



Announcement Comprehensive Examination

Doctor of Philosophy Program in Epidemiology (International Program)
Epidemiology Unit, Faculty of Medicine, Prince of Songkla University

The Comprehensive Examination (CE) is one of the graduation requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Epidemiology (International Program). The purpose of the Examination is to ensure that the student is able to appropriately select an interesting issue arising from or related to his or her thesis focus area(s), critically discuss the issue(s), and present related findings from the research literature and his/her own analyses.

Expectations: Students are expected to demonstrate in-depth appreciation of the selected issue(s), present a clear exposition of the issue(s) in a systematic and scientific manner, and retrieve and critically appraise the research literature relevant to the issues.

1) Qualification

Students are qualified to take the CE when they have satisfied all requirements to defend their thesis.

2) Procedure

- 2.1 The student's main thesis advisor and the program's Curriculum Chairperson agrees on the topic of review for a CE at least one month prior to scheduling the examination.
- 2.2 The student submits the presentation handout of the CE at least one week before the examination. The presentation must include the following sections:
 - 2.2.1 **Background/rationale of the review**, including the principles of the review topic, its importance, and rationale for conducting the review of the interesting issue arising from or related to his or her thesis focus area.
 - 2.2.2 **Objective(s) of the review**
 - 2.2.3 **Literature search strategy**. The student needs to present the search engine, search terms, and article screening and selection methods used in order to answer the review's objective(s).
 - 2.2.4 **Critical appraisal of the evidence** in the searched literature, including appraisals of the methodological quality of the studies, identifying knowledge gap(s), and weaknesses in the evidence.

2.2.5 **Discussion and conclusion.** The student must show articulation regarding the implications of the knowledge in the existing literatures on their field of interest and their thesis.

3) Examination committee

At least 4 qualified faculty members and 1 external expert will form the CE committee. The external examiner will chair the examination. The other 4 examiners will include the curriculum chair, the student's advisor(s), and one or two internal lecturers.

4) Evaluation principle

When the comprehensive examination is finished, committee members will discuss among themselves about the student's performance. Using the rubric assessment scoring system, the committee members will reach a consensus to either "pass" or "not pass". The details of each result are as follows:

"Pass" – the student presented his or her comprehensive literature review and thoughtful appraisal of evidence in epidemiology, statistics, and other health sciences related to their thesis research topic or area of interest. The student could identify knowledge gaps and systematically integrate the body of knowledge in the literature into their research work.

"Not Pass" – the student could not present a concrete literature review and make systematic and critical appraisal of the evidence. The committee will give suggestions to the student and allow him or her to either take a re-examination at a later date or complete additional assignments within one month *in lieu* of the re-examination. Such a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Announced on 12 May 2020



(Professor Virasakdi Chongsuvivatwong)
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