

Education Leadership Doctoral Program Handbook

(Spring 2016)

Department of Education Leadership
Texas A&M University-Texarkana

Texas A&M University-Texarkana
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Note: This handbook is subject to change. Updates will be available on the Education Leadership Department website. This is not a catalog and does **not** have catalog privileges.

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the Scholars of Practice doctoral program in Education Leadership at Texas A&M University-Texarkana, a degree designed with a *PK-12 public school administration* emphasis. Graduates of the doctoral program often pursue leadership positions in schools, districts, and state agencies. The Scholars of Practice degree is a web-enhanced doctoral program in which courses are approximately 50% online and 50% face-to-face delivered in a seminar format, providing flexibility for working students as well as the personal interaction for which A&M-Texarkana is known.

Applicants for the A&M-Texarkana's Scholars of Practice doctoral program may have completed a master's degree in Education Leadership and principal certification coursework. However, we encourage those with master's degrees from other disciplines that support PK-12 education to consider applying. Prerequisites for success include a demonstration of strong academic attainment (including outstanding writing skills), potential scholarship ability, leadership abilities, and commitment to PK-12 education.

If you have any questions about this program, you can contact the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at 903-223-3129 or you can contact the Dr. Rosanne Stripling at 903-334-6686 or rstripling@tamut.edu.

Once again, thank you for your interest in the Education Leadership doctoral program at Texas A&M University-Texarkana.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the department of Education Leadership is to be an advocate for all master and doctoral candidates both inside and outside the classroom. We propose to do this by effectively preparing candidates for campus and executive leadership roles in Pre K–12 Education. This is done with a focus on the campus vision, culture, climate, instruction, curriculum, staff development, student safety, facilities, finance, and specifically on the diverse and changing needs of students.

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP**

ADMISSIONS

Admission to the doctoral program in Education Leadership is a competitive process. In any given year, the department receives more applications from qualified students than can be accepted. Consequently, application materials should be carefully prepared to present the student in the most positive light.

Process

All candidates must apply to and be accepted by the A&M-Texarkana Scholars of Practice doctoral program. To be accepted into the Doctor of Education program, you must submit evidence to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research that you have satisfactorily completed the following requirements, including:

- Graduate application and processing fee (\$30 for US citizens/permanent residents; \$50 for international applicants) via www.ApplyTexas.org;
- Official TOEFL scores taken within the last two years (international students only);
- A letter of interest (500 word minimum) that clearly communicates
 - how the applicant will apply the doctoral degree to improve the field of education and
 - the applicant's career objectives and how the Doctor of Education degree in Education Leadership will assist in attaining these objectives;
- Curriculum vitae/résumé including demonstrated experience in a work environment where education is the primary professional emphasis (e.g., teaching, administration, school counseling, curriculum development in elementary, secondary, postsecondary, governmental, or private industry settings);
- Official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores in Verbal Reasoning or Miller Analogy Test (MAT) (< 5 years old). Scores older than 5 years will not be accepted, and applicants will be required to take the GRE or MAT again to submit scores within the appropriate timeframe;
- Official transcripts from all higher education institutions attended, including evidence of a Master's degree in Education Administration or other related field in education; and
- Three completed recommendation forms, at least one of which must come from an individual with a related terminal degree. Recommendation forms may be found at http://www.tamut.edu/Academics/Colleges-and-Departments/CASE/Graduate-Programs/Education%20Leadership/edleadership_edd_referenceform.pdf.

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research will forward your application materials to the Education Leadership department only after the above requirements have been submitted.

The Program Admissions Committee is composed of department members committed to the principle of equal educational opportunities consistent with the mission and policies of the Texas A&M University System as well as state and federal laws. At the conclusion of the process, the committee will select a cohort of students. A list of "alternate" applicants may be produced each year depending on the number of qualified applicants. Applicants will be informed via letter if they have been accepted into the program, placed on the alternate list, or denied admission to the program.

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research

For information and forms, please go to the following web address:

<http://www.tamut.edu/Academics/Colleges-and-Departments/Graduate-Studies/index.html>.

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research works closely with program faculty and the dean in providing a student-focused program. You may contact this office with any questions specific to the dissertation process.

