



PLANNING PHASE (~3-4 MONTHS BEFORE PROPOSED QE DATE)

- Meet with major professor to refine QE project and discuss 3 committee members.
- Draft QE proposal: typically includes a Central Hypothesis and 2-3 Specific Aims.
- Fill out [PTX- Request PhD QE Committee](#) form and submit to PTX Coordinator Katharine Moffat.
 - *Ensure that all PTX requirements are complete before submitting the form.
 - *It is recommended that you meet with your academic advisor as you fill out this form.
 - *CEP will review your proposal and assign 2 additional members for a total of 5 QE committee members. Once finalized, CEP will notify you of your approved QE committee.
- Submit [Grad Studies- Application for PhD QE](#) form, listing the 5 approved QE committee members, to PTX Coordinator Katharine Moffat. Qualifying Examination Applications should be submitted no later than four weeks prior to the proposed exam date.

STUDY PHASE (~6-8 WEEKS BEFORE PROPOSED QE DATE)

- Once the CEP assigns your QE committee, send out a poll to your committee to select a QE date.
 - *Due to busy schedules, it is recommended that you do this as early as possible.
 - *Include at least 10 work days, with 2 options per day (morning & afternoon).
- Begin studying as much as possible. A break from lab work is recommended for at least a few weeks before your QE date. This will vary by student & should be discussed with your major professor.
- Meet 1 on 1 with each committee member to discuss QE proposal. These meetings are helpful for clarifying questions, refining the proposal, and discussing exam logistics with your QE chair.
- Practice your QE chalk talk. This will be ~10-15 minutes before the questioning portion begins.
- Run 3-6 practice exams with peers, lab members, or other colleagues. Diverse audiences are helpful.
 - *It is possible to “over-practice”, so be sure not to stress yourself out with endless practice exams.
- Create a QE cheat sheet- use headings for major topics/methods and bullets for key points to remember.

APPROACHING THE EXAM (1-3 DAYS BEFORE QE DATE)

- Relax and review. You are likely more prepared than you think.
- Read over your cheat sheet or study notes. Reinforce key topics rather than learn new ones.
- Remember that your committee **wants you to pass!** It is their job to ask questions and test your knowledge, so try to create thoughtful conversation and don't get defensive.

AFTER PASSING THE EXAM

- Meet with your major professor to form a dissertation committee. A dissertation committee consists of your major professor (committee chair) and 2 additional faculty members for a total of 3 members.
 - *If desired, it is optional to add a 4th or 5th committee member. This sometimes occurs if several broad areas of expertise are needed to guide the student's project.
- Fill out [Grad Studies- Application for Advancement to PhD Candidacy](#) form, obtain all required signatures, and then take to the UC Davis Cashier's Office to pay the cash fee of \$90.

QUESTIONS? PLEASE REACH OUT!

The following people are available for any and all questions related to PTX academics and the QE:

1. Your **major professor**.
2. Your assigned **academic advisor**.
3. **PTX Chair**: Dr. Laura Van Winkle
lsvanwinkle@ucdavis.edu
4. **CEP Chair**: Dr. Mary Horne
mhorne@ucdavis.edu
5. **PTX G Coordinator**: Katharine Moffat
kmoffat@ucdavis.edu
6. Your **PTX Peer Mentor**.
7. **Student CEP Representatives**
**If you would prefer to reach out to a student, please contact Katharine Moffat for contact information of the current CEP student reps.*

Important Note: This checklist was prepared by the PTX Committee on Educational Policy as a guide for students. Specific timelines may vary between individuals and all students are required to consult with their major professor before proceeding with major actions.

****All forms are available on www.ptx.ucdavis.edu/resources/forms**