PhD Comprehensive Field Exam
International Trade and Commercial Policy

The PhD Comprehensive Field Exam in International Trade and Commercial Policy is an opportunity for students to demonstrate that they have a thorough understanding and mastery of the skills necessary to conduct research towards a PhD in this field. These skills include knowledge of the issues and techniques as presented in the literature.

Format of the Exam:

The written component is a three hour closed-book examination. Answers must be handwritten. The exam may consist of one question, a few questions, or of several questions, usually no more than ten. The exam will specify whether a question is compulsory or optional. An exam may contain only compulsory questions or it may offer choice between questions. Questions may be open-ended or presented as true-false statements. For either type of question, a student should derive his or her answer or conclusion from carefully explained analysis.

The oral component of the comprehensive field exam is about an hour long with questions posed by an examiner from each of the student's three fields of study. Questions may consider issues that were raised on the written exam; questions may raise issues that were not on the written exam; questions may be of an interdisciplinary nature on issues that arise from each of the student's two other fields of study; or questions may be a request for analysis of a current or a hypothetical event.

Preparing for the Exam:

A student who intends to take the International Trade and Commercial Policy Comprehensive Field Exam should contact the Field Coordinator no later than four months prior to taking the written exam. The coordinator will identify relevant readings possibly in collaboration with other faculty members teaching courses in the Field. If other faculty members will be participating in writing and grading the exam, the Coordinator will inform the students and request that students contact those faculty members to help identify relevant readings.