

PROCEDURES FOR THE PREPARATION OF FIELD STATEMENTS AND DISSERTATION PROPOSALS IN BIOARCHAEOLOGY

Committee Formation

Prior to writing a field statement the student must form the Ph.D. supervisory committee. Committee formation is primarily the function of the student and advisor, in accord with the School and Division of Graduate Studies (DGS) regulations. It is assumed that the student will constitute the committee in such a manner that the members' expertise relates to the fields and dissertation topic chosen.

Field Statement

The Nature of the Field Statement: The faculty view the field statement as an opportunity for each Ph.D. student formally to delimit an area of interest within Bioarchaeology. The statement fulfills the Division of Graduate Studies requirement for the written portion of the Ph.D. Qualifying examination. It is a statement that critically reviews literature in the field, signaling that the student appreciates the history of ideas and the current state of knowledge. Approval will not be dependent upon every member of the student's committee agreeing with all the views presented in the statement. The statement should stress: (1) the scope of topics in the field, (2) the major problems or questions that have been asked historically and currently, (3) the nature of the observations, or data, used, and (4) the methods and analytical procedures used. Successful completion of the statement will demonstrate to the student's committee members that he/she is qualified to proceed with the dissertation. It is reasonable that major portions of the field statement may reappear in the dissertation.

Choice of Fields: The purpose of this statement is to review critically the history of the topic, laying the groundwork for a student's dissertation project. The statement will form the basis for the subsequent literature reviews required for the dissertation proposal and the dissertation.

Field Statement Proposal: After committee formation, and prior to beginning work on the field statement, students should prepare and obtain committee approval of a brief (1-2 page) proposal containing the tentative title and proposed contents of the field statement, and an explanation of how it relates to the anticipated dissertation project. Committee approval should be recorded as indicated on the appropriate form (attached).

Field Statement Outlines and Bibliographies. Following approval of the brief proposal, the student should write an outline and a preliminary, but reasonably complete bibliography for the field statement. The outline will define the extent and scope of the statement to be produced. The bibliography may include both previously consulted items and items to be consulted. (It is anticipated that there will be subsequent additions to the bibliography as the field statement is written.) Committee approval of the statement should be recorded as indicated on the appropriate form (attached).

Writing the Field Statement. The field statement is written in the form of a bibliographic literature review. A good field statement, however, is more than a simple review of the literature; it should also exhibit creativity and critical thought, as well as a student's intellectual grasp of the topic in question. The field statement not only demonstrates a student's ability to synthesize the material, but also shows an ability to go beyond that material and suggest a general plan of valuable future research. The review should be comprehensive but not exhaustive, limited to 50 double-spaced pages in at least 12-point font (exclusive of the bibliography). A field statement is expected to be completed during the first year of Phase II for students who receive the MA degree within the ASU Anthropology Program. Students entering the Bioarchaeology Program with an MA from another institution may postpone completion until Year 4. Research credit hours are taken for this work (ASM 792).

Preliminary Field Statement. A draft of the statement is written in consultation with the faculty committee and submitted to the committee for comments, following approval by the Committee Chair. Committee members will normally read the paper within three weeks of submission and meet with the student either collectively or individuals to discuss comments.

Final Field Statement Draft and Approval Following revision, the final Field Statement is submitted to the committee for committee approval (see attached form). When a majority of the committee has accepted the field statement, the student has passed the written portion of the Ph.D. qualifying exam. The student should place a copy of the document, with the approval form, in his/her file in the SHESC office. Each committee member should receive a copy of the final version of the field statement for use in conjunction with the dissertation proposal in the oral qualifying exam. The committee may accept the draft with minor comments to be taken into consideration in preparation of the dissertation proposal and the dissertation. If

they do not accept the draft, this constitutes failure of the Written Qualifying Exam. If the exam is failed, the committee will meet with the student and may choose to allow the student to revise the field statement one more time. If the student ultimately fails the written portion of the Ph.D. qualifying exam, he or she must leave the program.

The committee chair and members will normally be expected to return a field statement to the student within three weeks of receiving it during the academic year.

Dissertation Proposal

Dissertation Proposal. Upon completion and committee approval of the field statement, the student writes a dissertation proposal. The dissertation proposal should follow the guidelines for the National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grants in format and length. Students should take proposal writing (ASM 591) in the fall of the fourth year, and should subsequently give the draft to the committee chair for comments and then, after consultation with the chair, the draft should be given to the rest of the committee. A final revision of the draft is prepared and circulated first to the chair, and then to the committee for approval (see attached form). When a majority of the committee has accepted the proposal, a defense of the proposal (the DGS Oral Comprehensive Examination) may be scheduled. Each committee member should receive a copy of the final version for use in conjunction with the field statement in the oral qualifying exam. While the examination will *mainly* be based on the dissertation proposal, students should also be prepared for questions based on their field statement. Students are encouraged to submit the dissertation proposal to funding agencies.

Time Schedule

Full-time students who obtained their MA from ASU, that is, enter the program in Track 1, are expected to write and obtain approval of the field statement during the first year of phase II in the graduate program. Preparation and approval of the dissertation proposal should be completed by the end of the fourth year. However, these expectations will be considered in reference to individual circumstances, which may be explained by students to their committee chair and in their annual progress reports. Students entering Track 2 with an MA from another institution should complete committee formation during their first year in residence (Year 3 of the program). Field statement completion should occur in Year 4 and the proposal defense in Year 5.

In the above, note that the reference to “normal” expectation of a return of the document in three weeks assumes that no other statement or proposal drafts or dissertations have been turned in earlier by others, yet await reading (see departmental policy distributed materials given to you upon arrival). However, faculty are expected to return the document no later than two months after it is submitted during the academic year. Please note that most faculty are on nine month appointments and are not required to review documents submitted to them during the summer, although many do. If your document will not be ready for submission until the end of Spring Semester, you should discuss with your Chair and/or committee members their willingness to review during the summer months.

ACCEPTANCE OR DENIAL FOR PH.D. FIELD STATEMENT & PROPOSAL

TO: Ph.D. Committee Members

FROM:

According to the department’s “Procedures for the Preparation of Field Statements and Dissertation Proposals in Bioarchaeology”, a form for approval (A) or disapproval (D) of (1) the field statement proposal, (2) the preliminary outline and bibliography, (3) the final draft of the field statement and (4) the final draft of the dissertation proposal is to be provided to the Committee Members. A copy of this form will then be placed in my file in the department office. Thank You.

FIELD STATEMENT PROPOSAL

When the field statement proposal is approved by each committee member, have each member sign and date the draft as approved and place a copy of the this draft in your file in the department office.

PRELIMINARY OUTLINE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE FIELD STATEMENT

When each committee member approves the final draft of the preliminary outline and bibliography, have each member sign and date the draft as approved, and place a copy of this draft in your file in the department office.

FINAL APPROVAL OF FIELD STATEMENT AND PROPOSAL

Please circle A or D **and initial and date** for the field statement and the proposal.

When the field statement is approved (by majority vote), this constitutes your Written Comprehensive Examination. **Have your advisor SIGN and date here. Put a copy of the form and the field statement in your departmental file.** When the proposal is approved, update the copy of this form in your departmental file and schedule the defense (Oral Comprehensive Examination).

Field statement approved: _____ Date: _____

FIELD STATEMENT

PROPOSAL

Subject: _____

Committee
(type in names)

_____	A D _____	A D _____
_____	A D _____	A D _____
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