



JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
MPA PROGRAM
Qualifying Exam Guidelines
Version 1.1

Students must take the Qualifying Examination upon completion of PAD 700, 702 and 705, which are required to be completed within the students' first 15 credits in the MPA Program. Students failing to take the Qualifying Exam in a timely fashion are subject to programming restrictions and may be barred from registering for additional courses.

Application Procedure and Upcoming Examination Information

Students are not allowed to take either exam unless they register for it by submitting an application by the application deadline. The deadline, application form, time and place of examination and exam questions are posted on the [MPA Program website](#) and updated each semester.

Students taking the exam for the first time must answer all three questions. If students fail to take all three questions, their scores for the other parts will be voided.

Students must attach a copy of their most recent transcript to their application for the exam. Applications sent without transcripts will be rejected. Matriculated students can access their transcripts online and print them out. Students who have been absent from the college for more than a year and are returning only to retake parts of the Capstone exam may submit a copy of their most recent transcript.

The Qualifying Exam begins at 9:00 AM and ends at 1:00 PM. (Instructions 9:00-9:15AM; Foundations of PA: 9:15 - 10:15AM; Organization Theory 10:30 - 11:30AM; Human Resources Management 11:45AM - 12:45PM. Each part is one hour.) Note: Students in the PMT Program begin their Part I at 8:30AM in a separate room. PMT students should meet outside Room 1311N in North Hall at 8:20AM.

Exam times are fixed. Only retake students may sit for parts of an exam and must do so at the scheduled hour. All other students must take all three parts of the exam(s) they sign up for.

Posting of Results

Pass/Fail results of the examination will be published on the date and time specified by the test administrator. Results will be posted on the Department of Public Management bulletin board and will also be available online on the "MPA Comprehensive Exam Information" page which is accessible from the bottom of the Department of Public management home

page. All results are coded to protect student anonymity. Detailed results and counseling will be available after the date and time specified by the test administrator.

Appeal of Results

Grading of examinations is blind. The faculty members do not know whose examination they are grading. If a student fails any part of an exam, the exam is assigned to a second faculty member for an automatic appeal review. If the second reader passes the exam, then it is assigned to a third reader and the determinations of two of the three readers determines the result. This procedure constitutes the appeal process. There is no additional process of appeal.

Second and Third Retake

When a student fails a part of the Qualifying Examination, the student is contacted by the Qualifying Examination Coordinator who is a member of the MPA faculty. The Coordinator sets up an appointment with the student to discuss the problems with the student's examination, as reflected in the grading sheets completed by the MPA faculty members who graded the student's exam.

A student is entitled to take the failed part(s) of the Qualifying Examination a second time. The Coordinator will provide advice as to steps the student might take to improve performance. These steps might include:

- Auditing a section of the core course associated with the failed exam part;
- Completing another class such as *PAD 755 Writing for Management*; and/or
- Approaching preparation for the examination in a different way.

A student must receive the permission of the Program Director to take a failed part of the Qualifying Examination a third time. The student must complete the following form: [Application to Attempt a Third Sitting of Part of the Qualifying Examination](#).

Portfolio Review

A student who has passed five of the six Parts of the two comprehensive examinations and has failed the remaining Part twice, shall receive an automatic "Portfolio Review". In that review, the student's grades for the five passed parts and the student's two grades for the remaining failed part will be averaged. If the resulting average score is at or above the overall passing grade for Comprehensive Exams, that student shall be certified as having passed all Comprehensive Examinations.

Special Portfolio Review

A student who has failed a part of the Qualifying Examination must retake that failed part, except when the student is otherwise eligible for graduation, as follows:

- A student who has passed two of the three parts of the Qualifying Examination, BUT who has not attempted the failed part a second time, BUT who has otherwise fulfilled all of the other requirements for graduation shall be eligible for a "Special Portfolio

Review".

- The student's eligibility must be confirmed by the Registrar's Office before a Special Portfolio Review will be conducted.
- In that review, a composite grade will be calculated consisting of four components:
 - the student's grades for the first passed part
 - the student's grade for the second passed part
 - the student's grade for the failed part
 - 67% of the student's grade for the failed part.
- If the resulting average score is at or above the overall passing grade for Comprehensive Exams, that student shall be certified as having passed all Comprehensive Examinations.

Portfolio Review For Students Completing the Capstone Project

See the [Capstone Project Guidelines](#). Note that completion of the Qualifying Examination is a prerequisite to enrolling in the Capstone Seminar. (*See 2008-2009 Graduate Bulletin, Page 56.*)