



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

PROCEDURES FOR DOCTORAL STUDY
In Educational Theory, Policy & Practice

Division of Administration & Counseling Leadership

Division of Curriculum, Research & Policy Leadership

Division of Elementary Education

Division of Secondary Education

Division of Integrated Studies

The Ph.D. degree is the highest earned degree offered by a university. It is conferred only for work of distinction and only in recognition of marked ability and achievement. Nothing in the following procedures should be construed to imply that the degree will be granted merely in recognition of faithful performance of prescribed work.

ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL AND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL THEORY, POLICY & PRACTICE

A student wishing to be admitted for doctoral study must:

1. Complete an "Application for Admission." This form is available online: <http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/index>
2. Send official transcripts to the Office of Admissions from each college or university attended. These are to be sent directly from the Office of the Registrar of the college or university attended.
3. Request the Educational Testing Service to send the student's scores on the Graduate Record Examination to the Graduate School. (Successful applicants will have a minimum score of 1000 combined on the Verbal and Quantitative sections of the GRE.)
4. Request that recommendation letters from at least three colleagues, professors, and/or supervisors be sent to the Department of Educational Theory, Policy & Practice.
5. Possess an undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 or above.

Students who fail to meet these entrance criteria are not usually admitted for doctoral study. Applicants whose credentials do not meet the criteria may be considered for probationary admission. A student will be removed from probation after completing nine semester hours of graduate work with at least a 3.00 grade point average

THE PROGRAM OF STUDY PROCEDURE

Once the Graduate School has determined that an applicant satisfies all minimum requirements for initial admission, the file is sent to the Director of Graduate Studies for the Department of Educational Theory, Policy & Practice (ETPP). The Director of Graduate Studies first identifies the student's area of interest and assigns a temporary advisor (major professor). The temporary advisor meets with the student and then, having determined the student's interests and apparent strengths, formulates a tentative program of study. The advisor and the student then form an advisory committee which includes the advisor and a minimum of two other professors. Of the three professors, one must be full member of the graduate faculty. Finally, a Program of Study Form is completed by the student and advisor and submitted in duplicate with all necessary signatures to the Graduate School through the ETPP Chair. This form formally identifies the student's committee to date and the approved program of study, and is typically submitted at the beginning of the first semester of full-time study. Changes in this program may be made with permission of the student's advisor or minor professor and the ETPP Chair. The student is responsible for processing a Change of Program Form to accomplish program modifications.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

One full academic year of continuous residence as a full-time graduate student (minimum course load of nine semester hours) is required at LSU after the Program of Study Form is received by the Graduate School (available online: [http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/\\$Content/Doctoral+Program+of+Study/\\$file/Program%20of%20Study.pdf](http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/$Content/Doctoral+Program+of+Study/$file/Program%20of%20Study.pdf)). The academic year consists of two consecutive semesters, fall and spring

or spring and fall. Summer sessions do not count toward fulfilling this requirement.

CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT

Doctoral candidates must maintain continuous registration for a minimum of three semester hours of credit each regular semester (excluding summers) from the completion of the general examination to the end of the semester in which an approved dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School. The dean of the Graduate School may exempt a student from the continuous registration requirement upon departmental certification that the student is in absentia from the university and is not drawing directly upon university resources. Exemptions are intended to accommodate students whose dissertation research requires extended periods of absence for field work in distant archives and laboratories; exemptions are not intended for students who have accepted positions as employees in business, industry, or education (Louisiana State Graduate Bulletin 2008-2009, p. 71).

Residency requirements for international students are governed not only by Graduate School requirements but also by the terms of their visas. For example, F-1 visas require full-time enrollment at all times.

THE GENERAL EXAMINATION

As the student approaches the end of his/her course work and the direction of research is established, the student prepares for the general examination. At that time, a full advisory committee is established. The student, in consultation with his/her permanent major professor (advisor), expands the advisory committee to include:

Four members of the LSU Graduate Faculty (2 members of the doctoral committee must be from the Department of Educational Theory, Policy & Practice)

- **Two** must be full members of the LSU Graduate Faculty (1 of these 2 must be a full member in the Department of Educational Theory, Policy & Practice)
- **One** outside committee member must be represented by the minor department if a minor is elected.
- Some faculty members may decline to serve unless they have taught the student in question.