General Information

Students admitted to the doctoral program will begin classes as a cohort group and are required to progress as a cohort group through a sequence of doctoral-only core courses and research tools courses. The cohort program provides students with an opportunity to progress through the program in a logical and sequential manner with a group of colleagues pursuing similar professional goals. The degree plan is 60 semester credit hours.

Upon admission to the program, students will be assigned a major advisor. This advisor will remain the student's central point of contact until he or she advances to candidacy and receives a dissertation chair. Students are not permitted to change advisors.

Admissions Review Committee Procedures

Departmental Receipt of Applications

Applications of students, who have submitted the requirements to The Office of Graduate Studies and Research as outlined in this document, are forwarded to the Education Leadership Department Chair, who then convenes an admission committee consisting of all faculty that teach in the doctoral program.

The Committee's Recommendation

A department-approved form is used to assign standard points to the program entrance criteria. If the sum of these points falls within the accepted entrance requirement range, then the committee will invite the student for an interview. The interview is also scored using a department-approved form.

Based on the applicant's scores on the application materials and the interview process, the committee forwards to the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research either its recommendation for admission to the program or denial.

The Admission Decision

The committee's recommendation must be approved by the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education. Once approved, the College of Arts, Sciences and Education will send written notice of

the admission decision to the applicant. All students will be notified of admissions decisions in writing.

COURSE SEQUENCE

The sequence of courses each cohort will take is provided below. **Students are expected to take courses (with the exception of the 12 SCH cognate) with their assigned cohort.**

Information contained in this document is subject to additional provisions found in the A&M - Texarkana *University Catalog*.

Course	Title	Hours
EDLD 611	Doctoral Seminar	3
EDLD 670	Critical Conversations and Team Building	3
EDLD 632	Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership	3
EDLD 612	Strategic Management	3
EDLD 613	Education and Non-Profit Law, Policy and Futurism	3
EDLD 663	Statistical Methods in Education Leadership	3
EDLD 623	Public Administration, Marketing and PR	3
EDLD 662	Methods of Inquiry (Qualitative Research)	3
EDLD 622	Executive Communication	3
EDLD 625	Field Study in National and International Cultural Perspectives	3
EDLD 624	Applied Instructional Technologies	3
EDLD 690	Executive Instructional Leadership of the Education Community *	3
EDLD 698	Administrative Leadership (Finance) *	3
EDLD 694	Executive Instructional Leadership*	3
EDLD 691	Leadership Internship *	3
EDLD 661	Dissertation Proposal Preparation	3
EDLD 692	Dissertation Proposal Research and Methodological Framework Dev.	3
EDLD 671	The Dissertation Process I	3
EDLD 672	The Dissertation Process II	3
EDLD 693	Dissertation Research**	3

* A&M-Texarkana superintendent certification courses. These courses may be accepted as part of previous coursework if all other criteria are met or may be replaced by courses in another cognate if superintendent certification is not desired.

** May be repeated as needed until dissertation is successfully completed. Only one completion of this course may count toward the degree plan. All repetitions will be for no credit toward degree.

Please Note: Students may not register for EDLD 692 until they have successfully passed comprehensive qualifying examinations and are admitted to candidacy. Please see the information on qualifying examinations and the dissertation.

Residency

There is a residency requirement for student's completing doctoral studies at A&M-Texarkana. Due to the hybrid course format used within this program, students meet the residency requirement of at least 48 credit hours to be completed at Texas A&M University-Texarkana.

CHECKLIST AND RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME

Many of the events a doctoral student encounters are listed below. The order of events is reflective of the doctoral process. The time frame is simply a helpful guide, and it is the *student's responsibility* to know and follow university policy regarding the completion of doctoral studies. This checklist is designed for you to maintain a record of completion of each step.

_____ **File Initial Degree Plan** with department (immediately after degree plan is completed with curriculum advisor) and in your first semester. Make sure necessary signatures are on the degree plan. File completed degree plan with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

_____ **Curriculum Advisor.** A curriculum advisor will be assigned to you soon after entering the program. This advisor can assist you with your degree plan, completing requirements, and taking your comprehensive exams (comps). Depending on research interests, another Education Leadership faculty member may be assigned as chair of the dissertation committee. The department will provide a process for matching students with an appropriate dissertation chair at the appropriate time.

