

***Department of Technology & Cognition***

**Doctor of Philosophy in  
Educational Research**

**Policies & Procedures  
for  
Doctoral Students**

*A supplement to information contained in the Graduate Catalog and  
Student Handbook*

**College of Education  
University of North Texas**

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## **I. NATURE OF THE DOCTORATE**

The doctoral degree in Educational Research (EDER) is offered through the Department of Technology and Cognition at The University of North Texas (<http://www.coe.unt.edu/eder>). Competency requirements are built for a wide range of professional interests and experience. Building upon a framework of core knowledge, a student can specialize in his/her professional interest area.

The program assumes an active stance on the part of the learner, and further assumes that the student is capable of planning a graduate program suitable for his/her own professional goals and objectives. Students are expected to demonstrate a high level of personal initiative and academic inquiry. Assistance, information, and encouragement in designing the doctoral program are available from the graduate advisor, the student's major professor, and other members of the graduate faculty. The doctoral program has been established as an interactive model, i.e., a model which allows interaction between the student and the graduate faculty, but places primary responsibility for success in completing the program directly on the student.

## **II. EMPLOYMENT CONTEXT**

The career fields for individuals who seek employment in Educational Research settings are rapidly expanding. The competition for resources in our society and the stricter standards of accountability placed on our institutions have increased the demand for long-range planning and assessment by our schools and related institutions. This has fueled acute need for individuals with quantitative research skills. The successful candidate in the educational research doctoral program is motivated by problem-solving, comfortable with systematic approaches and research principles, and unafraid of advanced statistical methods.

While Educational Research has long been recognized as a formal area of study, graduates continue to define the field in the many different ways they use their knowledge and skills. Federal and state mandates on public school performance have created a growth industry for research and evaluation. At universities and colleges, institutional research provides executive-level management information to decision-makers and outside agencies. Corporations stay competitive with sophisticated data analysis and rely on test development and training assessment to keep their work force prepared. Listed below are some career opportunities that encompass educational research.

1. Public schools: research and evaluation; testing services; regional service center positions; director of research positions.
2. University and community colleges: teaching of research and statistics; institutional research; executive-level research positions.
3. Private enterprise: test development, data analysis, program training and assessment.

These are only a few of the diverse education and industry opportunities. As organizations and institutions recognize the strategic importance of research-based decision making coupled with an ever increasing need for accountability measures, employment opportunities for persons with statistical and research methods skills should remain strong.

### **III. VISION**

The UNT graduate should be a scholar/practitioner; a conceptualizer able to connect research with best practice; a visionary; a professional with effective interpersonal, communication and leadership skills.

### **IV. MISSION**

The mission of the program is to establish a learning community of professionals who are committed to high standards of people and organizational development through appropriate and ethical utilization of research methods.

### **V. DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree is offered to prepare persons for careers as scholars/researchers. The Educational Research program is oriented toward developing research skills encompassing a variety of methodologies, and is supported by a strong minor emphasizing a cognate area which expands skills and perspectives.

The PhD requires a minimum of 90 semester hours beyond the bachelor's degree and a minimum of 60 semester hours beyond the master's degree. A master's degree in educational research is not required for admission to the PhD program. The PhD program requires 60 semester hours past the master's degree, which includes 6 hours of basic research and statistics, as required of all doctoral students in the College of Education; 24 hours of study in the major field, including research design, measurement, evaluation, statistics, and computer data analysis; 12 hours of course work in a minor field outside of educational research; 3-6 hours of practicum or internship; and 12 hours of dissertation research study. The remaining 3 credit hours are considered electives, but must be taken in the major field. These course may be either 5000 or 6000 level.

In addition to these hours, the student must demonstrate expertise in a tool subject area. This may include a foreign language proficiency through course work or examination, or nine graduate hours (18 undergraduate hours) in CECS (Computer Education and Cognitive Systems) or CSCI (Computer Science) with a C+ average or better.

In the spirit of professional dialogue and in recognition that doctoral work should contribute to the knowledge base, the candidate must also show proof of scholarly writing ability by the end of the degree requirements by preparing and submitting at least one article for publication to a nationally refereed journal and presenting a paper at a professional conference at state level or higher. The article submission can be co-authored but makes no expectation as regards the order of authorship. The paper presentation can also be co-authored but presumes that the student is first author. (The article submission can be verified with the editor's acknowledgment of receipt of the manuscript; the paper presentation can be verified with a copy of the student's entry in the conference program. Copies of these documents should be placed in the student's file in the department. The student is responsible for initiating and carrying out these requirements.)

