Doctorate in Educational Leadership
Program Policies and Procedures

Admission

Prospective students are urged to review and read the website for the Doctorate Program (Ed.D.), available through the Department of Educational Leadership website: http://www.uncw.edu/ed/el/. The website is updated regularly and all of the program policies and procedures are discussed on various pages.

The Ed.D. Program will typically admit a cohort of between 12 and 18 students in three locations (see the description below). Students focus on one of three concentration areas (see the description below). All students take a set of core courses during the first, and sometimes, second year of the program (only in cases where students start with other groups). The four courses are required for all concentration areas and include students from an array of experiences and perspectives. Students will break off into concentration areas after the initial set of classes and will not progress through the program as a cohort.

Applying. Prospective students must complete an application and submit additional documentation within the enrollment period. Check the Graduate School website for dates. All submissions are completely online and can be accessed through the Graduate School website. Students are admitted to the Doctorate in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) based on the following criteria:

1. A Master’s degree in school administration, supervision, curriculum, instruction, or related educational field from an accredited university (official transcripts from undergraduate and graduate school are required)
2. An overall graduate grade point average of at least 3.0 out of 4.0 in undergraduate and graduate coursework
3. Satisfactory scores (mean or above) on all three parts of the Graduate Record Examination General Test (GRE scores more than five years old at the time of application will not be considered)
4. A score of at least 79 on the internet-based (TOEFL) version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for applicants whose native language is not English or a score of 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System
5. A minimum of three years of documented leadership experience

Students must submit, electronically:

1. An application for graduate admission (available at www.uncw.edu/gradschool).
2. Official transcripts of all college work (undergraduate and graduate).
3. Official scores on the Graduate Record Examination (verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing) that are less than five years’ old.
4. Three written recommendations by individuals in professionally relevant fields addressing the applicant's potential to succeed in a doctoral program. Recommendations from individuals who have supervised the applicant will be given greater weight.
5. Official score on the TOEFL (if applicable/see number 4 above).
6. Letter describing your interest in pursuing a degree in leadership, focusing on either administration or curriculum and instruction, professional goals related to the program description, teaching and leadership experiences and philosophy of teaching and learning (maximum of three pages).

Admission Processes. Most students are admitted through the following processes.
1. Interest sessions are held at various times and places. Please check with the Department of Educational Leadership or the Graduate School for times, dates, and places for interest sessions. If there is no interest session scheduled, students can meet with the Program Coordinator or faculty in the program to discuss the program.
2. Interested students submit a full application (see the list above of items to submit).
3. Applications are reviewed by faculty and interviews with prospective students are set. Interviews typically begin in late January and complete by late May. All decisions about admission are made only after a complete application has been submitted. Interested students may be interviewed, however, formal admission to the program will not be granted until all materials are received and processed by the Graduate School.
4. Most prospective students are notified of admission to the program by June 1. Students who have completed all admission requirements except for receipt of the GRE score may be admitted pending the score. All other materials must be in the Graduate School office prior to any notice of acceptance.
5. Students can check their admission status by following the account they establish during the admission procedure. A checklist is available through the online site and will notify students of missing materials. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor and submit all materials.
6. Students admitted to the cohort are expected to monitor their UNCW email account throughout their time in the program. There will be emails sent prior to the start of the first classes.
7. All students must complete a summer reading assignment and attend a full-day orientation, usually planned in August prior to the beginning of classes.

Locations and Delivery of Courses

Classes are offered in three locations and through various formats.

On-campus. Classes, in all three concentrations (see below) are offered on the UNCW campus, usually on Monday nights during the academic year (August through May) and online during the summer. Various cohorts will be attending classes at the same time. Be sure to check the course schedule each semester for times, dates, and rooms for class delivery.

Distance sites. There are two distance sites where classes are delivered. The Sandhills is a site in Hoke County and classes are offered at Turlington Alternative School. The second distance site is James Sprunt Community College, in Duplin County. Classes at these two location are offered on-site one Saturday a month during the academic year (August-May) and online in the summer. See the course schedule each semester for meeting dates, times, and locations.

Delivery format. Classes are delivered in three formats. All students are expected to have access to a computer and high-speed Internet access to participate in all delivery formats. Students can check with the technology support services office at UNCW to determine what equipment and configurations they will need for their classes. Lack of Internet access or access
to appropriate equipment will not be accepted as a reason for not participating in required classes, programs, or assignments. 

**On-campus** classes are delivered in a hybrid format and meet face-to-face every other Monday night during the academic year (August-May). On the nights when students do not attend class face-to-face, faculty may require students to participate via an online course delivery system. Students must have access to the Internet and appropriate equipment to participate in online class sessions. Class dates and times vary, however, they are typically offered at either 5:00-7:15 p.m. or 7:30-9:45 p.m. See the course schedule for exact times, days, and room numbers. Students may use the online format to attend classes with the permission of the Program Coordinator and the faculty member. Typically, students located within 50 miles of campus will be required to attend class. Students participating in on-campus classes from distance sites may elect to use the virtual course delivery option with the permission of the Program Coordinator and the faculty member.

**Distance sites** offer classes 3-4 Saturdays during each semester of the academic year (August-May). Students in these sites are expected to attend class on the Saturdays selected, see the schedule on the program website. Classes will meet at a designated location from 8:30-10:45 a.m. or 11 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. unless otherwise instructed by the faculty.