_____ **Meet Research Tools Requirements.** Three tools classes are scheduled in the cohort sequence and are required before student is eligible for the comprehensive examinations (EDLD 661, EDLD 662, and EDLD 663).

_____ **Prepare for Comprehensive Oral and Written Examinations** after gaining approval from your curriculum advisor. Plan for comps after research tools and the majority of coursework are completed. The comps coordinator will contact each cohort at the proper time with information about the comprehensive examination. Oral comprehensives will only be required if a student is not successful on any part of the written examination. Students who are successful on the written comprehensive examination may have the oral comprehensive waived by their advisor. Only the student's advisor may make this decision.

_____ **Take Comprehensive Examinations** (after completing research tools and majority of coursework). Pass written and oral comprehensive examinations in major areas.

_____ **Obtain Admission to Candidacy Status.** After residency requirements are met (completion of at least 48 credit hours), written and oral comprehensive exams are passed, *and* all research tools courses are completed, the student's advisor will file a Notification of Admission to Candidacy form. It is at this time the **FINAL Degree Plan is filed.**

_____ **Appointment of Dissertation Chair.** The department facilitates a matching process, based upon research topic and methodology, to appoint your dissertation chair. Chairs are permanent appointments except in rare/exceptional cases. If deemed necessary by the department chair and doctoral program coordinator, a student may apply for a change of chair a maximum of one time during the dissertation process. If the student receives a new chair, then he or she must complete the dissertation with the second chair. No changes of dissertation chairs will be made after the assignment of the second chair.

_____ **Establish Doctoral Advisory Committee** Your dissertation chair will assist you with creating your dissertation committee. This committee must have four or more members—at least one

outside the Department of Education Leadership and may include an appropriate practitioner from the field with a related terminal degree. Two members of the dissertation committee (one of whom must be the Chair) must be from the EDLD Department.

Enroll in EDLD 692. This is the first dissertation course and will be taught by your assigned dissertation chair. Efforts will be made to assign 3 members of a cohort to each chair to continue the cohort model. Continuous enrollment in dissertation courses from completion of the comprehensive exam until graduation is required, except for summers. If the student is consulting with the dissertation chair during summer, then he or she must register for at least one summer session. Dissertation courses receive a letter grade, so you should perform in this course as you would any other course in your degree plan, spending equivalent time on writing the dissertation.

Develop Dissertation Proposal. Select research topic and develop dissertation proposal in collaboration with dissertation chair and committee. See the Writing References.

Complete and Distribute Final Version of Dissertation Proposal. Finish writing the dissertation proposal and distribute to committee members with prior approval of your dissertation chair. You must submit your dissertation proposal to each member of your committee a minimum of two weeks prior to scheduling your proposal defense date. This normally means each member of your committee must have your complete proposal no later than the **FIRST** of the month **PRIOR** to the month you wish to propose. The dissertation chair will email a Microsoft Word copy to the committee members and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for review.

Schedule Proposal Defense with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Once you have your committee's approval, complete the Schedule for Presentation of the Dissertation Proposal obtained from the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Be aware that scheduling a defense may take several weeks. All requests necessary for completion of a course should be received by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research no later than the 10th week of class (Fall/Spring). See your dissertation chair for information about scheduling during the summer.

Prepare IRB Materials. Discuss expectations with your advisor. This application must be ready for submission immediately following your successful proposal defense.

Defend Proposal. Discuss expectations with your advisor. This must occur at least one semester prior to expected graduation. You may only proceed past this point once your proposal has committee approval.

Clear Proposed Study with University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The student will forward the application to the university Human Subjects Committee (IRB-Institutional Review Board) for approval following the proposal defense. Data collection may not formally begin with human subjects until the IRB has granted approval, you have successfully defended your proposal, and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research has contacted you to indicate that your study may begin. In some cases, the IRB may wish to meet with the student in person to discuss the proposal.

Report Outcome of Proposal Defense. Complete and file with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, the Office of Graduate Studies and Research Dissertation Proposal Form. This form is signed by each member of your committee, your committee chair, department head, and Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education.