The members of this general examination committee are selected by the major professor (advisor) in consultation with the ETPP Chair and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School, who may make any changes deemed appropriate.

[Note: While it is desirable that continuity be maintained among the committee membership throughout the student's program of study, changes in committee membership are sometimes necessary due to retirements, leaves of absence, or other factors. Should a change in committee membership be necessary, the student in consultation with the major professor may request a change of committee membership from the chair of the department.]

In addition, the Dean of the Graduate School appoints a member of the graduate faculty to serve on doctoral general and final examination committees. This individual is a full voting member of the committee. The Dean's representative should receive advance copies of the written portion of the General Examination and the dissertation on the same schedule as other members of the

committee.

The General Examination is usually scheduled during the student's last semester of course work, or soon thereafter. The examination is both written and oral. [The Request for Doctoral Degree Examination Form](#) must be submitted to the graduate School at least three weeks prior to the scheduled oral examination (available online: [http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/\\$Content/Request+for+Doctoral+Exam/\\$file/Phd%20Exam.pdf](http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/$Content/Request+for+Doctoral+Exam/$file/Phd%20Exam.pdf))

The request must state the time and the place proposed for the oral examination and the names of the faculty members selected to serve as the examining committee. The Graduate School will also appoint an outside faculty representative to the committee. A [Request for Change of Program of Study for the Doctoral Degree](#) is submitted at this time if changes have been made in the original program of study. The [Request for Change of Program of Study for the Doctoral Degree](#) form is available online: [http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/\\$Content/Request+for+Change+of+Program+of+Study/\\$file/Change%20Program%20of%20Study.pdf](http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/$Content/Request+for+Change+of+Program+of+Study/$file/Change%20Program%20of%20Study.pdf)

The Written Portion of the General Examination

The written portion of the Examination consists of three parts: (a) the area of concentration; (b) research; and (c) the minor area (if applicable). At the discretion of the committee the written portion may be a sit-down exam, a take-home exam, or a combination thereof. **The written portion of the General Examination must be submitted in final form to the student's committee no later than two weeks prior to the oral examination.**

- **AREA OF CONCENTRATION:** The portion of the General Examination dealing with the student's area of concentration will be comprised of submitted questions from the student's committee and will cover the principles and specifics of the student's graduate work in the field.
- **RESEARCH PORTION:** The intent of the research section is to determine a student's skill level in applying research methodologies to his/her area of concentration. A passing grade would signify that the student has the skills necessary to conduct a doctoral dissertation in his/her area of expertise. All students need not be intimately familiar with all types of methodologies since the appropriateness of a particular method depends upon the area of research to be investigated. Therefore, it is up to the full committee to decide what constitutes requisite skills and an acceptable level of performance.
- **MINOR AREA (if applicable):** The minor section of the examination will be constructed by the minor professor and cover the course content the student has taken in the minor area.

The major professor is responsible for coordinating the General Examination and insuring that the questions represent an adequate cross-section of the student's work. Committee members will work collaboratively with the major professor and the student in determining the questions to be answered.

The Oral Portion of the General Examination

The oral portion of the examination will deal with the student's responses to the written portion,

plus other aspects of the student's work as determined by the examining committee.

Completion of the General Examination

Following the oral examination, the Committee will vote on the successful completion of the examination. The Committee has the option of passing the student, passing with minor deficiencies to be rectified by further study, failing the student with a provision that the student retake the examination at a specified later date, or failing the student. There must not be more than one negative vote in the decision to pass the student. If the student fails, he/she may be given one reexamination.

Once the general examination has been successfully completed, the student is expected to spend the remaining time in his/her program concentrating on the dissertation and in preparing for the Final Examination. No less than one academic year (**See the [Academic Calendar](#)**) may elapse between the passing of the General Examination and the completion of all requirements for the Doctoral degree.

THE PROSPECTUS AND DISSERTATION

With the help of the major professor, the student must develop a formal prospectus for the dissertation. The prospectus is submitted to and considered by the student's committee at a scheduled meeting of the committee. **The prospectus must be submitted in final form to the student's committee no later than two weeks prior to the oral presentation.** This meeting is open to all ETPP faculty who may attend and make suggestions following the presentation. The committee members will carefully examine the prospectus for contribution to knowledge in the field of study. Other graduate students may attend the student's presentation of the prospectus or dissertation but will be asked to leave prior to the defense.

