# General Examination

The general examination must be completed prior to the dissertation proposal. The general exam consists of two components: a written literature review and an oral defense.

**Written Examination**

The written portion of the general examination is an integrative literature review that makes an important theoretical contribution to psychological research and/or provides clear directions for future empirical studies that will make an important contribution to research. The written document must be approved by the student’s major professor before it is disseminated to the general examination committee. The final version of the written review paper should be submitted to the examining committee at least **two weeks** prior to the oral examination.

**Oral Examination**

The oral examination will involve the general examination committee (including the Dean's Representative) who will have a vote. The student must demonstrate independent mastery of the research included in the written document during the oral examination.

**Criteria for Passing**

To pass the general examination, the student must demonstrate an ability to synthesize an area of psychological research in a way that makes an important theoretical contribution and/or that provides clear directions for future, empirical studies that will make an important contribution to research. All votes of the examining committee must be recorded and signed on the signature pages provided by the Graduate School. Your committee chair will give them to the graduate secretary who will forward them to the Graduate School.

Passing the general exam is a requirement of the program. There are three possible outcomes of the general examination oral defense: Pass, Fail, Retake. If a student passes and revisions are needed, and can be satisfactorily completed within two week of the oral defense meeting, then a Pass may be granted by the committee. However, if revisions are necessary that take longer than two weeks to complete, the committee may grant a Retake. In cases in which revisions are necessary, the committee will attach a memorandum to the signature page specifying whether the required revisions, and a clear plan of the timeline for the Retake. Further, the committee will determine the appropriate steps to be followed by the student with regard to continuing in the Ph.D. program. A written report of these steps will be completed with copies given to the committee members, the student, and filed in the student’s folder in the Psychology Department’s graduate secretary’s office. Failure of the general examination will lead to dismissal from the program.

**General Information:**

1. After setting your defense date, you are required to complete the *Request for Doctoral Examination and Degree Audit.* The form is located on the department website under Graduate School Forms
2. The meeting should be scheduled for a minimum of two hours.
3. Once this has been done, you will need to find a room to hold your meeting. Rooms in Audubon are listed in a calendar in the main office.

4. An unsuccessful second attempt of the General Exam will result in Failure of the General Exam and an immediate dismissal from the program.

5. You are to accommodate your Dean’s Representative as well as the remaining members of your committee when scheduling the General Exam. The Dean’s Representative’s attendance is required during the general exam defense.

**LSU Clinical Psychology Program**

**General Examination Evaluation Scale**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student: | Evaluation Date: |
| Evaluator: |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Inadequate | Needs improvement | Proficient | Excellent |
| **Framing the Literature Review** | | | | |
| 1. The student reviews and synthesizes the available literature within a domain of psychological inquiry |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The student builds a scientific case for the importance and appropriateness of specific research problems |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The student proposes relevant research questions that can be investigated to answer specific research problems. |  |  |  |  |
| **Communicating and Presenting the Literature Review** | | | | |
| 1. The student communicates the review in writing using professional language and adheres to APA Style guidelines |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The student presents the review orally using professional language and provides adequate content coverage of all relevant paper sections |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The student responds to questions and critiques of the review by demonstrating professional courtesy and directly attends to and attempts to resolve (if possible) relevant issues. |  |  |  |  |