



VCU School of Education

School of Education

Ph.D. in Education Program

Student/Faculty Handbook

03.27.2024

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	5
Program Administration.....	6
A. Ph.D. in Education Policy Board	6
B. Policy Changes to Ph.D. in Education	6
C. Ph.D. in Education Concentrations	6
Graduate School Policies and Regulations	8
A. Program Time Limits	8
B. Continual Enrollment	8
C. Transfer Credits.....	8
D. Leave of Absence	10
E. Withdrawal from Courses & Programs.....	10
F. Termination from program.....	11
G. Reinstatement into Program.....	11
H. Readmission Policy.....	11
I. Exemptions from Policy.....	12
J. Appeals.....	12
Pre-Candidacy Curriculum Requirements	13
A. Prerequisites	14
B. Foundations Component	14
C. Research Component	14
D. Concentration Component: Program Concentrations	15
E. Co-curricular Activities	15
F. Independent Study	15
G. Externship.....	16
H. Dissertation Seminar.....	16
Program Planning.....	16
A. Advisor	16
a. Role of Advisor	17
b. Request to Change Advisor	17
c. Advisor as Dissertation Chair	17
B. Preliminary Program of Study	17
C. Revised Program of Study	17
D. Final Program of Study.....	18
E. Concentration Transfer	18

Student Evaluation and Feedback.....	18
A. Grades	18
B. Qualifying Assessment	19
a. Student Feedback for Qualifying Assessment.....	19
b. Continuing Doctoral Status	20
C. Comprehensive Exam	21
The Dissertation and Advancement to Candidacy.....	21
A. Prospectus	21
a. Dissertation Seminar and the Concept Paper	22
b. Selecting a Dissertation Topic	22
c. Format for the Prospectus and Dissertation	22
B. The Dissertation Committee	22
a. Selecting the Dissertation Committee	22
b. Responsibilities of the Candidate, Dissertation Chair, and Committee Members	24
C. Prospectus Hearing	28
a. Prospectus Approval Process	29
b. VCU Institutional Review Board	30
c. Advancement to Candidacy.....	30
D. Doctoral Candidacy and Dissertation	30
a. Scheduling the Dissertation Defense	31
b. Approval of the Dissertation.....	32
c. Submission of Approved Dissertation	32
E. Graduation.....	33
Appendices.....	34
Appendix A Concentration Coordinator Contact Information	35
Appendix B Ph.D. in Education Curriculum	36
Appendix C Curriculum Overview for Ph.D. in Education.....	38
Appendix D Co-curricular Activity Form.....	39
Appendix E Proposal for Independent Study.....	41
Appendix F Externship Application	42
Appendix G Concept Paper Guidelines	45
Appendix H Concept Paper Approval Form.....	47
Appendix I Preliminary Program of Study	48
Appendix J Revised Program of Study.....	49

Appendix K Post-Qualifying Assessment Review	50
Appendix L Final Program of Study.....	51
Appendix M Comprehensive Exam Policy Table	52
Appendix N Comprehensive Exam Report Form.....	54
Appendix O Dissertation Committee Agreement Form	55
Appendix P Graduate Faculty Appointment Form	56
Appendix Q Prospectus Report.....	58
Appendix R Advancement to Candidacy.....	59
Appendix S Dissertation Defense Report	60
Appendix T Content of Qualifying Assessment	61
Appendix U Format for Prospectus and Dissertation	64
Appendix V Student Checklist of General Program Requirements.....	69

FOREWORD

Welcome to the VCU School of Education Ph.D. in Education program!

With more than 100 full-time instructional faculty and more than 20 million in funded research, the School of Education is recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the top 50 public University graduate programs in education. The Ph.D. in Education program enjoys a reputation of high standards and quality students. With recent program revisions, we know you will find many opportunities to engage in scholarship and learning with an exceptionally talented group of faculty and students.

This handbook serves as a guide for doctoral students and faculty on SOE and University policy and procedure. Changes to policies, procedures, deadlines, program dates and announcements relevant to the School of Education Ph.D. in Education program will be communicated through the SOE Doctoral Program Canvas page and VCU e-mail. In addition, students and faculty will use the program forms that are on Canvas, rather than the example forms from this handbook. It is essential that students check Canvas and their VCU e-mail regularly to stay updated on program information.

Students are responsible for meeting all requirements associated with the pursuit of their degree and are expected to initiate most procedures as they work with their advisors throughout their tenure in the doctoral program. In addition to this handbook, students should become familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin. It articulates university policies and information related to graduate study. **It is important that VCU and SOE outlined policy and procedures are followed in consideration for university and department operations and ensuring a positive experience during tenure in the program.**

Students or faculty who need help with information regarding the Ph.D. in Education program are encouraged to contact the Office of Graduate Studies at winnkb@vcu.edu. Suggestions for any changes that will improve the usefulness of the handbook are welcome and should be directed to the same office. Have a great year!

Sincerely,

Luciana C. de Oliveira

Luciana C. de Oliveira, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
School of Education
Virginia Commonwealth University

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The SOE Office of Graduate Studies is responsible for the administration of the Ph.D. in Education program.

A. Ph.D. in Education Advisory Board

The Ph.D. in Education Program Advisory Board provides direction and determines policy for the Ph.D. in Education program. The Advisory Board is configured with one coordinator from each concentration (see Appendix A) and two student members. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs chairs these meetings.

B. Policy Changes to the Ph.D. in Education Program

The process recommended for any policy changes is:

- a. For concentration-specific issues, recommendations are made by the concentration coordinator on behalf of the concentration. Their recommendation is forwarded to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs who brings that recommendation forward to the Advisory Board. At the discretion of the board, an open forum may be held on concentration-specific issues during an Advisory Board meeting.
- b. For changes that impact all concentrations, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will appoint an ad hoc committee to investigate the issue and make a recommendation for changes to be adopted program-wide which is brought to the Advisory Board for discussion and a vote.

Students and faculty will be notified of changes made to policies and procedures in the Ph.D. in Education program through e-mail, blackboard and SOE website.

C. Ph.D. in Education Concentrations

The Ph.D. in Education program has eight concentrations that allow students to specialize in a particular area by taking prescribed concentration courses. The contact information for concentration coordinators is listed in Appendix A and the concentration courses for each concentration are listed in Appendix B.

- a. **Art Education.** The Art Education concentration of the Ph.D. in Education allows students to connect contemporary art and education theories and philosophies, practical and professional experiences, and impactful research to develop an area of expertise relevant to the field of art education. The program distinguishes itself by integrating urban community engagement, digital and emerging media, and research and assessment in diverse settings. Graduates will be highly qualified to serve in teaching, research, and leadership positions at universities and in arts and education organizations.
- b. **Counselor Education & Supervision.** The Counselor Education and Supervision concentration of the Ph.D. program is designed to prepare students for careers as counselor educators, counselor supervisors, researchers, and leaders in the counseling profession. The program provides a unique emphasis on social justice and advocacy.

- c. **Curriculum, Culture & Change.** Designed to offer doctoral students rigorous perspectives on curriculum, advocacy and social justice, while maintaining a commitment to instruction and learning, its graduates are well prepared for curriculum and instruction (C&I) leadership positions in academia and in school systems at the building level and above. The concentration's theoretical depth also readies scholars with a wide range of curricular interests—urban education, rural education, linguistically diverse groups, adult learners, oppressed groups, critical pedagogy, philosophical and sociocultural foundations of education, etc.—to advocate for change across institutions and contexts, including communities, families, systems, schools and the university.
- d. **Educational Leadership, Policy & Justice.** Designed primarily for those interested in critically examining leadership in education. This concentration is conceptualized as a set of learning experiences that allow students to grow from being consumers to producers of research that draws inspiration from real-world problems of education and leadership. Emphasis is placed on conducting problem-finding, problem-solving, and especially translational research.
- e. **Educational Psychology.** Designed for research-oriented doctoral students who want to study the success of students in educational environments. Doctoral students will integrate theory and research in the areas of educational psychology, including; developmental psychology, cognition, motivation, assessment, and diversity to better study learning in schools or school-like settings. Graduates are well prepared to teach in educational psychology and related programs at the university level; as well as take leadership positions in state and local research and policy environments.
- f. **Research, Assessment & Evaluation.** Designed primarily for individuals with responsibility for conducting research and evaluation projects in and for agencies and educational organizations and for individuals interested in teaching in higher education. Emphasis is placed on developing proficiency quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches of inquiry, providing students with a breadth of ways to study varied educational and social research questions.
- g. **Special Education and Disability Leadership.** The PhD in Special Education program is a stand-alone program designed primarily to prepare individuals to become future faculty, scholars, and leaders in the field of special education. Emphasis is placed on advanced skills in the areas of research, personnel preparation and policy advocacy.
- h. **Urban Services Leadership – Adult Learning.** The Urban Services Leadership concentration is designed for those students who desire a career working with adult learners in a variety of settings. This may include for-profit and non-profit learning and development, higher education administration, such as Student Affairs or Community College, and those aiming to teach Adult Education in Higher Education. This concentration allows students to customize their concentration courses to meet their specific career goals. Applicants are expected to have experience working with adult

learners in organizational, community, government, healthcare, or non-profit settings, or within the community in roles as faculty, faculty developers, trainers, human resource development and organization development professionals, adult literacy educators, and other roles in which they are actively involved in the teaching and training of adult learners.

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

A. Program Time Limits.

The time limit for completing all degree requirements, including the successful defense of the dissertation, is **eight years** (as noted in the Graduate Bulletin). The eight-year time frame begins with the first semester a student enrolls for course work after being admitted into the program. The eight years allows for the completion of the degree, regardless of whether leave of absence time was granted to a student. **Students are responsible for keeping track of their timeline and progress in the program and adhering to SOE and university policy.**

To read about time limit completion info. in the Graduate Bulletin, go to:

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/time-limit/>

B. Continual Enrollment.

Students who commit to doctoral study are expected to make progress toward their degree each semester. The School of Education requires that students admitted into the program must complete credits as follows:

***0-36 Credits earned-** 12 credit hours per each 12-month period commencing with the first semester in which the student enrolls for course work, until didactic coursework is complete.

***36 Credits earned & Pre-Prospectus/Degree Candidacy-** 3 credits per semester during the fall and spring semesters.

***Post Prospectus/Degree Candidacy-** 3 credits of dissertation research (EDUC 899) per semester during the fall and spring semesters until 6 credit minimum requirement for dissertation credits completed. After 6 credit minimum, students can enroll in 1 credit of EDUC 899 per semester.

Students are expected to enroll themselves in the appropriate number of credits after consultation with their advisor/dissertation chair. **It is important to note that if during any particular semester, including summer, a student plans to defend his/her dissertation, graduate, or otherwise access university resources, the student must enroll in EDUC 899.** Continual enrollment is both a School of Education and Graduate School policy. Students who do not follow this policy will be considered for dismissal from the program for lack of satisfactory progress toward the degree.

See the graduate school policy on attendance and enrollment at:

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/registration-policies/>

C. Transfer Credits

Transfer credits refer to graduate courses taken after the awarding of a master's degree and prior to admission to this program, whether taken at VCU or another accredited college or university.

To request credits to be transferred to your program coursework, you must submit the following to Office of Graduate Studies:

1. Written request to transfer credits
2. Statement of support from advisor
3. Completed and signed Transfer Equivalency Form

You can request transfer equivalency form from the Office of Graduate Studies. The Office of Graduate Studies will forward those materials to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for approval and then to the Graduate School for approval and processing.

In making a request to transfer credits to this program, be aware that:

1. The Ph.D. in Education program is not as flexible as the Graduate School regarding the number of transfer credits allowed in the Ph.D. in Education program. Each case will be evaluated and approved on an individual basis by the advisor and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies.
2. You may not apply credits earned toward another degree (VCU or outside institution).
3. You must have received a grade of "B" or above in each course for which you are requesting transfer.
4. A course from another institution requested to be transferred must be equivalent to a VCU course in content. VCU course descriptions can be found on the VCU website at <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/azcourses/>
5. Transfer credits cannot be more than **eight years** old at time of completion of all requirements for awarding of the Ph.D. in Education degree.

For credits earned at another institution during the program:

If you have already begun the program and want to take a course at another university for the purposes of transferring credits, you will need to first request permission from your advisor. Your request should include:

- a. the name of the school
- b. course description of requested course
- c. VCU course to be substituted- must relate to concentration area
- d. statement of support from your advisor

Submit request with items listed above to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. After taking course (s), you must submit official transcripts along with transfer equivalency form signed by advisor to OGS. The Office of Graduate Studies will forward those materials to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for approval and submit along with special action request form to the VCU Graduate School for processing.

To access the Graduate School policy on transfer credits go to:
<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/transfer-credit/>

D. Leave of Absence

After enrolling in program coursework, a student may request a leave of absence at any time. A Leave of Absence request is only needed if a student wishes to take absence for two consecutive semesters. **The time limit on a leave of absence is 1 year**, meaning a student must reenroll one year after the last semester of enrollment to avoid penalty. For example, if a student is enrolled the fall semester and takes absence in the spring and summer semesters, they must enroll the following semester. The student must submit written request to Office of Graduate Studies along with statement of approval from advisor. It is the student's responsibility to contact student accounting and/or financial aid to inquire about any impacts the leave of absence will have on student bill or any financial awards received. **A request for a leave of absence must be submitted and approved prior to the start of the semester the leave of absence is to begin.**

When a leave of absence is granted, the original eight-year time limit for completing the degree requirements, including successfully defending the dissertation, remains in effect. Students are responsible for consulting advisor and checking university calendar for registration deadlines prior to their return and that they are enrolled for the semester they are slated to return. **Failure to do this may result in the student needing to reapply to the program as the university only permits a maximum period of one year for a leave of absence.** If the requested leave of absence includes exceeding the time limit in the program, a request for a program extension with a letter of support from the advisor is required.