## **VI. PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

Admission in to the Educational Research doctoral program is selective and competitive. The applicant must initially achieve acceptance to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies and meet all College of Education admission requirements. *However, admission to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies does not indicate admission to the program.*

To apply to the Educational Research Program, a two stage process is necessary. First, the student should successfully apply to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies. Second, the student must apply directly to the program area with the submission of a brief dossier described below. This dossier can be submitted concurrently with the application to the graduate school, but it will not be considered until acceptance by the graduate school is verified. The minimum requirements for consideration for program admission include:

1. A master's degree or 30 hours of graduate credit from an accredited institution.
2. A grade point average of 3.4 or better on the master's degree (on a 4.0 system).
3. Minimum GRE scores on the verbal and quantitative sections for the current academic year. Official GRE scores must be submitted to the Graduate School before admission to the program. Applications to the program will not be considered until GRE scores are on record.

In addition, the dossier submitted directly to the program should consist of the following. The dossier should be sent to Dr. Robin K. Henson at the address noted previously. All items listed here must be present.

- a. *A personal resume or vitae.*
- b. *A statement of career goals (maximum of 2-4 pages, double-spaced) to include how the completion of a doctorate would relate to these goals. Also, include a statement about the relevance of your Master's degree to your career goals and the Educational Research PhD.*
- c. *Transcripts of course work sent directly to the program. (Copies are sufficient. Other, official, copies must be sent to the Graduate School, however.)*
- e. *Three letters of recommendation from individuals knowledgeable of the candidate's capabilities. These letters should be submitted in the same packet as the dossier. However, each letter should be contained in a separate, sealed envelope with the signature of the person providing the reference across the envelope flap.*
- d. *Sample of scholarly writing skills.*
- e. *A written critical response (maximum of 2 pages, double-spaced) to an article. This article is posted on the Educational Research program web page.*

There are two application deadlines annually. For admission for the Fall semester, the deadline is April 1 of the previous Spring semester. For admission for the Spring semester, the deadline is November 1 of the previous Fall semester. **The student must be formally admitted to the Graduate School (including submission of official GRE scores) and have submitted the complete dossier by these dates in order to guarantee full consideration of the application for the noted semester.**

Upon successful admission to the doctoral program, the student will be assigned a faculty advisor. The student should meet with this faculty member to discuss appropriate course work and development of the doctoral committee, which will guide the student's dissertation.

#### **VII. RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES**

Doctoral students will be encouraged and are expected to participate in research and development activities conducted through the Educational Research program, the Department of Technology and Cognition, and/or the College of Education. Research is viewed as an integral part of the student's professional development and may include individual or group activities conducted in educational and/or corporate environments. These opportunities will aid the student in meeting the research article and paper presentation requirements noted above.

#### **VIII. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT**

The residency requirement consists of two consecutive semesters (fall and spring or spring and fall) or two summer terms and one contiguous semester. A minimum enrollment of nine hours in each of the two semesters is required. Residency must be completed prior to the doctoral qualifying examinations.

#### **IX. COE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND STATISTICS EXAMINATION**

Students are no longer required to take the research and statistics examination after completion of EDER 6010 and 6020. Students will be required to answer statistics and research design questions in their written qualifying exams for their doctoral program. In situations where portions of the written exams are not passed, these sections only will be required to be retaken.

#### **X. DOCTORAL QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS**

Both a comprehensive written and an oral examination are given to qualify students for advancement to candidacy for the doctoral degree (doctoral candidate status is not procured until successful completion of the qualifying exams). Students may be required to retake all or sections of the written qualifying examination that is not satisfactory.

In the students' last semester or after completion of all course work on the degree plan, after completion of the language or research tool requirement, and after meeting the residency requirement, then and only then is the written examination given. The written examination is scheduled by the College of Education student advising office. The written exam will be developed by the student's doctoral committee. The student must pass all portions of the

exam. Failure on any portion of the exam will result in re-examination on that portion at the discretion of the doctoral committee. Written exams are held on a Friday and Saturday once per semester. The student should contact the College of Education student advising office for a current schedule. The oral examination is conducted by the doctoral committee and is typically held within three to four weeks after successful completion of the written exam.

