The PhD Comprehensive Exam consists of a major review paper. The main components of the procedure are as follows:

- Major review paper on a topic identified by student (not dissertation topic). The paper should not exceed 50 pages
- Must include critical review of theory, empirical evidence, applications
- Committee of three examiners to oversee process and evaluate (at least 2 from ASP)
- Student submits very brief proposal to committee – proposal consists of proposed topic and articulates any potential overlap with dissertation
- Student will then expand on proposal with committee input to the point where there is a detailed paper outline and reading list
- After this point the student works on the paper independent of committee input
- When finished the student submits the complete paper to the committee for review. If adequate, then the student will proceed to oral examination of the paper. If not adequate, the committee will suggest necessary revisions and the student has one more attempt
- Must begin process by April of second year in program.
- Time limit of one year from date that committee approves topic