**Online** classes are offered during the summer months and students must have adequate Internet access and equipment to participate. Online courses may meet synchronously or asynchronously, however, faculty typically schedule some synchronous classes that are optional. Optional, synchronous classes are usually recorded and available to students who cannot attend. 

**Virtual course delivery** is part of every courses offered in the Ed.D. Program. At this time, we use WebEx, a course delivery platform through CISCO. Students are urged to test their access to WebEx prior to the first time they need to use it.

### Concentration Areas

Program concentrations focus on three areas, Leadership in Educational Administration, Leadership in Curriculum and Instruction, or Leadership in Higher Education. Courses in each concentration build upon the foundation of leadership, organization, and research. Courses are offered on a rotating basis and a final course program will be determined in consultation with an advisor. Courses in the program typically begin with the EDL prefix, however some courses are offered through other departments in the Watson College of Education, the Cameron School of Business and other programs on campus.

**Leadership in Educational Administration.** Students take a set of courses that focus on areas related to educational administration, such as policy, law, regulation, technology, curriculum, assessment, decision making, global achievement, and resource management.

**Leadership in Curriculum and Instruction.** Students take a set of courses that focus on areas related to curriculum and instruction, such as planning and design, innovation and change, accountability and assessment, policy and law, diversity and special education, and supervision and resource management.

**Leadership in Higher Education.** Students take courses such as policy and law, budget and finance, organization and governance in higher education. Students have the opportunity to pursue a specialized course of study through electives, domestic internships and international study abroad opportunities at various colleges and universities.
Program of Study

Students may complete the program as part-time (6 credits per semester) or as full-time (minimum of 9 credits per semester) student. Graduate assistantships may be available to qualified students. Students should contact their Advisor, the Program Coordinator or Department chair to discuss available graduate assistantships.

Ed.D. courses are designated with a 600 numeral and usually come under the EDL prefix. A maximum of six (6) credits may be taken at the 500-level if the courses are not offered at the 600-level and only after approval of an Advisor.

The program of study for the Doctorate in Educational Leadership includes core courses and concentration-specific courses. A total of 60 credits are required for graduation. Students must fulfill the requirements for a specific concentration of study and work closely with an advisor to plan their course of study. Students who self-advise risk getting to the end of their program and finding out they do not have the appropriate courses for graduation. Students are urged to meet with an advisor regularly.

**Program core (24 credits).** The primary purpose of the program core is to provide all students with a foundation in leadership and organization theory and practice. Other courses in the core prepare students as researchers. All courses in the core are required for graduation and are offered in a specific sequence.

- EDL 601 Leadership Theory (3)
- EDL 602 Social Foundations in Educational Leadership (3)
- EDL 609 Organizational Development and Analysis (3)
- EDL 641 Applied Research (3)
- Additional Research Courses (6) (To be determined with advisor)
- EDL 699 Dissertation (6)

Total 24 Credits

**Concentration specific courses (36 credits).** Each concentration has specific courses required for the concentration and electives. See the website for a required and suggested list of courses.

**Transfer of credits.** Students generally may transfer into the Ed.D. Program a maximum of six credits of 600-level course work or its equivalent, earned beyond the master’s level, not used for another earned degree or license, and taken through a regionally accredited university with standards consistent with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools requirements for graduate program accreditation. Students may petition their advisor, the program coordinator, and the department chair for an exception to this rule. Individual cases of transfer credit will be determined after review of transcripts, course catalogs, university websites, and in consultation with the Graduate School. Only students formally enrolled as a degree-seeking students can transfer credits into the program.

**Monitoring progress.** Students must monitor their own progress through the program. At the beginning of the third year of coursework, all students must make an appointment with their advisor to conduct a degree audit.
Taking Courses

Students officially enrolled in the Ed.D. Program are eligible to take courses with a 600-level designation. In some cases, a student may be admitted as a non-degree seeking student and take up to nine (9) credits before declaring a major. Students must complete their enrollment and be formally admitted to the program to continue to take courses after the initial nine credits are earned.

Expectations. Students enrolled in the Ed.D. Program are expected to perform at the highest level of academic and ethical behavior. Following is a list of expectations, however, it is not all-inclusive. Students are expected to:
1. Attend all scheduled classes, fully prepared to participate, and engage in scholarly activities to the best of their ability.
2. Conduct themselves as professionals at all times.
3. Treat others with courtesy at all times.
4. Submit original assignments, as required, without plagiarizing others or themselves (using work submitted to other classes).
5. Complete attempted courses, if at all possible, to the best of their ability.
6. Participate in all required activities and in as many optional activities as possible.
7. Contribute to the learning community of the classroom.

Flexibility. Faculty have various teaching strategies and styles. It is up to the student to fully engage in each course to the best of their ability. It is the student’s responsibility to communicate with faculty if they are experiencing situations that will not allow them to fully participate. At times, faculty may find it necessary to revise the syllabus, reschedule an activity or event, or change a meeting time or date. Students are expected to make every attempt to be as flexible as possible to meet unexpected changes.

Student Progress

Students are urged to read the Graduate Catalogue, especially the section on Academic Regulations and Progress: http://catalogue.uncw.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=753. The catalogue is available online and students are required to follow policies and procedures for the catalogue dated the semester they start their program.

