

- [FAQ for PhD](#)
- [Should I have taken classes with committee members before?](#)
- [How do I approach faculty members if I haven't taken classes with them?](#)
- [If I don't have anyone in mind, how should I choose a third person?](#)
- [Should all three members of my Comp Committee be on my Supervisory Committee?](#)
- [How long does it usually take to prepare for the comps exam?](#)
- [How long is the exam itself?](#)
- [Can I submit my dissertation proposal before I have my comps exam?](#)
- [What happens if I fail the comps?](#)

Should I have taken classes with committee members before?

Although it is not required, it is strongly recommended that you take courses with the people you want to work with so that you have a sense of how they work and their approach to your areas of research interest. (Remember, you can only have one member of your committee from outside of the SPTH graduate program).

[^ Back to top](#)

How do I approach faculty members if I haven't taken classes with them?

If they are in SPTH, most of the faculty members would be willing to discuss your research areas and your supervisory/committee needs. You can contact them by email and/or make an appointment for a meeting. Prepare for the meeting with a short (written is preferable) overview of your areas of research interest. Also make sure you are clear about your expectations of their involvement if you decide to ask them to be on your committee, and it is recommended that you take information from the SPTH program guidelines to the meeting. In addition, if they have specific questions, they can contact the program office or the Director for additional information. (Remember, you can only have one member of your committee from outside of the SPTH graduate program).

[^ Back to top](#)

If I don't have anyone in mind, how should I choose a third person?

Talk with your readers and the SPTH Director about potential faculty members. Generally the choice will be driven by the books you have chosen to be tested on, and your academic interests. (Remember, you can only have one member of your committee from outside of the SPTH graduate program).

[^ Back to top](#)

Should all three members of my Comp Committee be on my Supervisory Committee?

Many students continue on with the same committee; however, it is possible to change members of the committee at this point. (Remember, you can only have one member of your committee from outside of the SPTH graduate program).

[^ Back to top](#)

How long does it usually take to prepare for the comps exam?

For the student

- his or her supervisory committee is the best judge of when the student's depth of knowledge is sufficient and broad enough to proceed to the exams.

Notice of exam for the program office and the faculty members

- one month minimum from when the comprehensive lists are submitted to the Director for review (this is after the Supervisor and committee members have approved the lists), as the program office needs to find a Director's rep, send out notices, book the room, etc.

[^ Back to top](#)

How long is the exam itself?

The examination is approximately two hours.

[^ Back to top](#)

Can I submit my dissertation proposal before I have my comps exam?

No - it is strongly advised that you do not do so as the proposal cannot go forward to the Faculty of Graduate Studies until the after the comps exam results have been received by the office.

[^ Back to top](#)

What happens if I fail the comps?

If you fail your comps, you will need to meet with the Director immediately. After discussing the exam, the director will meet with the supervisor. A second exam would need to be set up when both the supervisor and the director believe you are better prepared.