Ph.D. Preliminary Examination: August 2018

The following outlines specific details in relation to the August 2018 preliminary exam under the new system.

→ Students should complete the preliminary examination form and submit it to the Area Chairperson for approval. Students will need to have their Specialization Examination committee formed before submitting this form. The Area Chairperson, Dr. Zach Brewster, will forward it to the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Krista Brumley, for approval. The application is due by June 15th for the August exam.

→ The August 2018 exam period is as follows:

   → First exam will start at 9:00 a.m. on August 2nd, and is due by 9:00 a.m. August 9th (time released on Canvas)

   → Second exam will start at 9:00 on August 16th, and is due by 9:00 a.m. August 23rd.

   → This means the one week break is from 9:00 a.m. August 9th until 9:00 a.m. August 16th, allowing time to travel to ASA/SSSP as early at the 9th and return as late as the 15th.

   → Once students have downloaded the first exam question, this counts as the first attempt of taking the preliminary exam; no exceptions.

→ The first exam focuses on a broad area. Currently, we are offering exams in the broad areas that are the same as the ones offered under the previous prelim system: race/ethnicity, gender, medical sociology, labor, and urban. This exam is based on a reading list written by the faculty who are experts in each area. The reading lists are available on the prelim blackboard sites. Each list is comprised of readings you would have had in relevant courses, in addition to other foundational articles or books on the topic. The exam consists of two questions. The first exam committee includes three Department of Sociology faculty members.

→ The second exam, the specialization exam, focuses on a more narrowly defined set of themes/topics that are developed by the student and adviser. Each student forms a specialty examination committee, and works with that committee to write a 1-2 page description that details their area of interest. The 1-2 page document must be approved by all committee members. The second exam also consists of two questions.

→ This “proposal” description is intended to help the student hone their specialization areas, guide their studying, and assist the committee members in writing exam questions. Ideally, it should focus on the student’s anticipated areas of their dissertation. For example, gender, work, and work-family, race/ethnicity and work, race/ethnicity and education, or reproductive health. These are just some examples based on our current faculty expertise.

→ The specialization committee is anticipated, but not required, to form the nucleus of the student’s final dissertation committee. The student and their adviser should jointly select the student’s preliminary specialty examination committee. The committee must consist of at least three full-time faculty, all from the Department of Sociology, including the adviser.

→ Refer to the Preliminary Examination document on the website for more details on process.