A. Comprehensive Examinations - Major Field

1. This examination is set by the appropriate program (Czech and Slovak; Polish; Russian; South Slavic; Ukrainian) and aims to test students’ knowledge of the entire breadth of their major field. Typically, the major field exam consists of two parts, taken one week apart. Each part lasts two to three hours and consists of two to three sections. Students must choose one question from each section and answer it in essay form. Considering the breadth of the major fields offered by the Slavic Department, no single model of the major field exam will apply to all doctoral candidates. Students usually take the major field exam at the beginning of the fall semester in the third year of doctoral study. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the department.

2. A candidate who fails the major field exam may attempt to pass it one more time and will be required to sit the exam in the following term. The candidate must pass the major field exam in order to go on to the special field examination.

3. Considering significant regional variations in Slavic cultural history, each program within the department determines the chronological breakdown of its major field exam. Students specializing in Czech and Slovak, Polish, South Slavic and Ukrainian literatures and cultures must consult with the faculty in charge of these programs for details concerning their major field exam.

4. The format of the major field exam in Russian literature and culture is as follows:

   a) Each student must choose a thesis supervisor several months prior to taking the exam.

   b) The chronological breakdown of the exam:

   Part I (three sections)
   - Pre-1700
   - The longer 18th century
   - 1815-1856

   Part II (three sections)
   - 1856-1895
   - 1895-1956
   - 1956 to the present

   c) In consultation with the thesis supervisor and with reference to the Russian literature reading list posted online, each student will compile an individual reading list for the major field exam. The list must be approved by the thesis supervisor and submitted to the Graduate Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the student’s major field exam.
d) Students are responsible for the thorough knowledge of the primary and secondary sources from the individual reading list. Major field exam questions will be based on the list, testing one’s knowledge of the sources included therein and of the larger issues in literary, intellectual, and cultural history relevant to or discussed in these sources.

e) The individual reading list will correspond to the chronological segmentation of the major field exam (see above). The list will include both primary and secondary sources. The sources must represent all six chronological periods covered by the exam. The number of sources on the list shall not exceed 100. For the purposes of this list, a poem or a short story are treated as part of the verse collection or story cycle in which they originally appeared. Only the entire collection or cycle will count as a source.

Please note: the Russian literature reading list posted online is for consultation purposes only; its goal is to help students compile their individual reading lists for which they may choose primary and secondary sources not included in the posted reading list.

B. Comprehensive Examinations - Special Field

The department allows for different models of the special field exam. Each student must discuss the format and timing of the special field exam with his/her proposed dissertation supervisor and committee well in advance of the actual exam and no later than the end of the second year in the doctoral program.

Two different models are described below. Model A is obligatory for students whose major field is Russian. Students in major fields other than Russian may choose their special field exam model or devise a hybrid form acceptable to their committee and to the department’s Graduate Coordinator.

Model A Special Field Exam (obligatory for Russian majors)

1. Immediately after the major field exam, the candidate and his/her proposed thesis supervisor will assemble a committee usually consisting of three members (including the supervisor).

2. Within a month following the major field exam, the candidate will submit a draft of the doctoral thesis proposal consisting of a statement of the topic, a summary of the secondary literature on it, and a description of the methodology. This proposal and the reading list associated with it will be no longer than 2500 words.

3. The supervisor and, in most cases, the committee will respond to the proposal.

4. The candidate will submit the final draft of the proposal and the reading list within a month after receiving response to the first draft. The final draft will contain a provisional outline of the dissertation and will be no longer than 5000 words.

5. Within ten days of this submission, the committee will conduct an oral special field exam, accepting or rejecting the proposal. If the proposal is rejected, the candidate will be asked to submit another proposal within a month.
6. Once the proposal is accepted by the committee, it will be circulated among the faculty for suggestions, and will be submitted for formal approval at a department meeting to take place no later than one month after acceptance by the committee.

**Model B Special Field Exams**

1. The exam is based on a reading list prepared by the candidate in consultation with his/her supervisor and dissertation committee. The reading list will consist of primary sources but may include significant secondary texts in the candidate's area of concentration. As a rule, the time frame of the list will be limited to a fifty-year period around the subject of the student's research. The reading list must be submitted for Departmental approval *in the fall of the third year*. The examination will then consist of:

   a) A three-hour written examination in the field. The specific form of the examination will depend on the special field chosen by the candidate. The usual form of the exam consists of two questions, which are to be answered, in essay form, from a choice of at least four. The questions are based on the candidate’s reading list.

   b) A one-hour oral exam, to take place no later than one week after the written exam. The oral may cover the candidate's answers on the written examination and those questions which she or he did not attempt, as well as other relevant issues.

2. Questions on the written portion of the exam will be devised by the candidate’s supervisor, together with the committee. The supervisor will evaluate the written exam, again in consultation with the other members of this committee. This committee will also conduct the oral exam.

3. Failure on the special field exam will require retaking both written and oral portions of the exam no later than in the first week of September, before the fourth year fall registration.