When the Committee is satisfied with the prospectus, all members sign the cover page of the prospectus, which is placed in the student's file. Any changes in the prospectus must be approved and signed by the Committee. Such changes will be appended to the prospectus.

Once the prospectus has been approved, the student will devise appropriate instrumentation (if appropriate), collect and analyze the data from the study, and write the dissertation. The student will work closely with the major professor in the writing of the dissertation. The student's committee may act as consultants in the writing process.

THE FINAL EXAMINATION

When the student has finished the dissertation and it has been approved by the major professor, the student must defend it in a final examination. The student submits his/her application for the doctoral degree to the Graduate School before the final date for application specified on the [Academic Calendar](#). This application is completed after consultation with the major professor.

The Request for Doctoral Examination Form

([http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/\\$Content/Request+for+Doctoral+Exam/\\$file/Phd%20Exam.pdf](http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/$Content/Request+for+Doctoral+Exam/$file/Phd%20Exam.pdf)) must be submitted to the Graduate School through the ETPP Chair at least **three** weeks prior to the proposed final examination date for submission of approved dissertations and committee examination reports.

The request must specify the major and minor fields, dissertation title, time and place proposed

for the examination, and the members of the Examining Committee. **The Examining Committee must have copies of the dissertation at least two weeks prior to the Final Examination.**

The Dean of the Graduate School must approve the Final Examination Committee. In most cases it will consist of the full advisory committee to which one representative of the Graduate School will be appointed.

The committee will ask the student questions pertaining to the rationale, method, results, and discussion of the dissertation. The student should be prepared to defend orally what he/she has stated in writing.

Following the oral defense of the dissertation, the Committee will vote on the successful completion of the examination. The Committee has the option of passing the student, passing with appropriate revisions, or failing the student. Abstentions are not permitted under Graduate School regulations. There must not be more than one negative vote in the decision to pass the student. If the student fails, he/she may be given one reexamination.

The program of study for the doctoral degree must be completed within seven years from the time a student is classified as a doctoral student.

**SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN
EDUCATIONAL THEORY, POLICY, AND PRACTICE**

*****REFER TO ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR ALL UNIVERSITY DEADLINES *****

1. Student applies and is admitted.
2. Student selects a major area of study and a temporary advisor (major professor) from the graduate faculty advising list with the assistance of the Director of Graduate Studies. Students are required to interview prospective ETPP advisors and committee members.
3. In consultation with the major professor student chooses a minor advisor (if applicable) and at least one additional faculty member in the major area. If a minor is not selected, student chooses two additional faculty members in the major area. Program of study is designed and submitted to the Graduate School.
4. Student takes courses and prepares for the General Examination.
5. Student, with the permanent major professor, chooses a General Examination Committee and consults with the members.
6. Date for the oral portion of the General Examination is set and requested of the Graduate School. Written portions are to be administered at least three weeks prior to the orals.
7. Questions are requested of committee members and the examination is assembled by the major professor.
8. Student completes the written questions and then orally defends the exam at the scheduled time.
9. A prospectus for the dissertation is developed based upon the student's course work and independent study.
10. Formal meeting on the dissertation proposal is held. The prospectus is accepted, modified, or rejected and placed in student's file.
11. Student submits preliminary drafts of dissertation to major professor. With the major professor's direction, the student may hold informal sessions with other committee members as the study is conducted. A final draft is prepared.
12. When the major professor is reasonably sure that the dissertation is complete and defensible, a date for the Final Examination is set and requested of the Graduate School. The date **must be in accord with deadlines** set by the College and the Graduate School.
13. Final Examination is held and the committee accepts, modifies, or rejects the dissertation. (At this point a dissertation would be totally rejected if the student has failed to conduct the study according to the accepted prospectus.)

14. Student obtains approval from the Editor at the Graduate School of a hard copy of the final version of the dissertation. Student submits the dissertation electronically.
15. Successful completion of the Final Examination is reported to the Graduate School enabling the student to graduate.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR DOCTORAL EXAMINATIONS AND DISSERTATION

Department of Educational Theory, Policy & Practice

ROLE OF THE MAJOR PROFESSOR:

1. Advises student as to courses to schedule and activities to pursue in preparation for the general examination.
2. **Encourages student to assume primary responsibility in such matters as meeting deadlines, completing necessary paperwork, and keeping informed on regulations set forth in the Graduate School catalog.**
3. Works with student in designing Program of Study.
4. Holds extended discussions with student as the dissertation study evolves.