E. Withdrawal from Courses & Program

Withdrawal from Courses

To formally drop or withdraw from VCU courses, students must go online via e-services (<http://www.ts.vcu.edu/askit/university-resources/eservices/>). Failure to formally drop a course by deadline will result in student bill and failure to formally withdraw from courses by deadline may result in assignment of failing grades.

Please note there is a difference between a course withdrawal and course drop.

-Course Drop- Completed before the end of add/drop registration period at the beginning of the semester. Course is removed from registration record and no financial penalty

-Course Withdrawal- Course will remain on student academic record with grade of "W" and student retains financial responsibility for the course.

To avoid being billed for a course, the course must be dropped (not withdrawn) before the registration deadline of that semester which can be found on the University calendar at <https://academiccalendars.vcu.edu>.

To see more on the Graduate School course withdrawal vs. course drop policy, please go to: <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/drop-withdraw/>

Withdrawal from Program

To withdraw from the program, a student must submit a written request to their advisor, concentration coordinator and the Office of Graduate Studies stating that they wish to withdraw from program. The Office of Graduate Studies will then file a Special Action Request with the Graduate School and the student will be officially withdrawn.

A student who wishes to withdraw program must do so prior to the end of the add/drop registration period of the semester they wish to withdraw or after they have completed a semester. Students who are enrolled and request program withdrawal after the add/drop period has ended will be financially responsible for the courses withdrawn.

F. Termination from Program

The following are the conditions under which a student could be terminated or reviewed for termination from the program:

1. Reviewed for possible termination
 - a. Any grade of "D" or "F"
 - b. A grade of C prior to completing Qualifying Assessment
 - c. Two grades of C at any time in the program
 - d. A cumulative GPA of 2.99 or lower at any time in the program
2. Termination
 - a. Unprofessional conduct while a doctoral student or candidate (see VCU Code of Conduct at <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/student-conduct/>)
 - b. Violation of the VCU Honor System (see VCU Honor Code at <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/honor-system/>)
 - c. Three grades of "C" or lower while enrolled in the doctoral program
 - d. Two "U" grades or an "F" in EDUC 899: Dissertation Research

G. Reinstatement into Program

A student who has been terminated from the program may appeal to the faculty in their concentration to be reinstated. If the decision to terminate is not reversed, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the decision to terminate is reversed, the student will be reinstated into the program. The student may be allowed to register for courses during the pendency of the appeal, understanding that they will need to be dropped retroactively if the termination is upheld

H. Readmission Policy

If a student leaves the program voluntarily or because of failure to meet one or more program requirements and was not reinstated upon appeal, they may seek readmission. Readmission must be sought through the regular admission process adhering to admission deadlines. The process is as follows:

- a) The applicant submits a complete admission packet. This includes completing online admission application with updated references, GRE scores (preferably less than five years old), transcripts, resume/vita and personal statement.
- b) The applicant includes written statement in their application indicating that the

application is for readmission. This statement must include a rationale for consideration of readmission, and a summary of relevant factors that have changed the applicant's situation and increased the expectation of success for the applicant.

- c) The applicant's admission packet is reviewed by the coordinator and faculty of their concentration and a decision is made. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs gives final approval for readmission.

If readmitted, the applicant will be expected to meet all program requirements, including continuous enrollment, grades, program requirements, and the eight-year time limit for completion of the program. Courses previously taken will need to be transferred into the new program. Note that some courses may need to be retaken as courses with a grade of C or lower will not transfer in and courses older than eight years will need to be reviewed for relevancy.

I. Exemptions from Policy

Students may request exemptions from the general policies and procedures of the program which will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students may not request to be exempt from program requirements. To request an exemption, a student must meet with his or her advisor to discuss the requested exemption. Following the meeting with the advisor, the student submits a written request for the exemption to the Office of Graduate Studies including a written statement from the advisor indicating degree of support for the exemption.

Upon receipt of policy exemption request, there will be consultation with necessary department faculty and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and a decision will be made. After a decision is made the student and their advisor will be notified.

A student will have two weeks to appeal a decision if they wish to do so. If there is no appeal, the decision stands.

J. Appeals

Students may appeal a denial of a request for exemption to general policies and procedures. A subset of the Advisory Board will form an appeals committee which will consult and act on any student appeals. A request for an appeal must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies within two weeks of decision.

To appeal a decision a student first meets with his or her advisor to discuss the request, decision and appeal. Following the meeting with the advisor, the student submits a written statement of appeal to Office of Graduate Studies including a statement from advisor indicating their degree of support (within two weeks of decision). Within two weeks of receiving the student's appeal statement, it is reviewed by designated department faculty and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and a decision is made and the student and advisor will be notified.

If the Appeals Committee does overturn a decision to terminate a student from the program, the Office of Graduate Studies will forward a special action form and all supporting documentation regarding the decision to the VCU Graduate School.

The student has the right to appeal decisions on termination to the Graduate School after receiving official notification from the department.

Please see the Graduate School policy for more information about the appeals process:
<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/dismissal/>

PRE-CANDIDACY CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 48-54 credits will be required to earn the Ph.D. in Education from the School of Education at Virginia Commonwealth University depending on concentration. These courses include program requirements as well as concentration requirements and electives chosen within the School of Education or throughout the university. In addition to the required credit hours, students are required to engage in co-curricular activities with one or more faculty mentors to increase skills and gain experience related to their long range career goals and scholarly interests. The Ph.D. in Education Curriculum Overview provides an outline of program requirements and concentration-specific requirements (See Appendices B and C).

All program coursework (excluding the dissertation) must total a minimum of 39 credit hours. Of those credits, no more than 12 credit hours can be at the 500 level. Students are encouraged to take a minimum of three credits outside of the School of Education (this can be a course that meets other program requirements such as the research elective or a concentration class) or it may be a requirement over and above the required minimum.

In addition to the formal prerequisites and requirements related to the Ph.D. in Education program, students are encouraged to prepare in other ways for the dissertation seminar as well as completion of the dissertation itself. Students should focus on both general, long term, and more immediate and specific preparation in the following areas:

1. Evolving a scholarly knowledge of a broad area leading to dissertation research. As the student progresses through the program, he or she should select electives and course work that will focus on promising and interesting areas for dissertation research. In general, the more thorough the scholarly understanding of relevant areas, the smoother the process of dissertation development. Topic areas can be discarded, refined, or explored further. Specific research questions can be generated.
2. Developing or refining the tools that can enhance and support the development of a prospectus and dissertation. A working knowledge of resources that will facilitate research, writing, and manuscript preparation can assure clear, accurate communication about the dissertation topic. Awareness of and experience in using the reference tools, primary sources, periodicals, organizations, and other research tools in the topical area are critical skills for successful dissertation preparation. Course experiences in selecting research design, processing data, summarizing studies and critiquing reports should be applied and practiced whenever possible. In addition, the use of word processing, referencing software and other computerized aids to complete course assignments and

research papers throughout the doctoral program can be expected to increase the quality and speed of dissertation preparation.

3. Forge the scholarly and collegial links that can foster direction and support during the dissertation development process. Look for faculty who are conducting research using methodology that would be useful for your dissertation study and work with them as one of your co-curricular activities. Course instructors, externship placement contacts, workshop presenters and faculty members provide vital avenues for networking that can, in turn, contribute depth and breadth as the dissertation committee is determined and as the dissertation evolves. The individual interests and talents of each individual can provide further sources and resources, both formal and informal, during various phases of dissertation development.

A. Prerequisite Courses.

Concentration coordinators and relevant faculty members review transcripts of newly admitted students to determine whether general research methods and statistics classes have been completed to satisfy prerequisite requirements. If it is determined that a student needs prerequisites, he or she is advised to take EDUS 660 (Research Methods in Education) and/or STAT 508 (Statistics for the Social Sciences) at VCU, or the equivalent at another institution or online. The SOE Office of Graduate Studies will notify the student and their advisor about any needed prerequisites in their department admission letter. These prerequisites should be met prior to the first semester of enrollment in the program in order for the student to be ready to complete the Qualifying Assessment in a timely manner. Plan for completing program prerequisites should be discussed with and approved by the student's advisor.

B. Foundation Component (6 hours minimum)

This component emphasizes theoretical and social issues of scholarly inquiry, policy, and ethics which all leaders in urban service institutions must research in order to be better able to respond to the challenges they confront in their organizations. The courses in this component include the following:

- a. **EDUS 702: Foundations of Educational Research & Doctoral Scholarship I** is the first course of a two-semester sequence and is designed to explore the limits and validity of scholarly inquiry and research within a social and political context.
- b. **EDUS 703: Foundations of Educational Research & Doctoral Scholarship II** is the second course of a two-semester sequence and is designed to examine in greater detail the limits and validity of relationships between politics, policy and ethics and research in an urban context.

C. Research Component (12 hours minimum)

This component emphasizes the skills essential to designing, conducting, interpreting, and reporting research. Students are required to demonstrate competency in areas of research methodology and statistics appropriate to doctoral level study and must obtain a grade of B or better in EDUS 660 and STAT 508 or the equivalent, prior to enrolling for courses in this

component. The courses included in this component are the following:

EDUS 608: Educational Statistics

EDUS 710: Educational Research Design (quantitative methods)

EDUS 711: Qualitative Methods and Analysis

Advanced Research Elective

*The foundation and research courses mentioned above should be completed in the beginning of program in preparation for the qualifying assessment that must be completed after the first year in the program.

D. Concentration Component: Concentration Options (18 hours minimum)

This component is designed to allow the student to pursue a series of courses that provide a specific focus and serve as the student's primary discipline. These courses are expected to develop the in-depth knowledge and skills in an identifiable area that is congruent with the student's current or projected career field. It is at this point in the program that the student pursues study in their designated concentration, which includes courses related to the professional roles and responsibilities typical of concentration enrollees. See Appendix B for concentration specific courses. In addition, each concentration requires co-curricular activities.

*Concentration courses should be taken either simultaneously with the foundation and research courses mentioned above or taken after completing the foundation and research courses described above.

E. Co-curricular Activities.

Although not a credit-earning part of the program, co-curricular activities are essential to help prepare doctoral candidates for their future roles as researchers, university faculty, administrators, and other leadership positions. Students will work with their advisors to determine necessary co-curricular activities, which are chosen in light of concentration requirements, student experience, and goals for individual student's professional development. Examples of co-curricular activities include conducting research, teaching at the university level, participation in preparing a proposal for a grant-funded project, presentation at a state or national professional conference, writing a manuscript for publication, and/or participation in leadership positions. Participation in these activities will be monitored and documented by the student's advisor. Students must complete at least one co-curricular activity and complete a co-curricular activity form (Appendix D), and obtain approval and signature from advisor and submit it to the Office of Graduate Studies before beginning the co-curricular activity. The form is available on the SOE Doctoral Program blackboard page.

F. Independent Study.

Only six credit hours of independent study can be applied towards the minimum 48 credits required for the doctoral program, however, students may find in consultation with their advisor that they need to take additional independent study courses above the six credit limit. Students and their advisors must complete and submit the independent study form with signatures to the Office of Graduate Studies prior to beginning the independent study. Independent Studies should be completed within the start and end date of a semester which can be viewed on the VCU

academic calendar. The independent study form (See Appendix E) is available on the SOE Doctoral Program blackboard page.

G. Externship (3 hours minimum).

The externship is a semester-long experience designed to enhance the student's program, career goals, and professional development. The externship site is typically an off-campus planned experience, outside the setting in which the student is currently employed, and ideally in a different but related career area in which the student has had no or limited prior work experience. It is expected that the student will develop an appreciation for the network of service delivery systems in the urban setting and acquire additional leadership skills to function more effectively within that network. It is important that students discuss their ideas for an externship with their advisor and/or concentration coordinator as concentrations may have specific requirements and/or guidelines for this experience.

**Students may not register for the externship until they have successfully complete the Qualifying Assessment and been awarded Continuing Doctoral Status. The externship application must be signed, approved and submitted to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies prior to beginning the externship. Externships should be completed within the start and end date of a semester. See Appendix F for additional details regarding the Externship and the Externship Application Form. **

H. EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar.

This course is designed to help students develop a dissertation research concept into the components of a dissertation prospectus. Students who have not had the opportunity to participate in co-curricular activities, coursework, or research projects under the direction of a faculty mentor resulting in a critical review of the literature in the area of their dissertation should plan to take this course. The course offers students with structure and support to conceptualize and draft the prospectus.

All students should work closely with their doctoral advisor/dissertation chair to plan for integrating the seminar in their program of study. Ideally, all program coursework and the comprehensive exam will be completed prior to enrollment in 890. Students should have completed all research methods courses and be enrolled in their last semester of required didactic coursework at the time of enrollment in 890.

See Appendix G for the Concept Paper guidelines and Appendix H for the Concept Paper Approval Form. Students who take EDUS 890 must pass this seminar with a grade of "B" or better in order to enroll in EDUC 899: Dissertation Research. Students who wish to opt out of taking EDUS 890 must have permission from their advisor, submit one-page abstract describing the context for and purpose of the dissertation study and the Dissertation Committee Agreement Form. For additional information about EDUS 890 see the dissertation section of this handbook.

