Candidacy Exam Format

If separated from Prospectus Defense
Candidacy Exam in 4th semester or earlier, after all course work is finished
Prospectus in 6th semester or earlier, when the topic of dissertation is identified and some preliminary work is done.

The goal of Candidacy Exam is to check student’s readiness to do research in chosen research area
Advisor and committee determine the exact format of the exam
Here are generic guidelines on the exam

- Consists of two parts: written exam and oral exam
- Research advisor forms a Candidacy Examination Committee, consisting of research advisor plus two CS graduate faculty that are familiar with student’s chosen research area
- Advisor in consultation with the committee members determines a set of papers and other material considered fundamental in that research area, and informs student about this reading list
- After about one month the written part of the exam takes place; student gets a set of exam questions developed by the committee and provides his/her answers in written form.
- Each committee member gets a copy of student’s written answers to evaluate
- the oral part of the exam takes place in a couple of weeks; during oral examination the committee members get opportunity to discuss with student his/her answers, to clarify some points, to ask few other related questions
- The outcome of the Candidacy Exam (in form of pass/fail) is the committee members’ judgment of whether student is familiar with fundamental issues in chosen research area, adequately addresses them, and is ready for intensive research in this area
- PhD Candidacy Examination Form get signed (http://www.kent.edu/CAS/CS/graduate/upload/Report-of-Candidacy-Examination.pdf)
- After passing the candidacy exam, student can enroll in Dissertation I