

UNITED STATES SPORTS ACADEMY



MASTER OF SPORT SCIENCE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION REVIEW GUIDE

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Purpose of the Comprehensive Examination

The United States Sports Academy is a private, non-profit graduate school of sport offering programs of instruction, research and service nationally and internationally. The role of the Academy in higher education is to prepare men and women for sport professions in the areas of sports coaching, sports management, sports medicine, sports studies, and sports health & fitness.

To achieve this end, the Academy must maintain the deliverance of quality education in the sport sciences. The evaluation of student learning is critical in determining how the Academy is achieving and maintaining the quality of its degree programs. To improve teaching and delivery systems, the faculty and administration must assess the extent to which students have achieved the goals and objectives established by the Academy at the master's level.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to confirm that students have met the goals of the master's degree program. Program goals are outlined in the Master of Sport Science Academic Catalog, as well as specific competencies formulated to meet those goals. When students are able to demonstrate knowledge of sport science and a specific knowledge in their fields of expertise, students, faculty and administration can be assured that the goals have been met.

Eligibility

Students who enrolled in the Master's Degree Program **before 1 September 2010** are required to sit for the Master's Comprehensive Examination. (Students who enrolled between 1 Sep. 2010 and 31 Dec. 2013 MSS students completed a portfolio instead of an exam.)

Students enrolling in the Master's Degree Program **after 1 January 2014** are required to select one of three academic track options before completing their Core Courses. The three-track options are: **Thesis, Non-Thesis, and Mentorship.**

- Students who elect the **Thesis Option** will be enrolled in the **Master's Portfolio.**
- Students selecting the **Non-Thesis Option** will take a **Comprehensive Examination** at the end of their program of study.
- Students selecting the **Mentorship Option** will take a **Comprehensive Examination** at the end of their program of study.

To be eligible to take the Comprehensive Examination:

- a student must be in good academic standing, and
- must have completed ALL degree requirements with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher.

Students must register for the Comprehensive Examination, through the Registrar's Office, at least 30 days prior to the testing date desired. The specific testing dates for the current academic calendar year are listed on the examination application and on the Academic Calendar on the www.ussa.edu website. Only 15 students will be allowed to sit for the Comprehensive Examination each month; examinations are offered on a "first-come, first-served" basis.

Examination Fee

- The fee for master's level students taking the Comprehensive Examination can be found on the Academy's website or by contacting the Academy Registrar (registrar@ussa.edu).
- If a student fails to appear for the examination on the selected test date, the registration fee will be forfeited in full.
- Students who fail the Comprehensive Examination on the first attempt will be required to pay the full registration fee for all successive attempts.

Application to take the Master's Comprehensive Examination

1. Students must print, fill out, and submit the Master's Off-Campus Comprehensive Examination Application **30 days prior** to the requested test date. This application is located on the Student Services page of the Academy website: <http://www.ussa.edu/admissions/forms-applications/>. If all required examination application information is not provided, students will NOT be eligible to sit for the Comprehensive Examination.
2. The application form can be returned to the Registrar's Office via email, fax, or mail:
Email: registrar@ussa.edu
Fax: 251-625-1035, ATTN: Registrar
Mail: United States Sports Academy
One Academy Drive
Daphne, AL 36526
3. All Comprehensive Examination application forms must be received by the close of business **30 days prior to the test date**. Please keep this in mind when choosing the method to submit your application. Each examination date will be limited to fifteen (15) students—first come, first served.
4. **It is the responsibility of the student to confirm receipt of the application with the Office of the Registrar.** Students can contact the Office of the Registrar at 800-223-2668 ext. 7146. Applications received after the deadline will not be processed and students will be required to submit a new application for the next available exam date.
5. Upon receipt of the application and payment of the examination registration fee, the Office of the Registrar will **audit each student's file to ensure eligibility**. Once the audit is complete, the student information will be given to Academic Affairs.
6. **The examination is offered on the third Thursday and Friday of each month, with the exception of December. The examination is not offered in December.** The examination can be accessed beginning at 12:01 AM Central Time on the Thursday testing date and closes at 11:59 PM Central Time on the Friday testing date.
7. It is recommended that the **examination be taken between the hours of 8 AM – 5 PM Central Time** to ensure proper electronic monitoring is maintained to protect the integrity of the exam. This will also ensure that any problems during the administration of the exam can be addressed prudently.
8. Students are allowed to cancel or postpone their requested test dates up until two weeks prior to the actual test date without forfeiting their application fees. **Any student who cancels after this date or fails to show up for the examination will forfeit the application fee.**

