

Comprehensive Exam

All first year PMCB students are required to take comprehensive examination at the scheduled time following completion of their first year of graduate studies. This examination tests the student's ability to think scientifically using concepts covered during the first year of coursework. The comprehensive exam is prepared by the PMCB Comprehensive Exam Directors. The exam consists of the following:

1. Part one - A review of the scientific literature which gauges the student's ability to read and interpret scientific literature. Students are tested on their ability to interpret the data, explain methodologies, identify strengths and weaknesses, and integrate results into larger fields of molecular and cell biology.
2. Part two – A sitting, written exam with questions that tests the student's ability to apply core principles learned in the CON courses; and questions designed to assess the breadth of knowledge within the disciplines represented within each CON course. Exam questions will consist of several components and be designed to test broad as well as specific aspects of student's knowledge. Effort will be made to integrate key concepts across traditional discipline boundaries. Answers will be evaluated for breadth and depth of knowledge.

Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or greater for the required CONJ courses (fall/winter terms) and are in good academic standing may opt out of part two of the exam in which case their cumulative exam grade will be based solely upon the review of scientific literature. If a student wishes to opt out of part two of the exam, they must submit a written request to the PMCB director (email is acceptable).

2014 Dates:

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| June 25 | Conj. Course Directors submit Journal Articles & Questions to Crystal for review & approval by the Comprehensive Exam Chair |
| July 2 | Journal Articles will be posted to Sakai. Students will have two weeks to review the articles. |
| July 7 | Conj. Course Directors submit Written Questions to Crystal for review & approval by the Comprehensive Exam Chair. Questions should reflect a comprehensive overview of the course and should take students no more than 1.5 hours to complete. |
| July 11 | Journal Questions will be posted to Sakai. Students will have five days to submit their responses electronically via Sakai Submissions. |
| July 16 | 8:00 AM Journal Response Submissions are due
9:00-12:00 Comprehensive Written Exam Section 1 (CONJ 661 & 662)
12:00-1:00 Lunch Break
1:00-4:00 Comprehensive Written Exam Section 2 (CONJ 663 & 664) |
| July 17 | Crystal returns exams to course directors for grading |
| July 25 | Course Directors submit final grades (written & journal) to Crystal for review by the Comprehensive Exam Chair & PMCB Director |
| July 31 | Exam Results are posted to Sakai & student result letters are distributed |