PROGRAM PLANNING

A. Advisor

- a. Role of the Advisor
 - i. Meets periodically with the advisee;
 - ii. Provides appropriate advice, support and counseling;
 - iii. Assists with planning program of study and monitors advisee's progress in the program;
 - iv. Identifies and evaluates appropriate co-curricular experiences; and
 - v. Assists the student in completing required paperwork.

****Students are responsible for initiating correspondence with their designated advisors**

- b. Request to Change Advisor

The student may maintain their originally assigned advisor for the duration of the program or may change their advisor through mutual agreement with and consent of their current advisor, the requested advisor, and the concentration coordinator. If a student requests an advisor outside of their concentration, the concentration coordinator for the chosen advisor must review and approve the request.

A student must complete and submit Change of Advisor form with required signatures to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies to be added to the student's record. The Change of Advisor form is available on the SOE Doctoral Program Canvas page.

- c. Advisor as Dissertation Chair

The advisor may become the chair of the student's dissertation research committee or the student and the advisor may, upon mutual agreement, opt to invite another faculty member to be the chair. If a student does opt to invite another faculty member to chair their dissertation committee, they will take over academic advising duties and a Change of Advisor form should be completed and submitted to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies.

B. Preliminary Program of Study.

Students and their advisor develop a preliminary program of study (See Appendix I) and must submit to the Office of Graduate Studies **prior to the end of the student's first semester in the program.** Though it is anticipated that the preliminary program of study will change, it is the expectation that students will register for courses based on the sequence of courses outlined on their program of study in consultation with their advisor with minimal revision. Completing the preliminary program of study assures that students meet with advisors and take the most important courses required to complete the Qualifying Assessment. In addition, it assures that students and advisors have time to explore possibilities for co-curricular activities and mentors.

C. Revised Program of Study.

The student's Revised Program of Study (See Appendix J) is completed after the student has completed their Qualifying Assessment. During post Qualifying Assessment meeting with advisor, the student's performance on the Qualifying Assessment is examined and any needed remediation is discussed and planned. The student and advisor will complete and submit the Post Qualifying Assessment meeting form (Appendix K), Qualifying Assessment remediation plan if necessary and revised program of study with required signatures to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies. A reminder students are expected to register for courses as outlined on their program of study.

D. Final Program of Study

The final program of study will be submitted after the student has taken their comprehensive exam. The final program of study will be used to ensure that all degree requirements are met before submitting the candidacy form to the Graduate School. See Appendix L.

*Please be sure to use the appropriate program of study form when submitting to OGS

E. Concentration Transfer

In the event that a student would like to transfer from one concentration to another, the student submits written request to their advisor and current concentration coordinator as well as the concentration coordinator of the concentration they wish to transfer to. Student's admission materials and program documents will be reviewed. Students may need to complete an interview or submit a writing sample if the concentration coordinator requests.

It is important to note that a change in concentrations may necessitate the student taking additional course work. When a student is considering a request for a change in program concentration, it is recommended that they talk with their current concentration coordinator and concentration coordinator of the concentration they wish to transfer to who can provide more details about the expertise of faculty and the courses that are part of the concentration.

After both the current and requested concentration coordinators have reviewed the transfer request, they will notify both the student and SOE Office of Graduate Studies of their decision based on the best interest of the student. If the concentration transfer request is approved, the SOE Office of Graduate Studies will submit special action form to the Graduate School.

STUDENT EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

Admission to the doctoral program is based upon an assessment of the student's academic strengths, professional experience, and leadership potential, all of which affect the probability of successfully completing the doctoral program. Such success is dependent upon the doctoral student's continuing growth in knowledge acquisition, concept synthesis, and integrative application.

Thus, periodic student evaluation while enrolled in the doctoral program is important in three ways: (1) it is beneficial to the student in assessing his or her progress; (2) it is essential in determining the student's probability of successful program completion; and (3) it is critical to the maintenance of program integrity.

A. Grades

Within the doctoral program, course grades provide an important evaluative tool for students, as well as guidance for advisors. While doctoral students by their very admission into a doctoral program have demonstrated skills and knowledge beyond that of Masters level students, performance in individual courses with specific content and expectations can vary widely. Average doctoral work should, therefore, be at a "B" level or higher. Course grades will be

monitored and students and advisors should be aware of the following:

1. Students in the Ph.D. in Education Program must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.2 to graduate.
2. Students who receive a grade of "C" or below or the grade of "U" (Unsatisfactory) on required graduate course work will be reviewed for possible action.
3. No grades below "C" will be accepted for Continuing Doctoral Status (CDS).
4. A student who earns three grades of "C" while enrolled in the doctoral program is automatically reviewed for termination.
5. A student earning any grade of "D" or "F" is automatically reviewed for termination.
6. A student who receives two "U" grades or an "F" in EDUC 899: Dissertation Research will automatically be reviewed for termination from the program.

B. Qualifying Assessment

Students must successfully complete the Qualifying Assessment portfolio after earning 18 credits in the program. Students are responsible for contacting their advisor to coordinate completing the Qualifying Assessment.

The purpose of the qualifying Assessment is to:

1. assure that students have the appropriate foundational knowledge and skills necessary to progress through their doctoral program
2. to identify students who need further review and determine appropriate remediation.
3. allow early identification of students who may not be sufficiently competent to continue in the program

The Qualifying Assessment will provide a single measure of student knowledge, understanding, and application of the foundations and research/statistics/measurement areas. The assessment will assess student competencies that integrate previously taken foundations and research courses (EDUS 660 and STAT 508 as program pre-requisites; EDUS 608, EDUS 702, EDUS 703 and EDUS 710) and require students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key concepts.

Please see Appendix T for the content of the Qualifying Assessment.

a. Student Feedback from Qualifying Assessment

The content/portfolio items of a concentration's Qualifying Assessment is determined by the faculty of that concentration. Students must meet with their advisor to discuss materials to be submitted, items reviewed and timeline for completing the Qualifying Assessment in compliance with SOE policy. The Qualifying Assessment should be completed and result documented prior to the student completing 21 credits in the program.

When a student completes the Qualifying Assessment, a follow up meeting must be held between the student and the advisor to:

1. Discuss result of Qualifying Assessment and complete Qualifying Assessment Report form
2. Discuss any remediation plans or steps to be taken as a result of the qualifying assessment.
 - i. Student may be counseled out of the program as the concentration faculty considers qualifying assessment performance in conjunction with other aspects of student performance as part of the post qualifying assessment review.
 - ii. Remediation may include: additional review of course readings, additional coursework
3. Complete the revised program of study.
4. Complete the Post-Qualifying Assessment Advising form (Appendix K).
5. Forward post-qualifying assessment advising meeting summary form (Appendix K), revised program of study and electronic copy of qualifying assessment portfolio to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies for Continuing Doctoral Status (CDS) approval (see next section).

***These forms must be submitted to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies to avoid disruption in proceeding in the program.**

b. Continuing Doctoral Status

Students who have successfully completed the Qualifying Assessment (after 18 credits earned) and who have earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at time of successful completion of qualifying assessment will be awarded Continuing Doctoral Status (CDS).

Students who do not complete the qualifying assessment successfully and/or have not earned a cumulative GPA of 3.0 will have a joint conference with their advisor and concentration coordinator to develop a plan designed to achieve CDS. The plan will include:

1. A review of a statement written by the student concerning their progress in the program, citing strengths, and possible deficiencies, and suggesting ways to improve the GPA.
2. List of courses or requirements designated by advisor that the student will complete to achieve CDS.
3. Timeline for completing requirements for CDS- not to exceed the next two consecutive semesters

C. Comprehensive Examination

From its inception, the SOE Ph.D. in Education Program has been designed to develop interdisciplinary conceptual skills beyond the traditional in-depth extension of the master's program and to emphasize rigorous thinking and the capacity to integrate theory with practice. The comprehensive examination component of the program seeks to ensure that each degree candidate can demonstrate the ability to conceptualize, apply, and communicate information at an advanced, doctoral level.

The developing, administrating and grading the comprehensive examination for a specific concentration is coordinated by the faculty of the concentration. Students need to meet and consult with their advisor the semester prior to when they intend to complete the comprehensive examination. **The Comprehensive exam should be successfully completed prior to enrollment in EDUS 890 or EDUC 899.** Students must successfully complete the comprehensive exam to avoid disruption in their completion of the program.

For an overview of each concentration's policy see Appendix M. For specific comprehensive exam information, students should consult with their advisor or concentration coordinator. When comprehensive examination is completed, the comprehensive exam report form (Appendix N) must be completed, signed and submitted to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies.

*Note: Students must be enrolled the semester in which the examination will be completed. If the student has no other program courses for which to register, they can register for EDUS 641.

THE DISSERTATION AND ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

A. Prospectus

After qualifying assessment, co-curricular activities, externship, all didactic coursework and the comprehensive exam are completed; the doctoral student begins the process of completing their prospectus and advancement to candidacy. The first step is writing a prospectus for a study that is a contribution to the student's discipline literature and is acceptable to the dissertation committee. To support and guide prospectus writing, EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar is strongly recommended. To ensure maximum benefit from the Dissertation Seminar, the student is required to write a concept paper so it is clear that the topic is a viable one. Alternatively, a student who has sufficient research experience, or has conducted an extensive critical review of the literature in the area of the dissertation, and is well along in drafting the prospectus, may, with the advisor's approval, opt out of EDUS 890 and work independently with their dissertation chair and committee to complete the prospectus. If a student wishes to opt out of EDUS 890, they must submit the following, with advisor approval, to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies:

- EDUS 890 opt out approval form
- A Final Program of Study form (signed by student and advisor/chair)
- Dissertation Committee Agreement Form (if not already submitted)
- One-page abstract that provides an overview of the dissertation study

After the previously mentioned documents have been completed and submitted to SOE Office of Graduate Studies, the student may enroll in EDUC 899 credits in consultation with their advisor.

a. Dissertation Seminar and the Concept Paper

EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar This course is designed to help students develop a dissertation research concept into the components of a dissertation prospectus. Students who have not had the opportunity to participate in co-curricular activities, coursework, or research projects under the direction of a faculty mentor, resulting in a critical review of the literature in the area of their dissertation should plan to take this course. The course offers students with structure and support to conceptualize and draft the prospectus.

All students should work closely with their doctoral advisor/dissertation chair to plan for integrating the seminar in their program of study. It is the expectation that all required didactic coursework and comprehensive exam will be completed prior to enrollment in 890. See Appendix G for the Concept Paper guidelines and Appendix H for the Concept Paper Approval Form. The Concept Paper will need to be submitted prior to enrollment in 890. The concept paper is distinct and separate from the doctoral comprehensive exam. Students who take EDUS 890 must pass this seminar with a grade of “B” or better in order to enroll in EDUC 899: Dissertation Research. Students who wish to opt out of taking EDUS 890 must have permission from their dissertation chair and submit a Dissertation Committee Form, and a one-page abstract describing the context for and the purpose of the dissertation study. For additional information about EDUS 890 see the dissertation section of this handbook.

b. Selecting a Dissertation Topic

A doctoral dissertation study should be an original study, designed to add to the body of knowledge in the student’s discipline. It should be chosen carefully; being large enough to serve as a foundation for a future research agenda (particularly for doctoral candidates who plan to pursue a tenure-track position at a university), but targeted enough to assure that it can be accomplished within a reasonable timeframe. The student proceeds to conduct a careful review of the literature to identify the research question(s). For many students this will be reflected in the concept paper which is submitted prior to enrolling in EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar.

c. Format for the Prospectus and Dissertation

The prospectus is a detailed plan of the student’s dissertation. As such, it should conform to the guidelines in the VCU Thesis and Dissertation Manual, as well as School of Education requirements. VCU Thesis and Dissertation Manual can be found on the graduate school website at <https://graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html>. Please see Appendix U for details.

B. The Dissertation Committee

After the student has been awarded Continuing Doctoral Status and prior to completing EDUS 890, the student should meet with their advisor to select a dissertation committee.

a. Selecting the Dissertation Committee

The committee must be selected and names submitted for approval to the Office of Graduate Studies by the end of the semester in which the student completes EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar. It is highly recommended that students choose dissertation committee members PRIOR to beginning EDUS 890. Process should be as follows:

1. Within the above stated time frame and the student has a clear idea of their dissertation topic, students meet with their advisor to agree on a Dissertation Chair. There is no expectation that the advisor will necessarily chair the student's dissertation committee. If a student and their advisor do decide to invite another faculty member to chair their dissertation committee, that faculty member takes over academic advising duties for the student.
2. With the Dissertation Chair, the student identifies faculty members with expertise in the dissertation area. Members should be chosen based on their knowledge of the content and/or methodology of the dissertation study. One member must be an expert in methodology, although there does not necessarily need to be a separate methodologist (that is, the methodologist could also be the chair, or VCU faculty outside the School of Education). The student contacts those individuals to determine their interest and willingness to serve. If any person declines to serve, the student and the dissertation chair select a replacement. This procedure is followed until all selected committee members have agreed to serve.

See the Responsibilities of Dissertation Committee Members section of this handbook for more detailed explanation of the responsibilities of the student, committee chair, and committee members. The final committee must have a minimum of four members. **Three of the members, including the chair, must be graduate faculty in the School of Education (with the exception of the Art Ed concentration). The fourth member must be a VCU graduate faculty member outside of the School of Education.**

For students in the Art Education concentration, committee will be four members including two graduate faculty members in the School of the Arts and one graduate faculty member in the School of Education. The fourth member can be a SOE graduate faculty member or VCU graduate faculty outside of the School of the Arts and School of Education.