Preparing for the Comprehensive Examination

1. Comprehensive examination questions are generally phrased to measure the student's ability to analyze, synthesize, and apply knowledge pertinent to a discipline; therefore, the student should emphasize those abilities in his/her study.
2. Review the major themes course textbooks, quizzes, class notes, assignments, discussions and papers prepared for each course. Concentrate on the learning objectives of each course taken rather than minute details. Course syllabi and unit overviews (Core/Major courses only) are available upon request for students who no longer have access to their courses in the Learning Management System (LMS). Contact the Registrar for syllabi.
3. Students can practice by preparing comprehensive examination questions for themselves. Answer them electronically. Check to ensure the responses answer the questions and that they are well written. Remember, the Comprehensive Examination is a reflection of writing ability. Be sure to edit responses for misspellings, poor grammar, and faulty sentence structure or paragraph construction.
4. Start studying at least two months in advance.
5. Prepare thoroughly—this will result in a confident attitude which, in turn, is likely to translate into a good performance.

Taking the Comprehensive Exam

1. After you open the examination in Canvas, read the questions carefully and identify the questions you want to answer first. **DON'T PANIC** over those questions to which an answer does not come readily to mind. Continue through the test and come back to those later.
2. Read each question carefully. Identify **ALL** the elements of the question. Before typing, outline the response and ensure that **ALL** elements of the outline answered **ALL** elements of the question. (e.g., if there are three elements in the question, be sure the response contains an answer to all three elements.)
3. The answer to each question should be comprehensive and thorough.
4. A total of ten (10) essay questions must be answered during the examination, as outlined below. In the event the student fails the examination, during the retake only those sections in which the student did not make a score of at least 70% must be retaken.

The examination questions will be from the following six areas:

- Major Area*: Student answers three (3) questions out of four (4) from their designated major of study
**Please note: Dual major students will answer three out of four questions covering both major areas. For example, a coaching-management dual major would receive two major areas questions for coaching and two for management. Three of the four questions would then be answered.*
 - Contemporary Issues in Sports: Student answers one (1) question out of two (2).
 - Sports Administration: Student answers one (1) question out of two (2).
 - Sports Marketing: Student answers one (1) question out of two (2).
 - General Area: The student must answer four (4) questions out of ten (10) in the General Area section of the comprehensive examination. The General Area questions are based upon the courses a given student has actually taken, as well as additional choices of topics from within the student's academic major.
5. Budget your time. Students have four (4) hours in which to complete the exam, which means spending an average of 20-25 minutes per question. Students should not spend an inordinate amount of time on any one question.

A suggested time allocation is as follows:

▪ Carefully read the question	One minute
▪ Analyze the question and outline the response	Two minutes
▪ Write a clear and detailed answer	Fifteen minutes
▪ Review the response to ensure the question is properly and completely answered. Spell check and check for grammar	Three minutes

	Total: 21 minutes

6. Relax. Take a brief rest between questions.
7. Rough spots. Attempt to save five to 15 minutes at the end of the examination period to go back over those questions which were troublesome.
8. Answer order. The questions may be answered in any order provided that 10 questions are answered, as outlined above.
9. RECHECK & FINISH. Finally, and most importantly, check that each answer thoroughly answers each question and covers ALL the elements of the question. If the question has two parts, make sure the answer has two parts as well.

The Canvas examination module will automatically store entered text/information as answers are typed.

*****DO NOT USE THE TAB KEY WHILE WRITING YOUR
ANSWER IN THE TEXT BOX*****

*******Doing so will automatically submit your test.*******

During the examination if there are computer issues, e.g., computer freezing, malfunctioning, or the examination locks itself before the allotted time is up, please contact the Academy immediately: 251-626-3303, Ext. 7157 (Academic Affairs) or 7126 (Instructional Design).

Comprehensive Examination Format

The examination questions will be from the following six areas:

1. **Major Area*** - *Student answers three (3) questions* out of four (4) for their designated major of study:

- Sports Coaching
- Sports Health & Fitness
- Sports Management
- Sports Studies
- Recreation Management

2. **Contemporary Issues in Sports** - *Student answers one (1) question* out of two (2).