The major professor should not hesitate to reject a proposal if in his/her opinion, the proposal would not lead to a meritorious study. Although he/she must be willing to accept committee suggestions that would strengthen a study, the major professor should not schedule a formal meeting for approval of the prospectus until convinced that the proposal could reasonably lead to a study that meets Graduate School requirements.

5. Coordinates the development of the General Examination. Works with the student in scheduling written and oral examinations; works with student after examinations as various suggestions are evaluated; files prospectus cover sheet in the ETPP departmental office after committee members have signed cover sheet.
6. Advises student in preparation for General Examination. Presides at oral segment of this evaluation.
7. Works closely with student as dissertation is prepared. The major professor assumes responsibility for seeing that the dissertation draft is at least approaching final form before it is circulated through the committee.
8. After the draft is circulated through the committee, the major professor works with the student in evaluating suggestions made by committee members before the draft is submitted as a final product.
9. Encourages the student to disseminate dissertation results through publications, presentations at professional meetings and to appropriate persons who are involved in the study. It is recommended that the student bring a professionally prepared manuscript to the Final Examination that is ready to be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. At the discretion of the committee, it is acceptable to have this be a portion of the dissertation. (Students are encouraged to submit conference presentations and journal articles throughout the doctoral program, not just as part of the dissertation process.)

ROLE OF THE STUDENT:

1. Consult with major advisor on time line for completing your Program of Study.
2. Schedule rooms for written and oral (general/final) examinations.
3. Contact committee members about dates for examinations and any changes being made.
4. Submit to Graduate School Records Office, 114 David Boyd Hall, all necessary paperwork for general or final examinations. **Graduate School Calendar for any given semester must be consulted in order to meet deadlines.*

ROLE OF THE DOCTORAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

1. Serve in an advisory capacity to major professor and student.
2. Participate in the several examinations as scheduled by the student and advisor.
3. Serve as "sounding boards" and informal advisors to the student as dissertation plans are developed. Ideally, the student will have conferred with committee members regarding the study prior to the prospectus meeting.
4. Give careful study to the final prospectus as presented at the prospectus meeting so that the student may proceed with confidence to fulfill his/her "contract" as spelled out in the prospectus.
5. Carefully read and comment on the draft of the dissertation.
6. Maintain a positive approach throughout the entire process.

ELEMENTS OF A DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

The dissertation proposal should be sufficiently detailed and clear to serve as a blueprint for the study which will follow. **The proposal should contain the following elements, but may vary among major professors.**

1. Statement of the Problem.
2. Purpose of the study.
3. Setting
4. Significance of the study.
5. Research questions
6. Definition of Terms.
7. Review of the Literature
8. Methodology
9. Research design
10. Data collection procedures
11. Data analysis procedures

12. References
13. Appendices

PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF PROSPECTUS

1. An acceptable study grows out of extended discussions between student and major professor.
It may be, but is not necessarily, a part of the professor's ongoing research. Normally, committee members are not involved until the major professor is convinced that a proposed study has merit.
2. After the student and the major professor are committed to an idea, the student should hold informal discussion with members of the advisory committee, other faculty members, fellow graduate students or anyone who might be of assistance in the evolution of a prospectus.
3. **At least one to two weeks** before the meeting on the prospectus, the student must provide each member of the committee with a copy for review prior to the meeting.
4. It would be helpful if, as part of the meeting, the student could inform the committee as to the proposed time schedule, target date of graduation, etc.
5. All suggestions growing out of the meeting should be noted by the student and/or major professor and should be carefully evaluated in the process of putting together the final form of the prospectus.
6. The final form is circulated among the committee members for signatures, and then is placed on file in the departmental office.

PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION

1. **The student is responsible for keeping completely informed regarding deadline dates as shown in the graduate catalog.** This includes such matters as, "The examining committee must have paper copies of the dissertation at least two weeks prior to the final examination." This refers to the final draft.
2. The major professor has the primary responsibility for working with the student in the processes of writing, editing, correcting, assembling, and circulating the dissertation.
3. Dissertations should be written in a conventionally recognized publication style such as the American Psychological Association, the Modern Language Association or Chicago Style; but must be formatted as required in the "Guidelines for Preparation of Theses and Dissertation" which is available from the Graduate School.
4. During the period of research and writing, the student should feel free to seek help on specific points as they arise, either from the major professor or members of the committee.
5. There is no best way to turn in a dissertation. Some professors prefer to have the student turn in one chapter at a time; others prefer to wait until the complete volume can be examined.

