IU School of Informatics and Computing at Indianapolis
Doctor of Philosophy in Informatics / Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) Track

**Annual Student Review Process**
for HCI PhD students starting Fall 2014 and onward

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**The Annual Review**

All HCI PhD students will be reviewed by the HCI area research faculty on an annual basis. The purpose of this review is twofold. First, the review affords the faculty an opportunity to holistically evaluate student growth and progress toward candidacy or defense of dissertation. Students in the program are expected to exhibit consistent progress in expanding their domain knowledge, developing their analytic and critical thinking skills, adopting an effective research mentality, engaging in the scholarly community both within and beyond the department, and honing their presentation and communication skills. Second, the review provides the faculty an opportunity to provide feedback to students to help improve the quality, rigor, professionalism, and publishability of their scholarly work.
The Annual Review Committee

All tenured and tenure-track HCI faculty will serve as members of the annual review committee.

Research Portfolio

Each year, all students in the program will submit a portfolio reflecting their academic progress over the course of the previous year.

1. Portfolios should represent a comprehensive self-assessment, emphasizing scholarship, presentations, teaching, coursework, service, and professional activity. Taken together, the materials submitted as part of a student’s portfolio should summarize a year of work and include an overview of the student’s progress on their plan of study.

2. The documents to submit as part of the Yearly Research Portfolio are the following:

   A. **Research Self-assessment document** (2 pages). This is a *reflective summary* of the research and academic accomplishments in the previous year that includes:
      - Generated scholarship (e.g., publications, presentations, studies planned, in progress, or completed, contributions to research grants)
      - Teaching activity (if any)
      - Salient accomplishments in coursework as connected to research
      - Contribution to service (school/dept, profession, organizations)
      - Overview of student’s progress with respect to the PhD Plan of Study
      - Goals and plan for upcoming year

   B. **Up-to-date Curriculum Vitae**

   C. **Brief research statement** (1-2 page), which should clearly indicate the faculty research advisor(s) that the student has identified or is working with.

   D. **Copy of all proposals and publications** submitted or in preparation during the previous year
Each document must also indicate clearly the student’s name, the current research advisor, and the semester of first enrollment in the program. The portfolio should be submitted electronically in PDF portfolio format (1 file) to the graduate program coordinator, Elizabeth ‘Bunge’ Cassell (cassell@iupui.edu). Submissions are due by the last day of classes of the spring semester.

Results and Dates

1. Possible outcomes for the annual review are satisfactory or unsatisfactory. An unsatisfactory review indicates that the student is not demonstrating adequate progress and is expected to complete a follow-up review with the faculty prior to the beginning of classes of the subsequent fall semester to correct any problems identified as part of the review. Multiple unsatisfactory reviews may result in suspension of financial support or dismissal from the program.

2. The faculty will convene the annual review committee within 2–3 weeks of the portfolio submission deadline, with the review taking place mid- to late-May.

3. Each student will be notified in writing of their review results and provided with feedback about their portfolio materials shortly following the conclusion of the review committee’s meeting (typically, on or before June 1). If a follow-up review is required due to an unsatisfactory outcome, the student will be notified of the date of the follow-up review and the specific requirements that they must meet for reinstatement to satisfactory standing as part of this written notification.
First-Year Review

**Students completing their first year in the Ph.D. program** will receive a more thorough review in order to provide them with early feedback on their ability to perform successfully in a Ph.D. program. In order to provide first-year students with more time to settle into the program and gain experience participating as a member of one (or more) research group(s), the annual review for first-year students will take place at the end of the summer term (instead of the beginning). This extended submission deadline provides students an opportunity to include work completed as part of research rotations or independent study courses in their portfolio materials.

Research Portfolio

1. A research portfolio should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the instructions for a typical annual review (see above).
2. First-year students are expected to include at least one research manuscript of publishable quality in their portfolio. It is not necessary that this manuscript have been submitted for publication or external peer review by the time the first-year review takes place.

Oral Research Presentation

As part of the first-year review, each student will give a 15-minute oral presentation of the research included in his or her portfolio to the members of the HCI research faculty. This presentation should clearly communicate the student’s role in and specific contributions to one (or more) research project(s) completed during the his or her first year in the program. Students should be prepared to answer questions about their research from the faculty at the conclusion of their presentation.

Results and Dates

1. Possible outcomes for the first-year review are **satisfactory** or **unsatisfactory**. An unsatisfactory review indicates that the student is not demonstrating adequate progress and is expected to complete a follow-up review with the faculty prior to
the end of the fall semester (second-year) to correct any problems identified as part of the review. A second unsatisfactory supplemental review may result in suspension of financial support or dismissal from the program.

2. First-year student research portfolios should be submitted electronically to the graduate program coordinator, Elizabeth ‘Bunge’ Cassell (cassell@iupui.edu) no later than August 1.

3. In consultation with first-year students and their advisors, dates will be set for students to give their oral research presentations. All oral presentations must be completed prior to the first day of classes in the fall semester.