#### XI. DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

A newly admitted doctoral student will be assigned a faculty advisor for the purposes of initial course selection. The student is then advised to select a major professor from among the Educational Research faculty for their dissertation that has the expertise to guide them through the doctoral program. The student should actively pursue a major professor during their first year of study that can mentor the student on course work, advanced reading of related topics, and the preparation of a doctoral dissertation. Note that in many cases the declaration of the student's major professor is a rather natural match between student interests and faculty expertise. The major professor and student should arrange for other faculty to form a doctoral dissertation committee prior to the completion of the second long semester. The doctoral dissertation should include at minimum the major professor, one faculty member in the student's minor concentration area and an additional faculty member from the Educational Research program. The doctoral dissertation must consist of at least three faculty members, but may include additional faculty with expertise to assist in the student doctoral dissertation research.

The doctoral committee will advise and approve the student's degree plan and dissertation research. The committee will also develop and evaluate the qualifying examinations. Committee membership can change upon negotiation between the student and the major professor.

#### XII. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Upon successful completion of the qualifying examinations, the student may present a dissertation proposal to the doctoral committee. The proposal should carefully outline the proposed research, including a timeline for completion of various milestones in the research process. The proposal should be developed primarily in conjunction with the student's major professor with consultation from the doctoral committee.

In conjunction with the major professor, the student will schedule a proposal meeting with the doctoral committee. The student must distribute full copies of the proposal to the committee members at least ten working days prior to the proposal meeting date and have committee members sign on the appropriate form indicating readiness for the proposal meeting. This form can be obtained from the student advising office. The form should be submitted to the student advising office at least five days prior to the proposal meeting.

#### XIII. DISSERTATION RESEARCH

Completion of the dissertation represents both a formative and summative evaluation of the student's ability to conduct scholarly research. The dissertation should involve the creation of significant new or expanded knowledge in the field of educational research.

The dissertation should be a natural extension from the conclusion of course work and other academic preparatory activities that come before it. The dissertation should be a part of the

planning process of the degree from the very beginning. All decisions made in terms of selection of a minor area, elective courses, and options should be done in the context of the dissertation. In general, students will select minor courses, electives, and options that prepare them to complete the dissertation. The student's degree plan must include at least 12 semester hours of dissertation research.

The dissertation must be successfully presented and defended to the doctoral committee. The full dissertation document should be distributed to the doctoral committee members at least ten working days prior to the defense date. Students should have committee members sign on the appropriate form indicating readiness for the proposal meeting. This form can be obtained from the student advising office. The form should be submitted at least five days prior to the meeting.

#### XIV. SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To ensure continuity to the student's doctoral education and research experiences, satisfactory progress of all students is required. All students will be reviewed annually by the program faculty. The Graduate School also maintains the status of graduate students. During the course work phase of the degree, students are expected to accumulate credit toward the degree each year after admission to the program. Importantly, all doctoral degree requirements must be completed within ten years of admission into the program (this includes final defense of the dissertation). However, a more rapid completion of the degree is generally hoped for and expected. Several milestones are noted below as a policy guide for minimum expectations for satisfactory progress. Meeting these minimum expectations do not guarantee satisfactory progress as they largely do not speak to the quality of the work completed by the student or the academic demeanor by which it is completed.

- |    |                                |   |
|----|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Admissions Process completed   | Prior to first semester of course work  |
| 2. | Doctoral Committee chosen      | Prior to the end of the second long semester  |
| 3. | Degree Plan approved and filed | Prior to the end of the second long semester  |
| 4. | Course Work completed          | Typically within 8 to 10 long semesters. More rapidly for those taking larger course loads. |





Evaluation of satisfactory progress is ultimately dependent upon the student's apparent progress toward dissertation completion in a timely and professional manner. Accordingly, the student should maintain appropriate progress and communicate that progress to the student's major advisor. In addition to maintaining minimal academic progress, it is expected that the student will exhibit high standards of professional behavior; fulfilling all responsibilities of a doctoral student; and understanding and demonstrating collegiate behavior toward faculty, staff, and peers.

Students found by the program faculty to be in non-compliance with university, college, or program policies/guidelines for satisfactory progress will be counseled and evaluated as unsatisfactory by placement on probation or suspension status or removal from the program.

An unsatisfactory evaluation usually will be the result of a lack of progress made that is not necessarily in terms of timeline deadlines, but because of the advisory committee's belief that the student is not making progress necessary to eventually satisfy the timeline deadlines and complete a quality dissertation in a timely fashion.