Students must maintain good standing in the program. For all courses required, in each concentration, a minimum of a B must be earned. In elective courses, students may earn no more than two grades of C. Three grades of C, one grade of F, or one grade of U (e.g. thesis/dissertation) results in dismissal from the graduate program. All courses attempted during the student’s course of study, both for the Ed.D. Program and any add-on licenses attempted at this time will be taken into consideration when applying this requirement.

Faculty who determine a student is in danger of failing a class or does not display courtesy or professional dispositions can submit a Performance Review Form; see below. This form will be submitted to the Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and/or Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs. The Program Coordinator will request a meeting with you to discuss the situation and determine if action is needed by the Department Chair or Associate Dean.
Please review each of your students (undergraduate, graduate, and licensure-seeking) using the WCE Dispositional Expectations below, and indicate any significant concerns on this form. Submit to the Program Coordinator for follow-up.

1. Commitment to Personal and Professional Qualities
   - demonstrates integrity (honesty, ethics and character).
   - exhibits a caring nature.
   - shows tolerance of others and acceptance of differences among people.
   - uses critical thinking and problem solving skills.
   - possesses creativity and innovation.
   - is considerate and thoughtful.
   - uses language appropriate to context and audience.
   - has excellent attendance and shows punctuality and responsiveness.
   - wears professional attire and has a neat appearance acceptable in a public school setting.

2. Commitment as a Learner
   - engages actively in courses.
   - completes assignments to the best of ability.
   - takes responsibility for learning by showing initiative in responding to assignments, projects and class activities both as a learner and a teacher.
   - is receptive to new ideas and accepts feedback readily.
   - thoughtfully considers the viewpoints of others.
   - contributes ideas and demonstrate initiative when working in groups and teams, and comes to classes prepared.
   - collaborates with peers, colleagues, and other teachers to create a professional learning community.

3. Commitment as an Educator to Success of All Students
   - reflects on cultural identity and experiences.
   - examines and seeks to overcome bias and stereotypical viewpoints.
   - is respectful and sensitive to students’ varied perspectives and cultures.
   - takes full responsibility for all students’ learning and holds high expectations for all students.
   - shows tolerance of others and acceptance of differences among people.
   - establishes an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive and inclusive.
   - works collaboratively with families and significant adults in the lives of students.
   - chooses methods and materials that engage students to raise academic achievement of all learners and strive to eliminate achievement gaps.

4. Commitment to Professional Leadership
   - involves families and the community in the classroom and the school.
   - participates in initiatives to improve public education, including professional associations, community service, membership on boards, panels, agencies or special projects.
   - advocates for positive change in policies and practices affecting student learning.
   - seeks solutions to overcome social, political, cultural, economic, physical and cognitive barriers that may prevent effective family and community involvement in the education of students.

Student:  
ID#:  
Date:  
Instructor:  
Course:  
Concerns:  

Actions to date:  
- Confirmed with student  
- Provided written documentation to student  
- Developed a written professional development plan or written contract  
- Would like for Associate Dean for Academic & Student Affairs to meet with student at this time.
Advising

Advisors for the program are identified on the Department of Educational Leadership webpage. Students must meet with advisors on a regular basis. Students should not self-advice. Taking additional courses or courses not listed in your program of student may result in not meeting graduation requirements. All courses attempted while enrolled in the program count when determining grade point average, limits on the number of C grades that can be earned, length of time you have to pursue the degree, and other situations that effect your progress in the program. Always check with your advisor before planning to enroll in courses, internships, and additional programs or add-on licenses.

Dismissal from the Program

Students may be dismissed from the program for lack of academic progress, lack of professional dispositions, or any other behavior or situation that causes concern for the faculty, Program Coordinator, Department Chair, Associate Dean, or other people associated with the program. Students can appeal dismissal to the Graduate School after they have exhausted all appeal options at Watson College of Education.

For grade appeals and other situations that require support from the Graduate School, consult the Graduate Catalogue at: http://catalogue.uncw.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=463.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION

Candidates pursuing the Educational Leadership Doctoral degree must successfully pass an oral comprehensive examination as part of degree requirements. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to assess the doctoral candidate’s ability to demonstrate a broad and deep understanding of the knowledge base in educational leadership and their concentration area; to intelligently synthesize these concepts, theories, and principles; and to effectively apply them to real world problems encountered in educational settings. The comprehensive examination serves as a milestone in the doctoral program that occurs during the final year of required coursework. In addition to assessing candidate abilities, the results of the examination promote faculty learning by providing feedback on the coursework of the program.

The Knowledge Base

The primary goal of the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program is to prepare effective leaders who are skilled managers, curricular experts, and research-based scholars. Each of these aspects of leadership requires theoretical and practical knowledge, application of skills, and appropriate professional dispositions. Coursework focuses on the following strands:

- Leading systemic organizational change processes;
- Facilitating educational reform;
- Serving urban and rural communities;
- Serving diverse students and families;
- Integrating interdisciplinary knowledge—e.g., from the fields of education, business, government;
- Expanding international connections;
- Applying emerging technologies; and
- Using research and data to inform decisions.

Thus, comprehensive exam questions assess the candidate’s ability to demonstrate expertise as a skilled manager, curricular expert, and research-based scholar. This requires the candidate to provide clear evidence of understanding, synthesizing, and applying knowledge related to the strands and learned through coursework.