If a student wishes to have a committee member from outside the university or additional SOE committee member serve on their committee, this must be approved by their advisor, concentration coordinator and department chair.

3. All members of a dissertation committee must have graduate faculty status or affiliate graduate faculty status.

Students must check the Graduate School website at <https://graduate.vcu.edu/facstaff/>

To make sure their selected dissertation committee members are listed and have graduate faculty status prior to submitting dissertation committee agreement form to SOE Office of Graduate Studies. Students can also check with the Graduate School directly at gradschool@vcu.edu or 804-828-2233 to confirm a committee member's faculty status.

If a student chooses an individual for his or committee that does not have graduate faculty status or affiliate graduate faculty status with VCU, they can obtain faculty status by submitting a Graduate/Affiliate Faculty Status Appointment Request form (Appendix P) to the Office of Graduate Studies along with copy of the vita of the requested committee member.

Please Note- No person may serve on a dissertation committee if such service would create the appearance of conflict of interest. For example, a student working with an agency or commercial organization may not have their supervisor serve on the committee.

4. Once all committee members have agreed to serve on the committee, the student submits a Dissertation Committee Agreement Form (along with any needed faculty status requests) to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies. The Office of Graduate Studies will review the proposed members and will approve the candidates submitted or may reject candidates who appear to have a conflict of interest. (See Dissertation Committee Agreement Form- Appendix O).

Please Note-Barring resignations, members of a dissertation committee continue to serve until the candidate's research is completed and successfully defended.

If changes are made to a student's dissertation committee then a new dissertation committee form must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies. If a committee member leaves the university prior to dissertation defense and wishes to still serve on committee then a faculty status request form must be submitted. An affiliate faculty member cannot serve as chair on the committee.

b. Responsibilities of the Candidate, Dissertation Chair, and Committee Members

1. The Candidate

The dissertation is the candidate's research, but it is the candidate's responsibility to seek out and act upon guidance from the dissertation chair and each committee member. At the same time, the candidate should recognize that faculty workloads vary during the year, so that contacting a committee member, scheduling an appointment, critiquing a written draft, and similar activities may unavoidably require extra time in some instances. Maintaining contact, however, will facilitate the good communication that helps make the dissertation development process a rewarding experience for all. Early in the dissertation process, the student should meet with the chair to establish a realistic time-line for completing the dissertation.

Responsibilities of the Candidate:

- a. Select a dissertation chair, or co-chairs, with guidance from his or her advisor.

b. Nominate committee members with guidance from the dissertation chair(s) and submit Dissertation Committee Approval form to the Office of Graduate Studies after obtaining required signatures.

c. Establish attainable research goals, with the approval of the dissertation chair and committee members.

d. Develop a formal written prospectus that includes an introduction, a review of literature that includes all major studies relevant to the specific research questions, and the methodology to be used. Prepare formal written materials in an accurate and scholarly form by:

- 1) following the *VCU Thesis and Dissertation Manual* and the *American Psychological Association (APA) Manual 7th Edition* for both prospectus and dissertation; and ensuring compliance with academic integrity and research ethics (for details see <http://www.research.vcu.edu/orie/> and VCU Honor System at <https://conduct.students.vcu.edu/vcu-honor-system>
- 2) assuring that prior to submission for formal review or defense, the format, grammar, and editing of the written prospectus and dissertation are accurate.

e. Meet required deadlines for submission of written materials by:

- 1) Distributing copies of the completed prospectus to the dissertation chair, each committee member, and the Office of Graduate Studies, at least 21 calendar days prior to the date of the prospectus review.
- 2) Distributing copies of the completed dissertation to the dissertation chair, each committee member, and the Office of Graduate Studies, at least 21 calendar days prior to the date of the dissertation defense.

f. Submit the appropriate application to the VCU Institutional Review Board. In addition, seek IRB approval before making any changes to the research protocol.

g. Receive formal committee approval of the prospectus and IRB approval before beginning data collection. Submit copy of IRB approval to Office of Graduate Studies.

h. Understand that when the prospectus is approved by the dissertation committee at the prospectus hearing, it becomes an agreed upon plan between the candidate and committee. Any changes in the approved prospectus must be discussed with committee and approved in writing by the committee.

- i. Consult with and be guided by the dissertation chair and committee members throughout the research process. Although the specific interaction between the candidate and committee may vary, the candidate is expected to make appointments and, when requested, submit written drafts at least 7 calendar days prior to meeting with the dissertation chair or committee members.
- j. Understand and be prepared to defend the research methods and data analyses used in the dissertation.
- k. Assume responsibility with the dissertation chair for the final proofreading of the dissertation.
- l. Submit copy of the approved final dissertation electronically to SOE OGS and complete exit forms. Also submit the approved final electronic dissertation to VCU Scholars Compass. See guidelines at the Graduate School website: <https://graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html>

2. The Dissertation Chair

Serving as a dissertation chair constitutes a major responsibility to the candidate, the School of Education, and the Ph.D. Program. For the dissertation chair, the dissertation process requires extended involvement with both the candidate and committee members. It is time-consuming and, at times, demanding. At the same time, it provides an intellectual challenge unlike any other University responsibility. Through successful guidance of a completed dissertation, the chair not only contributes to the expansion of knowledge in a given field, but also becomes an integral part of that contribution as the dissertation becomes a basis for future research.

Responsibilities of the Dissertation Chair:

- a. Guides the candidate in:
 - 1) Developing a scholarly, researchable question.
 - 2) Preparing the written outline or summary of the problem statement, research question, and methodology.
 - 3) Selecting and utilizing instrumentation and statistical analyses congruent with the methodology and research design.
 - 4) Ensuring academic integrity and VCU honors system are followed.
- b. Establishes times when available to guide the candidate with prospectus and dissertation drafts.

- c. Establishes, with the candidate, attainable research goals and a reasonable time frame for completing the steps in the dissertation process.
- d. Clarifies for the candidate and committee members the role of the candidate, chair, co-chair (where appropriate), and committee; and suggests ways in which each can contribute most effectively to the dissertation development process.
- e. Advises the candidate when materials are at an appropriate level of completeness to share with committee members, as well as when to communicate progress or problems.
- f. Assists the candidate in preparing the application for the VCU Institutional Review Board or the Exempt Research Committee. For IRB purposes, the chair is the principal investigator for the research and is required to have current CITI certification.
- g. Guides the candidate in developing content and format, as well as in using appropriate grammar and style; and assures that the final document is without error and suitable for publication.
- h. Supervises the preparation of and approves both the prospectus and the dissertation prior to the formal review and the defense.
- i. Assists as needed with scheduling the candidate's prospectus hearing and dissertation defense through the SOE Office of Graduate Studies.
- j. Maintains a climate that facilitates constructive discussion during the prospectus hearing.
- k. Guides the student in enrolling in the appropriate number of credit hours each semester of EDUC 899: Dissertation Research and submits a grade of Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or Fail for dissertation credit during each semester in which the candidate is enrolled in EDUC 899.
- l. Maintains a climate conducive to a fair review of the candidate's dissertation research during the dissertation defense.
- m. Ensures that all committee members sign the appropriate forms related to the defense.

3. Co-chair

Because of the need for special expertise from a given committee member, it may be appropriate to appoint a person on the committee to serve as co-chair. It is anticipated that this person would, comparatively speaking, provide more consultation than any other committee member except the chair.

Responsibilities of the Co-Chair:

- a. Confers with the dissertation chair on his or her role on the committee.
- b. Provides needed in-depth review of the areas of the dissertation that are their area of expertise.
- c. Guides the candidate in areas of the dissertation research in which they have expertise.
- d. Participates in the prospectus review and dissertation defense.

4. Dissertation Committee Members

The expertise of each committee member is essential to the development of the candidate's dissertation research, and as such, will be reflected in the quality of the final product. The contributions and support of each committee member helps assure that the candidate will complete a quality dissertation.

Responsibilities of Committee Members:

- a. Assist the candidate by:
 - 1) Critiquing all written materials submitted by the candidate.
 - 2) Conferring in the selection of instrumentation and statistical analyses congruent with the research design.
 - 3) Providing content, methodological, and/or statistical expertise related to the research problem under study.
- b. Presents concerns and suggestions to the dissertation chair and candidate during the prospectus development process.
- c. Recommends additional committee meetings to the dissertation chair when needed
- d. Participates in the prospectus review and dissertation defense.

C. Prospectus Hearing

The dissertation chair is responsible for reviewing content and determining that a prospectus meets university and School of Education guidelines and ready for formal review. When, in the opinion of the dissertation chair, the prospectus is ready for critical review, and the student has completed all required coursework, co-curriculars, and the comprehensive exam, a prospectus hearing is scheduled. To schedule a prospectus hearing, a student must:

- 1. Get approval from dissertation chair (after review of grades and program requirements) to schedule prospectus hearing.
- 2. Consult committee and select date to hold prospectus hearing via zoom

3. E-mail Office of Graduate Studies at winnkb@vcu.edu for prospectus hearing request form that must be completed and returned.
4. Submit prospectus hearing request form **2 weeks** prior to prospectus hearing with zoom meeting information.
5. Submit electronic copy of prospectus to committee and to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies **2 weeks** prior to hearing. Copies must be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies at winnkb@vcu.edu. The Prospectus must meet the requirements of the *VCU Thesis and Dissertation manual* before submission.

E-mailing the Office of Graduate Studies is essential for timely announcement to the School of Education.

*Prospectus hearing must be held within the first and last day of class of a semester.

a. Prospectus Approval Process

Upon completion of the prospectus hearing, the committee reaches a conclusion about moving forward with data collection. A minimum of three positive votes is required for approval. The committee may decide to:

- a) approve the prospectus without changes
- b) approve with specified changes,
- c) disapprove the prospectus altogether

The committee will share their decision with the student. The dissertation chair must notify the Office of Graduate Studies of the committee's decision to initiate required documents to be signed via DocuSign. These forms include the Prospectus Review Report (See Appendix Q) and VCU Advancement to Candidacy Form (Appendix R).

If the prospectus is approved without changes, the dissertation chair will notify the Office of Graduate Studies and forms to be signed will be initiated. If the prospectus is approved with specified changes, the dissertation chair needs to provide document of changes to be made to the student and to the Office of Graduate Studies. If required changes are minor, forms for prospectus approval can still be completed.

If the prospectus is not approved, the committee explicitly identifies in writing changes to be made and steps to be taken for approval and provides copy to student and the Office of Graduate Studies and the Prospectus Review Report will be completed. **Student should submit required changes to committee within 5 days of hearing and committee should review and approve changes within 5 days of receipt.**

When required changes are completed and prospectus is approved, the Committee Chair must alert the Office of Graduate Studies so the VCU Advancement to Candidacy Form can be completed. If prospectus is still not approved after submitted changes then a meeting with the student, dissertation chair, department chair and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is held to determine next steps the student must take.

Degree Candidacy will be awarded after successful completion of prospectus and completion and submission of the Prospectus Review Report and the Advancement to Degree Candidacy form.

b. VCU Institutional Review Board

Initial CITI Training Requirement

VCU requires all research personnel on a study to complete the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) Basic Course before beginning human subjects research. For details please see: http://www.research.vcu.edu/human_research/citi_requirements.htm

VCU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews all proposed research studies that involve human subjects. Prior to prospectus hearing, the candidate with their adviser determines whether the study meets the requirements for exempt, expedited, or full board review. If the study requires IRB approval, the approval process must be initiated prior to prospectus hearing.

Please see the website for Human subjects research at http://www.research.vcu.edu/human_research/index.htm for details. The getting started guide may be particularly helpful. When submitting the research protocol through VCU RAMS-IRB, please select the Department Chair as the PI for review and approval. In addition, please designate the SOE Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development and Research Director as editors (field 5 on RAMS-IRB submissions for exempt, expedited, or full board review (this information can be found on the SOE website at <https://soe.vcu.edu/directory/>).

While the dissertation chair is the principal investigator for all dissertation research studies, **it is the students' responsibility to ensure that IRB approval has been obtained before beginning any data collection activities.** Students using secondary data must contact and receive formal approval from IRB before the use of any data.

- c. **Advancement to Candidacy.** A student becomes a Ph.D. candidate after having completed all coursework required for the degree, including EDUS 890 (unless the student has opted out), passed the comprehensive exam, and successfully presented the prospectus. Students who have fulfilled all of these requirements must alert the Office of Graduate Studies to have Advancement to Candidacy form completed.

Please see the Graduate Bulletin for more information about degree candidacy:
<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/>

D. Doctoral Candidacy and Dissertation

Congratulations! You are now ready to complete the final phase of your program, the dissertation study. A minimum of 9 dissertation credits is required, three of which can be EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar. With approval from advisor and submission of required documents, Students who do not take EDUS 890 may begin taking dissertation credits (EDUC 899) after completing didactic coursework. The student is required to maintain continual enrollment during

the dissertation process and is required to register for dissertation credits EACH semester that they are using university resources, including consulting with the dissertation committee.

