

Preparing for Qualifying Exams

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Anchor your reading and your organization of themes around your own research and on the ground experience. It's always useful to have a frame or frames when reading to engage you and provide a context for applying and remembering key literature. When the frame develops out of your research, you are the expert and have access to findings and contexts that you can deploy with the committee in answering questions.

Choose a provisional dissertation topic or problem in order to amplify the value and the focus of your reading and annotated discussions. That way your QE work has an anchor and will usefully advance you in the literature-based component of framing the research question(s) for your dissertation.

Hold regular meetings with your committee members organized around components of your readings. Create short think pieces around these reading segments or themes that you can share with the committee. You will be passing your QEs little by little as you engage with your committee around segments of your readings.