The current policies and guidelines for the grading of the Graduate Oral Examination do not clearly distinguish between a “condition” and “fail” grade. The BSU Graduate Committee, therefore, is proposing the following changes to these policies and guidelines (see Proposed Policy Changes, and Current and Proposed Examination Outcome Guidelines):

**Proposed Policy Changes**

**The Oral Examination**

5. Grading of the Oral Examination: The examination committee has the option of recommending a "pass," "conditional," or "fail." A candidate who "conditions" or "fails" will have one (1) opportunity to retake the oral examination. A candidate’s whose “conditional” recommendation requires the oral exam to be retaken will have one (1) opportunity to do so. A candidate who “fails” will have one (1) opportunity to propose a new project. However, the committee will specify (in writing) any conditions that the candidate must satisfy prior to the scheduling of a second examination or proposal. Conditions may include additional course work, readings, and/or projects. It is the responsibility of the candidate's advisor to notify the School of Graduate Studies once all conditions have been satisfied. All conditions that may be required must be contained in a graduate faculty representative's report to the School of Graduate Studies. A second oral examination may not be scheduled in the same semester.

**Current Examination Outcome Guidelines**

**Grad Faculty Final Oral Exam Responsibilities**

**Examination Outcome Guidelines:**

The examining committee has three options in determining the final oral examination outcome. They are pass, condition, and fail. Each of these is described in more detail below:

A. **Pass:**
   This option signifies the candidate has satisfied all departmental and graduate degree requirements. The committee may pass a candidate when minor revisions that do not substantially alter the thesis or research paper are required.

B. **Condition:**
   A candidate may receive a conditional recommendation when there is sufficient reason to suggest that considerable deficiencies exist in the candidate's knowledge of the literature, major concepts, methodologies, and/or when it is necessary for the candidate to make substantial revisions to the thesis or research paper. The Advisor must provide written recommendations to the candidate outlining the specific deficiencies that must be satisfied as a condition to rescheduling a second oral examination. Conditional requirements may include additional course work, a complete revision of the submitted thesis or research paper, practicum, readings, laboratory work, etc. The Chair must also provide the School of Graduate Studies with a list of all deficiencies. A candidate may not schedule a second oral examination in the same semester or summer session as the first examination.

C. **Fail:**
   A committee recommendation to fail a master's degree candidate requires that clear cause(s) exist to warrant such a decision. Generally, the recommendation to fail requires that significant deficiencies exist in the candidate's knowledge of the primary theories and literature, as well as in applications and methodologies in the major area. In addition, the committee may recommend a failing grade when they determine the thesis or research paper to be unacceptable. The Advisor must provide a written explanation and additional specific requirements to the candidate and the School of Graduate Studies concerning the basis for the fail. The Advisor must notify the School of Graduate Studies once all deficiencies noted by the examining committee have been satisfied. Candidates may not schedule a second oral examination in the same semester or summer session as the first examination.
Proposed Examination Outcome Guidelines

Grad Faculty Final Oral Exam Responsibilities
Examination Outcome Guidelines

The examining committee has three options in determining the final oral examination outcome. They are Pass, Conditional, and Fail.

A. Pass:
This option signifies that the candidate has satisfied all departmental and graduate degree requirements. The committee may pass a candidate when minor revisions that do not substantially alter the thesis or research paper are required.

B. Conditional:
A candidate may receive a conditional recommendation when there is reason to suggest that sufficient deficiencies exist within the thesis or research paper and/or the oral examination to warrant revisions and/or a second oral examination.

Three different levels of conditional pass are possible.

______a. The student’s performance in the oral examination is acceptable, but substantial revisions to the thesis or research paper need to be made and approved by the Committee Chair.

______b. The student’s performance in the oral examination is acceptable, but substantial revisions to the thesis or research paper need to be made and approved by the entire committee.

______c. Deficiencies exist both within the thesis or research paper and the oral examination to warrant revisions to the thesis or paper and a second oral examination. A candidate has one (1) opportunity to retake the oral examination and may not schedule a second oral examination in the same semester.

The Committee Chair must provide written recommendations to the candidate outlining the specific deficiencies that must be satisfied.

The Committee Chair must notify the School of Graduate Studies once all deficiencies noted by the examining committee have been satisfied.

C. Fail
A committee recommendation to fail a master’s degree candidate requires that clear cause(s) exist to warrant such a decision. Generally the recommendation to fail requires that significant deficiencies exist in the candidate’s knowledge of the primary theories and literature, as well as in applications and methodologies in the major area. In addition the committee may recommend a failing grade when the members of the committee determine the thesis or research paper to be unacceptable.

The committee must provide to the candidate and the School of Graduate Studies a written explanation of deficiencies that in their opinion warrants the failure.

Any failing project (thesis, research paper, capstone project, etc.) cannot be resubmitted. A candidate who “fails” will have one (1) opportunity to propose a new project.