EPIDEMIOLOGY PRELIMINARY EXAM

Exam Dates

MAY 17, 2017
BACK-UP DATE: MAY 18, 2017*

Intent forms accepted:
Starting: February 1, 2017
Due by: March 8, 2017

*Back-up Date – In case there is a closure at any campus on exam day, this will be the alternate. All students MUST plan to be available both days.

Intent Form

- # credits in doctoral program (typically ~18-27)
- Required course checklist
  - Approved waivers (if applicable)
  - Document remediation if grade <B (if applicable)
- Unofficial transcript from myUTH
  - Update at end of semester if taking required courses (student must send ASAP after semester)

Required Courses

- PH 2710: Epidemiology III
- PH 2711: Epidemiology IV
- PH 1830: Categorical Data Analysis
  - Or PH 1831: Analysis of Survival Time Data
- PH 2712: Experimental Methods in Epidemiology
  - Or PH 1835: Statistical Methodology in Clinical Trials
- One elective course in Epidemiology (2-4 credits)

- B or higher (or P in P/F course)
- Provide “Approved Waiver” for required courses taken outside of UTSPH

Requirements for students matriculating prior to Fall 2017:
1. PH 2710: Epidemiology III
2. PH 2711: Epidemiology IV
3. PH 1830: Categorical Data Analysis OR PH 1831: Analysis of Survival Time Data
5. One elective course in Epidemiology

Requirements for students matriculating in Fall 2017 or after:
1. PH 2710: Epidemiology III
2. PH 2711: Epidemiology IV
3. PH 1830: Categorical Data Analysis OR PH 1831: Analysis of Survival Time Data
4. PH 2712: Experimental Methods in Epidemiology
5. One elective course in Epidemiology
Exam Content

3 Articles / different epidemiologic study designs
- 10-15 multi-part questions per article
- General epidemiology & article specific questions & hypothetical questions
- Focus on article methods, results & interpretation (not topic)
- Short answer & calculations
- Length of answers specified
- Epi “speak” - Clear & concise articulation of answers

Style of Questions

Recall
- Definitions & concepts

Application
- Go beyond definitions – use & identify concepts

Calculations
- Use data in article

Interpretation
- Data results & application
- Statistics – understanding, applying, interpreting

Hypothetical
- Apply concepts to different scenarios

Questions

Study design and its assumptions
Study population
Ascertainment of sample
Conduct of study
Analysis approach
Results – data in tables in figures
Discussion - interpretations
Any concepts mentioned in article are “fair game” for questions

Format

Articles provided by email 24 hours in advance
- For individual review – not discussion!
- Clean copies of articles provided on day of exam

In-class exam - proctored at home campus

5 hour exam
- Allows for in-class breaks (lunch, snacks)

No computer – exam is hand written
- Bring pen
- No notes/books – scratch paper provided
- Basic calculator (not phone or mini computer!)

Exam Development

- Committee selects designs & articles
- Develop questions & answers
- Revise questions & answers
- 3 internal reviews by 7 epidemiologists
- 3 external epidemiologists provide review
- 10 faculty involved in creating exam
Grading

Process
- 2 committee members/article (blinded, only ID)
  - Grade independently
  - Then, confer to resolve discrepancies
- Full committee – combine results (blinded, only ID)

Pass / Fail
- Weighted average ≥ 80% OR
- Weighted average <80% but >75% AND all sections ≥70%

ADA Accommodations

Committee Chair
- Dr. Susie Day

Office of Student Affairs
- Dr. Mary Ann Smith

Results

Pass
- Letter (by email) to student with copy to Advisor

1st Fail
- Exam Chair contacts Advisor
- Advisor contacts student
- Advisor meets with student to develop Remediation plan
- Must retake exam at next offering

2nd Fail
- Exam Chair contacts Assistant Dean for Students
- Advisor, Assistant Dean for Students meet with student
- Student does not continue in the doctoral program

Remediation Plan

Students work with advisor to develop plan
- Complete a plan of action – see forms on Web

Possible approach
- Independent study
- Courses – new or retake
- Study groups
- Tutors
- Other…

“…ultimately the student’s responsibility to assess his/her educational needs, develop a plan of action, and ensure that the plan is completed prior to the next offering of the preliminary exam.”

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