3. **Sports Administration** - *Student answers one (1) question* out of two (2).

4. **Sports Marketing** - *Student answers one (1) question* out of two (2).

5. **General Area** - The *student must answer four (4) questions out of ten (10)* in the General Area section of the comprehensive examination. The General Area questions are based upon the courses a given student has actually taken, as well as additional choices of topics from within the student's academic major.

***Please note:** Dual major students will answer three out of four questions covering both major areas. For example, a coaching-management dual major would receive two major areas questions for coaching and two for management. Three of the four questions would then be answered.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Exam Section I: Major Area Questions

SPORTS COACHING

Answer any three (3) of the four (4) questions. The four comprehensive examination questions in the sports coaching major area **may** come from any of the following required courses:

- Sports Psychology
- Sports Coaching Methodology
- Sports Conditioning and Nutrition
- Seminar in Sports Medicine

Sample Topics for questions that **may be** asked include:

- The Roles and Special Relationships of the Coach
- Setting Goals and Motivating Athletes
- Introducing, Explaining and Demonstrating Sport Skills
- Developing a Year Round Physical Training Program
- Observing and Analyzing Sport Skills
- Ethical Dilemmas in Coaching
- A Personal Philosophy of Coaching
- Desirable Qualities of a Coach
- Off-Season Planning
- Using Feedback and Positive Feedback in Skill Development
- Negligence
- Coaching Decisions
- Behavioral and Discipline Problems
- Athletes, Parents, and Fans
- Communication
- Evaluation

Note: These areas may overlap with materials covered in several courses within the student's degree program.

Sample Questions for the Sports Coaching Major Area:

1. Why would a person go into coaching? Describe the pros and cons of making such a decision. Describe the pressures and conflicts a coach may face, along with the potential benefits and rewards.
2. If one is to develop a comprehensive program of strength and endurance development, one must understand the physiological principals involved. Explain these in terms of the training concepts of overload, specificity, progression, reversibility and periodization.
3. There is often pressure on a coach to be more than just a coach. What are the other essential roles that a coach must assume?

SPORTS FITNESS & HEALTH

Answer any three (3) of the four (4) questions. The four comprehensive exam questions in the fitness management major area are likely to come from any of the following courses:

- Exercise Physiology
- Sports Conditioning and Nutrition
- Exercise Testing and Prescription
- Issues in Nutrition

Sample topics for questions that **may be** asked are:

- Preliminary health and fitness screening
- Assessment of cardio-respiratory fitness
- Exercise prescriptions
- Assessment of body composition
- Nutritional factors in performance
- Obesity and weight control
- Stress management
- Strength & conditioning
- Assessing of strength & flexibility fitness
- Designing & implementing a conditioning program

Sample Question for the Health and Fitness Management Major Area:

Scenario #1:

After a series of testing, as the exercise specialist, you have determined that your client, who is a 35-year old, 150 lb., fairly active female with two significant risk factors (35% body fat and family history of heart disease), has asked you to prescribe a cardiovascular conditioning and general weight loss program for her. Discuss the factors that you would incorporate into this person's cardiovascular and nutritional program to facilitate improved functional capacity and weight loss. (Hint: Remember to address aspects such as type of exercises, intensity, frequency and nutritional aspects such as resting metabolic rate, overall energy expenditure, daily caloric requirements, etc.)

SPORTS MANAGEMENT

Answer any three (3) of the four (4) questions. The four comprehensive examination questions in the sports management major area **may come** from any of the following required courses:

- Sports Administration
- Sports Finance
- Sports Business and Personnel Management
- Sports Facilities
- Sports Marketing
- Public Relations in Sports
- Sports Law and Risk Management

The questions for the sports management major area may require you to incorporate information from two or more of these courses into your answer for a particular question. These questions may

ask you to consider issues, concepts, theories or methods involved in sports management. Human, financial, physical or sport information resources of an athletic program, sport, or educational organization may be assessed.

Sample Questions for the Sports Management Major Area:

1. Discuss critical administrative issues that would be involved with the organization of a school athletic department. Apply significant material from three of the seven reference areas listed above to address this task.
2. In marketing it is important to have the right “mix” to achieve success in the sale of your product. Explain what is meant by the marketing mix and tell how each component influences the others.
3. In labor-intensive industries like sport, the personnel function is very important. Tell why it is important and describe the basic steps you would have in the staffing process, from job analysis through evaluation, to have the best system to predict success of a new hire.