Forming the Committee

Students must meet with an advisor to form the Comprehensive Exam/Dissertation Committee. You will form one committee with three faculty from UNCW. The Chair must be someone from the Watson College of Education. Exceptions can be made with the support of the Program Coordinator. You form this committee, thus you can change the committee. Sometimes, although rare, situations arise where faculty cannot complete their responsibilities for the committee. In these cases, you must find replacements for your committee. This must be done with the support of the Chair, or the Advisor, or Program Coordinator in the event the change must be made to the Chair. It is critical that you form a committee that you can work well with to complete both the comprehensive examination and the dissertation.
Meeting with your Advisor or Program Coordinator will give you information on faculty who have expertise in the your area of interest. It is the responsibility of the student to approach the faculty member to be their Chair. Faculty will typically want to meet with the student to determine a good fit and to ask some questions about timeline and study interests. When the Chair has agreed to serve, you should plan to meet with the Chair to form the rest of the committee. You must identify a methodologist on your committee. This person has an expertise in the methodology you hope to use for your study. This person can also be the Chair and content expert. Be sure to identify who the methodologist is so you will know who to meet with to discuss the methodology of the dissertation study. You can add outside people to your committee after you pass your comprehensive exam, for support on your dissertation.
Department of Educational Leadership
Comprehensive/Dissertation Committee Form

Candidate: _____________________________ Cohort # ________

A dissertation committee includes a minimum of three participants to be determined in consultation with a committee chairperson. Students may ask faculty to serve as chair or member of a committee in their final year of coursework. The dissertation committee may or may not have the same membership as the comprehensive examination committee. Students may elect to change members of their committee in consultation with their chair. If the chair of the dissertation is to be changed, the student may work in consultation with the chair of the Educational Leadership Department. Any change in committee requires a new Dissertation Committee Form be filed with the Educational Leadership Department Office.

The following faculty members have agreed to participate on the dissertation committee:

Committee Members Signatures

____________________________________              ________________________
Signature, Chair      Department

____________________________________              ________________________
Signature, Member      Department

____________________________________              ________________________
Signature, Member      Department

Members outside the Watson College of Education (not required)

____________________________________  ________________________
Signature       Affiliation

____________________________________  ________________________
Signature       Affiliation

Other required signatures:

____________________________________  ________________________
Chair Educational Leadership Department       Program Coordinator, Ed.D. Program
Comprehensive Exam Processes

The comprehensive exam is an oral discussion, led by the student, based on a set of questions prepared by the committee that reflect knowledge, theories, and applications the student gained through the coursework.

Before the exam
- The Chair will determine the date of the exam in consultation with the student and other members of the Committee. When a date is set, the Chair will gather 3-5 questions from the Committee to send to the student. Students have their questions 2 weeks prior to the date of the exam. The exam should cover all coursework in the program.
- Students prepare for the exam by reviewing coursework, scholarly literature, and other materials that will help them respond to the exam. Students may bring in one page of notes, front and back, any font. This is for prompting only. Students should not read from or rely on the sheet of notes to answer the questions.

During the oral examination
- The Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair welcomes everyone and makes sure that the candidate is ready to move forward with the examination. If so, the Chair provides a brief overview of the process and monitors and manages time.
- The oral examination is conducted in discussion format. The candidate shares responses to each exam question. Committee members ask clarification and probing questions related to each response, as appropriate.
- Once all questions have been discussed, the candidate is asked to leave the room while the Chair facilitates the Committee discussion and evaluation of the quality of the responses.
- The candidate is called back to the room and the Committee shares the results of the comprehensive exam. The Committee completes the Results of Comprehensive Exam form (available from the Ed.D. webpage).
- A pass judgment on all questions by consensus of the Committee is required in order to pass the examination. If the candidate does not receive a pass judgment, he or she may reschedule the oral examination with the Committee. Depending on the reasons for not passing, the Committee may decide that the candidate must (a) retake the entire comprehensive examination with the same, modified, or new questions; or (b) retake part of the comprehensive examination with the same, modified, or new questions. The Committee will determine the amount of time needed before the candidate retakes the exam. The candidate may retake the comprehensive examination once.
Comprehensive Exam Checklist

Here is a summary checklist for Chairs and Committee Members of a comprehensive exam committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students must pass all of the courses attempted and required prior to participating in the comprehensive exam process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The committee members hold a meeting with the student to discuss the comprehensive exam process, create a timeline, and gather information to help in the development of questions. It is recommended that the committee chair keep records and notes of all meetings with the committee and/or the student that include time and date, as well as, a summary of the discussion.</td>
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<td>It is expected that comprehensive exams will be held during the final year of courses. Exceptions will be made for extenuating circumstances and will be determined by the comp committee.</td>
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<td>Comps should be completed within a 3-hour timeframe. Typically, 2 hours are set-aside for students to answer questions and respond to follow-up questions. The additional time may be used for further questioning, introductions, and conclusions.</td>
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<td>Students should be given 3-5 questions to answer and be expected to address 3 of the questions during the exam. Students should receive the comp questions 2 weeks prior to the exam date.</td>
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<td>There is a database of possible questions for committees to review and use/tweak. The link to the database is available through the Educational Leadership office. Questions should reflect material covered in courses and do not need to address the dissertation study.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students may bring a page of notes for quick reference during the exam. The notes should not be read as responses to the questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A rubric will be used to evaluate the oral exam. The chair of the committee will collect each committee member’s evaluation rubric, have the committee sign the results form and prepare a packet to submit to the Educational Leadership office that includes the rubrics, the result form, the questions asked of the student, a copy of any handouts the student provides to the committee during the exam, and, if possible, a copy of any notes the student brings into the exam.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students may only take the comprehensive exam twice and must pass it prior to moving on to the dissertation proposal defense.</td>
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Notes:
Department of Educational Leadership  
Results of Comprehensive Examinations*

