

HINTS TO HELP YOU SUCCEED ON YOUR QUALIFYING EXAM

Now that your Qualifying Examination Committee is approved and your exam is scheduled, here are some tips that we've picked up by listening to other students:

- **CONSULT WITH YOUR MAJOR PROFESSOR FOR GUIDANCE:** He/she has been there. This person is your mentor and can provide advice that will help.
- **TALK WITH OTHERS IN YOUR PROGRAM WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR EXAM:** Who better to talk to than your peers? They have actually been through it and can tell you what they wish they had done before, during and after. They may have had some of the same faculty on their committee and can give you useful tips. (Strategy is helpful)
- **TAKE THE MYSTERY OUT OF IT:** Meet individually with each member of your committee prior to the exam date to determine what sort of expectations they will bring to their portion of the examination. Try to view the QE as an “exchange of information with your senior colleagues rather than a TEST”. Remember to send each committee member an email a week prior to the exam reminding them of the place and time.

Schedule some time in the very same room where your examination will take place. Ask some of your fellow graduate students to participate in a MOCK exam or two. Get familiar and comfortable with being at the board, taking charge, and answering questions that they throw at you. It's amazing how much easier it will be to walk into familiar surroundings when the big day arrives.

- **THE DAY OF THE EXAM:** Make sure that you have all of the props and equipment that you will need BEFORE the exam starts (AV equipment, markers, chalk, etc). Remember to bring some juice or water for yourself; you're going to do a lot of talking.
- **WHAT IF YOU GET A NOT PASS:** Don't be discouraged or destroyed if you don't pass the first time. Although the majority of students pass with no problem, **many** students receive a “not pass” the first time. Your committee wants you to be the best you can be (along with the Marine Corps), and they may have identified an area or two that you need to concentrate on, building strengths or gaining more knowledge. You may even have to take the entire exam again, or perhaps just TA a class or rewrite a proposal. Don't look at a “no pass” as a “vote of no confidence”; it's the responsibility of your committee to make sure that you're ready to advance to candidacy. 99% of those who are required to take the exam a second time pass with no problem!
- **TRY TO RELAX!!!**