

## **Assessment Memo: Preliminary Exam (Thesis Prospectus)**

The Preliminary Exam is administered to students pursuing a PhD in the department according to the format and criteria listed in the Graduate Handbook. Usually, this consists of a written thesis prospectus and a research presentation, including oral questioning. After the Thesis Committee has discussed and evaluated student performance on the exam, the Committee Chair should complete this Assessment Memo, send it to the Graduate Program Manager, and copy the student and the other committee members.

The purpose of the Preliminary Examination is threefold:

- (a) to examine the proposed dissertation topic for originality, scientific importance, and likelihood of completion as an acceptable Ph.D. dissertation.
- (b) to examine the student's proposed methodology for pursuing the dissertation research, and
- (c) to examine the student's preparation and knowledge of those subjects and methods that the proposed research may require.

## **Evaluation**

Preliminary Examination Date:

Graduate Student Name:

Committee Members and Affiliation  
(if not UW-Madison):

## **Results**

Pass

Fail

The Thesis Committee commonly provides feedback or requests for changes directly to the graduate student following Committee discussion. However, the committee may document reasoning or feedback here as well: