

Policy on Comprehensive Examinations

Department of Physical Sciences – Geology Program
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania – October 2020

Purpose

The purpose of the comprehensive exam in geology is to assess each student's mastery of undergraduate geological concepts. This instrument will provide valuable feedback to both faculty and students. All students pursuing a BS degree in Geology must satisfactorily complete the geology comprehensive examination.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible to take the geology comprehensive exam, the student must first *complete* 90 credits toward graduation with at least 28 of those credits in geology courses and have a quality point average (QPA) greater than or equal to 2.0.

Establishing Eligibility

The student wishing to take the geology comprehensive exam must complete the Geology Comprehensive Exam Eligibility Form available from the exam administrator. The form must be taken to the student's advisor for confirmation of eligibility, and then returned to the exam administrator at least one week prior to the exam date.

Scheduling of Exam

The geology comprehensive examination will be offered once during the spring semester and once during the fall semester. At least two weeks prior to the comprehensive examination, the date and time will be announced. *The exam may also be offered at an alternate time by special arrangement.*

Exam Format

The geology comprehensive examination requires integration of knowledge and skills across multiple sub-disciplines of geology and related sciences, in order to solve complex problems. Students receive various types of data and are asked to conduct analyses and make interpretations. Data types, contexts, and work products vary each semester.

Grading the Exam

Each semester's exam will be created collaboratively, then scored independently, by at least two faculty members. Each exam will be scored in two categories on the attached rubric each semester (for example categories 1&3, or categories 2&4). The rubric categories used for scoring will vary according to the semester and the exam version.

Passing Grade

Students must achieve a score 2 or better on all rubric categories being scored.

Repeating the Exam

The comprehensive exam may be repeated only once during any particular semester. Dates for exam repetition during the same semester must be arranged with the faculty member administering the exam.

Geology Comprehensive Exam Eligibility Form

Revised: October 2020

To be completed by student:

Name: _____

Email address: _____

Student ID: _____

To be completed by advisor:

Current semester (fall/spring/summer and year): _____

Total number of credits **completed**
(not including this semester): _____

Number credits **completed** in geology
(not including this semester): _____

Current QPA: _____

Advisor signature: _____ Date: _____

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

This form must be submitted to the exam administrator one week prior to the date of the exam.

Exam Results

Rubric category	Score

PASS?

Yes

No

Geology Comprehensive Exam Assessment Rubric

SLO	++ (diamond) (3)	∅ (shale) (2)	-- (slag) (1)
1: Accurately describe/represent geologic features and structures from remotely-sensed and/or limited data	Product describes or represents relevant geologic features / structures in a realistic manner.	Features and structures are present and broadly correct but lack relevant details indicated by the data.	Features and structures are not represented correctly or at all
2: Accurately describe/represent geologic and/or environmental conditions from available geological data	Conditions are accurately interpreted and described / represented in thorough detail.	Conditions are conceptually correct but details of interpretation are absent or not accurate	Interpretation is incorrect and conditions are not represented correctly, or at all
3: Accurately describe/represent environmental and/or process change from available geological data	Environmental and/or process change is interpreted and described accurately	Interpretation is conceptually correct but details are absent or not accurate	Change is not interpreted, described, or represented correctly
4: Proficiency in relevant technical skills (e.g. data processing, geophysical exploration, field mapping)	Student proficiently implements the correct technical skills	Student identifies the proper technical skills but implementation is incomplete or significant errors are made. OR Student utilizes the wrong skill set, but does so proficiently.	Student does not implement the correct technical skills and makes significant errors.