

CSU San Marcos
Department of Mathematics
Comprehensive Exam Option Policy
(Updated Spring 2018)

1. Students selecting the Comprehensive Exam Option must Advance to Candidacy under the Comprehensive Exam Option by the end of week 11 of the semester prior to which the student wishes to take the Comprehensive Exam.
2. The student must have completed at least 18 non-thesis units towards the MS degree by the time of advancement.
3. Once the student has Advanced to Candidacy under the Comprehensive Exam Option, the student may not switch back to the Thesis Option.
4. In the advancement study plan, the student may list three (3) or more classes on which he would like to be tested and at most three (3) classes on which he would not like to be tested.
5. The department will appoint a Comprehensive Exam Committee consisting of three (3) members.
6. The Comprehensive Exam Committee will decide the content. The content will include Abstract Algebra and Analysis at the 400 level and up to four courses from the student's plan of study, to include no more than one 400 level course. Math 448 and Math 474 cannot be included in the exam. The student will be notified of the coursework to be tested by the end of the 15th week of classes.
7. The Comprehensive Exam Committee will consult the instructors of the courses tested when developing test questions.
8. The Comprehensive Exam will be administered in 3 separate 3 hour sessions during weeks 11-14 of the semester following the semester of Advancement to Candidacy.
9. The Comprehensive Exam Committee will score the exam as either passing or failing. To make a determination, they may ask the instructors of the courses tested to assess the responses to questions pertaining to those courses.
10. A copy of the exam and the Comprehensive Exam Committee's decision will be placed in the student's file. Students may review these documents by making an appointment with the Graduate Program Coordinator.
11. If a student fails a Comprehensive Exam, the student may retake the exam in a future semester. A student wishing to retake the exam must request this from the Graduate Program Coordinator in writing by end of week 11 or within one week of receiving an exam result (whichever is later) in the semester prior to which the student wishes to retake the Comprehensive Exam. The content of the retake will be decided in the same manner. In particular, the Comprehensive Exam Committee members may change and the coursework tested may also change.
12. A student may take the Comprehensive Exam at most 2 times. If both attempts result in failure, the student will be dropped from the program.