_____ Complete the Research and Writing of the Dissertation. The student is expected to make progress each semester on this and confer with the advisor on an ongoing basis or the student will be placed on the inactive list. This requires continual course registration of a minimum of three hours each Fall and Spring. You must continue to take EDLD 693 until graduation. There is a 10-year time limit for completion of degree until early courses must be retaken. Students who take more than 130 semester hours toward the doctorate may have to pay out-of-state tuition. See your dissertation chair for more information.

_____ Schedule Dissertation Defense. Schedule your defense with your chair and committee. Complete and file Schedule for Dissertation Defense form with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Complete and return the form to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled dissertation defense. You will receive information regarding submission of your dissertation and graduation from the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at this time. Work closely with your chair to schedule the time and place of the defense as well as the notification to the university faculty and cohort members.

_____ Distribute Copy of Final Dissertation to Committee. Present a copy of your dissertation to all members of your doctoral advisory committee at least two weeks prior to your dissertation defense date. Provide an extra copy for your advisor to submit to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research requests it.

_____ Defend the Dissertation. Defend the dissertation at the scheduled time. Make any required edits and resubmit to your chair. Upon approval of the final edits, obtain signatures of the committee members and other required parties and submit the form to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

_____ Obtain the signature of the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education.

_____ Send a Copy of the Dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Send a copy of the dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for final approval. Make any corrections as directed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

_____ File for Graduation. File for graduation in the Registrar's Office. Deadlines are listed in the schedule of classes for the semester (this deadline is usually early in semester of graduation).

_____ Complete the Graduate Survey

_____ Attend Commencement Exercises. Students must attend commencement. This is a great accomplishment! We want to celebrate with you.

Stay in Touch with the department concerning your position, any location changes, and your address/phone/e-mail.

CURRICULUM ADVISOR

Assignment

Upon admission to the department's EDLD doctoral program, the department chair or doctoral coordinator assigns a faculty member to serve as the student's curriculum advisor.

Curriculum Advisor's Role

The curriculum advisor:

- Provides general information regarding the department and the doctoral program to the student as needed, and
- Assists with the student's degree plan.

The curriculum advisor and the student's doctoral committee chair do not serve the same purpose and are likely not the same faculty member. Once the student completes residency and passes comprehensive exams, the student's doctoral advisory committee is established. The chair of this committee assumes the major advisory responsibility of the student's curriculum advisor, and the initial advisor is no longer responsible for advising duties. Students will be guided in establishing a dissertation chair and committee.

Dissertation Committee Chair

Upon completion of residency and passing comprehensive exams, the department will provide a procedure for matching a dissertation chair from the Education Leadership faculty with each student. This process helps match faculty with student research interests and methods. The chair will guide the student secure a committee and guide him/her through the dissertation process. This is a permanent appointment.

Upon rare occasions, it is in the best interest of students and faculty members to reassign dissertation chairs to better match research needs. If necessary, a student may appeal to the doctoral program coordinator and department chair to request reassignment to a new dissertation chair. If deemed appropriate, then the student will be reassigned.

DEGREE PLAN

General Guidelines

All doctoral degree plans must include the coursework equivalent of a master's degree program. This requirement, in addition to the 60 semester credit hours of doctoral coursework, equals a minimum 90 semester credit hours of post-baccalaureate coursework.

Time Limitation for Degree

All degree requirements beyond the master's must be completed **within ten calendar** years from **the date of admission** to the doctoral program. No coursework beyond the master's degree that is over ten years old at the time the doctoral degree is conferred can be used toward the doctoral degree.

Transfer Credit

With advisor recommendation and department chair approval, a student may transfer a maximum of 12 SCH from another regionally accredited institution of higher education toward the doctoral degree. However, only courses for which the student received a grade of "B" or better may be transferred, and all courses transferred must have been completed within 10 years of completion of the doctoral degree. If the transferred courses are within the degree core and/or methodology courses, close alignment between the transferring course and the A&M-Texarkana course must be established. All transferred courses within the 12 SCH cognate must fit within the student's cognate choice. Approved courses will be posted on the degree plan. **Under no circumstances may a student transfer more than 12 hours toward the doctoral degree.**

Competency-Based Credits

Students may apply for competency-based credits based on work experience, outside trainings, and other approved life experiences. Credit is granted based on a portfolio completed by the student and reviewed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, the departmental faculty, and the student's advisory committee.