SPORTS MEDICINE

Answer any three (3) of the four (4) questions. The four comprehensive examination questions in the sports medicine major area are likely to come from any of the four major required courses:

- Seminar in Sports Medicine
- Advanced Assessment in Sports Medicine
- Treatment Procedures in Sports Medicine
- Sports Conditioning and Nutrition

One or more major area questions could come from the following courses only if a particular student has taken these courses:

- Sports Biomechanics
- Sports Performance Enhancement
- Exercise Physiology
- Sport Conditioning & Nutrition
- Exercise Testing & Prescription
- Issues in Nutrition & Health

Sample topics for questions that may be asked include:

- Preliminary health/fitness screening: guidelines
- Assessment of cardiorespiratory fitness: max and submax techniques
- Exercise prescription for athletic, healthy, and clinical populations
- Nutritional factors in performance and conditioning
- Exercise performance and environmental stress
- Designing cardiorespiratory fitness programs
- Assessment of body composition
- Assessment of muscular strength and endurance
- Special aids to performance and conditioning
- Adaptations and benefits of exercise training

- Obesity and weight control
- Assessing and designing flexibility programs
- Training for anaerobic and aerobic power

Sample Questions in the Sports Medicine Major Area:

1. Explain, step-by-step, the procedures you would follow in evaluating an unconscious athlete on the field.
2. Diabetes Mellitus is prevalent in our society. Describe the signs and symptoms and the special considerations in dealing with a diabetic athlete.
3. Discuss in depth the indications of the use of heat versus cold therapy in the rehabilitation of an athlete.

SPORTS STUDIES

Sport studies majors will be asked to answer any three (3) of the four (4) questions in the major area. The four comprehensive examination questions in the major area for sports studies will be chosen from the specific courses that the student completed (exclusive of the core courses which are covered in another part of the comprehensive examination). For example, if a sports studies student took the following courses, the student's major area questions would be derived from the learning objectives, the content or the major themes of these courses:

- Sports Psychology
- Exercise Physiology
- Sports Conditioning and Nutrition
- Exercise Testing and Prescription
- Sports Law and Risk Management

For example, if another sports studies student took the following courses, the student's major area questions would be derived from the learning objectives, the content or major themes of these courses:

- Sports Business and Personnel Management
- Sports Facilities
- Issues in Nutrition
- Sports Coaching Methodology
- Olympism

Sample topics for questions for a sports studies major student are unique and dependent upon the specific courses taken on individual transcripts. Please check the sample topics and questions listed in the major area section for each of the other academic majors.

RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Answer any three (3) of the four (4) questions. The four comprehensive examination questions in the sports management major area **may come** from any of the following required courses:

- Introduction to Parks, recreation and Tourism
- Philosophy and History of Recreation and Leisure
- Recreation Programming and Administration

or from the following major courses:

- Food & Beverage Service Management
- Membership and Marketing for Sports Clubs
- Sports Club Management

The questions for the recreation management major area may require you to incorporate information from two or more of these courses into your answer for a particular question. These questions may ask you to consider issues, concepts, theories or methods involved in recreation management.

Exam Section II: Sports Administration & Finance Area Questions

The student will answer any (1) of the two (2) questions provided on the exam. The two (2) comprehensive examination questions are likely to come from the following areas:

Styles of Management/Leadership	Functions of Management
Strategic/Tactical Planning	Organizational Control
Sources of Power	Decision-Making
Conflict Resolution	Levels of Management
Type of Organizations	Types of Budgets & the Budget Process
Planning and Funding Programs	MBOs/Personnel/Evaluation
Hiring Procedures, Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity	Managerial Ethics
Sexual Harassment	Communication

Sample Questions for the Sports Administration Area:

1. Distinguish between an authoritarian and democratic manager. Using a \$100,000 budget with 18 budget lines, show how an authoritarian manager's approach to planning and controlling a budget would differ from a democratic manager. Provide examples to illustrate your analysis.
2. You are the manager of a sports medicine clinic with a budget of 1.3 million dollars and four organizational units which report to you. You are a consultative, democratic manager. Develop a process for the preparation of the budget based upon your management style.
3. You are the athletic director at a new high school. Show how the different types of managerial skills can be utilized to implement an interscholastic athletic program.

