

## GUIDELINES FOR QUALIFYING EXAMINATION OPTIONS

The three options for the written Qualifying Examination allow exploration of the broad fields represented in Global Health. Generally speaking, all three options should conform to the following format:

- Page limit 15-20 plus references, charts, tables, graphs, and a glossary if needed for acronyms.
- No smaller than 11 point type, Arial or Times New Roman preferred, 1–inch margins, single spacing,
- Include a title page on the front with name, date, title, contact information, word count, Dissertation Chair.
- Number, label, and put the graphs, charts, and glossaries at the end of the paper.
- Reference articles using standard medical literature format (see JAMA for reference guidelines, <http://jama.ama-assn.org/misc/ifora.dtl#References>). Students must use EndNote or RefWorks for the bibliography.
- Use foot notes for clarification of statements, not for references.
- Make liberal use of websites references, but cite these according to standard citation practices (Author, title, web address, date accessed, etc)
- Grey literature (documents not found in journals or published reports) should be appended if not easily referenced
- Number pages and include name in the header or footer
- Clearly identify headings with **bold type**, subheadings with *italics*
- Carefully proofread prior to handing in.
- Spelling, punctuation, referencing should be perfect.
- **Timing:** Once the option for the Qualifying Examination has been decided by the Chair and the Student, the Student will have two weeks to complete the written element. This will be submitted by the Chair to the Committee and written comments will be provided to the student within two weeks. The student will then have two weeks to provide written responses and a revised draft to the committee. He/she may discuss individual comments with each of the committee members. Once the committee approves the written exam, the student will arrange a meeting of the committee to defend his/her dissertation proposal.

### **Option 1. Research Grant Application**

This option for the Global Health JDP Qualifying Examination will take the form of a *NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Award* (R21). These are typically 15-20 pages in length, including tables, charts, and graphs. References may be additional, as well as pertinent appendices. The subject should be decided by Dissertation Chair in consultation with the student and may be related to planned dissertation research but *must not* be a proposal to support the planned dissertation research. See <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r21.htm>

The general format should be:

- Abstract
- Aims
- Background and Significance
- Research design and methods (including statistical approaches)
- Personnel required
- Human subjects/bioethical concerns
- Bibliography

The proposal need not include a budget or budget justification, nor key personnel, or facilities and resources sections. The important content is the theory, methods, and approach to a research question.

### **Option 2. Policy Options Paper ('White Paper')**

This option is to be an analytic policy document that explores a major global health issue and the structures, organizations, tools, and approaches currently used to address the issue; it would then provide the basis for recommendations based on the analysis.

**Subject:** Select an issue that has **NOT** been published on in recent years, that the student has not previously written, or that has submitted in previous or current work and research activities.

- The subject could be disease-specific (such as malaria, TB, smoking, injuries, neglected tropical diseases, HIV/AIDS)
- It could also be a life-stage issue (such as maternal/child health, family planning, aging and dependency, disabilities, adolescent health, interpersonal violence)
- It could also be a social determinants of health issue (poverty, women's education, literacy, human rights, migration)
- It could also be a security issue (disaster response, famine, biologic threats, emerging IDs, pandemics, health diplomacy with a difficult State)

The target audience for the paper could be:

- A Washington, DC, or international think tank focusing on global health problems (Center for Strategic and International Studies, Council of Foreign Relations, Institute of Medicine, etc)
- A Non-governmental Organization or private-public partnership such as the Global Fund for AIDS, TB, and Malaria, STOP TB, Oxford Health Alliance, PATH International, etc., addressing one of the major global health problems covered by these organizations.
- A Multi-national organization such as the Pan American Health Organization, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, or the International Organization on Migration.

The paper should contain:

- A clearly identified **problem statement**,
- A description of the **scope of the paper**, and the **intended audience**.
- **Background and review of previous approaches**,
- Analysis of the **political economy** in which the problem must be addressed,
- Some consideration of **economic issues** such as cost, cost-effectiveness, and cost-benefit of approaches.
- Clear presentation of **alternatives** and reasons to reject these.
- Clear **conclusions** based on analysis and **recommended actions** that might be taken to move the issue forward.

### **Option 3. Systematic Literature Review**

A third option for students in the Global Health track of the JDP is to conduct a systematic literature review, based on the general criteria for a Cochrane review. The student and his/her Dissertation committee chair should discuss possible review topics, but the committee should decide upon the specific constraints of the review topic, to be given to the student on the agreed upon date.

Review topics should generally be: 1) broad enough that the topic is worthy for publication as a review, without duplicating other reviews on the same or similar topic; 2) focused on a topic of global importance, drawing from international literature, 3) up to 15-20 pages, including tables, graphs, and charts, but excluding references. The student is encouraged to prepare a document that will be submitted to a scholarly journal after the exam is graded and approved. As such, it is permissible to prepare the document in the style of a

specific journal (apart from the word limit, which should adhere to the above guideline).

Each review should consist of:

- A title, citation details and contact address for lead author ;
- An abstract - using a structured format;
- Text of the review - consisting of an introduction (stating relevant background, objective and scope), materials (selection criteria, search strategy, languages), results (description of included and excluded studies, methodological quality, and results), discussion and conclusions (summary, implications for practice or research)
- Standard tables and figures should show characteristics of the included studies, specification of the interventions/characteristics that were compared, the results of the included studies and a log of the studies that were excluded
- References
- Acknowledgements and funding sources

*(1) Selected extractions from: Mulrow CD, Oxman AD (eds). Cochrane Collaboration Handbook [updated September 1997]. In: The Cochrane Library [database on disk and CDROM]. The Cochrane Collaboration. Oxford: Update Software; 1997, Issue 4. <http://cochrane.co.uk/>*