The latter system probably facilitates the work of the committee in locating

inconsistencies, redundancies, etc.

6. The major professor should function as coordinator or arbitrator in applying suggestions and corrections from the committee members.
7. A finished, fully assembled clean paper copy must be used for the Final Examination. A copy must be in each committee member's hands at least two weeks prior to the date of the final examination.
8. The primary purpose of the Final Examination is to provide the student with an opportunity to defend the findings and conclusions of the dissertation.

Major redesign of the research project should not be considered at the time of the final examination.

9. The student takes a hard copy of a PDF of the dissertation to the Editor in the Graduate School, who will review the dissertation for conformity to LSU style. After revisions are made according to the Editor's instructions, a final version of the dissertation must be submitted both electronically and in paper form to the Graduate School.
10. Copies of the completed dissertation should be presented to the major professor and to each committee member. One copy should be placed on file with the department, and a copy provided to any other appropriate person/persons involved in the study.

Ph.D. STUDENT CHECKLIST

Program of Study

1. Obtain signatures of committee members.
2. Turn in to ETPP office at least one week prior to date due to Graduate School.

General Examination Questions

1. Ask committee members for questions.
2. If you do a "sit down" exam, it must be completed and turned in with the rest of your questions.
3. Schedule defense date with your 4 committee members.
4. Schedule room for defense with Dean's office (College of Education).
5. Take copies of General Examination responses to committee members at least 2 weeks prior to defense.
6. Take paperwork to Graduate School **three weeks** prior to defense.
7. Graduate School will report to department your outside member or dean representative of your general defense. A copy of your responses must be submitted to the representative in a timely manner.

Prospectus

1. Schedule defense with committee members.
2. Schedule room for defense with Dean's office.
3. Take copy of prospectus to committee members at least two weeks prior to defense.
4. Complete paperwork for Internal Review Board concerning research for human subjects (Office of Sponsored Research - 117D David Boyd Hall).
5. Complete sign-off sheet for major professor.
6. Arrange for overhead projector if you plan to do a presentation with transparencies.

Dissertation

1. **Obtain "Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations" from the Graduate School.**

Note: The Graduate School requires electronic submission of all dissertations.

2. **Follow Graduate School calendar for the semester in which you plan to graduate.**
3. Schedule defense with committee members.
4. Schedule room for defense with Dean's office.
5. Take copy of dissertation to committee members at least two weeks prior to defense.
6. Complete sign-off sheet for front of dissertation.
7. Arrange for overhead projector or technology equipment if you plan to do a presentation with transparencies or PowerPoint.

Before Graduation

1. Complete paperwork for Graduate School. These forms are available from the Graduate School Office of Records or online at the Graduate School website.
2. Schedule appointment with Graduate School editor.

DOCTORAL PROCEDURES

Examination Policy for Graduate Examinations Where Student Performance is Unsatisfactory

The Doctoral General Examination

1. **Written**

Committee will suggest areas where further study is necessary and develop a written plan designed for the student to make up deficiencies. All or part of written exam may be retaken once.

2. **Oral**

Committee will suggest areas where further study is necessary and develop a written plan designed for the student to remediate deficiencies. The oral may be retaken once.

The Prospectus Meeting

1. If the proposal is unsatisfactory, the committee will suggest areas which need to be strengthened.
2. It is the student's responsibility to consult with individual faculty members during the development of the proposal.
3. After two meetings (if necessary) the committee will decide if the student should proceed further.

The Final Examination (Dissertation Defense)

1. Major professor and committee members will formulate a written plan for the student to follow in terms of revisions or explore other avenues that the committee may wish to consider.
2. Examination may be repeated only once.

Pertinent Resources and Links

Doctoral Program Guidelines – LSU Graduate Bulletin:

[http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/\\$Content/Graduate+Bulletin+09/\\$File/09bulletin.pdf](http://appl003.lsu.edu/grad/gradschool.nsf/$Content/Graduate+Bulletin+09/$File/09bulletin.pdf)