

ART EDUCATION

ARTE 886 Comprehensive Examination

Part I. Department Regulations

Purpose and Scope

ARTE 886 is a 3-credit course graded on a pass or fail basis. The examination consists of one examination with three questions, which may be answered through written, arts-based, and oral tradition formats that investigate theory, methodology, and the field of study as they relate to the student's research in art education.

The examination assesses students' critical thinking, breadth and depth of knowledge of the discipline, capacity to conduct original research, and ability to communicate knowledge. The examination is expected to contribute directly to the dissertation proposal and to the research that follows.

Students work independently to complete the examination under an embargo and confidentiality agreement, which is a separate document coordinated by the Graduate Program Assistant. Work submitted for the comprehensive examination must not include work that has been, or is currently being, submitted for evaluative purposes in a course or exhibition at the University or in the community.

Prerequisite and Timing

Students must complete 12 credits of coursework before starting their exam (ARTE 886). The comprehensive examination generally takes place in year 2 of the doctoral program. Submission of the examination package is rolling, determined by student readiness in consultation with the student's supervisor.

Examination Committee

The examination committee is composed of two members: the student's supervisor and one additional full-time faculty member from the Department of Art Education holding the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor, or holding an Extended Term Appointment (ETA). An ETA member requires the approval of the Chair, the Graduate Program Director (GPD), and the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to sit on each examination committee. That approval also covers the member's service on the same student's PhD Thesis Supervisory Committee, and a second approval is not required.

It is expected that the second committee member will subsequently serve on the student's Thesis Supervisory Committee. This expectation is acknowledged on the approval form.

The supervisor and the second examination committee member are responsible for the following.

- The supervisor works closely with the student to establish the three questions, format, and bibliography.
- The second examination committee member, in consultation with the supervisor, finalizes and confirms only the three examination questions.
- Scheduling the oral examination with the student.
- Attending the oral examination and assessing the student's performance.
- Determining the result of the examination on a pass or fail basis.

Should the supervisor and the second committee member fail to reach agreement on the questions or the bibliography, the GPD serves as the arbitrator, and the GPD's decision is final.

Examination Formats

At least two of the three questions must be answered in written form. Only one question may be answered in a format other than written, whether arts-based or within an oral tradition.

Written. Each written response is expected to be 8 pages in length plus references, based on double spacing and 12-point font, and must include sufficient references in APA 7th edition citation style.

Arts-based. One of the three questions may be answered through an arts-based inquiry by an artist, researcher, or teacher. Arts-based inquiry includes an exhibition, performance, or presentation of work, together with an artist statement that relates the work to ongoing research, and extensive documentation of techniques and investigations into creative issues. The body of creative practice must be situated in scholarship and is followed by deliberation with the examination committee. An arts-based response carries the same weight as a written response.

Oral tradition. One of the three questions may be answered within an oral tradition, such as storytelling. Oral traditions adhere to the traditions of, for instance, First Peoples and Indigenous peoples, address the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of students, and are grounded in Indigenous beliefs, values, cultures, traditions, and worldviews. Students who wish to pursue this pathway should discuss it with their supervisor early, so that the examination committee can arrange appropriate protocols and the department can accommodate the format within the scheduling period set out below.

Writing Period

The writing period is 15 continuous days for an examination composed of three written responses.

Where the examination includes an arts-based response or a response within an oral tradition, the writing period for the remaining two written responses is 10 continuous days. Where the arts-based response involves an exhibition tied to a firm date, the writing period is scheduled by the examination committee in relation to that date.

Students registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) must approach the GPD before the examination package is submitted, so that accommodation is confirmed and reflected in the scheduled writing period.

Bibliography

The student prepares a single bibliography covering all three questions, with a minimum of 3 pages, in APA 7th edition citation style. The bibliography is submitted with the approval form and is approved by the supervisor.

Oral Examination

An oral examination, not to be confused with the Oral Tradition response, follows the completion of the writing period, according to a format appropriate to the presentation of the research and with the agreement of the examination committee. The oral examination is normally held between 2 and 4 weeks after the writing period ends and is scheduled by the supervisor, the second committee member, and the student.

