

Department of Anthropology, Rice University
Qualifying Exams and Qualifying Essays for PhD Candidacy -- Guidelines
** revised February 2017*

1. Students will comprise one bibliographic reading list made up of 50 – 60 texts (as an appropriate combination of peer reviewed journal articles and books).
2. The list should include approximately 25-30 texts with a theoretical focus (pertinent to the student's research) and 25-30 texts with substantive and regional relevance; the list should be divided into 2 sections to delineate into which category each text is being placed. (Obviously it is not possible to fully distinguish "theory" from "substantive and regional" foci, but in framing the bifurcation of the list students are encouraged to place texts in the category in which they see themselves actively engaging with the work.)
3. The bibliographic reading list must be submitted to all three members of the student's candidacy committee by the 3rd week of class in the spring semester of the student's third year; faculty committee members may provide revisions and suggestions for the reading list.
4. Drawing from the list and the student's research interests, the candidacy committee will co-construct two questions for the candidate; each question will be emailed by the Chair of the committee to the candidate at the appointed time (and returned with email time stamp to all three committee members) in the case of Qualifying Exams. For Qualifying Essays, students will likewise receive two questions from the committee in the early part of the spring semester following the same procedure.
 - 4a. For the **Qualifying Exams**, students will write two 10-12 page papers (double-spaced, 1-inch margins); bibliography pages are separate from the page count. Exam papers will be produced over the course of two Saturdays toward the end of the spring semester allowing faculty 2 weeks to read the essays before the faculty/student meeting. Each Saturday writing period will be 9 hours total, with a 1 hour break (normally 9a-6p) on two consecutive Saturdays and it is the responsibility of the student to schedule these well in advance in addition to scheduling the faculty/student meeting to follow.
 - 4b. For the **Qualifying Essays**, students will write two 25-30 page papers (double-spaced, 1-inch margins); bibliography pages are separate from the page count. Essays will be produced over the course of the semester and are due toward the end of the spring semester allowing faculty 2 weeks to read the essays before the faculty/student meeting. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule the deadline well in advance in addition to scheduling the faculty/student meeting to follow.
 - 4c. After submitting the two Exam papers or Essays students will meet with their Candidacy Committee for one hour to discuss the papers and the overall intellectual project of their work. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule the faculty/student meeting well in advance.

5. In responding to each of the two questions, students should plan to refer to most of the texts on their list to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding and engagement with the works most pertinent to the student's research. One question will nominally focus on "theoretical" questions and the texts in that category, and the other will refer to substantive and regional concerns, drawing from that portion of the list.