1. The student is required to consult with their dissertation chair each semester prior to registering for dissertation research hours. The student must register for a minimum of three credit hours of dissertation research each semester, until the required six credits are met. A minimum of nine dissertation credits are required if a student has opted out of EDUS 890 with permission. However, if the dissertation requires additional time for completion, the student is required to register for a minimum of one credit hour of dissertation research each subsequent semester, including the summer session if the students will need to access university resources. This is continued until the dissertation is successfully defended.
2. At the end of each semester the dissertation chair submits a grade of “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory” for the dissertation credits for which the student has enrolled. **If the dissertation chair is not the listed instructor for the student’s EDUC 899 course, they must submit grade earned to the listed instructor prior to grade submission deadline to be posted in e-services.**
3. A student who receives two "U" grades or an “F” in EDUC 899 will be reviewed for terminated from the program. All thesis and dissertation credits are to be graded each semester as satisfactory (S), unsatisfactory (U) or fail (F). There is no limit to the number of these credits a student may take while pursuing completion of the degree. A grade of S or U is not included in the calculation of the GPA. A grade of incomplete (I) may not be assigned for a course approved for satisfactory, unsatisfactory or fail grading.”

To see the Graduate School policies on grades, go to:
<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/grading/>

a. Scheduling the Dissertation Defense

To schedule the dissertation defense, a student must:

1. Get approval from dissertation chair (after review of grades and program requirements) to schedule dissertation defense
2. Consult committee and select date to hold dissertation defense via zoom
3. E-mail Office of Graduate Studies at winnkb@vcu.edu for dissertation defense request form that must be completed and returned.
4. Submit dissertation defense request form **2 weeks** prior to defense with zoom meeting information.
5. Submit electronic copy of dissertation to committee and to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies **2 weeks** prior to defense. Copies must be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies at winnkb@vcu.edu. The Dissertation must meet the requirements of the *VCU Thesis and Dissertation manual* before submission.

E-mailing the Office of Graduate Studies is essential for timely announcement to the School

of Education.

Dissertation defenses must be held no later than 10 calendar days prior to the Graduate School's deadline for submission of final and approved dissertation to the digital archives. The School of Education's last day to defend for each semester will be posted on the SOE Doctoral Programs Canvas page at the beginning of each academic year. The Graduate School's deadline for submission to the VCU Scholars Compass can be found on the VCU Academic Calendar (<https://academiccalendars.vcu.edu/>)

*Dissertation defenses must be held within the first and last day of class of a semester.

b. Approval of the Dissertation

Following the dissertation defense, the committee deliberates and makes decision on approval. The committee may decide to

- a) approve the dissertation as written
- b) approve dissertation with minor changes
- c) request the candidate to make specific changes before approval

If minor changes (spelling, typographical or syntactical) are needed, approval forms can still be completed. The committee may empower the dissertation chair to act on its behalf in supervising the corrections. **Requested changes need to be submitted to committee within 5 calendar days of dissertation defense and committee must review and approve changes within 5 calendar days of receipt and notify the Office of Graduate Studies of its decision.**

If major changes (defined as conceptual, factual, or interpretive changes) are needed, a second meeting must be scheduled, at which time the dissertation committee reviews and acts on the revisions. **The second meeting should be scheduled within 10 calendar days of original defense unless conflict with getting changes submitted and approved prior to the university Thesis/Dissertation approval deadline, in which case the meeting should be held sooner.**

A minimum of three positive votes is required for approval. Once the dissertation is fully approved, the dissertation chair notifies the Office of Graduate Studies of the committee's decision to initiate required paperwork to be completed. These forms include the SOE Dissertation Defense Form (Appendix S) and the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) Approval form, which is initiated by the Office of Graduate Studies through DocuSign.

If after second meeting, dissertation defense is still not approved then a meeting with the student, committee, department chair and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs needs to be held to determine next steps to take.

c. Submission of the Approved Dissertation

Please refer to the following link regarding dissertation submission to the VCU Scholars

Compass: <http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html>

The Graduate School requires the electronic submission of final dissertation to the VCU Scholars Compass. Note that you should convert your dissertation to PDF format as the VCU system will not allow you to upload a Word document. Please review the most up to date information in the VCU Theses and Dissertation Manual located on the Graduate School webpage listed above. **Final dissertations need to be uploaded to the VCU Scholars Compass by the designated deadline on the university academic calendar.**

Finally, VCU requires that you complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates also located at <http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html>.

E. Graduation

a) During the semester in which a student intends to graduate, they must complete and submit graduation application through VCU e-services at the beginning of the semester by SOE designated deadline. Students will be notified of graduation application deadlines and instructions via VCU e-mail.

If matriculated into program before Fall 2014- students are to complete and submit hard copy application (can request from Office of Graduate Studies) electronically.

If matriculated into program Fall 2014 or later- students are to complete graduation checkout through e-services (<https://ts.vcu.edu/askit/university-resources/eservices/>) and have advisor complete preliminary approval through degreeworks.

b) After the dissertation defense, the student must:

1. Make sure SOE Office of Graduate Studies has been contacted to initiate required paperwork for successful dissertation defense or notify of follow up meeting.
2. Upload final approved dissertation to VCU Scholars Compass before the university deadline for final submission as designated on university calendar.
3. Complete and submit the Survey of Earned Doctorates to the Graduate School <https://sed.norc.org/doctorate/showRegister.do>
4. Make sure graduation application with final approval signatures have been completed and submitted by designated deadline.

If matriculated into program before Fall 2014- Copy of originally submitted hard copy graduation application must be completed with final approval signatures and returned to SOE OGS immediately following successful dissertation defense.

If matriculated into program Fall 2014 or later- final approval will need to be completed by advisor, program coordinator and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in degreeworks by published deadline following successful dissertation defense

Students may go to <http://www.commencement.vcu.edu/> for commencement details.

APPENDICES

Appendix A



PH.D. IN EDUCATION CONCENTRATION COORDINATORS

Concentration	Coordinator	Email	Phone
Art Education	Dr. Sara Wilson McKay	swilsonmckay@vcu.edu	828-0471
Counselor Education & Supervision	Dr. Philip Gnilka	pbgnilka@vcu.edu	828-0866
Curriculum, Culture & Change	Dr. Hillary Parkhouse	heparkhouse@vcu.edu	827-2667
Educational Leadership, Policy & Justice	Dr. Jonathan Becker	jbecker@vcu.edu	828-1940
Educational Psychology	Dr. Sharon Zumbrunn	skzumbrunn@vcu.edu	827-2625
Research , Assessment & Evaluation	Dr. Michael Broda	mdbroda@vcu.edu	827-2629
Special Education & Disability Leadership	Dr. Kevin Sutherland	kssuther@vcu.edu	827-2652
Urban Services/ Adult Learning	Dr. Robin Hurst	rrhurst@vcu.edu	828-8021

Appendix B



Ph.D. in Education Curriculum

FOUNDATION COMPONENT (6 hours minimum)

- EDUS 702: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship I (3 credits)
- EDUS 703: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship II

RESEARCH COMPONENT (12 hours minimum)

- EDUS 608: Statistics for Social Research
- EDUS 710: Educational Research Design
- EDUS 711: Qualitative Research Methods & Analysis

Three credit research elective

CONCENTRATION COMPONENT (18 hours minimum)

Art Education Concentration

- ARTE 701 Issues in Art Education
- ARTE 702 History of Art Education
- ARTE 703 Contemporary Philosophies in Art Education
- ARTE 704 Research in Art Education
- ARTE 780 Cultural Diversity in Art & Society

Counselor Education & Supervision

- CLED 720 – Counselor Education Doctoral Seminar I
- CLED 721 – Counselor Education Doctoral Seminar II
- CLED 730 – Advanced Counseling Theories & Practicum (4 credits)
- CLED 740 – Counseling Supervision
- CLED 750 – Advanced Group Counseling
- CLED 760 – Advanced Career Counseling and Development
- CLED 810 – Counselor Education Doctoral Internship

Curriculum, Culture & Change

- TEDU 617 Instructional Models
- TEDU 730 Educational Staff Development
- TEDU 731 Instructional Theories and Strategies
- TEDU 732 Advanced Seminar in Curriculum Studies
- EDUS 706 Educational Theory and Praxis in Historical and Contemporary Contexts
- EDUS 707 Socio-Cultural Perspectives on Schooling, Society and Change
- Other courses selected in consultation with the adviser

Co-Curricular Activities: Grant-writing; present at a local or national conference; complete a capstone experience.

Educational Leadership, Policy & Justice

- ADMS 702: Leadership for Change/Reform
- ADMS 703: Leadership for Social Justice

- and Equity in Education
- ADMS 704: Distributive Justice/Resource Equity
- ADMS 706: Leadership Perspectives on Learning
- ADMS 707: The Politics of Education
- ADMS 651: Special Topics

Co-Curricular Activities: Research with faculty members; equity projects with faculty members, participation in journal club, presentation at a national, regional, state, or local conference.

Educational Psychology

- EDUS 620 Human Development in Education
- EDUS 621 Motivation in Education
- EDUS 662 Educational Measurement and Evaluation
- EDUS 720 Seminar in Cognition and School Learning
- EDUS 721 Seminar in Social Processes and Education Elective

Co-Curricular Activities: Submit Conference proposal in Years 2 and 3, attend a professional conference; others in consultation with advisor

Research, Assessment & Evaluation

Research Concentration (Select 6 courses)

- PPAD 723: Survey Research Methods
- SWKD 724: Constructivist Inquiry
- NURS 772: Qualitative Research Design
- MGMT 643: Applied Multivariate Methods
- SWKD 705: Multivariate Analysis in Social Work and Human Services Research
- SOCY 626: Applications of Advanced Research Methods
- SBHD 610: Behavioral Measurement
- PPAD 726: Advanced Research Design
- EDUS 661: Educational Evaluation
- EDUS 662: Educational Measurement
- PSYC 643: Principles of Psychological Measurement
- STAT 643: Applied Linear Regression
- STAT 642: Design and Analysis of Experiments

Evaluation Concentration (Select 6 courses)

- EDUS 661: Educational Evaluation
- PPAD 723: Survey Research Methods
- EDUS 662: Educational Measurement
- PPAD 627: Workshop in Policy Analysis and Evaluation
- SOCY 605: Survey Research Methods
- PSYC 643: Principles of Psychological Measurement
- PADM 654: Program Design and Evaluation in the Nonprofit Sector
- SWKD 722: Evaluation of Human Service Programs
- HADM 763: Health Program Evaluation

Other courses selected in consultation with the advisor

Co-Curricular Activities: Journal article prepared from externship; attend a conference within first two years; present at conference once prior to graduation; work with a faculty member on a research project; co-author with a faculty member a manuscript that is submitted for publication.

Special Education & Disability Leadership

SEDP 705 Seminar on Disability Policy
SEDP 706 Personnel Development in Special Education
SEDP 707 Critical Issues in Special Education
SEDP 708 Grant Writing in Special Education and Other Social Sciences
SEDP 709 Literature Reviews in Special Education and Other Social Sciences
SEDP 711 Single Case Research Designs
Other courses selected in consultation with the adviser

Urban Services Leadership (Adult Learning)

ADLT 702: Seminal Readings in Adult Learning Literature
ADLT 601: The Adult Learner
Students who have already completed ADLT 601 must take another substitute course

Other courses to be determined by faculty advisor

Co-Curricular Activities: Urban Services/Adult Learning
Attend and present at national conferences and local and regional presentations; publish in journals; serve as graduate assistant or teaching assistants; conduct extensive literature reviews and involvement in ongoing research interests/projects of faculty advisor; participate in grant-writing workshop and develop and write grant applications, or serve in a leadership capacity for a local/regional/national/international association.

EXTERNSHIP COMPONENT (3 hours minimum)

EDUS 700: Externship

DISSERTATION COMPONENT (9 hours minimum)

EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar (3 hrs.)
EDUS 899: Dissertation Research (6 hrs. minimum)

TOTAL MINIMUM COURSE CREDITS: 48

Please note that students are encouraged to take a minimum of three credits outside of the School of Educatio

Appendix C



Curriculum Overview for the Ph.D. in Education Program

****Components and credits may vary depending on concentration or program ****

Program Component	Minimum Number of Hours
1. FOUNDATIONS COMPONENT	6
EDUS 702	3
EDUS 703	3
2. RESEARCH COMPONENT	12
EDUS 608	3
EDUS 710	3
EDUS 711	3
Research elective	3
3. CONCENTRATION COMPONENT	18
Minimum of 18 credits in concentration	18
Co-Curricular Activities	0
4. EXTERNSHIP COMPONENT	3
EDUS 700	3
5. DISSERTATION COMPONENT	9
EDUS 890 (Dissertation Seminar)	3
EDUS 899 (Dissertation Research)	6
Total Minimum Post-Masters Hours	48
Students are encouraged to take a minimum of three credits outside of the School of Education.	

Appendix D



**PH.D. IN EDUCATION PROGRAM
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY APPROVAL FORM**

Co-curricular activities are those experiences throughout your doctoral program that provide you with an opportunity to work with VCU faculty as you expand your skills in research, teaching, and/or service at the University. These activities should be carefully chosen with your advisor and should expand your skills as a scholar of practice in your field. Examples of co-curricular activities can include (but are not limited to): collecting or analyzing data, writing a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, presenting research findings at a state, regional or national conference, participating in writing and submitting an application for grant funding, teaching a class, developing and/or evaluating university preparation programs/courses, supervising student teachers/externs, participating on university committees, and/or serving as a student representative of a professional organization. This form will help organize your efforts and describe how your work will be evaluated. You do not need to be registered in a class for the co-curricular activity, but if it requires a significant amount of effort, it can be an independent study. Co-curricular activities can be work you do with your advisor or another faculty member.

For work that involves human subjects in a research study, it is important to remember that all appropriate human subject safeguards must be followed and IRB approval obtained prior to beginning the research study.