The oral examination may be held in person, in hybrid form, or remotely. As a general rule, the oral examination will not exceed 2 hours. The format may be adjusted to reflect the formats through which knowledge has been presented, and may take place over more than one occasion where the student and the examination committee agree this is appropriate.

Evaluation

The comprehensive examination is evaluated as a single examination on a pass-or-fail basis. The examination committee assesses the three responses and the oral examination as one whole. Partial results are not recorded, since ARTE 886 carries credit and is graded as a single course.

A student who fails the comprehensive examination may retake it after 3 months and within 1 year of the original examination date, with the same examination committee. A second failure results in withdrawal from the program under SGS's academic regulations.

When the student passes the comprehensive examination and the thesis proposal is approved, the student advances from doctoral student to PhD Candidate.

Administrative Process

The completed and approved examination package must be received by the Graduate Program Assistant and the Graduate Program Director 30 days before the start of the writing period. The package consists of the approval form with all signatures, the three examination questions as a separate attached document, and the bibliography.

The Graduate Program Director's approval is administrative. The Graduate Program Director does not review, revise, or approve the examination questions, the bibliography, or the choice of format, except where called upon to arbitrate a disagreement between the two committee members or is invited to provide input at the request of the supervisor.

The Graduate Program Assistant confirms that the student has completed the required 12 credits, schedules the writing period, secures the signed confidentiality agreement, and files the approved package in the student's file. Following the oral examination, the supervisor completes the Graduate Activity Grade Report and submits it to the Graduate Program Assistant, who processes it for the student's academic record.

Steps for Students

1. Confirm that 12 credits of coursework are complete.
2. Work closely with your supervisor to formulate three questions and to determine the format of response for each.
3. Prepare a bibliography of a minimum of 3 pages in APA 7th edition citation style, covering all three questions.
4. If you are registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities, contact the Graduate Program Director **before** submitting your package to arrange for any necessary accommodations.
5. Obtain the signatures of your supervisor and the second committee member on the approval form.
6. Submit the complete package to the Graduate Program Assistant and the Graduate Program Director 30 days before the start of your writing period.
7. Sign the embargo and confidentiality agreement provided by the Graduate Program Assistant.
8. Schedule the oral examination with your committee, to be held between 2 and 4 weeks after the writing period ends.

Part II. Comprehensive Examination Approval Form

Submit this form with the three examination questions and the bibliography attached, as a single PDF, to the Graduate Program Assistant and the Graduate Program Director 30 days before the start of the writing period. Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed.

1. Student Information

Name

Student ID

Supervisor

Date

2. Format of Response

Indicate the format in which each question will be answered. At least two questions must be answered in written form, and only one question may be answered in a format other than written.

Question	Written	Arts-based	Oral tradition	Notes
Question 1	☐	☐	☐	
Question 2	☐	☐	☐	
Question 3	☐	☐	☐	

3. Scheduling

The writing period is 15 continuous days, reduced to 10 continuous days where the examination includes an arts-based response or a response within an oral tradition.

Writing period begins

Writing period ends

Proposed oral exam
date

Exhibition date, if any

Registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities: ☐ No ☐ Yes, and the Graduate Program Director has been contacted

4. Attachments

- ☐ Three examination questions, as a separate document
- ☐ Bibliography covering all three questions, minimum 3 pages, APA 7th edition citation style
- ☐ Approval of the Chair, GPD, and School of Graduate Studies for an Extended Term Appointment, if applicable.

5. Examination Committee Approval

By signing below, we confirm that we have reviewed and approved the three examination questions, the format of the response for each, and the bibliography, and that we accept responsibility for scheduling the oral examination with the student and evaluating the examination as a whole on a pass-or-fail basis.

Supervisor, name and signature

Date

Second member, name and signature

Date

The second committee member also confirms the following.

- ☐ The second committee member acknowledges the expectation of subsequent service on the student's Thesis Supervisory Committee.

6. Student Declaration

I confirm that the work I submit for the comprehensive examination will be my own, completed independently, and that it has not been and is not currently being submitted for evaluative purposes in a course or exhibition at the University or in the community.

Student, name and signature

Date

7. Administrative Approval

This section is completed by the Department.

Graduate Program Director

Date

September 2026