

How to submit your pre-liminary exam and proposal without having to ask 25 other grad students what they did...

Way before your exam:

1. This should be done the August before you begin your 2nd year. Submit your degree plan and establish your committee. Go here to submit your degree plan: <https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu/>

Remember, one person on your committee has to be out of your department. If you're like me and had never met that person before your advisor told you to put them on your committee, here is a sample e-mail.

“Hi Dr. _____,

My name is _____ and I am finishing my first year as a graduate student in the Neuroscience PhD program under the guidance of Dr. _____. My thesis focuses on mitochondrial biology in astrocytes, and I believe you would be a great addition to my advisory committee. If you are interested, please let me know any time that you would be available in the next two weeks for us to discuss this opportunity. Attached below is my CV in .doc form. Please let me know if you need any further information from me!

Thank you,

Your name”

2. Complete the course work on your degree plan. (This does not include 681 Seminar or 691 Research since you are “enrolled” in these courses your entire time here.)

Your Preliminary Exam:

*The student should complete the Preliminary Examination no later than the end of the semester following the completion of the formal coursework on the degree plan. **Results must be received by GPS 10 working days after exam date.***

1. Talk to your advisor and make sure you are on the same page about:
 - a. When your exam will begin/end.
 - b. What your exam will consist of. Your exam should contain a written portion (fellowship, literature review, etc.) and an oral portion (presentation with questions from your committee).
 - c. How much you should be in the lab while you are taking your exam
2. Preliminary Examination Checklist and Report is completed via ARCS: <https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/forms/preliminary-examination-checklist-and-report>
 - a. Students should initiate this form.
 - b. Complete all applicable information, click “Begin Signing,” and complete all requested fields on the form.

- c. The Staff Graduate Advisor that should be used is, Sylvia M. Bernal Jones, sylviabernal@tamu.edu. Always use official TAMU Email addresses for DocuSign/ARCS/Adobe Sign.
 - d. The Document will then go to the TAMIN Chair (or designee) and will be signed.
 - e. The form will then route to the committee members, who wait until the exam is held to report the results.
3. Don't forget your **Annual Committee Meeting Evaluation Form**:
<https://tamin.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FY21-Updated-TAMIN-Annual-Committee-Meeting-Evaluation-Form.pdf>

Your proposal:

You can do this during your exam; however, some committees do not have the proposal as part of the pre-liminary exam.

1. Write up your proposal
 - a. Ask other graduate students to look at theirs!
 - b. There isn't a clear format; however, if you want to format it in the way your final dissertation must be formatted check out:
<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/grad-student-resources/document-submission>
2. Research Proposal Approval Form – MUST BE SUBMITTED AND ACCEPTED TO BE ADMITTED INTO CANDIDACY!!!
[Graduate & Professional School - Research Proposal Approval Form \(tamu.edu\)](#)
 - a. Make sure your committee actually approves of your proposal before submitting the approval form, because they may have changes/suggestions.
 - b. On the proposal approval form – **you are submitting this for your PhD dissertation, NOT thesis or record of study.**
 - c. Complete all applicable information, click "Begin Signing," and complete all requested fields on the form.
 - d. The Staff Graduate Advisor that should be used is, Sylvia M. Bernal Jones, sylviabernal@tamu.edu. Always use official TAMU Email addresses for DocuSign/ARCS/Adobe Sign.