Student name _____

Semester _____ Number of credits (if relevant) _____

Student signature and date: _____

Instructions to Faculty Mentor: Please indicate the requirements the student must meet in order to complete the co-curricular activity and whether independent study credit will be earned.

Faculty Mentor/Advisor _____
(Print) (Signature) (Date)

Instructions to student: On a separate sheet of paper, describe your co-curricular activity. Include the following in your description:

1. **Co-curricular activity overview.** What is the nature of the co-curricular (presentation/grant proposal/research/teaching, etc.) you are planning to address and how it is relevant to your long range career goals and/or learning needs?

2. **Product.** What products (interim & final) will you generate as part of this co-curricular activity?

3. **Tasks & Timeline.** What are the major tasks of the project and the timeline for completing them? If this is a joint project, indicate your specific responsibilities and those of others involved.

4. **Evaluation.** How will your work in this co-curricular activity be evaluated and by whom? How will you document that evaluation?

**If this proposal for a co-curricular activity is in the area of research skills, the proposal must specify how the student will gain experience in one or more aspects of conducting a research project, including conceptualization of the question, research design, data collection, data analysis, and dissemination of findings.*

Students must obtain advisor and concentration coordinator signatures before submitting this form to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies.

Student Advisor:

(Print) (Signature) (Date)

Concentration Coordinator:

(Print) (Signature) (Date)

Appendix E



**PH.D. IN EDUCATION
PROPOSAL FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY**

All independent study proposals must be approved by the concentration coordinator, as well as the student's advisor and faculty mentor. **All signatures must be obtained and submitted to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies prior to registration for the semester in which the course (EDUS 641) will be taken.** Students should begin the process of developing and negotiating their proposal well in advance of the registration deadline.

Student Name _____

Semester: _____ Number of Credits: _____

Instructions to Faculty Mentor: Please provide brief statement of requirements the student must meet in order to earn the assigned credit hours. The student may work with others; however, the faculty member must assess each student's independent work (can attach separate document if necessary).

Faculty Mentor: _____
(Print) (Signature) (Date)

Instructions to student: Attach a brief description of your proposed project which includes the following:

1. **Learning goals & objectives.** What are the learning goals & objectives of the independent study?
2. **Integration/analysis & application.** In what way will this independent study contribute to your ability to integrate, analyze and apply knowledge to clinical and policy practice?
3. **Rationale.** What is the rationale/relevance to your educational needs and why do you need to meet these needs through an independent study course rather than an established course?
4. **Procedure.** How will goals be pursued (elaborate in some detail) including frequency and duration of contacts with faculty mentor?
5. **Tasks & Timeline.** What are the major tasks of the project and the timeline for completing them?
6. **Products.** What products (interim & final) will you produce?

Approval: Student must obtain advisor and concentration coordinator signatures before submitting this form to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies)

Student Advisor: _____
(Print) (Signature) (Date)

Concentration Coordinator: _____
(Print) (Signature) (Date)

Appendix F



PH.D. IN EDUCATION PROGRAM
EXTERNSHIP APPLICATION

All externship applications must be approved by the concentration coordinator, as well as the student’s advisor and faculty mentor. All signatures must be obtained and submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies prior to registration for the semester in which the course (EDUS 700) will be taken. Students should begin the process of developing and negotiating their proposal well in advance of the registration deadline.

STUDENT NAME _____

ON-SITE SUPERVISOR NAME _____

*STARTING DATE: _____ *ENDING DATE: _____ *HOURS PER WEEK: _____

*Must provide for a total of 120 clock hours of which 90 are on-site experience.

INSTRUCTIONS: Using the following headings, submit a statement outlining your proposed externship.

- I. Name and address of agency.
- II. Major services or products of the agency.
- III. Qualifications of on-site externship supervisor.
- IV. Indicate how this experience relates to your career goals and doctoral training objectives.
- V. List a minimum of five general goals for the proposed experience related to one’s future career.
- VI. Describe the nature of the proposed experience including schedule and specific activities.
- VII. List at least five specific measurable objectives of the proposed experience and explain how each objective will be measured, specifying at least one product from the experience. Additional products should be a log of hours spent and a final report to the advisor.
 - I. Explain how the proposed experience differs from your previous education and work experience.

Students must sign and obtain on-site supervisor and advisor signatures before submitting this form to the Office of Graduate Studies.

Student Date

On-Site Supervisor Date

Advisor Date

Concentration Coordinator Date

Additional details regarding the externship:

a) Application for Externship. In consultation with his or her advisor, the student, prepares and submits a statement outlining the proposed externship. With the approval of the advisor and concentration coordinator, the student completes the externship application form and forwards to the Office of Graduate Studies with required signatures. The externship application is available on the Ph.D. in Education Program Blackboard page. Deadlines for applying are on or about the following dates, please check the Ph.D. in Education Blackboard each semester for exact dates: **December 1st** for spring semester, **July 15th** for fall semester, and **April 15th** for summer session.

b) The Externship Site. It is the student's responsibility to identify a site for the externship; however, the student's advisor must approve the proposed site.

c) Individual Responsibilities in the Externship

1. The Student.

Timing and Setting. The student is responsible for consulting with his/her advisor to determine the appropriate timing of the externship and to develop an understanding of appropriate types of settings consistent with the student's experience, program, and professional goals. Based on this information and the requirements of the externship application statement, the student initiates contacts and consults with personnel in possible externship settings. Once the student and advisor agree on a setting, the student, in consultation with the proposed on-site supervisor, completes the written portion of the application. During the externship experience, the student works as a professional under the direction of the on-site supervisor and is responsible for decisions made and tasks assigned within the setting during the externship period. The student maintains the records and materials required for the externship, prepares the final written summary report, and submits all needed materials to his/her advisor within grading deadlines.

Log. The student maintains a log of all hours spent on and off-site, including a brief description of the type of tasks and related experiences completed during the time frame. The log should document which hours were spent on-site and which off-site. Additional time beyond the 120 hours that is spent in related, but off-site tasks may be reported for information. The log must be submitted to the advisor, who will review it as part of the externship grading process.

Product. The student is required to develop and submit to his/her advisor a product from the externship experience. During development of the externship experience, the student discusses with his/her advisor and proposed on-site supervisor the general nature of the expected product or products, e.g., an instrument, manual, booklet, publishable article, bibliography, resource list,

workshop kit, or similar material. Any change in the type of product to be developed must be approved in writing by the advisor. The product(s) must be submitted to the advisor, who will include a grade on the product(s) as part of the grade for the externship.

Final Report. The student will also submit a final summary report to his/her advisor. At a minimum, the summary report must include the name and address of the agency in which the externship was conducted, the major service or products of the agency, the name of the on-site supervisor, the time log, and a brief review of the purposes of the externship. The summary report must also include evidence of how the five goals and the five specific measurable objectives presented in the Externship Application were met. The summary report is reviewed by the advisor as part of the grade for the externship.

2. The University Advisor.

Oversight. The student's advisor works with the student to determine the scheduling of the externship within the doctoral course sequence, develop ideas for appropriate types of experience, and approve the site selected by the student. When the student has completed the externship application, which specifies the site, the on-site supervisor, and such specifics as time, experiences, and products; the advisor reviews the application, recommends any needed changes, and gives approval in writing. The advisor submits the approved application to the concentration coordinator for approval. During the externship experience, the university advisor serves as liaison between the on-site supervisor and the university, as needed.

At the end of the externship experience, the advisor reviews the application, log, product, on-site supervisor's evaluation, and the student's summary report and determines the student's externship grade. The student's advisor also submits the grade to listed instructor for entry into Banner.

3. The On-Site Supervisor.

Guidance and supervision. The term on-site supervisor refers to the person at the externship site who provides guidance and supervision of the student, while also serving as liaison between the agency or institution and the student's university advisor. The on-site supervisor provides professional direction to the student while in the host agency by orienting the student to the setting; acquainting the student with agency tasks and timelines; overseeing the work of the student; and providing a written summative evaluation of the student's performance.



PH.D. IN EDUCATION CONCEPT PAPER GUIDELINES

Purpose of the paper

The student will develop a “mini-literature review” of 8-10 double spaced pages, not including references. The review should describe and evaluate key studies in the student’s area of interest, provide a synthesis of studies cited, and identify key gaps in the literature. The review should follow APA style and close by identifying the student’s topic of inquiry.

The student will develop this literature review in consultation with their chair(s). The purpose of a concept paper is two-fold. First, it should provide an indication to the reader that the doctoral candidate has a sufficiently developed idea for a dissertation topic that is based on the literature. Second, it should provide an indication of the candidate’s ability to write about research literature and a research idea.

Preparation

Students can be proactive in the preparation of the concept paper to have a greater likelihood that they will be ready for the requirements of EDUS 890. Therefore, it is recommended that students follow these steps:

- a) Meet with dissertation chair or advisor to determine whether enrolling in EDUS 890 is appropriate for you, your readiness for EDUS 890, and for how to go about writing the concept paper.
- b) Meet with your dissertation chair to receive direction for the concept paper.
- c) Attend the concept paper information session to learn the timelines and submission guidelines.
- d) Submit the concept paper to your dissertation chair 2 weeks before the SOE deadline for submission for the semester you intend to enroll in EDUS 890.

It is important to follow the above recommended steps and work with your chair to prepare the best possible concept paper to avoid any disruption in progressing through the dissertation stage of the program. Please be aware that you should submit a concept paper formatted in APA style that is free of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and typing errors.

Review and Submission Process

The dissertation chair or other faculty designated by the student’s concentration will provide a written review of the student’s paper. If the advisor or chair deems the literature review

sufficiently substantive, the advisor/chair will sign and submit the concept paper approval form to the Office of Graduate Studies. The Student is responsible for submitting an electronic copy of the concept paper to the Office of Graduate Studies once approved (this can be sent electronically to winnkb@vcu.edu). Once the concept paper is approved and paperwork completed, the Student will consult with their advisor/dissertation chair on which section of EDUS 890 to enroll. If the paper is not accepted, the student will not be permitted to enroll in EDUS 890, however they will receive feedback about why the paper was not acceptable.

If your paper does not satisfy the requirements for enrolling in EDUS 890, your first step should be to discuss this with your advisor/dissertation chair. In this situation, many students enroll in an independent study (EDUS 641) section to review the literature related to their topic and revise their previously submitted paper.

Appendix H



Concept Paper Approval

Student's Name: _____ **V#** _____

To identify a potential topic of inquiry and to demonstrate the ability to write about research literature and a research idea, the above student has submitted a concept paper for review.

- Identify topic of inquiry
 - A sufficiently developed idea for research
 - Significance of proposed study

- Demonstrate knowledge in the area of interest
 - Describe/synthesis/evaluate key studies
 - Identify key gaps in the literature
 - Describe contribution of the proposed study
 - Reference list and annotated bibliography
 - APA style

Upon review, it has been determined that the student has:

Successfully met the criteria required for the concept paper

Not met the criteria required for the concept paper

Comments (or attached document): _____

Advisor signature: _____ Date _____

Appendix I
 Ph.D. in Education Program
PRELIMINARY PROGRAM OF STUDY FORM
 To be submitted by the end of the first semester

STUDENT NAME: _____ CONCENTRATION: _____ ADVISOR _____

Students are encouraged to take a minimum of 3 credits outside of the SOE.	HOURS	SEMESTER	GRADE
FOUNDATION COMPONENT (6 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 702: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship I	3		
EDUS 703: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship II	3		
RESEARCH COMPONENT (12 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 608: Statistics for Social Research	3		
EDUS 710: Educational Research Design	3		
EDUS 711: Qualitative Methods and Analysis	3		
Three Credit Research Elective	3		
QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT			
CONCENTRATION COMPONENT (18 HOURS MINIMUM)			
See Bulletin for program specific requirement			
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES			
EXTERNSHIP COMPONENT (3 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 700: Externship	3		
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION			
DISSERTATION COMPONENT (9 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar	3		
EDUS 899: Dissertation Research	6		
PREREQUISITE COURSES (AS APPLICABLE)			
TRANSFER COURSES (9 HOURS MAXIMUM)			

Students Signature & Date: _____ Advisor's Initials & Date: _____

Concentration Coordinator's Initials & Date: _____

Appendix J

**Ph.D. in Education Program
REVISED PROGRAM OF STUDY FORM
Submit after the post qualifying assessment meeting**

STUDENT NAME: _____ CONCENTRATION: _____ ADVISOR: _____

Students are encouraged to take a minimum of three credits outside of the SOE.	HOURS	SEMESTER	GRADE
FOUNDATION COMPONENT (6 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 702: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship I	3		
EDUS 703: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship II	3		
RESEARCH COMPONENT (12 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 608: Statistics for Social Research	3		
EDUS 710: Educational Research Design	3		
EDUS 711: Qualitative Methods and Analysis	3		
Three Credit Research Elective	3		
QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT			
CONCENTRATION COMPONENT (18 HOURS MINIMUM)			
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES			
EXTERNSHIP COMPONENT (3 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 700: Externship	3		
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION			
DISSERTATION COMPONENT (9 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar	3		
EDUS 899: Dissertation Research	6		
PREREQUISITE COURSES (AS APPLICABLE)			
TRANSFER COURSES (9 HOURS MAXIMUM)			

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

ADVISOR'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

CONCENTRATION COORDINATOR SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Appendix K



