CHRISTENDOM GRADUATE SCHOOL
MA COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS INFORMATION

The comprehensive exams represent the culmination of each student's work towards the Master of Arts degree in Theological Studies. This exam tests each student on the knowledge he or she has gained from the required courses and relies on his or her ability to synthesize this knowledge in both writing and discussion. Students should be prepared to give relevant, complete, and well-organized answers to questions. Candidates must have completed all required courses and must have resolved all "Incompletes" in order to register for the exam. Students who are not sure of their status may check with the registrar, Mary Castano, by calling the office or emailing her at mary.castano@christendom.edu

The exam has two parts, one written and one oral, which are taken on different days. The first part of the written exam, typically taken from 10:00am until 12:00pm, covers the core curriculum. Students answer one question in Scripture (chosen from a list of 15), one question in philosophy or moral theology (chosen from a list of 15), and two questions in dogmatic theology (again chosen from a list of 15). There is a break from 12:00pm until 1:00pm for lunch: students are encouraged to bring a lunch with them. The afternoon portion of the written exam (from 1:00pm-3:00pm) requires three essays, chosen from a list of approximately 15, on topics in the student's concentration. **Students are asked to bring laptops for the written exam.** They may also bring a Bible (with no writing in it) for reference during the exam.

For the oral portion of the exam, each student is examined by a panel of at least three professors (for approximately one half-hour) on various topics from the core curriculum and the student's concentration. The panel of professors will assign a grade of "pass" or "fail" to each student's complete exam (written and oral combined). Each student is notified of his grade in writing within a few days.

Students who are traveling from a long distance may contact the registrar in order to schedule the written portion of their exam in close proximity to the oral portion and thus avoid a longer stay in Virginia. There may also be a special session of the comprehensive exams during the summer term if there are sufficient summer residents who desire to take the exam.

Students who wish to register for the comprehensive exams may do so by submitting the registration form and fee to the registrar at least six weeks before the scheduled exam. The form can be found on our website, graduate.christendom.edu/about-us/graduate-student-resource-center/

Studying for the comprehensive exams should focus on class notes, old exams, and textbooks. Please see the "Christendom Graduate School Study Guide for Comprehensive Exams" for a list of suggested topics to study.