Exam Section III: Contemporary Issues In Sport Area Questions

The student will answer any one (1) of the two (2) questions provided on the exam. The two (2) comprehensive examination questions are likely to come from the following areas:

- Gender roles in sport
- Sociological theories and how they apply to sport
- History and development of sport in various cultures
- Similarities and differences of sports in different historical periods
- Gender logic: definition, purpose, history, trends
- Race and ethnicity issues in sport
- Politics and sport: historical lessons, future trends
- Economic impact of sport: Pros and cons
- Coaches' roles: traditional versus modern trends
- Sport as a cure and contributing factor to deviant or aggressive behavior
- Pros and cons of organized youth sports
- Sport as a socializing agent
- Social stratification and sport

Sample Questions for Contemporary Issues in Sport:

1. Describe the conditions that would be necessary for spectators to experience frustration and have this frustration converted into aggressive behavior.
2. What is sport sociology? Why is it important to study sport from a sociological perspective? What are some of the future problems facing school and professional administrators of sport?
3. You have just been hired as the head basketball coach at a large suburban high school. You have heard this high school has student drug problems. What specific rules, policies or procedures would you implement with your basketball team?

Exam Section IV: Sports Marketing Area Questions

The student will answer any one (1) of the two (2) questions provided on the exam. The two (2) comprehensive examination questions are likely to come from the following areas:

- In-depth definitions of marketing, sport and sport marketing
- The Marketing Mix: Product, price, place, promotion and public relations as they relate to sport
- Marketing management process
- Sport consumer behavior, life-styling, demographics and psychographics
- Positioning, perceptual maps and image
- Pricing strategies, elasticity of demand
- The steps in the marketing plan
- Marketing segmentation, target markets and the role of research in sport marketing

Sample Questions for the Sports Marketing Area:

1. Identify the most critical issues that would need to be resolved if the women's professional soccer league is to return next year. How would these issues impact the job of a sport marketer?
2. Price is the most manipulated of the P's of marketing. Consumers usually link price and value. Briefly describe a product/service and then describe the management decisional process that determines at least two alternative prices for the product/service.
3. In the 1970's and early 1980's, tennis was a popular sport. In the late 1990's, interest in tennis as a recreational sport has waned considerably. Explain this phenomenon in terms of product life cycle and lifestyle aging cycle.

Exam Section V: General Area Questions

Depending upon the specific degree requirements and academic program chosen, each student will be directed to answer four (4) questions out of 10 specific areas.

SPORTS BIOMECHANICS

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Force, Movement, Torque and Rotation
- Body Balance and Stability Control
- Biomechanics of the Musculoskeletal System
- Biomechanical Relationships in the Upper, Lower, and Trunk Extremities
- Application of Biomechanics to Fitness Activities
- Observing and Analyzing Skill Performance

Sample Question:

1. Explain and illustrate a biomechanical analysis of running.

EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Skeletal Muscle: Structure and Function
- Bioenergetics: Energy for Physical Activity
- Endocrine System and Exercise
- Cardiopulmonary Anatomy/Physiology: Responses to Exercise
- Fundamental Principles of EKG interpretation

Sample Question:

1. Discuss the excitation-contraction process in muscle contraction from the nerve impulse in the motor nerve to the relaxation of the muscle fiber.

SPORTS CONDITIONING AND NUTRITION

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Acute Physiologic Responses to Resistance Exercise
- Chronic Adaptations to Resistance Training
- Individual Differences and Implications for Resistance Training
- Evaluation and Testing the Athlete
- Strength Training Methods, Modes and Exercises
- Exercise Selection and Order
- Exercise Loads volume and Rest Periods
- Periodization: Concepts and Application
- Fundamental Principles of Strength Training

Sample Question:

1. When developing a resistance training program, discuss in detail the variables of exercise types, exercise load, volume and rest periods as they relate to periodization/cycling.

SPORTS MEDICINE

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Prevention of Athletic Injuries
- Emergency Procedures for Athletic Injuries
- Assessment of Athletic Injuries
- Referral of Athletic Injuries
- The Use of Therapeutic Modalities in the Treatment of Athletic Injuries
- The Use of Rehabilitation Techniques in the Treatment of Athletic Injuries

Sample Question:

1. Explain how an athletic trainer employed at the high school level would establish an emergency plan for the proper emergency care of athletic injuries.

SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- The Role of Personality Characteristics in Athletic Performance
- The Ability to Focus Based upon Intentional Skills
- Adjusting and Controlling Arousal
- Goal Setting
- Motivational Techniques
- Drive-Reduction Theory
- Causal Attribution
- Aggression and Violence
- Team Cohesion
- Psychological Training Plan
- Intervention Techniques

Sample Question:

1. Explain how arousal interacts with task difficulty, skill level, age and previous experience. In terms of the inverted U relationship, show how an elite athlete can handle a higher level of arousal than a beginning athlete.

SPORTS COACHING METHODOLOGY

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Steps in Presenting New Skills
- Establishing Instructional Goals
- Stages of Skill Learning
- Reinforcement and Feedback
- Variables Influencing Practice and Learning
- Transfer of Learning
- Ethical Considerations in Coaching
- The Roles and Desirable Qualities of a Coach
- The Recruiting Process
- Off-Season Planning
- Final Preparation for the Season
- Issues and Concerns in Coaching
- Motivation and Goal-Setting

Sample Question:

1. Athletes often claim that they don't receive enough feedback. What is feedback and what are the various types? What is its function and what is its relation to positive and negative reinforcement?

SPORTS BUSINESS AND PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

Organizational Effectiveness
 Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Issues
 Recruitment, Selection, Training, Performance Appraisals, Labor Relations
 Human Resource Planning and Recruitment
 Employee Selection, Interviewing and Testing
 Training and Orientation Programs and Employees
 Improving Performance and Employee Motivation
 Compensation Programs and Job Evaluation

Sample Question:

1. Discuss the importance of human resource planning and assess the impact of current trends, i.e. growth of the labor force; immigration; average age of the work force; occupational shifts; and illiteracy.

SPORTS LAW AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

Standard of Care Owed to Invitees, Licensees and Trespassers	Negligence - Types and Elements
Contract Formation	Defenses Against Negligence Claims
Legal System in the U.S.	Risk Management Strategies
Drug Testing Issues	Levels of Management
Title VII, Title IX, ADA	Defamation of Character
Hiring Procedures, Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity	False Light Intrusion
Sexual Harassment	Product Liability
	Antitrust Legislation

Sample Question:

1. What is Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972? Trace the effects of this legislation to intercollegiate athletics from inception to present day. Describe in depth the case law that has influenced the interpretation of Title IX.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BUSINESS OF SPORTS AGENTS

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Fiduciary Relationships
- Conflicts of Interest
- Duties and Services Provided
- Compensation for Athletes and Agents

Sample Question:

1. What are the major provisions or clauses contained in a “uniform player contract” for a professional team sport athlete? Which clauses benefit the club? Which clauses benefit the player? Why?

SPORTS FINANCE

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Financial challenges in intercollegiate and professional sports
- Types of business structures
- Short and long-term financial planning
- Red flags indicating financial difficulties

Sample Question:

1. What are the major financial challenges facing athletic administrators in intercollegiate and professional sports?

PUBLIC RELATIONS IN SPORTS

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Internal and External Publics
- The Qualifications and Role of the Public Relations Specialist
- The Role of the Media in Sport
- The Nature and Characteristics of News
- Communication between the Public Relations Specialist and Sport Personnel
- Preparation of Press Releases for the Print and Electronic Media
- The Nature of Publicity
- The Management of Crises and Emergencies
- Principles of Community Relations
- The Relationship between Public Relations and Promotions
- Promotions and Fund Raising
- Ethical and Legal Aspects of Public Relations

Sample Question:

1. Discuss the interrelationship between public relations and fund raising. Illustrate with examples.

SPORTS FACILITIES

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Architectural considerations for sport facilities
- Facilities maintenance and management
- Renovation of an existing facility vs. building a new facility
- Stadium and indoor arena designs
- Compliance with ADA legislation
- Financing of sport facilities

Sample Question:

1. You have just been hired as a sport facilities consultant. Under what circumstances would you recommend renovating an existing facility rather than building a new one?