Post Qualifying Assessment Advising Meeting Summary Form

Student: _____ VID _____

Concentration: _____

Advisor: _____

After completion of the Qualifying Assessment in the SOE Ph.D. in Education program. The student has:

- Completed prerequisites
- Completed and submitted preliminary program of study form
- Adhered to SOE continual enrollment policy
- Maintained 3.0 GPA
- Successfully completed Qualifying Assessment
- Completed and submitted revised program of study form

After review of the student's record and qualifying assessment results it has been determined that the student is:

- Recommended for Continuing Doctoral Status
- Recommended for Continuing Doctoral Status with remediation required
 - * Forward electronic copy of Qualifying Assessment Portfolio to Office of Graduate Studies
 - * Please attach document outlining details of remedial plans, i.e. courses, activities, assignments and due date for completion
- Not recommended for Continuing Doctoral Status (please attach document with reasoning)

Student:

Print Signature Date

Advisor:

Print Signature Date

Appendix L

Ph.D. in Education Program FINAL PROGRAM OF STUDY Submit after completion of Comprehensive Exam

STUDENT NAME: _____ CONCENTRATION: _____ ADVISOR: _____

Students are encouraged to take a minimum of three credits outside of the SOE	HOURS	SEMESTER	GRADE
FOUNDATION COMPONENT (6 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 702: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship I	3		
EDUS 703: Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship II	3		
RESEARCH COMPONENT (12 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 608: Statistics for Social Research	3		
EDUS 710: Educational Research Design	3		
EDUS 711: Qualitative Methods and Analysis	3		
Three Credit Research Elective	3		
QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT			
CONCENTRATION COMPONENT (18 HOURS MINIMUM)			
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES			
EXTERNSHIP COMPONENT (3 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 700: Externship	3		
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION			
DISSERTATION COMPONENT (9 HOURS MINIMUM)			
EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar	3		
EDUS 899: Dissertation Research	6		
PREREQUISITE COURSES (AS APPLICABLE)			
TRANSFER COURSES (9 HOURS MAXIMUM)			

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

ADVISOR'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

CONCENTRATION COORDINATOR SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Appendix M



COMPREHENSIVE EXAM POLICY OVERVIEW
 (For additional information, please consult with concentration coordinators.)

	CESN	CCC	EDLP	EDPY	RAE	SEDP	USL	Art Ed
Eligibility	Completion of all didactic course work, not including EDUS 890	Completion of all didactic course work, not including EDUS 890	Completion of all didactic course work, not including EDUS 890 (Semester of last class will be allowed, semester after last class is preferred.)	Completion of all didactic course work, not including EDUS 890 & prior to EDUC 700	Completion of all didactic course work, not including EDUS 890 (Semester of final coursework may be allowed.)	Completion of all didactic course work, not including EDUS 890	Completion of all didactic coursework, not including EDUS 890	Completion of all didactic coursework, not including EDUS 890
Administration	Fall, Spring or Summer.	Fall/Spring	Fall, Spring or Summer. 6 weeks to complete the exam, common start date. Submitted to TC at end of course work	Fall/Spring	Fall/Spring/	Fall/Spring or summer	Fall/ Spring	Fall/ Spring
Format	Consult advisor/concentration coordinator	Literature Review	Take-home project that includes competencies in data analysis	Timed exam/ literature review	Individualized take-home questions for a 20-page paper and an oral exam	Major area paper, portfolio, and an oral presentation Please see the SEDP Concentration Handbook for details.	AL=Timed computer-based exam on campus	Consult advisor/concentration coordinator

Preparation	Student will consult with advisor about exam preparation	Students receive questions and can meet with TC 45 days in advance	Students to compile/co ordinate any artifacts of learning in advance. Students encouraged to collaborate with others taking the exam. TC is available for questions during the 6 weeks.	Students meet w/ their advisor by the first week of the semester in which the exam is to occur to determine the topic and scope of the literature review or to submit topics for the timed exam questions.	Students receive questions 1 week prior. Take-home questions require approximately 25-30 hours of preparation	Please see the SEDP Concentration Handbook for details.	Exam must be scheduled 1-2 months in advance. 30-45 days in advance students may meet with TC. Questions not provided in advance.	Consult advisor/concentration coordinator
Grading	<p>In the case of a computer-based exam, two-three SOE faculty readers will evaluate the exam and two will need to assign a rating of “pass” or “pass with honors” in order for the student to have successfully passed the Comprehensive Examination. Students can expect their comprehensive exam results within 4 to 6 weeks of test administration. A student who fails one or more questions will be allowed to retake the exam once. All questions will be graded Honors, Pass, or Fail. Until a student has passed all components of the comprehensive exam, a grade of I (incomplete) will be recorded on the student’s transcript.</p> <p>For other exam formats, please consult with the TCs.</p>							

Appendix N



Comprehensive Examination Report

Student Name: _____ VID _____

Concentration: _____

After completion and department review, the comprehensive assessment is completed with result of:

- Satisfactory- approved to move forward with dissertation component of program.
*Forward electronic copy of comprehensive exam to Office of Graduate Studies

- Satisfactory with remediation and/or conditions to be met- please provide separate sheet with outlined remediation plan/conditions to be met and due date for completion.

- Unsatisfactory- needs to repeat comprehensive assessment prior to beginning dissertation component of program.
Due date: _____

Advisor:

Print

Signature

Date

Appendix O



PH.D. IN EDUCATION
DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AGREEMENT FORM

A minimum of four VCU faculty members must agree to serve on a student's dissertation committee. Please see the Ph.D. in Education Handbook for details about the requirements for committee members. Students must submit this dissertation committee agreement form prior to completing EDUS 890 (Dissertation Seminar) and/or enrolling in EDUS 899. If opting out of EDUS 890, students must submit this form at the time they request to opt out. This form can be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies as a hard copy or an email attachment to winnkb@vcu.edu. Please make sure requested committee members have faculty status prior to submission of this form or a faculty status request is submitted along with this form. If the form is e-mailed, students must have obtained all necessary signatures prior to sending.

To be completed by the student:

Student name: _____

Proposed title of dissertation: _____

The following faculty members have agreed to serve as members of my dissertation committee:

Chair: _____ Signature _____ Date _____

SOE Member 1: _____ Signature _____ Date _____

SOE Member 2: _____ Signature _____ Date _____

VCU Faculty (outside SOE): _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Concentration Coordinator: _____
Print Signature Date

Department Chair: _____
Print Signature Date

To be completed by the Office of Graduate Studies:

_____ The above-listed faculty members are listed as having Graduate Faculty or Affiliate Graduate Faculty Status with VCU's Graduate School.

_____ The above listed faculty members do not have Graduate Faculty or Affiliate Graduate Faculty Status with VCU's Graduate School. Action Recommended:

SOE Office of Graduate Studies: _____
(Print) (Signature) (Date)

Appendix P



Appointment to Graduate Faculty and Affiliate Graduate Faculty Status

All members of a dissertation committee need to have been granted graduate faculty status or affiliate graduate faculty status. The Student or dissertation chair initiates this by completing the appointment request form and submitting to the SOE Office of Graduate Studies with Department Chair signature and resume/vita for the requested faculty member. The Office of Graduate Studies will forward the request to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and then to the Graduate School for approval.

The Eligibility Criteria for Graduate Faculty Members:

1. Appointment as full-time faculty in the university.
2. Professorial rank (assistant professor and above).
3. Earned terminal degree or, if no terminal degree, exceptional contributions to graduate education.
4. Engagement in research or other scholarly or creative activities.
5. Participation in graduate education.

Affiliate Graduate Faculty Member Status: Provision may be made for individuals with special skills and knowledge to serve as Affiliate Graduate Faculty members. These individuals may include visiting faculty and professionals in the field. An Affiliate Graduate Faculty member may teach graduate courses and may advise and serve, but not chair, thesis or dissertation committees. This status is temporary.

Graduate/Affiliate Faculty Status Appointment Request

Requested Faculty Member: _____

On behalf of (Student name): _____

Reason for appointment request (i.e. dissertation committee participation):

Professorial Rank (instructor, associate professor, etc.): _____

Current Institution: _____

Highest Degree Earned _____

Level requested:
Graduate Faculty () Affiliated Faculty () in VCU Department of _____

- Please provide:
- A. Brief description of recent research or other scholarly/creative activities (attach a separate sheet if necessary)
 - B. Brief description of participation/involvement in graduate education
 - C. Please attach your recent resume

Approval:

Appointment Recommended: Yes _____ **: No** _____

Advisor/Committee Chair:

(Print) _____ (Sign) _____ Date _____

Dean of the School of Education/Designee:

(Print) _____ (Sign) _____ Date _____

Appendix Q



**PH.D. IN EDUCATION PROGRAM
PROSPECTUS REVIEW REPORT**

Title of Prospectus:

This is to certify that the undersigned have read and approved the Prospectus of:

_____ presented on _____
Student Date

Comments:

Dissertation Committee Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Appendix R

Admission to Master's or Doctoral Degree Candidacy (initiated by SOE OGS)

Student _____ SS or VCU ID# _____

Address _____

Degree _____ Major _____

My signature acknowledges that I have read and understand the following policies regarding research involving human or animal subjects and continuous enrollment requirements.

Student's signature

Date

Research involving human or animal subjects must receive approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before collection of data may begin. I understand that failure to obtain a copy of the IRB or IACUC approval letter from the project principal investigator will negate the use of that data for my thesis/dissertation or in any form of presentation or publication. (Information on human and animal subjects can be found at www.research.vcu.edu/irb/index.htm and www.vcu.edu/research/iacuc/index2.htm.)

University Graduate Council and Graduate School continuous enrollment policy requires that any student engaged in any form of study at VCU that involves use of university facilities, laboratories/studios and/or libraries, or who is supervised by or consults regularly with a faculty member concerning graduate work on a project, work of art, thesis or dissertation must register formally for a course while engaged in these activities, including the semester in which the student graduates.

Graduate students approved for candidacy must register for at least one graduate credit hour at VCU each fall and spring semester until the degree is awarded (including the semester of graduation). Students should consult with their program directors regarding additional enrollment requirements. Graduate students with approved leaves of absence are exempted from continuous enrollment requirements for the LOA period. Note: While an LOA temporarily suspends continuous enrollment requirements, it does not extend the time limit for degree completion.

Major Adviser and Advisory Committee Members (if applicable):

Major adviser

Committee member

Committee member

Committee member

Committee member

Committee member

The program director, major adviser and/or advisory committee (if applicable) have approved this student for admission to candidacy effective _____ and confirm the following (check all that apply):

- A 3.0 GPA has been maintained on all graduate course work attempted after acceptance into program (for repeated courses, both original and repeat grade must be included in calculation of graduate GPA).
- No more than 6 semester hours or 20 percent of total semester hours attempted (whichever greater) at "C" or below level (C, D, F).
- Graduate course work only (500 level or higher) may be applied to a graduate degree with at least one half of required course work designated exclusively for graduate students (600 level or higher).
- Written and oral comprehensive and/or qualifying examinations (if required) have been passed.
- The thesis or dissertation prospectus (if required for candidacy) or final research project has been approved.
- The major adviser and/or advisory committee members (if applicable) have been identified (**please identify above**).
- Other _____

Approval signatures

Major Adviser's Signature

Date

Graduate Program Director's Signature

Date

School Dean's Signature

Date

Graduate Dean's Signature

Date

Appendix S



**PH.D. IN EDUCATION PROGRAM
DISSERTATION DEFENSE REPORT**

Title of Dissertation:

This is to certify that the undersigned have read and approved the dissertation of:

_____ presented on _____
Student Date

Comments:

Dissertation Committee Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Appendix T



Content for the Qualifying Assessment

Content for the Qualifying Assessment portfolio in your concentration will consist of items and materials designated by the faculty in your concentration and performance and completion the following six courses:

STAT 508 Introduction to Social Statistics (prerequisite)

Introduction to statistical methods applicable in a variety of settings, with emphasis on nonexperimental data. Data description and analysis including chi-square and t-tests, using a statistical computing package.

EDUS 660: Research Methods in Education (prerequisite)

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the fundamental terms, concepts, and designs characteristic of both quantitative and qualitative educational research. The course emphasizes the learning and application of skills that will enable you to design your own research studies and critically evaluate published research articles in an effort to encourage data-driven reflection. Specifically, you will be able to evaluate: (a) the methodological procedures that an author followed, (b) the results that were reported, and (c) the practical significance of the study. These skills include not only the ability to comprehend common research designs, methods, and procedures but also the ability to interpret and communicate the research results clearly, concisely, logically and in a coherent manner. This course will:

1. Introduce you to different types of approaches to research and methodological designs
2. Enable you to understand, interpret and critically evaluate research articles
3. Prepare you to design your own research investigations

In this course students will develop:

1. An understanding of quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods approaches to research.
2. The ability to select a research problem and formulate appropriate research hypotheses and/or questions.
3. The ability to conduct a review of educational literature from texts, journals and computer library databases.
4. Skills to write a synthesis of the literature as it relates to a specific research problem.
5. Knowledge of experimental, quasi-experimental and non-experimental research designs and their application to different research questions.
6. An understanding of descriptive statistical techniques such as measures of central tendency, standard deviation and correlation.

7. An understanding of the ethical principles that pertain to research involving human subjects and research conducted in educational settings.
8. An appreciation for the conduct of research in education to improve practice; inform decisions, and contribute to better student outcomes.
9. The ability to engage in data-driven reflection through the continued use of published educational research and/or practice-based activities.
10. A viable research proposal.

