



## *PREQUALIFYING INTERVIEW*

**The Prequalifying Interview is required of all M.S. and Ph.D. students. Master of Science students must complete the interview before the second Fall semester; Ph.D. students must complete it before the second Spring semester. The qualifying examination occurs six (6) months later.**

Every student should have a pre-qualifying interview with his/her committee prior to his/her qualifying exam. The "interview" gives the committee members a chance to find out what the student is thinking about for a thesis/dissertation topic as well as possible areas of deficiency in the student's background (i.e., what further courses or reading the student might need). In turn, the student gains better insight as to what his/her committee expects in terms of a prospectus and background knowledge.

The student will be asked to give a 5-10 minute oral presentation describing his/her interests and goals. The committee will then discuss with the student the knowledge required to meet these goals. In most cases, the interview should not last more than one hour or so.

The interview is not an exam; one does not pass or fail the interview. Rather, the pre-qualifying interview provides useful information for both the student and the committee. Recommendations by the committee will be summarized in writing on the Pre-Qualifying Interview form.

Master of Science students should have their pre-qualifying interview before the end of their first year at SMS/VIMS, i.e., before the beginning of their second fall semester. Ph.D. students should have the interview before the end of the second fall semester. In most cases, the qualifying exam will be taken within six months after the pre-qualifying interview.

**Applicable Form:** *Pre-Qualifying Interview*

**NOTE:** The form for documenting the Pre-Qualifying Interview is on the reverse side of this page.