

Department of Chemical Engineering
L3 (Core Competency) Exam
Suggestions, Rules and Guidelines for Seniors

The department competency exam consists of 24 multiple-choice questions, one for each of the 24 competencies. All students must pass the competency exam during their senior year as part of the degree requirements. The exam may be taken three (3) times. Although each exam is self-scheduled, windows of approximately two weeks are set up by the department for each of the three available periods of time to take the exam. Generally the exam is administered the last two weeks of September, the last two weeks of October, and the first two weeks of January. Check the department website to find out the exam availability dates for the current year. There is no time limit on the exam. The first and second exam retakes include only those competencies not passed on the previous attempt(s). Thus, if a student misses four competencies on the first attempt, the second exam will include four new questions on the four missed competencies. To pass this second exam, the student would need to answer three of the four questions correctly. Should the student miss two of the competencies on the second examination attempt, the third exam would contain two new questions covering the two missed competencies and s/he would be required to answer at least one of the two questions correctly in order to pass the exam.

The exam is intended to test basic, fundamental concepts that every chemical engineering student graduating from BYU should understand. Often the questions are qualitative in nature to test your understanding of concepts, but a few are quantitative, usually involving a single calculation. Though the faculty hopes that most students will pass the exam on the first attempt, it recognizes how easy it is to make simple mistakes, such as reading the question wrong or checking the wrong answer box. This is the intent of the two retakes and the allowance for one missed competency. Remember, only those competencies missed are tested on the next exam. Because mistakes are easy to make even when you know the material, wise students will **STUDY FOR THE EXAM BEFORE THE FIRST ATTEMPT**. If you do not prepare for the first attempt, you may put yourself in a difficult situation in which you have many questions on the second attempt. Then mistakes on the second attempt can put you in a must-pass situation on the third attempt. The key to success is preparation for the first attempt so that a second attempt is either not necessary or consists of only a few questions.

The examinations are computer generated so that each student gets a different exam. Nevertheless, students must not discuss the exam in any manner with other students or faculty. All information about the exam, including questions, difficulty level, time that it took to complete the exam, content, etc., is confidential and must not be discussed with **anyone** else. In particular, students are NOT permitted to go to faculty members or other students and discuss how to work a problem given on one of the exams. The exams are closed book with the exception of the *Reference Booklet for the L3 or Core Competency Exam* that you should have received in your sophomore year. You will be provided with a clean copy of this booklet when you take the exam. Paper is provided in the examination room, but please shred all scratch papers before you leave the room. Please **WRITE DOWN** and take with you any missed competency numbers displayed on the final screen of the examination. You will need to know which competencies to study if a retake is necessary.

Best wishes as you prepare for the L3 exam!

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