The core of the substantive areas covered in the development economics field exam are defined by the range of topics covered in Professor Block's E240 course on development economics. However, students should study these topics with greater depth and analytical sophistication than their presentation in E240. The core list of readings is the entire current syllabus for E240, including all supplementary and suggested readings. In addition, students should review relevant chapters (to be discussed with the field coordinator) from a graduate-level textbook on development economics, such as the book of that title by Debraj Ray. Students planning to take the exam should confer with the field coordinator 3-4 months in advance of the exam to confirm details.

The exam may also address selected topics covered in micro-development economics and the political economy of development.

The exam is 7.5 hours long and consists of four questions, from which the student chooses any two (if this is one of three fields) or three (if this is one of two fields). It is closed book and computers may be used for writing only (no Internet use). Sample questions from past exams are available in the Registrar's office.