Candidate: ___________________________ Cohort # _____ Date __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Members</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Fail</th>
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Recommendation of Doctoral Committee _____ PASS _____ FAIL

_________________________ _____________________________
Chair/Co-Chair Signature Department

_________________________ _____________________________
Chair/Co-Chair or Member Signature Department

_________________________ _____________________________
Member Signature Department

NOTE: A **PASS** judgment on all questions by consensus of the Committee is required to pass the examination. If the candidate does not receive a pass judgment, he or she may reschedule the oral examination with the Committee. The Committee will determine the amount of time needed before the candidate retakes the exam. The candidate may retake the comprehensive examination **one (1) time**. The candidate’s dissertation proposal and IRB to proceed with his or her study may not be approved until 2 weeks from the PASS date of the comprehensive exams.

* The chair of the committee will prepare a packet to submit to the Educational Leadership office that includes the rubrics used to evaluate the student, this result form, the questions asked of the student, a copy of any handouts the student provides to the committee during the exam, and, if possible, a copy of any notes the student brings into the exam (ask to make a copy).
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## Comprehensive Examination Rubric

The purpose of this rubric is to support the Doctoral Advisory Committee in assessing the quality of Comprehensive Examination responses. Submit a completed rubric along with the *Results of Comprehensive Exam* form to the Educational Leadership Department.

**Doctoral Candidate:**      **Date:**      **Committee Member:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses fully and accurately/appropriately address questions.</td>
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<td>Responses are clear, coherent, and well-organized with an introduction and conclusion.</td>
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<td>Responses are well-prepared and well-presented (e.g., Candidate does not overly rely on notes).</td>
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<td>Responses demonstrate reflection, insight, creativity, and original thinking that goes beyond generalities.</td>
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<td>Responses include analysis and synthesis of key concepts.</td>
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<td>Responses demonstrate the application of coursework, including internships, to professional practice.</td>
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<td>Responses include descriptions and specific examples in support of main ideas.</td>
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<td>Responses demonstrate the ability to meaningfully cite and use research and theory in support of ideas presented.</td>
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*Note: Responses refers to prepared responses to questions and responses to probing/clarification questions asked during the oral examination.*
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Dissertation Information for Chairs

The written dissertation should be a substantial body of work that reflects the topic appropriately. The dissertation defense is a presentation of the research design and key findings of the work. Examples of dissertations are available in the Randall Library and in the Educational Leadership Conference Room.

Here is a summary checklist to help you prepare to serve as Chair or Committee Member of a dissertation committee:

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<tr>
<th>✓</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students must pass all of the courses attempted and the comprehensive exam prior to meeting with the committee to discuss the dissertation proposal. Students may not move on to work on completing their dissertation until they have successfully defended the proposal.</td>
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<td>Following the dissertation defense, the committee chair (and members) holds a meeting with the student to discuss the timeline for completing the dissertation and the process for communication with the committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Each committee will need to determine how information will be communicated. It is recommended that all communication between the student and the committee begin with the committee chair and the committee chair is copied on all communication between a committee member and the student.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The dissertation should be submitted to the committee chair throughout the process and a final draft (needing minor edits) sent to the committee members four weeks ahead of the dissertation defense.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The dissertation defense is scheduled only after the dissertation is in its final draft with few edits remaining to be completed. The dissertation defense is a formal presentation. The committee schedules a 3-hour block of time for the defense.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students must submit the final draft to the Graduate School, along with the Format Approval Sheet by the published date on the Graduate School website.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students have 6 calendar years to complete their Ed.D. Program. Students who do not complete their dissertation during the semester they take the credits for the dissertation research hours (EDL 698) need to sign up for continuing dissertation hours-EDL 699 until they finish their work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students must submit a PDF to the Graduate School and the Educational Leadership Department after the defense is approved.</td>
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Dissertation Proposal

The purpose of the dissertation proposal is to “propose” the dissertation study, including the background and rationale for the study, the research purpose and questions, and the research methods. An accepted dissertation proposal is an agreement between the doctoral candidate and his or her Doctoral Advisory Committee outlining what is required for the dissertation study. The candidate may make needed adjustments to or expand on the anticipated procedures as he or she conducts the study, but any changes must be discussed with the Committee Chair or Co-Chairs and approved by the Doctoral Advisory Committee. The following sections provide information about the required format and content of the dissertation proposal and the procedures for the dissertation proposal defense.

The dissertation proposal is not the first three chapters of the dissertation; it is the starting point for these chapters. The contents of the proposal are not as comprehensive and refined as what is expected for dissertation chapters. The outline includes the contents of the dissertation proposal and the suggested length for each section. The format of the proposal must follow the guidelines specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition (2009).

1. **TITLE PAGE**

2. **INTRODUCTION**
   **Statement of the Problem:**
   - Introductory Hook: Opening statement or statements to gain the interest of the reader.
   - Practical Need
   - Research Problem: What is known and unknown from the research literature based on the Review of the Literature; culminates in a statement of the research problem—the problem is the unknown.