Research Tools

Completion Schedule

The student must demonstrate proficiency in the use of research tools prior to taking the doctoral comprehensive examination. Research tool requirements can be met by successfully completing each of the three courses with a grade of B or better. (Note: All courses that count toward the degree plan must be completed with a final course grade of B or better). All research tool courses must be taken in sequence and completed *prior* to taking the comprehensive examinations. These courses are EDLD 662, EDLD 663, and EDLD 661.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The Doctor of Education Leadership Comprehensive Examination is a milestone event in the academic program study leading to candidacy. Specifically, the comprehensive examination provides the doctoral student an opportunity to 1) demonstrate comprehensive understanding of the knowledge base, 2) provide an opportunity to chronicle the student's foundations as an academic as well as an educational leader, 3) demonstrate and characterize a grounded vision of leadership in the Education Leadership context for the future, and 4) provide candidates an

opportunity to provide academic insights and thought that reflects the work completed with their major advisor through the residency and other professional activities during the doctoral study.

The comprehensive examination is not intended to be an exercise in regurgitating all that a student has gained and learned throughout the program. Rather, this exam grounds the student in the academic discipline, so he or she may *construct new knowledge* that will establish the student as a thoughtful yet inquisitive thinker.

Each student will first take a written Comprehensive Examination scheduled and administered simultaneously to a cohort of students followed by an oral examination that will be scheduled by each student in conjunction with their curriculum advisor.

Prerequisites

Research tools. The student must have met the proficiency standards for research tools by successful completion of the research tools courses: EDLD 661, EDLD 662, and EDLD 663.

Courses. The student must have taken or be in his or her last semester of content courses, and completed approximately 48 credit hours, as approved by the student's doctoral advisory committee. Students may be in their last semester of doctoral content classes.

Education Leadership departmental doctoral committee chooses the time. All students are required to sit for the written examination based on the schedule provided by the department. Oral examinations will be scheduled based on student performance on the written examination and the recommendation of the student's advisor.

Approval of the curriculum advisor. Students will discuss the appropriate semester in which to sit for the comprehensive examination with their curriculum advisor, with final approval resting with the curriculum advisor.

Registration for the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

When? Specific dates for the doctoral comprehensive examination are announced by the department approximately two months in advance. Eligible students in each cohort are notified by email of their eligibility. Students no longer aligned with their original cohort must contact their advisor to inquire or register for comps.

Schedule of Examinations and Content Areas Tested

The Comprehensive Examination for the Doctorate of Education in Education Leadership will be administered during the time assigned by the departmental EDLD doctoral committee. The expectations of each content area examination will extend the course material expectations by requiring students to synthesize, connect, and construct knowledge across other content areas and to their own professional practice as a result of the entire program of study. Faculty from each content area, in consultation with the major advisor, will determine pass/fail performance. Students must pass ALL content areas in order to be eligible to advance to candidacy.

Content areas addressed on the exam:

Executive Leadership (Specific to courses taken in the chosen Cognate)
Strategic Leadership and Change
Education and Non-Profit Law
Public Relations and Marketing
Program Evaluation and Educational Change
Applied Instructional Technologies

Evaluation of Examination

Each written response is rated as either a pass or fail. Students must pass all content areas of the Comprehensive Examination. Individual faculty, in consultation with the committee chair, will determine the rating for each content area. The committee chair will report the results of the examination to the student.

An applicant who does not pass the qualifying examinations may be suspended from the doctoral program, or upon the recommendation of the advisory committee, may be permitted to repeat the written examination a maximum of one time. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to take the written examination, or any part thereof, more than two times.

If a student is unsuccessful on the written comprehensive examination, he or she will not be allowed to take any dissertation courses and will be exited from the program.

Oral Comprehension Exam

If a student is not successful on the first administration of the written comprehensive examinations, then he or she will be required to take Oral Comprehension Exams.

Content of the oral examination. The student should defend or expand on what he or she has written on the comprehensive examination and is expected to provide appropriate bibliographical information to support references to research. **However, questions are not limited to what the student has written.**

Evaluation. At the end of the oral examination, the major advisor and any member of the faculty participating in the oral examination deliberate on the outcome of the examination. If the outcome is unfavorable, faculty participants decide what options, if any, the student may pursue.

