

CCN BREADTH COMPREHENSIVE BRIEF INSTRUCTIONS

If you're a CCN grad student who'd like to take the breadth comprehensive exam, this document can get you started. Detailed information can be found in the Graduate student handbook. (The handbook is also the formal reference point in case any conflicts need to be resolved; these brief instructions, in contrast, are just provided for your convenience and have no formal status.)

How to get the ball rolling

- Discuss with your advisor whether this is the right time to get ready for the breadth comps. If so, then contact Jan Brascamp saying you'd like to take the exam, and which 3 topic areas you'd like to study. The options are currently: attention, cognitive control & working memory, memory, perception, and skills & expertise. Dr. Brascamp will work with you to find a date for you to take the exam near the start of any semester (this can be Fall, Spring or Summer).
- If other CCN students are interested in taking the breadth comps as well, Dr. Brascamp will want to schedule all of you on the same day, so talking to other students can facilitate the process of finding a suitable date.
- Leave enough time between contacting Dr. Brascamp and taking the exam: the committees will want time to put together questions for you, and you'll need to study the material.

What to expect during the exam

- On the day of the exam you'll come in at the appointed time (usually 9 am) and you'll be handed two written-answer questions on each of your three chosen content areas. You choose one question for each area, and ignore the remaining ones. You'll have the greater part of the day (usually till 4 pm) to answer the three questions you chose. You'll be able to consult papers, the internet, etc. during this period.

How to prepare

- A reading list for each of the topic areas is available at <https://psychology.msu.edu/graduatestudents/current-grads.html>. The questions are about the papers on those readings lists, so preparation consists, at the least, of studying those papers.

Further questions?

- The graduate student handbook provides further details, your advisor might know answers, and Dr. Brascamp is also there to answer any remaining questions you might have.