**Purpose Statement**

**Proposed Research Questions**
- Research questions developed for the proposal are rarely the same questions you will be using for your study. One of the jobs of the committee is to help you refine your questions. Be prepared for the committee to guide you to revise your proposed questions.
3. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
The literature review for the proposal should include approximately three-to-four focus areas of literature that supports the study. Look at your research questions. If you were not going to gather additional information, where would you look in the scholarly literature to answer the questions? What search terms would you use? Those will probably be your third-level headings in this section. Are there other studies that asked similar questions, include those in your review. Be prepared for your committee to advise additional areas of literature for you to include. In addition, you will need to include a section on literature for your research methodology.

4. METHODOLOGY
This section is your road map of what you are going to do and how you are going to do it. Write it like you are telling someone what you plan to do in your research. You answer the “who, what, when, where, and why” of your research study here. Be as descriptive as possible. Your committee will assist you in refining this section. It is important to consider how you are going to answer each one of your questions. Match your methods and data collection to answering each of your research questions.

Research Design Overview: Brief description of the design.
Description of Study Site (if applicable)-why this site, what does offer to answer your questions
Participants and Sampling Procedures-who are you going to include and why

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures: Consider using data collection instruments that are already developed. Review studies that are similar to yours to determine what they used and see if it could be used for your study. Developing instruments can be difficult and you will have an issue with reliability and validity. Survey and interview questions need to be developed and included as an Appendix. If you are using a large data set, a secondary source of data, you need to describe what it is, why it is the most appropriate data to use, and how you will access it. If you are using questions or an instrument you develop, you will need to include a description of what you will do to establish validity and reliability for quantitative data collected and/or accuracy and credibility for qualitative data collected.

Data Analysis: A description of the procedures that will be used to analyze the data for each research question, including procedures that will be used to ensure the accuracy of data analysis results (e.g., data validation checks for data entry, audiotaping interviews, member checking).

5. REFERENCES: A complete list of references cited in the dissertation proposal.

6. APPENDICES: Include draft materials to be submitted to the Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects Protocol Form, data collection instruments, etc.) in an appendix or appendices. *Please note that materials cannot be submitted for Institutional Review Board approval until after the dissertation proposal has been approved by the Doctoral Advisory Committee. Data collection for the study cannot begin until Institutional Review Board approval is received.

Dissertation Proposal Defense
The purpose of the proposal defense is to determine if you have a viable project and can move forward. Some defenses end with significant changes to what you propose. That is not a
negative outcome and will not mean you did not pass your defense. The question the committee must answer at the end of the defense will be, Is this a project that the student can move forward on? If the answer is yes, they will determine that you passed your defense. If the answer is no, then you may have to defend your proposal again after making revisions.

You should develop a PowerPoint presentation that covers about 5-7 slides: Introduction, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Literature Review-only the third-level headings and one or two key studies that support your proposal, Research Question, Methodology, References.

Prior to the beginning of the proposal defense the candidate is asked to step out of the room. The Committee Chair or one of the Co-Chairs asks if the Committee is in agreement that they should proceed with the proposal defense. If all are in agreement, the candidate is invited back into the room and the defense commences; otherwise, the defense is scheduled for a later date.

During the dissertation proposal defense, the candidate briefly presents the proposal to the Committee. This presentation should be about 15 minutes in length. In addition to the 15-minute presentation, Committee members will ask clarifying questions about the dissertation proposal and may offer suggested or required changes to the proposal. The Chair or a Co-Chair from the Department of Educational Leadership facilitates this discussion, as well as any negotiation related to needed changes. Determine a way to gather feedback. Either have your proposal read in front of you to take notes or decide, with your Chair that the Chair will take notes to give to you at the end of the defense. Following this discussion, the candidate is asked to leave the room so that the Committee can determine the outcome of the proposal defense.

The candidate is called back to the room and the Committee shares the results of the proposal defense. The Committee completes and submits the Results of Proposal Defense form (available from the Ed.D. webpage). Acceptance of the proposal by consensus of the Committee is required in order to submit materials to the UNCW Institutional Review Board and begin the study; thus, acceptance of the proposal indicates that the proposal needs no further work. If the proposal is not accepted as presented during the proposal defense, the candidate must reschedule the proposal defense with the Committee.
Department of Educational Leadership
Dissertation Proposal Defense Form

Candidate: ___________________________________________ Cohort # ________

*Scheduled: Date: ________ Time: __________ Location: ________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Members</th>
<th>Defense</th>
<th>Passed</th>
<th>Failed</th>
</tr>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation of Doctoral Committee:

_____ Accept   _____ Accept with Changes   _____ Reschedule Defense

Committee Members Signatures

____________________________________  ________________________
Signature, Chair/Co-Chair              Department

____________________________________  ________________________
Signature, Chair/Co-Chair              Department

____________________________________  Department
Signature, Member

____________________________________  School District
Signature, Member

*Please notify Lisa Hunt of Date, Time & Location 2 weeks prior to proposal defense. Submit this completed form at the end of the defense.
Steps and Deadlines for Completing the Dissertation

Once the doctoral candidate completes a proposal defense and has formal approval from his or her Doctoral Advisory Committee and from the UNCW IRB to begin the dissertation study. The format of the dissertation must follow APA guidelines and may include a variety of chapters or sections. The Dissertation Chair will guide you in what needs to be part of the dissertation. Some studies do not follow a strict APA format. Clarification of what is expected is the responsibility of the student, with guidance from the Chair. Make sure you discuss expected sections, section titles, and treatment of data-embedded in the dissertation or added as appendices, prior to assembling the dissertation. It is expected that you work closely and regularly with the Chair to develop the dissertation. It is not appropriate to send a complete draft of your dissertation to your chair without meeting and discussing each section. There are also several steps with accompanying deadlines that must be met in completing the dissertation as part of the degree requirements of the Educational Leadership and Administration Doctoral Program.