Final Report of Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

The major advisor will notify the Office of Graduate Studies and Research upon the student's completion of written examinations and will notify the doctoral coordinator of the student's readiness to receive a dissertation chair.

DOCTORAL ADVISORY/DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Selection of Doctoral Advisory Committee Members

When? The department and your dissertation chair will guide you in selecting a dissertation committee upon registering for your first EDLD 692.

How many? The committee is composed of three to five faculty members, one of whom is an Education Leadership faculty member who will serve as chair. The remaining member(s) will be from the Department of Education Leadership and a member from outside the department. Upon approval of the Department and Dissertation Chair, one of the members of the committee may be a practicing superintendent, school leader, or other educational executive that holds a terminal degree in Education Leadership, or a related field.

Who may chair? Members of the Education Leadership department are eligible to serve as chairs as approved by the Department Chair and College Dean.

Function of Doctoral Advisory Committee Members

Proposal

The committee works closely with the student in preparation of the proposal for dissertation. The chair is your contact for all communication regarding the proposal.

Dissertation

The committee monitors the student's progress in writing the dissertation, advises accordingly, and evaluates the oral defense of the dissertation.

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

Prerequisites

Successful Completion of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations. The Office of Graduate Studies and Research must verify that all portions of the qualifying examinations have been successfully completed.

Research tools. The Office of Graduate Studies and Research must verify that research tools proficiency has been achieved.

Notification

Notification of admission to candidacy will be made by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

Dissertation Writing Course Requirements

After doctoral candidates are admitted to candidacy, they are required to enroll in a minimum of three semester hours of dissertation writing each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed and approved by the doctoral advisory committee and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Students who fail to enroll for dissertation during any fall or spring semester after admission to candidacy will be prohibited from enrolling until the tuition has been collected for each semester.

NOTE: Doctoral candidates will not be required to enroll during the summer term, unless using the counsel and advice of the major advisor or University facilities, such as the Library. A student cannot propose or defend during the summer if not enrolled in a dissertation writing course. Also note: students may be required to pay out-of-state tuition after they have completed 130 hours of work.

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

(See Other Deadlines in this document that pertain to the proposal)

Preparation of the Proposal

Step 1. Enroll in EDLD 692 and See Dissertation Chair. The student should begin talking with his or her advisor regarding dissertation topics and research plans.

Step 2. Select topic and dissertation guide. Work closely with the chair and other committee members in the selection of an adequate topic or area for research in the Education Leadership field. All students are to use The American Psychological Association, 6th Edition, as a guide for writing the proposal and dissertation.

Step 3. Human Subjects Protection forms. Three weeks prior to scheduled proposal defense (see Step 4), the student must submit an application to the Education Leadership Department's Human Subjects Committee for approval to conduct the research. (The student must clear this application with his or her Committee Chair before sending it to the IRB committee). The proposal must be approved by the department committee and sent to the IRB before the proposal defense is scheduled. Once approved, the IRB application is then forwarded to the University Institutional Review Board (IRB—the University Human Subjects Protection Committee) for recommendations and/or approval. Major changes to the proposal or research activity after IRB approval must receive further approval from the university committee, along with the approval of the student's committee chair and members. This process must be completed for all university research activities even when human subjects are not involved in the research activity.

Step 4. Schedule proposal meeting. Reserve a time and place for the proposal in consultation with your chair. **Your dissertation proposal must be submitted to each member of your committee a minimum of 2 weeks prior to scheduling your proposal defense date.**

Step 5. File with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Once approval to present the written proposal has been received from all members of the student's doctoral advisory committee, the advisor and student complete the proposal form to submit to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Step 6. Distribute copies of proposal. At least two weeks prior to the dissertation proposal defense date, the student distributes copies of the proposal to (1) departmental committee members, (2) his/her minor committee members, (3) the College of Arts, Sciences and Education (CASE) Dean's office for review, and (4) the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for distribution to its representative. Questions or concerns from faculty or the Dean's office will be relayed to the major professor at least two full days prior to the scheduled proposal meeting. If concerns are substantial, then the proposal defense will be postponed until corrections have been made to the satisfaction of the faculty member.

Defense of the Proposal

Who is present? All departmental faculty, the committee members, and the Graduate Faculty representative are invited to the presentation of the proposal for research, in addition to the student's dissertation committee. The proposal presentation is also open to all university faculty members and interested students.