A student wishing to appeal his/her removal from the doctoral program may petition the program faculty. This written appeal must be received within 30 days of the notification or attempted notification of the student's removal.

#### XV. INACTIVE STATUS

Students who find that their personal or professional life situation demands a suspension in the active participation in the pursuit of the PhD may petition to be placed on "Inactive Status." This petition should be in writing and submitted to the major professor. While inactive, the program requirements for maintaining progress toward the degree are suspended (with the exception of the general 10 year time limit for completion of all degree requirements). The doctoral committee will be suspended during this time. The Graduate School should be notified of this request.

Students wishing to return to "Active Status" after a period of inactivity may petition the program for such a change by submitting a written request to the committee chair. The doctoral committee will be reactivated to consider any conditions that must be met to return to active status. The primary concern of the committee in a return to active status will be verification of the currency of the student's knowledge in the field. Information concerning employment activities; other academic activities; participation in professional, industry, and technical conferences; and publication in the field will be considered in this process. The Graduate School must be notified of this request.

#### XVI. WITHDRAWAL

A student who intends to withdraw from the program should submit written verification of his/her intent to withdraw to his/her major professor, the program coordinator, and the department chair.

## XVII. LEVELS OF REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

The UNT Graduate Catalog provides description of requirements for the doctoral degree. All students are expected to obtain and read the Graduate Catalog. It is important to understand, however, that there are three levels of regulations governing the PhD in Educational Research. The Toulouse School of Graduate Studies specifies requirements that apply to all PhD degrees at UNT. The College of Education specifies additional, or more rigorous, requirements that must be met by all PhD degree candidates within the College of Education. The Educational Research program specifies additional, or more rigorous, requirements that apply only to the PhD in Educational Research. Each set of requirements builds upon the minimums set at the previous level. It is the student's responsibility to understand and meet the requirements at all levels. This document provides a summary review of university, college, and program requirements, but is not intended as final documentation of all policies and expectations.

## ***XVIII. NOTICE OF COMPLIANCE***

All students who are admitted to the Educational Research program must complete the Notice of Doctoral Handbook Compliance form found at the end of this Handbook. The student must initiate the completion of this form and send it in immediately upon notification of the student's acceptance into the program.

## **APPENDICES**

**Educational Research  
Doctoral Progress Report**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

The following report highlights your progress in the doctoral program as of this date. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar with all policies governing your progress. If you have any questions, please contact the Program Coordinator at 940-565-2093.

DATE	PHASE	STATUS			
		Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program
	Admissions Process	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program
	Committee Chosen	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program
	Degree Plan Filed	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program
	Course work	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program
	Qualifying Exams	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program
	Dissertation Proposal	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program
	Dissertation Defense	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Probation	Removal from Program

Explanation:

Sincerely,

EDER Program Coordinator

**Educational Research**

**Student Counseling Form**

On \_\_\_\_\_ a counseling session was held with  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Name) (SS Number)

concerning the difficulty the student has encountered in the program. To wit,

The student has been informed of the consequences of this problem and acknowledges that further difficulty could result in the following:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Major Professor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Program Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Department Chair

Additional Comments:

Action Taken (if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_ Probation \_\_\_\_\_ Suspension \_\_\_\_\_ Removal  
Request for Exceptions:

**Educational Research  
Notice of Doctoral Handbook Compliance**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (please print), have read, understand, and agree to comply with the policies and procedures set by the Educational Research program in the Department of Technology and Cognition in the College of Education at the University of North Texas. I also indicate that I have read and understand all Toulouse School of Graduate Studies and College of Education requirements.

I understand that should I not follow the guidelines contained in the Educational Research doctoral handbook (or those guidelines contained in other relevant documents such as the Graduate Catalog), I can be removed from the doctoral program.

Additionally, I understand that the handbook is a living document that is updated annually. I will be responsible for accessing, reading, and understanding these updates.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Program Coordinator

***Students are required to have this "Notice of Doctoral Handbook Compliance" page on file in the Educational Research office prior to filing their degree plan. It is the student's responsibility to have this form completed and submitted to the office.***

Send this page to:

EDER Program Coordinator  
Educational Research Program  
University of North Texas  
Department of Technology and Cognition  
1300 Highland, MH 304  
P.O. Box 311335  
Denton, Texas 76203