

Purpose. The Comprehensive Examination is intended to assess the breadth and depth of a graduate student's knowledge of the core principles in neuroscience, research design and analysis and the ethical conduct of research. It is taken after the student successfully completes his/her core coursework and laboratory rotations. It is normally administered during the summer between the student's second and third year of training.

Format. The Comprehensive Examination consists of a total of 10 questions:

- two questions for each of the core competencies – student chooses 1 in each core for a total of 6 questions
- four questions within the student's minor specialty – student chooses 3 questions.
- two questions focused on the responsible conduct of research – student chooses 1 question.

The Comprehensive Examination is administered over three days. Students have 9 hours each day to complete questions:

- Day 1 consists of six possible questions covering three core competencies.
- Day 2 consists of six possible questions covering the remaining core competencies plus the two possible questions on the responsible conduct of research.
- Day 3 consists of the four possible questions within the student's minor.

Each question is scored on a 10 point scale for a total of 100 points for the entire exam. The questions will be scored according to the PIN Grading – Qualifying Examination rubric.

Evaluation. In order to pass the Comprehensive Examination, the student must score at least 80 on the entire exam and no lower than 70 on two or fewer questions.

Remediation. Remediation is based on the score of the Comprehensive Examination:

- Overall score < 80 and 1-2 question(s) less than 80 but greater than 70.
 - Student revises question(s) and satisfactorily addresses specific criticisms within 1 week of scoring.
 - Each question is reviewed by 2-3 PIN faculty.
 - Faculty must agree that question(s) have been satisfactorily addressed in order to pass.
 - Failure to pass after revision requires student to retake and pass entire Comprehensive Examination within 3 months.
 - Failure on retest results in recommendation for dismissal from PIN.

- Overall score < 80 and 3 or more questions less than 80 but greater than 70
 - Student must retake and pass entire Comprehensive Examination within 3 months.
 - Failure to do so results in recommendation for dismissal from PIN.
- Score on 1-2 individual question(s) < 70.
 - Student must retake and pass entire Comprehensive Examination within 3 months.
 - Failure to do so results in recommendation for dismissal from PIN.
- Score on 3 or more individual questions < 70.
 - No remediation. Student is recommended for dismissal from PIN.

In exceptional cases, the Program Director, with the agreement of the PIN Steering Committee, may recommend additional quarters of remedial coursework instead of dismissal. However, the student receives no stipend while taking remedial coursework.