How is the presentation conducted? The procedure may vary by major advisor, but a standard format includes introductions, introductory remarks by the student regarding his or her interest areas, and an explanation of the proposed study by the student. During the session, any faculty member present may ask for clarifications and/or offer suggestions regarding the proposed study. Near the end of the proposal meeting, the student and any observers not part of the dissertation committee leave the room while the committee chair allows faculty members a time for additional comments. The student returns to the session, at which time the student is informed of the doctoral advisory committee's recommendations regarding the proposed study.

Outcome. The student's doctoral advisory committee has final recommending authority, subject to review by the Dean of the College of Education and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. The outcome may be to (a) accept the proposal, (b) modify and accept the proposal, or (c) reject the proposal. If the proposal is accepted or modified and accepted, the student completes a Dissertation Proposal form obtained from the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, and presents this to said office, signed by all doctoral advisory committee members, the major and minor department heads, and the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education (CASE).

Human Subjects Protection

In general, a research proposal should provide that risks are minimized to those participating in the research study (any risks beyond those incurred in daily life must be outweighed by benefits to the subjects). Reduction of risks can be accomplished through providing procedures consistent with sound research design, equitable selection of subjects and appropriate setting, confirming that informed consent is adequate and documented, checking

that continued monitoring takes place to ensure the safety of the subjects, and making sure that privacy and confidentiality are noted to the participant and maintained throughout the project.

Participation of a human subject in any study must be voluntary, and the information provided to gain subject consent must be adequate and appropriate. The IRB or University Human Subjects Protection Committee may choose to waive the requirement for informed consent in some cases; however, such action must be based on clearly defensible grounds. The ultimate and final decision belongs to the University Human Subjects Protection Committee.

FINAL DISSERTATION

The final dissertation is published in the academic community and is a reflection of the University and its faculty. Hence, the student is expected to design and write a scholarly dissertation of high academic quality. It is the responsibility of the dissertation committee and Office of Graduate Studies and Research to ensure the highest quality of research delivered through the dissertation.

Time Limit

All degree requirements, including the dissertation, beyond the master's degree must be completed within ten calendar years from the date of admission to the doctoral program. No coursework beyond the master's degree that is over ten years old at the time of the doctoral degree is conferred may be used toward the doctoral degree. Timely completion of the dissertation is advised as the topic may become outdated if extended for a long period of time. **There is no waiver for this policy.**

Special Assistance

Writing. Doctoral students may receive assistance from the writing center and any other academic support offered from the university that is appropriate to the rigor required of the doctoral program.

Editing and statistics review. The student is encouraged to work with an editor and/or statistician in the preparation of the proposal and the dissertation. The editor and/or statistician should be familiar with the dissertation guide. Faculty members, graduate assistants, and department staff members are not editors. Drafts submitted in need of editing will be returned to the student. The student is solely responsible for completing and defending the dissertation.

Accommodations. Each division within the University is aware of the needs of the disabled student and is ready and willing to work with each student to solve problems as they arise. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Texarkana**

Enrollment in Dissertation Courses (EDLD 692, EDLD 671, EDLD 672 and EDLD 693)

Continuous enrollment. After the student is admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree, the student must continuously enroll in dissertation courses until the dissertation is complete. University policy states that the student must be enrolled in a course while receiving advice or assistance from a member of the faculty or while utilizing university facilities, and therefore the student must be registered in 693 during the semester the dissertation is submitted.

Minimum and maximum EDLD 693 credit. Regardless of the number of semester hours of dissertation writing in which a student enrolls, no more than 12 hours, as designated on the degree plan, will be counted for credit. The student must repeat EDLD 693 until the dissertation is complete if they do not defend during the first registration of EDLD 693.

Grade in Dissertation Writing Courses. Dissertation courses are awarded letter grades based on the student completion and mastery of Student Learning Objectives.

Dissertation Defense

Scheduling Defense. Your final dissertation draft must be submitted to each member of your committee a minimum of three weeks prior to scheduling your final defense date.

Forms. A Schedule for the Presentation of the Final Dissertation Defense, available from the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, must be filed in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research three weeks prior to the defense. A Final Examination Report will then be forwarded by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research to the department for recording the results of the defense.

