

## Preliminary Exam

This exam will be focused on a specific research proposal. Typically the exam would be oral and based on a significant written proposal. The type of the exam (written, oral, or a combination) and its content are determined by the faculty committee. As part of the preparation for the preliminary examination, a Ph.D. student must prepare a dissertation prospectus for review by his/her faculty committee.

**The dissertation prospectus should normally include the following:**

- 1. Statement of the research problem**
- 2. Statement of the significance or importance of the problem**
- 3. Statement of the research goals or hypotheses**
- 4. Proposed research methods**

A literature review can be included in the dissertation prospectus as part of items 1-3. The prospectus should be given to the committee at least one week prior to the preliminary examination.

*Discussion of Research with Program Chair:* Ph.D. students who are preparing to take their preliminary examinations are required to meet with the chair of the Environment and Resources Program, Arthur McEvoy, before requesting their preliminary warrants. To schedule this appointment, students should contact the chair directly, either by phone or e-mail.

The Ph.D. preliminary warrant is issued by the Ph.D. examiner in the Graduate School; it should be requested through our Academic Programs Office at least three weeks before the preliminary examination. The warrant will not be issued if the student's record contains any incompletes, no reports, etc. This warrant is to be signed by the committee members only after successful completion of that exam. The program chair will sign the warrant, acknowledging that all program requirements except the dissertation have been completed.