

Field Exam for Humanitarian Studies (9-2009)

Field Coordinator: Dr. Peter Walker

Students should contact the field coordinator sometime during their last semester of course work (typically 4-6 months prior to taking the comprehensive exam).

Students prepare a reading list that is organized by topic area. The list must include a general section on humanitarian issues and two specific topic sections, chosen and agreed upon with the Field of Study Coordinator, which are relevant to the PhD candidate's research topic. This list is presented to the field coordinator who critiques it with the students, asks questions and makes recommendations. This process often requires several iterations, and there is an opportunity for the student to ask questions about relative emphasis of topic areas. The list should include articles, books, treaties, reports and other sources that may or may not have been assigned for specific courses. The study period is seen as not only a review of material, but an opportunity to read books, authors or key articles that have not been read by the student. Relative emphasis of topic areas may vary among the student reading lists depending upon major source of interest, but students are expected to cover all important aspects of the field.

For students doing TWO PhD fields:

The exam lasts seven and a half hours and consists of a set of six questions of which the student answers four. One question is required and the others may be selected from additional categories of questions. The questions address larger conceptual issues in the field, and students are asked to provide specific examples to demonstrate that they understand how general principles apply to specific cases.

For Students doing THREE PhD fields:

The exam lasts seven and a half hours and consists of a set of six questions of which the student answers three. One question is required and the others may be selected from additional categories of questions. The questions address larger conceptual issues in the field, and students are asked to provide specific examples to demonstrate that they understand how general principles apply to specific cases.

The oral exam common to both the above options, will primarily cover questions that were on the exam, and is normally used for clarification of answers on the written exam. However, additional questions may be asked, and the student may be asked to make connections with other fields.