PROFESSIONAL WRITING AND APPLIED RESEARCH

Sample topics for the examination question in this area include:

- Nature and characteristics of research
- Ethical issues in research
- Normal bell curve theory
- Basic and applied research
- Objectivity, reliability and validity
- Identifying the specific variables of a study
- Alpha and beta errors in hypothesis testing (the truth table)
- The steps in developing a research plan (the methodology process)
- Literature searching and review in context of developing and delimiting a problem
- Comparison of the major types of research designs (historical, descriptive, experimental)
- Research and null hypotheses and how they are tested
- Types of statistical tests that are available and the appropriate use of them

Sample Questions:

1. What are nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio data? What are some types of survey research designs? What kinds of data tend to be yielded by these types of survey research designs?
2. Discuss the concepts of objectivity, reliability and validity? How are these determined for a survey or a piece of instrumentation? What are alpha and beta errors? What does an alpha level of $p < .05$; $p < .01$ and $p < .001$ mean?
3. What are the five characteristics of research? Which one is the most important? What are the two extremes of the research continuum? What are the steps involved for the Scientific Method of Problem Solving?

Grading the Comprehensive Examination

1. Faculty is given five (5) business days in which to grade the examination. Comprehensive Examinations are graded Pass/Fail. The final grade is reported to the Registrar and recorded on the student transcript. Students can view the unofficial transcript in their Student Portal. Grades will not be given out over the phone.
2. Upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination, students will receive notification by electronic mail sent to their “student.ussa.edu” email account. This email will also contain important information regarding graduation.
3. In each section of the examination (Section I-Major Area; Section II-Sports Administration & Finance, Section III-Contemporary Issues in Sports; Section IV-Sports Marketing; and Section V-General Area) the **student must receive a score of 70% or higher**. Those sections in which the student did not receive a score of 70% or higher must be retaken.

If the student is required to retake the examination, the student will be sent a certified letter from the Chief Academic Officer outlining the sections which must be retaken and the steps which the student must follow. Any sections in which the student earned a passing score will not have to be retaken. The student will have one year from the date of the original examination to retake the necessary sections.

4. Students will be given one additional attempt (after the initial attempt) to successfully pass the examination. If the student does not pass the examination in two attempts, he/she may petition the Academic Committee for another attempt.
5. Any student needing to retake the exam must complete the application process again. The request must be approved 30 days in advance of the Comprehensive Examination date on which the student wants to sit for the retake.

Requests to retake the Comprehensive Examinations must be accompanied by payment of the required examination fee.

Examination dates are published in the Academic Calendar available on the web site (www.ussa.edu).

6. When the student has passed the Comprehensive Examination and is ready to graduate, the student must submit the Graduation Application (available in the Student Portal). The student file will not be audited for graduation until this form is received and the graduation fee is paid. Once the audit is complete and cleared, the degree will be conferred and the student will automatically receive, by mail, a transcript confirming that the degree has been conferred. A graduation plaque will follow in about 8-12 weeks.
7. Per the Department of Education, any student receiving financial aid at any time during their degree program must complete the Student Loan Exit Counseling.

A Review of Important Facts

1. The Master's Comprehensive Examinations **are not proctored**. The student may take the exam at the time and place of his/her choosing (during the two-day exam period). The Academy trusts the student will follow exam rules to maintain the integrity of the exam.
2. The Comprehensive Examination is **given only on the third Thursday and Friday of each month with the exception of December** (no examinations are given in December).

The student is highly encouraged to take the examination between the hours of 8 AM – 5 PM Central Time in order that Academy staff may properly monitor and assist any student if administrative problems occur.

3. Each examination **date will be limited to 15 students**—first come, first served. Please plan accordingly as there will be NO EXCEPTIONS.
4. Follow the steps below to complete the examination application process:
 - a. Go to the USSA Website www.ussa.edu, click on STUDENTS, download the Master's Off-Campus Comprehensive Examination Application. Complete the application and return to the Registrar as instructed on the form.
 - b. Provide the appropriate information and pay the appropriate fees.
 - c. The student will be emailed a confirmation from Registrar's office stating the student is registered for that examination date.
 - d. To begin the examination, the student will log onto the Canvas Learning Management System, find his/her Master's Comprehensive Examination, follow instructions, and take the exam.
5. Any **student needing to retake the exam must complete the application process again**. The request must be approved 30 days in advance of the Comprehensive Examination date on which the student wants to sit for the retake.

Requests to retake the Comprehensive Examinations **must be accompanied by payment of the required examination fee**.

Examination dates are published in the Academic Calendar available on the web site (www.ussa.edu).