

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
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Comprehensive Examination
Policy and Procedure Statement

Purpose

The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to provide the doctoral candidate the opportunity to demonstrate a degree of mastery related to the salient leadership concepts, theories, and practices as pertaining to the selected topic. The doctoral candidate has the opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of research methodologies related to the selected topic.

In preparation to successfully complete the written and oral components of the comprehensive exam doctoral candidates are encouraged to submit a detailed outline to their advisors prior to beginning the exam. The advisor will offer feedback on the outline in the form of questions and suggestions. At the point of receiving feedback from an advisor, the doctoral candidate will typically take between four and six weeks to complete the exam.

General Description

Educational Leadership doctoral students are required to successfully complete a written and oral comprehensive examination before developing a dissertation proposal and conducting a research project. The exam is designed to build on the student's previous studies and experiences, while pushing them to look ahead to a possible area for conducting their research. In this sense, the comprehensive examination process is meant to be a researchable topic area.

To achieve this purpose, there are several guiding principles of the examination pertaining to the doctoral candidate:

- ‡ The exam is intended to allow students to apply relevant theories, concepts, and practices experienced during their doctoral program;
- ‡ The exam is intended to assist students in thinking about the most significant trends and problems facing leaders of educational organization;
- ‡ The exam is intended to allow students to apply concepts from their previous studies; and
- ‡ Therefore, the exam is not a dissertation research proposal. It is intended to allow students to demonstrate a comprehensive and broad-based view of leadership practice and research.

To assist students in preparing for and thinking through the trends, issues, and problems they will explore in the comprehensive exam, the specific component of the exam will be provided to students early in their doctoral program. Our expectations, therefore, are that students will be better able to apply concepts from the courses, share ideas and insights with their peers, and clarify questions and issues with their Program Advisor and faculty throughout their program of studies as pertaining to the selected research topic.

Revised 20

The Ed.D. Comprehensive Examination, as required by the Graduate Schools, consists of two portions, a written exam and an oral exam. Written examinations comprised of five sections (see actual exam at the end of this document)

1. Environmental Science A Macro Perspective
2. Literature Review and Problem Identification
3. Leadership and Organizational Implications
4. An Agenda for Research
5. Research Methodology

The oral portion of the exam is scheduled upon successful completion of the written exam. The major purpose of the oral exam are threefold: (1) to clarify and expand on responses given to the written questions; (2) to demonstrate workable knowledge and ability to interpret and critique salient ideas, concepts, and theories pertinent to educational leadership; and (3) to ascertain a

Scheduling of Examination

Once the student has fulfilled all the eligibility requirements to take the exam, the written exam upon by the student, Program Advisor, and Program Committee. The exam is completed in a take-home format and decisions about the beginning and ending dates are determined between the student and Program Committee.

The oral exam is scheduled by the Program Advisor once the written exam has been successfully completed and a date, time and place has been arranged by the student and agreed to by all comprehensive committee members. The Graduate School must have at least two weeks notification prior to the examination date. The Graduate School will approve and publicize the oral examination date. All members of the faculty are invited to attend and graduate students may also attend with the permission of the chairperson of the committee.

Comprehensive Examination Committee (Oral Portion)

Each student is assigned a Comprehensive Examination Committee composed of members of the Graduate School and are representative of the Graduate Faculty who is chosen in consultation with the Program Advisor and appointed by the Graduate School. The representative of the Graduate Faculty must be outside of the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS). This committee chaired by the chair of the Program Committee is responsible for evaluating the oral comprehensive examination.

Eligibility to Take Examination

In order to take the written comprehensive examination, a student must: (1) have been granted regular admission to the program; (2) have filed an approved plan of study; (3) have

Assessment and Evaluation of the Examination

complete this exam. Again the chairperson of the committee will notify the Graduate School on WKH UHVXOWV RI WKH H[DP RQ WKH ³5HSRUW RI WKH 2UDO

Written Examination Feedback System

Once the written comprehensive examinations have been graded, students should meet with the chair of their committee (who normally is the Program Advisor) for the purposes of: (1) reviewing the feedback given on these exams; (2) preparing for the oral comprehensive examination; and/or (3) if the student has not passed the written portion of the exam, assisting in preparing for retaking the written portion. The committee chair may request that students meet with other committee members as needed.

Examination Retake

Students who fail the written comprehensive exam may be allowed to retake of the exam. This retake will be scheduled by the chairperson of the Program Committee. A second permit is required for the retake. If a student fails the retake examination, his/her degree program will be terminated.

Students who receive an unsatisfactory grade on the comprehensive exam are allowed one retake of this exam. Again, this retake will be scheduled by the Program Advisor.

knowledge that would result from such a study would be useful to educational leaders in responding to or addressing the research problem.

Part V. Research Methodology

Select one of your research questions or hypotheses and then describe and defend a methodology that could be used to study the problem. Include additional research questions or hypotheses related to this overarching question/hypothesis, the research setting(s), subjects, concepts or variables of interest, data collection and analysis methods, and such issues as reliability and validity (or trustworthiness of the data) as appropriate to the methodology.

Writing Tips

The following are writing tips that the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS) faculty have decided to emphasize in the grading practices and, ideally, instill in aspiring educational leaders. The ELPS faculty feels that aspiring educational leaders must be able to communicate clearly and accurately in order to have the necessary credibility to successfully lead schools in the 21st century. For that reason, students are advised that excessive violations (five or more) of any combination of these writing tips may result in at least a .25 reduction in the final score assigned to each assignment. For that reason, students are encouraged to review these writing tips and apply them in all of their assignments.

1. Assume your reader knows nothing and everything needs to be explained at least once. You cannot use an acronym unless it is first written out and you identify the acronym in the text. Another example would be No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Once you identify the acronym, you are free to use it to your heart's content throughout the rest of the text.
2. Never forget what your 7th-grade English teacher taught you concerning writing. Every paper must have an introduction and a conclusion. We would also guess that this same teacher talked to you

11. If you are not familiar with the short book on the use of commas entitled and you have questions about the proper use of a comma, then take time to peruse this book. Suffice it to say, depending upon how you use the comma, the following phrase has a different meaning:

“The panda eats shoots and leaves” (a phrase from a nature show)

“The panda eats, shoots, and leaves” (call CSI)

12. If you are not certain when to use a semi-colon, then don't. A semi-colon is used to link two independent thoughts (or clauses) into one sentence. However, if you lack a comfort level with the use of semi-colons, then consider this guiding question: Do you have two independent thoughts or clauses in the sentence that are able to stand alone and are not fragment sentences? If so, why not just create two sentences?
13. Avoid sentences where you have two or more independent clauses connected only by a comma and lacking a conjunction or connecting word. For example, Greg works at the university, he is a friend of mine – BAD (meaning it is a run-on sentence). Greg works at the university, and he is a friend of mine – ACCEPTABLE. (Also note that a comma is needed in the last sentence before the conjunction because what is written on either side of the conjunction can stand alone.)
14. Be sure to include a comma after an introductory phrase. If you can move the phrase to the end of the sentence and it makes sense, you need a comma after it at the beginning of the sentence.
15. Write out all numbers less than 10.
16. “I plan on becoming a principal. In the next few years, anyway.” That second sentence is a fragment and is an incomplete thought that needs to be fully developed. It is NOT a sentence.
17. Before submitting any paper for assessment, READ IT OUT LOUD to ensure you are saying what you want or intend to say. As you do so