Conduct of the defense. An Office of Graduate Studies and Research representative will be present at the dissertation defense, as well as all members of the student's doctoral advisory committee. The committee evaluates the defense of the dissertation. Any questions about the design of the research, the methods of conducting research, the reporting of data, the conclusions, implications, recommendations, etc. may be asked. The dissertation defense is open to all graduate faculty members, other graduate students, and the general public with the dissertation chair's permission.

Questions or concerns from faculty or the Dean's office will be relayed to the major professor at least two full days prior to the scheduled final defense. Additionally, a copy of the dissertation should be provided to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for distribution to its representative.

The dissertation defense is a public event and open to all interested faculty and students. Voting persons include the major professor and committee members only.

After the Defense

The candidate will distribute and obtain relevant signatures on the Signature Pages and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research Approval form. Additionally, the candidate and the major professor will prepare a list of agreed upon changes or modifications to be made to the defended manuscript prior to its submission to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Following approval by the CASE Dean, the candidate will submit the completed Office of Graduate Studies and Research Approval Form, Signature Pages, and a copy of the completed manuscript to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Candidates are cautioned to be aware of required deadlines for final submission of all dissertation or thesis manuscripts, necessary forms, copyright agreements, fee payments, and applications for graduation etc.

If the dissertation defense is successful, then the doctoral advisory committee chair completes the Final Dissertation Report, which is signed by committee members and the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education.

University Guidelines

It is the student's responsibility to carefully follow the policy stated in the *Dissertation Manual* regarding the final dissertation, number of copies, deadlines, etc.

GRADUATION

Filing for Graduation

As specified in the University Catalog, the student must file for graduation in the Registrar's Office by the deadline indicated in the schedule of classes for that particular semester. A student is entitled to graduate under the degree provisions of the catalog in effect at the time of admission into the doctoral program or a subsequent year, provided that in all cases the student fulfills the requirements of a catalog within ten years of currency.

Commencement

The degree is conferred at the commencement following the fulfillment of all requirements. The candidate is expected to be present at the ceremony, and permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research must be obtained if circumstances prevent a candidate from attending commencement.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Other information can be found in the A&M-Texarkana University Catalog.

Note: This handbook is subject to change. This is not a catalog and does not have catalog privileges.

REFERENCES

The following list of references is provided for help in designing and completing dissertations.

- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed. Washington, DC: APA.
- Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (1993). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Glatthorn, A. A., & Joyner, R. (2005). *Writing the winning thesis or dissertation*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.
- LeCompte, M. D., Millroy, W. L., & Preissle, J. (Eds.). (1992). *The handbook of qualitative research in education*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, Inc.
- Merriam, S. B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Ogden, E. H. (1993). *Completing your doctoral dissertation or master's thesis in two semesters or less*, 2nd ed. Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publication.

CONGRATULATIONS!

When you reach this page and have completed all the processes successfully, you have reached a milestone and you are deserving of many accolades from your family and friends. They, too, have been watching and supporting your progress and wishing you well.

There are two postscripts which must be added to this academic process, both of which you may be aware. The first is that the doctoral degree is a distinction that you carry with you for the rest of your life and indicates your scholarly achievement. It has been a long, hard road of knowledge and scholarship and was achieved at a particular point in time. This should not preclude the notion that currency in matters concerning education must still be maintained through continued study and research. Just like a computer program and hardware that are three years old and have limited use, the knowledge and skill level achieved in earning a doctorate must be renewed or else they become archaic and obsolete.

To avoid this, it is important that you attend professional conferences, seminars, and staff renewal sessions; interact with professional colleagues; and conduct and report on research. The degree that you now hold must be maintained to continue to be useful and productive. Your clients, your employer, and your university are depending on you to do this.

The second postscript is that the use of the title *doctor* is one that is accorded by your colleagues, students, and friends because of their respect for you and your scholarly achievement. This is a professional title and should be used in a professional manner and not as a barrier in building relationships with others.

With those words from experience, we, all the faculty members of the Education Leadership Department, wish you the best in all future endeavors. We rely heavily upon you to carry forward this knowledge and experience, and practice the skills we have so happily and readily conveyed to you.

Best of luck,

The Education Leadership Faculty