1. The Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair agrees that the dissertation is in final form and is ready for defense.

2. The doctoral candidate sends a copy of the dissertation, in final form, to the Doctoral Advisory Committee at least four weeks prior to the dissertation defense date.

3. The doctoral candidate schedules a dissertation defense date with the Doctoral Advisory Committee. The defense date must occur at least two weeks prior to the UNCW Graduate School deadline for submission of final theses/dissertations to allow for needed editorial changes to be made and approved following the defense (see UNCW Graduate School website for deadlines; submit Request for Dissertation Defense and Notification of Dissertation Defense Date forms to the Department of Educational Leadership).

4. If, after reviewing the dissertation, all Doctoral Advisory Committee members agree that the dissertation is ready for defense, the doctoral candidate completes the dissertation defense.

5. Upon completion of the dissertation defense, if the doctoral candidate receives a “pass” or “pass with changes” decision from the Doctoral Advisory Committee the doctoral candidate makes any editorial changes requested. Note that a decision of “pass with changes” refers to editorial changes. If substantive changes are needed, the defense decision is “fail” and the defense must be rescheduled (see Results of Dissertation Defense form).

6. When the Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair agrees that the editorial changes made are sufficient, the doctoral candidate submits the final dissertation to the UNCW Graduate School (see UNCW Graduate School submission requirements).

Note: The UNCW Graduate School publishes Graduate Graduation Application deadlines for fall and spring graduations on their website.
### Example Dissertation Timeline for Fall Graduation
*(assuming each step in the process goes off without a hitch!)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td><em>Graduate Graduation Application</em> deadline (approximately, see Graduate School for exact date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Doctoral candidate may register for 3 credits of EDN 699 (Dissertation) with Doctoral Advisory Committee chair approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Doctoral candidate may register for 3 credits of EDN 699 with Doctoral Advisory Committee chair approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Doctoral Advisory Committee chair agrees that the dissertation is ready for defense. Doctoral candidate sends a copy of the dissertation, in final form, to the Doctoral Advisory Committee. Doctoral candidate schedules the dissertation defense date with the Doctoral Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Doctoral candidate submits a PDF copy of the dissertation with Format Approval Sheet to the UNCW Graduate School.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dissertation Defense—Doctoral Advisory Committee chair submits the <em>Results of Dissertation Defense</em> form to the Department of Educational Leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Doctoral candidate submits the final dissertation to the UNCW Graduate School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dissertation Defense

When the Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair or Co-Chairs agree that the dissertation is in final form, the doctoral candidate schedules a dissertation defense date with the Doctoral Advisory Committee and sends a copy of the dissertation, in final form, to the Committee. The Committee must receive a copy of the dissertation at least 4 weeks prior to the dissertation defense date. The defense date must occur at least two weeks prior to the UNCW Graduate School deadline for submission of final theses/dissertations to allow for needed editorial changes to be made and approved following the defense (see UNCW Graduate School website for deadlines; submit Request for Dissertation Defense and Notification of Dissertation Defense Date forms to the Department of Educational Leadership).

Prior to the beginning of the formal dissertation defense the candidate is asked to step out of the room. The Committee Chair or Co-Chair from the Department of Educational Leadership asks if the Committee is in agreement that they should proceed with the defense. If all are in agreement, the candidate is invited back into the room and the defense commences; otherwise, the defense is scheduled for a later date.

During the dissertation defense, the candidate formally presents the dissertation to the Committee. This presentation should be 20-30 minutes in length. In addition to the presentation, Committee members will ask clarifying and probing questions about the dissertation study. The Chair or Co-Chair from the Department of Educational Leadership facilitates this discussion, as well as any negotiation related to needed changes. Following this discussion, the candidate is asked to leave the room so that the Committee can determine the outcome of the dissertation defense.

The doctoral candidate is invited back into the room to receive the results of the defense. If the doctoral candidate receives a “pass-accept” or “pass-accept with changes” decision from the Doctoral Advisory Committee the doctoral candidate makes any editorial changes requested. Note that a decision of “accept with changes” refers to editorial changes. If substantive changes are needed, the defense decision is “reschedule defense” and the defense must be rescheduled (see Results of Dissertation Defense form).

When the Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair agrees that the editorial changes made are sufficient, the doctoral candidate submits the final dissertation to the UNCW Graduate School (see UNCW Graduate School submission requirements).
Department of Educational Leadership
Dissertation Committee Form

Candidate: _________________________________ Cohort # ________

A dissertation committee includes a minimum of three participants to be determined in consultation with a committee chairperson. Students may ask faculty to serve as chair or member of a committee in their final year of coursework. The dissertation committee may or may not have the same membership as the comprehensive examination committee. Students may elect to change members of their committee in consultation with their chair. If the chair of the dissertation is to be changed, the student may work in consultation with the chair of the Educational Leadership Department. Any change in committee requires a new Dissertation Committee Form be filed with the Educational Leadership Department Office.

