PRELIMINARY EXAM PROCEDURE

Two Formats
Students can choose either a written exam format or a research project format and complete the registration form for approvals from the academic advisor, the research advisor (if applicable), and the program director.

When to Register
Students should plan to take the exam when they have successfully completed LITS 7011, LITS 7100, LITS 7110, LITS 7130, LITS 7140, LITS 7210, ENGL 7651 and PSY 7290. In general, students are not permitted to take Preliminary Exams until the required courses have been completed. An exception may be granted if a student is enrolled in the last required courses during the semester in which the Preliminary Exams are taken. Students who are granted an exception are still held accountable for all the content covered on the Preliminary Exam study guide.

Also, students must be in good academic standing and must have at least a 3.25 grade point average in graduate coursework at the time the Preliminary Exam Registration Form is filed.

How to Register
The Preliminary Exams are offered once each semester (fall, spring, and summer). The deadline for registration is always the first two weeks (14 days) of each semester. Further information about registration deadlines and the registration form are available online at http://www.mtsu.edu/literacy. Currently, the Program Secretary handles Preliminary Exams registration. Students may contact her by phone at 904-8434, by email at literacy@mtsu.edu, or in her office in COE 316. If students have a disability that may require assistance or accommodation, please contact the Preliminary Exams Coordinator, currently Dr. Jwa Kim (Jwa.Kim@mtsu.edu or 904-8419), when they sign up for the Preliminary Exams. The Preliminary Exams coordinator will require a letter from the Office of Disabled Students Services (898-2783) verifying the disability and addressing the necessary accommodations.

Procedure
Written Exam Format
If students choose the written exam format, the Preliminary Exams are administered on a Friday, usually during March, June, and October. Students are given six hours to complete the exam. Once they have finished, they turn in the exam. It generally takes around three weeks before grades are reported. The length of time between taking the Preliminary Exams and receiving grades will vary according to how many people take the exams.

Content Covered - The Preliminary Exam questions are derived from the required courses. A list of sample questions will be posted on the program web site within the first week of each semester. It is useful for students to obtain the sample questions early in each semester in order to familiarize themselves with the questions that are asked on the exam.

Grading Criteria - The grading criteria for the Preliminary Exams are described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Score</th>
<th>Item Scores</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80% or higher</td>
<td>80% or higher on all 4 or more items</td>
<td>Pass the exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% or higher</td>
<td>79% - 70% on any of the 4 items</td>
<td>Fail the exam. Must give oral defense of failed items. Item scores from the oral defense replace the failed item scores from the written exam, and the total score is recalculated. If the oral defense scores are below 80%, the candidate fails the exam and must give both written and oral defense of failed items on second attempt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% or higher</td>
<td>69% or less on any of the 4 items</td>
<td>Fail the exam. Must give both written and oral defense of failed items on second attempt. Item scores on the second attempt replace the failed item scores from the first attempt, and the total score is recalculated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 80%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fail the exam. Will be tested over all items on second attempt. Total score is based only on the second attempt results.</td>
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Students are automatically allowed to attempt the Preliminary Exams a second time. A second failure of the preliminary exam generally results in termination from the program.
**Research Project Format**

If students choose the research format, they must also choose a research advisor and a second reader. The research advisor and the student will work together for one semester or until the project is finished. The deadline to submit the project to the research advisor is the end of October for fall, the end of March for spring, or the end of June for summer. The minimum requirement of the project is that the submitted manuscript be under review in a peer-reviewed journal. The students must submit a copy of letter or email from the managing editor of the journal, stating that the manuscript is under the review process.