4. Students will be notified in writing of their review results and provided with feedback about their portfolio materials shortly following the completion of the student’s oral research presentation. If a follow-up review is required due to an unsatisfactory outcome, the student will be notified of the date of the follow-up review and the specific requirements that they must meet for reinstatement to satisfactory standing as part of this written notification.

For any question on the annual review process, please refer to the chair of the Department of Human-Centered Computing, Dr. Davide Bolchini (dbolchin@iupui.edu).
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Doctor of Philosophy in Informatics / Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) Track

Qualifying Examination Process  
for HCI PhD students starting Fall 2014

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The Qualifying Examination

The qualifying examination is aimed at assessing students’ readiness to carry out successful, independent research in the HCI discipline.

The qualifying examination must be taken after the student completes their second year in the PhD program, regardless whether the student is full-time or part-time. In other words, part-time students will NOT be given extra time to complete their course work. As such, all course work as defined by the PhD Plan of Study in Year I and II must be completed by this time (end of Spring of second year). It is very important that students work with their advisor to work out a course schedule to make sure they complete all necessary courses in preparation for the written qualifying exam.

Pre-Qualification Requirements

1. Students must submit a reading list of at least 30 books, journal articles, or conference papers relevant to the student’s research area prior to sitting the qualifying exam. Students should construct this list in consultation with their advisor, and it must be submitted electronically to the graduate program coordinator, Elizabeth ‘Bunge’ Cassell (cassell@iupui.edu) by the last day of classes in the spring semester of the students’ second year.

2. Students should identify and recruit a qualifying exam committee composed of at least three members of the HCI research faculty. This committee should consist of the student’s advisor, a faculty member representing the student’s primary research area, and at least one additional member of the HCI research faculty. (The committee may optionally include a faculty representative from the student’s minor.) The committee is responsible for developing and assessing the research area-specific written examination questions and administering the oral portion of the qualifying exam.

Written Examination

1. The purpose of the written examination is to assess the breadth and depth of the student’s knowledge of the HCI discipline.
2. Questions on the written examination will draw both from the content presented in those core HCI courses that the student has completed at the time that he or she sits the qualifying exam and from the research area-specific references identified as part of that student’s individual reading list. The questions will be set by a group of faculty who are familiar with the content of the core courses in consultation with the members of the faculty selected by the student to serve on his or her qualifying exam committee.

3. Students who do not successfully complete the written exam can retake it only one additional time, and this retake will be offered within one month of the first attempt.

4. The written exam consists of two parts:

   **Part A: Breadth Exam (4 hours, to be completed individually but with access to the student’s books, notes, and online resources)**

   The purpose of the breadth component of the written exam is to evaluate the student’s broad understanding of HCI theories, methodologies, and the existing research literature. The questions require the student to make connections across material presented in the core HCI courses, and, in most cases, demonstrate the application of this content to their own research area(s).

   The breadth exam will consist of 6 questions; students will be expected to select 4 questions and answer them coherently and comprehensively, citing references as appropriate. Note that actual number of questions available and to select from may vary year by year.

   **Part B: Depth Exam (take-home exam, to be completed individually within one week)**

   The purpose of the depth exam is to evaluate the student’s understanding of how his or her own area of research fits into the larger context of HCI research. The student will be presented with one (potentially multi-part) question that will require a synthesis of ideas found in his or her customized reading list as well as
content from the HCI core courses, including both theory and research methods. Some tasks that a student might be asked to complete in this portion of the exam include performing a design space analysis of a research area based on a comprehensive literature review or developing a detailed and well-grounded research proposal. The individualized depth exam is handed out to the student immediately upon submission of their breadth exam answers.

Oral Examination
1. The purpose of the oral examination is to assess the student’s overall ability to articulate reflective, critical and in-depth responses on the core topics of the discipline, as studied in both required and elective courses. The oral exam also provides an opportunity for the student to provide more in-depth answers to the questions asked in either the breadth or depth components of the written exam.
2. Only those students who will successfully pass the written exam will be scheduled for an oral exam.
3. The oral exam is set and given by the faculty committee recruited by the student.
4. The oral exam will last approximately one hour for each student.

Results and Dates
1. Tentative date for the breadth component of the written exam: The first Friday in August of the student’s second year in the program. However, since specific dates may change, all students are advised to clear their schedule for the first two weeks of August for the written exam.
2. Due date for the depth component of the written exam: One week after the breadth component of the written exam was taken.
3. Tentative date for the oral exam: If the student passes the written examination, approximately one week after the depth component of the written exam is submitted.
4. Students who do not successfully complete either the written or oral portion of the examination can retake that portion of the exam a second time but only for
one part, either written or oral. That is, failure to pass either the written or oral portion of the examination on a re-take will result in dismissal from the program.

5. Any substantiated allegations of academic misconduct while sitting the qualifying examination (e.g., plagiarism or collaboration) will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

6. When a student passes both the written and oral portions of the qualifying examination, he or she advances to candidacy.

For any question on the annual review process, please refer to the chair of the Department of Human-Centered Computing, Dr. Davide Bolchini (dbolchin@iupui.edu).