**Guide to MBSE Qualifying Exam (for both 2019 and 2020 students)**

**Timing**

The qualifying exam is taken at the end of the second year after starting the Ph.D. program, enabling a student to finish their Ph.D. in 5 years. Students anticipating to take 6 years for their Ph.D. may take the qualifying exam at the end of their third year. Students who have not completed their qualifying exam by the end of the third year may be assessed as not making adequate progress toward their degree. The student’s committee can give guidance about the student’s readiness for taking the qualifying exam. Students entering the MBSE program with a Masters degree are expected to complete the qualifying exam by the end of the second year.

**General information**

Please go to <https://engineeringgrads.ucmerced.edu/academics/doctorate/doctoral-examinations-pre-candidacy> for general information.

**MBSE-specific information**

• MBSE does not have a Preliminary Examination. MBSE’s Core-Knowledge Exam will be given in the spring starting in spring 2021 for students starting in fall 2020 and later. The Core-Knowledge Exam will cover materials presented in MBSE 210, MBSE 211, and MBSE 212.

• The MBSE Policies and Procedures provide full information about the qualifying exam and can be downloaded at <https://mbse.ucmerced.edu/current-students/forms>.

• Please plan 3 actions ~1 month before your exam: 1) Complete step 1 at the General information link given above, 2) Schedule a date when your committee is available for a block of time of ~ 3 hours, and 3) distribute your research proposal to your committee for their review.

**Committee**:

The Qualifying Examination is completed by the student’s Faculty Committee (usually same as Doctoral Committee for the Ph.D.). If you have not yet formed your official committee, please consult the Policies & Procedures for guidance. For composition of the committee, please consult the MBSE Policies and Procedures. <https://mbse.ucmerced.edu/current-students/forms>

**Conduct of the Exam:**

The format of the oral exam is determined by your committee – please consult with them about their preferred format (you may do this in your previous Annual Evaluation). The format typically includes a short presentation of the research proposal and follow up discussion. The presentation usually stimulates questions that take much longer than the presentation itself. A student is expected to not only have a clear plan for a research project, but to understand the underlying scientific concepts behind the research project as well as core knowledge of Materials Science. The Committee may choose to ask questions about deficiencies identified by the Core Knowledge Exam and/or grades in courses.

**MBSE goals for successful students:**

The MBSE Graduate Program is designed to comprehensively support student development. The rubric that is used to assess the success of the program and the success of the student in achieving MBSE’s goals can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/uv4vv8n>