PURPOSE
The Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE) is the second requirement for doctoral candidacy. Students can begin preparing for the OQE after they have passed the WQE and completed coursework requirements, usually sometime in the fourth year of the program. The OQE consists of a written research proposal and oral defense.

WRITTEN RESEARCH PROPOSAL
The proposal will be 7-15 pages long, based on a literature review of the field. It should include a brief background description, hypotheses to be tested, appropriate methodology, anticipated results, potential pitfalls, future directions and broader impacts, and literature citations. The subject of the written proposal can be an extension of the student’s dissertation research but must be agreed upon by the student, Research Advisor, and Dissertation Committee. Generally the structure of the written proposal is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Overview, rational, specific aims, and background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-9</td>
<td>Detailed research plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>Future directions and broader impacts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The format of the proposal should be in Times New Roman and 12 point font. Before the oral examination the student should confer with the members of their committee regarding the soundness of their proposal. If the proposed research were successfully completed it should result in a series of publications. Completed proposals must be presented to the dissertation committee two weeks prior to the defense date.

ORAL PRESENTATION AND DEFENSE
Once the student is ready to deliver their oral defense, the student must contact the Dissertation Committee, GPD, and Graduate Program Assistant to make appropriate scheduling arrangements for the defense. The GPD will confirm with the committee that the written proposal is in acceptable form to warrant scheduling of the defense. Students should also contact the Chemistry Main Office about the availability of the Chemistry Conference Room and submit their seminar date, title, and abstract to the Graduate Program Assistant.

Students prepare a 45 minute proposal seminar to a general audience and Dissertation Committee. A short question and answer session will follow the presentation and then a formal examination administered by the Dissertation Committee will probe the student’s understanding of the proposed experiments, examine in depth the students understanding of their chosen research field, test the student’s ability to think on their feet and competently defend their work and ideas.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE EVALUATION
The dissertation committee completes a grade report after the defense and determines the student is assessed one of the following:

- Passed Unconditionally
  - Candidacy into the doctoral program granted
- Passed Conditionally
  - Student must satisfy conditions spelled out explicitly by the dissertation committee before being granted candidacy into the doctoral program.
- Failed
  - Candidacy into the doctoral program is denied

Last revised 7.26.13