The following faculty members have agreed to participate on the dissertation committee:

Committee Members Signatures

__________________________  ________________________
Signature, Chair            Department
__________________________  ________________________
Signature, Member           Department
__________________________  ________________________
Signature, Member           Department

Members outside the Watson College of Education (not required)

__________________________  ________________________
Signature                      Affiliation
__________________________  ________________________
Signature                      Affiliation

Other required signatures:

__________________________  ________________________
Chair Educational Leadership Department  Program Coordinator, Ed.D. Program
Disseminating Your Research

Once you have completed your study the next pivotal step is to present your research at a conference or to submit your research for publication. The impact of a conference presentation or a journal article can be far greater than that of a dissertation (Slavin, 2007). These are several resources that may be of interest as you become part of a larger research community. This link explains the purpose/benefits of disseminating your work.

Writing a conference proposal or a journal article after writing a dissertation requires a mental shift. The essence of a conference paper or publication is brevity. You must cover the most critical information from a dissertation is the allotted space (Slavin, 2007). Each organization/publication will have specifications for length and formatting, which are typically described in a Call for Proposals or a Call for manuscripts. Conferences typically have deadlines for submitting proposals, while journals may have deadlines that vary with the frequency of publication. The best place to seek this information is on the website for the respective organization/publication.

You should be listed as the primary author on work that is based on your dissertation. Committee members may be listed in order of their contribution or in the order that has been agreed upon by contributors. See authorship guidelines in the APA manual (1.13, p. 18, in the 6th Ed.).

Organizations/Conferences. Organizations may be local, regional, national or international in nature. Many professional organizations have a conference. Smaller conferences typically have calls for proposals a few months in advance of their conferences. Larger, national conferences can have calls for proposals as early as 9 months in advance. Check their websites often for updates.

EERA – Eastern Educational Research Association (February 2011)
CREATE - Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (October 2010)
NC-Acte - North Carolina Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators (September 2010)
NCARE - North Carolina Association for Research in Education (February 2011)
NCASA – North Carolina Association of School Administrators (March/April 2011)
NCSBA - The North Carolina School Boards Association (if you’re interested in district and state exposure) (November 2010)
NCPAPA - North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals Association organizes various events throughout the year
NAESP - National Association of Elementary School Principals (April 2011)
NASSP- National Association of Secondary School Principals (Feb 2011)

Other associations and conferences include:
American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
American Evaluation Association (AEA)
Atlantic Assessment Conference
Association for Coaching (AC)
Association for Educational Communications and Technology
Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)
Comparative and International Education Society (CIES)
The Council of Professors of Instructional Supervision (COPIS)
International Coach Federation (ICF) Annual International Conference
International Coach Federation (ICF) European Coaching Conference
National Association for Early Young Children (NAEYC)
National Council of Professors of Education Administration Summit
National Middle School Association (NMSA)
North American Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)
NC Association of Early Young Children
NC Association for Research in Education (NCARE)
SLOAN-C International Conference on Online Learning
Teaching and Learning (T+L)
University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA)
World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES)

Publications. The format and style of a publication will vary based on its emphasis and audience. Ask faculty/mentors about publication venues and/or view several articles from a publication to see if it seems like a good fit. Look at the author guidelines for details about word limit, the submission process, etc.

In general there are two kinds of publications, briefs (e.g., newsletters, short articles) and journals. Both types of publications are advantageous. Some publications are research oriented while other publications are practitioner oriented.

- Write for a professional organization newsletter. These are distributed on a regular basis and require brief submissions. See examples
  - CREATE has a newsletter that is disseminated twice a year. Submissions are two pages
  - ASCD Express seeks short articles and practical education information:
- For research oriented journals think about the journals in which you found many of the articles that supported your research.
- For practitioner oriented journals think about the journals you and your peers read such as “The School Administrator,” “Educational Leadership,” Leading and Learning with Technology” and “Principal.”
- A journal article is typically 20-30 pages and consists of an abstract, introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, references, and tables and figures.
- Each journal varies in terms of the review process. However the number of reviewers is typically included on the publication’s website.
- Chapter 8 in the APA manual discusses the publication process and has excellent information about submission letters, etc.
- From your dissertation you can publish at least two peer-reviewed articles (1) the literature review and (2) an empirical research study.

Tips.
- It’s always a good idea to have others review your work prior to submission. Constructive feedback can strength your manuscript and increase your chances of publication.
Another way to increase your chances of publication is to identify a themed issue that relates to your topic. Ask faculty, mentors, or colleagues about special issues. You can also learn of these opportunities via organizational listservs.

If an article is not accepted, don’t be weary, incorporate the reviewer’s suggestions if they are appropriate and resubmit the paper to a different publication. Many excellent publications were not accepted the first time around. However persistence leads to a successful publication.

**Additional resources.**
- Publishing Advice and Information links: [http://gradschool.about.com/od/publishing/Publishing_Advice_and_Information.htm](http://gradschool.about.com/od/publishing/Publishing_Advice_and_Information.htm)

Remember wherever/whenever you decide to share your work to include it on your resume!

**Misc.**

**Reference**