EDUS 608 Educational Statistics

The purpose of this course is to facilitate students' development of the skills required to come up with a research hypothesis and analyze data to confirm or deny said hypothesis. Students will specifically consider the development of theoretically grounded hypotheses and the use of a variety of statistical techniques to enable their testing. The class will focus in particular on multiple regression with two or more independent variables and the psychometric analysis of measurement scales intended to tap variables used in the models developed. Students will also consider curvilinear relationships, factor analysis and power analysis. Students who successfully complete the course should have the ability to analyze complex data sets and construct measures that enable the testing of hypotheses that advance theory, research and practice in the field of education.

EDUS 702-703: Foundations Component Objectives

This course will:

1. Acclimate beginning Ph.D. students into the realm of doctoral studies
2. Encourage students to reflect on their place in their program in particular and on the wider contexts within which their programs/fields are situated
3. Expose participants to the field of epistemology, or the study of knowledge—particularly as it applies to educational research
4. Provide interdisciplinary exposure by giving students opportunities to work with students from other programs
5. Impart skills necessary for the conduct of research and scholarship.
6. Study the major research paradigms and help students understand what they need to learn to be comfortable working in diverse paradigms
7. Analyze ethical issues in research and scholarship
8. Discuss various research methodologies, especially their ethical and political components
9. Provide a setting where doctoral students from diverse specializations develop heightened sensitivity to the complex nature of contemporary education, especially urban and global issues in education (diversity, race, class, gender)
10. Introduce students to the history and purposes as well as conventions and rules of the IRB process

EDUS 710: Educational Research Design

The purpose of this course is to examine complex quantitative designs and concepts that are commonly encountered in conducting quantitative research in applied social settings. The course assumes knowledge of fundamental principles of research, such as identifying research problems or questions, reviewing literature, sampling, choosing appropriate

assessment techniques to gather information, simple research designs, internal and external validity, types of research, descriptive and inferential statistics, and a working knowledge of SPSS data analysis software. Specifically, there are two prerequisites for this course, EDUS 660, and EDUS 608. These basic principles and skills are extended to the more complex situations that are frequently encountered in applied settings. The course is designed for doctoral students. An important goal of the course is to enable students to become critically reflective in the use of quantitative data for decision-making. More specifically, the objectives include student understanding and application of:

1. the effects of sampling on non-experimental and experimental designs
2. data entry and SPSS software for data analysis
3. advanced principles of measurement as related to research design
4. statistical, internal, construct, and external experimental validity
5. survey and non-experimental designs
6. experimental and quasi-experimental designs, including single and multiple factor designs
7. multivariate research designs
8. factor analysis
9. statistical analyses for single factor and multiple factor designs
10. nested experimental designs requiring HLM analyses
11. differences between statistical significance and effect size

Students are responsible for consulting their advisor and concentration coordinator regarding preparation and completion of the qualifying assessment after completion of 18 credit hours in the program. The qualifying assessment is to be completed prior to when a student has earned 21 credits.



Format for the Prospectus and Dissertation

Prospectus

The Prospectus is a plan the candidate develops to serve as a guide in completing his or her dissertation research. It is expected that the plan should be concise, well-articulated, and represent the candidate's best thinking and inquiry on a researchable topic.

The most recent *American Psychological Association (APA) Manual 7th edition* is the style of choice for dissertations completed by students in the Ph.D. in Education program. A student may petition the concentration coordinator for an exception to the use of the APA style. Students are encouraged to become familiar with the APA Manual and the *VCU Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Manual* as guides for the technical preparation of their dissertation. In general, attend to APA style for determining the levels of headings, resolving style issues, particularly with regard to expressing numbers and statistics, using gender neutral language, constructing tables and figures, crediting sources and constructing the reference list. It is also recognized that for some dissertations, the format outlined here may not be appropriate. Alternatives to the traditional three-chapter organization for the prospectus and five-chapter organization for the dissertation may be approved. However, the *VCU Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Manual* must be followed for non-content formatting requirements for fonts, margins, pagination, constructing the abstract, labeling the tables and figures in the body of the text, developing the List of Tables, List of Figures, and the Table of Contents, etc. It also has information about arranging the contents of your dissertation for upload to the VCU Scholars Compass. Please see the checklist at the end of this Appendix.

A. Prospectus Format

Since the prospectus is a detailed plan of the candidate's dissertation, it reflects the dissertation format. The body of the prospectus is composed of three major parts, roughly equivalent to the first three chapters of the final dissertation, as well as some other features typical of a major scholarly work. The relative length and depth of each section may vary somewhat, but it is expected that each section will be included in the prospectus.

The first part, Introduction, includes the statement of the problem and its significance, the rationale for the study, a summary of the literature review and methodology, and a listing of specific research questions. In essence, the Introduction should provide a brief overview and understanding of what will be studied, why it is of importance, and how it will be accomplished.

The second part of the prospectus, the Review of Literature, describes and documents the theoretical, historical, experiential, and/or experimental background of the proposed study. The review should be carefully organized to clarify the various conceptual and interdisciplinary roots

from which the proposed study has emerged and illuminate the way in which the study will expand upon, rather than duplicate, past knowledge. Thus, it includes a thorough review of the literature and research relevant to the dissertation question, although it may not provide the exhaustive review of supportive and related areas that will be found in the final dissertation. In addition, this part usually includes a subsection listing the terms and definitions that are critical to the study.

The third part, Methodology, presents the detailed procedures that will be followed in conducting the research. It is written in the future tense. Depending on the specific methodology to be employed in the study, such components as the population, participants, instrumentation, procedures, research design, data analysis steps, and other information needed to understand the study should be included and described in detail. In most instances, the limitations of the study are also delineated in this part of the prospectus. *The Journal Article Reporting Standards* in the appendix of the APA Manual gives good guidance as to what should be included in Methodology chapter.

Although the content of these first three parts has been carefully developed to provide both a clear overview of and detailed plan for conducting the dissertation study, placement of two specific components may vary. Depending upon the area of inquiry and the nature of the study, the definition of terms may be placed in the first or second part and the limitations and/or delimitations of the study may be located in the first or third part of the prospectus. In such situations, clear guidance should be sought from the doctoral Committee.

In addition to the three basic parts of the written prospectus, please follow the *VCU Thesis and Dissertation Manual* for formatting of the Title Page and Table of Contents, margins and pagination, etc. A bibliography, which lists all sources cited, but no additional supporting references, follows the Methodology part of the prospectus. Appendices should also be used as appropriate, to include any documents, such as letters, permissions, data gathering instruments, or other exhibits that will be used in conducting the dissertation research. (See Sample Prospectus Contents for an outline of this information).

B. Dissertation Format

Although the dissertation follows the format already used for the approved prospectus, minor revisions must be made as the prospectus parts are developed into dissertation chapters. Two additional major components and some new specific pages must also be prepared and included in the final dissertation. The three prospectus parts become the first three chapters of the dissertation and additional chapters titled "IV. Findings" and "V. Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations" complete the written record of the candidate's study.

Chapter 1 may be revised as an executive summary and include a discussion of the analysis and conclusions or it may stand as organized for the prospectus. Often the Review of Literature is expanded to include greater information about areas that support or relate to the dissertation question under study or to include more current literature. The part on Methodology in the prospectus must be revised from future to past tense. Any changes in the procedures or difficulties which developed in carrying out the methodology are also reported.

The quantitative and/or qualitative results of the study, where appropriate, are reported in the Findings chapter. In addition to data describing the actual population used in the research, both tables and explanatory clarification of the actual data collected in the course of the study are presented in the first section of the chapter. Narrative analysis of the data and any trends observed are discussed in a final section of the same chapter.

The Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations chapter uses the data already reported and relates those findings to the specific research problem and questions delineated in the Introduction and each subsequent chapter. Therefore, the chapter must be carefully crafted to reflect the actual content of the preceding four chapters, as well as to provide logical extensions of that content. It is in this chapter that the implications of the findings and how they impact policy should be demonstrated.

The recommendations, which are highly dependent upon the nature of the dissertation problem, attempt to put the dissertation research into practical terms. Thus, the recommendations which emerge, in part, form the basis for further research. (See Sample Dissertation Contents below.)

SAMPLE CONTENTS FOR PROSPECTUS

- *[Title Page]
- *[Table of Contents]
- List of Tables
- List of Figures

I.	INTRODUCTION	
		Statement of Problem.....
		Rationale for Study of Problem
		Statement of Purpose
		Literature/Research Background
		Research Questions
		Methodology
		Summary
II.	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	
		Overview of Related Areas.....
		*[Organized review of literature/research]
		Definition of terms
III.	METHODOLOGY	
		Design
		Population
		Instrumentation
		Procedure
		Data Analysis

Limitations
REFERENCES
APPENDICES

SAMPLE CONTENTS FOR DISSERTATION

*[Title Page in mandatory format]
Acknowledgement
*[Table of Contents]
List of Tables
List of Figures
*[Abstract] in Mandatory format
I. INTRODUCTION
 Statement of Problem.....
 Rationale for Study of Problem
 Statement of Purpose
 Literature/Research Background/Theoretical Framework.....
 Research Questions.....
 Summary.....
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE
 Overview of Related Areas
 *[Organized review of literature/research]
 Definition of terms.....
III. METHODOLOGY
 Design
 Population
 Instrumentation
 Procedure
 Data Analysis
 Limitations
IV. FINDINGS
 Results
V. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....
REFERENCES
APPENDICES
VITA

- * Bracketed portions indicate that prospectus/dissertation specific information, rather than the indicated heading, should be provided in the actual prospectus

VCU Thesis and Dissertation Manual Summary Checklist for School of Education

Please obtain a copy of the *Graduate School Thesis & Dissertation Manual* from the Graduate School website. It contains all of the rules and procedures that apply to the preparation of the dissertation and final committee approval. It contains guidelines for uploading the dissertation to VCU Scholars Compass, and completing the paperwork required by the university. This checklist covers the basics for the preparation of the prospectus and dissertation, and relevant page numbers in the *Thesis and Dissertation Manual* are noted. Please consult relevant pages of the Thesis and Dissertation manual for additional information. The current VCU Thesis and Dissertation manual can be found at <https://graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html>.

Appendix V



STUDENT CHECKLIST OF GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS PH.D. IN EDUCATION PROGRAM

Students are responsible for making sure required forms are completed. Forms are available on the SOE Doctoral Programs Canvas page.

- Preliminary Program of Study.** Completed by the student and advisor during the first semester.
- Qualifying Assessment.** Students must complete qualifying assessment after completion of eighteen credits, including four courses in research and educational foundations (EDUS 702, 703, 710 and EDUS 608).
- Post-Qualifying Assessment Summary Form.** Completed by advisor to summarize the goals and objectives of the student after reviewing qualifying assessment results, course grades and any supplemental coursework. Any remediation required to address deficiencies identified during this review are specified on this form including timelines for completion and/or other recommended action.
- Revised Program of Study Form.** Completed by the student and advisor after the first year review meeting and before CDS has been awarded.
- Continuing Doctoral Status (CDS).** Awarded once the student has successfully completed qualifying assessment, completed any remedial plan, and filed their Revised Program of Study form.
- Co-curricular Activity Form.** Completed by the student and advisor to outline the specifics of co-curricular activities determined to assist the student in gaining professional experiences important for long-term career goals in research, teaching, leadership, and/or service to the field. Submit to the Office of Graduate Studies.
- Externship Application.** Completed by the student, advisor and on-site supervisor in the semester prior to the Externship experience.
- Comprehensive Examination.** In consultation with the advisor, the student follows concentration-specific instructions for registration, preparation, and completion of the comprehensive exam.
- Final Program of Study Form.** Completed by the student and advisor after the Comprehensive Exam.
- Dissertation Committee Agreement Form.** In consultation with the student, the advisor submits a dissertation committee agreement form to the Office of Graduate Studies requesting committee membership no later than the end of the semester in which EDUS 890: Dissertation Seminar is completed.
- Prospectus Hearing.** The student is allowed to schedule this with the agreement of the dissertation chair and committee members. The student schedules the prospectus hearing with their committee **three weeks** prior to the desired date and emails winnkb@vcu.edu for instructions and provide information for the hearing announcement. At the same time, the student forwards copy of prospectus to their committee and OGS. Student responsible for making sure required documents prior to and following prospectus hearing are completed.

- ❑ **Admission to Doctoral Degree Candidacy Form.** Completed after successfully prospectus hearing.
- ❑ **Graduation Application.** Submitted at the beginning of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. If matriculated before Fall 2014, hard copy application is completed. If matriculated after Fall 2014, application is completed through e-services. The student's advisor/chair must thoroughly review the application. The student, advisor, program director, and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs must sign hard copy application (if matriculated before Fall 2014) or approve through e-services/degreeworks (if matriculated after Fall 2014).
- ❑ **Dissertation Defense.** The student is allowed to schedule this with the agreement of the dissertation chair and committee members. The student schedules the dissertation defense with their committee **three weeks** prior to the desired date and emails winnkb@vcu.edu for instructions and provide information for the defense announcement. At the same time, the student forwards their dissertation to their committee and OGS. Student responsible for making sure documents required before and following the dissertation defense are completed.
- ❑ **Final Edits.** Once the dissertation is approved, the student must make any final edits and revisions recommended by the committee within 10 calendar days of the defense date.
- ❑ **Upload Dissertation.** Student uploads final dissertation to VCU Scholars Compass by Graduate School deadline. See the Electronic Theses and Dissertations for specifics at: <https://graduate.vcu.edu/student/thesis.html>