Doctorate of Education [D.Ed.] in Educational Leadership

Policy Leadership - Fall 2014

College of Education
Department of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership (EMPL)

**Doctorate of Education (D.Ed.) Program Manual**

Program Description, Student Information, and Application Instructions

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**Department Informational Website**  
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Application Instructions, Program Description, and New Student Information for Doctoral Programs  
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Department of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership

See: EMPL Programs
http://education.uoregon.edu/empl

The Department of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership (EMPL) is one of several departments within the College of Education at the University of Oregon. EMPL offers two doctoral degree programs; the Doctorate of Education (D.Ed.) program and the Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program. Both the D.Ed. and the Ph.D. programs lead to degrees in educational leadership. The knowledge bases supporting the D.Ed. and the Ph.D. are different because understanding and affecting the processes of change require different perspectives and skills. To allow for this differential focus and provide a rich learning environment, students from both degree paths take some courses together.

The Ph.D. program develops expertise in educational research and is intended for individuals who wish to pursue careers as researchers in various types of educational organizations or as professors of education with a specialization in research. This document does not provide information about the Ph.D. program; however, a detailed description of the program and application information can be found in the Ph.D. Program Manual.

The D.Ed. program develops expertise in professional practice and is intended for individuals who wish to pursue careers as administrators, staff developers, curriculum specialists, or professors of education. Detailed program description and application information follows in this document.

Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership is committed to ensuring that graduates of both programs acquire at least three fundamental abilities: (a) technical knowledge of systems operations, (b) conceptual perspectives for interpretation, and (c) human interactions for implementation. EMPL is positioned in its programmatic offerings and faculty expertise to lead the change process through new areas of inquiry and field-based practice.

Concentration Areas

- Policy Leadership
- Equity Leadership
- Literacy Leadership
Program Description - Doctorate of Education (D.Ed.)

The goal of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership is to develop effective, highly-regarded, and influential leaders in educational practice, policy, and scholarship. The Doctorate of Education (D.Ed.) program focuses on the processes by which educational outcomes and systems change are measured and how Pre-K-12 educational improvement can be diagnosed, prescribed, and managed.

The purpose of the Doctorate of Education (D.Ed.) degree in Educational Leadership (EDLD) offered by the department of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership (EMPL) is to provide practicing educational professionals with an advanced graduate degree that emphasizes leadership development, oral and written communication, and understanding of educational assessment and research. The D.Ed. is the highest degree offered to those interested in developing practice-oriented expertise. The program’s curriculum content, sequence, and proficiency requirements are tailored to develop advanced leadership capabilities that enable individuals to lead school districts and buildings in making decisions and implementing programs grounded in evidenced-based practices. The D.Ed. provides meaningful learning opportunities and experiences that enable graduates to:

- Improve student learning performance and progress
- Improve effectiveness of professional practice
- Enhance school building / district capacity and capabilities
- Cultivate and sustain professional communities of practice
- Advance professional knowledge and analytical expertise

The remainder of this document provides details of the D.Ed. degree program offered in EDLD, including faculty areas of emphasis, required coursework, comprehensive examination portfolio requirements and procedures, and the dissertation process.

The D.Ed. program is designed to address the growing need of education professionals to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to lead school systems in today’s data-driven, change-oriented environment. The D.Ed. program follows current recommendations from the University Council for Educational Administration, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and the Education Schools Project to craft a degree that is distinctly different from the Ph.D. in how educational research is used and studied, and also in specific degree requirements.

The orientation of this degree program is toward problems of practice. The degree is designed for working professionals who can initiate reforms in current educational settings. This degree can be aligned with an administrative license program, anchoring its content to case-based problems in the field.

The program is organized around a set of competencies presented in a sequential curriculum that enables students to build the knowledge, skills, and expertise necessary to complete the dissertation successfully and to function as effective educational leaders. The program fully

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integrates high-quality educational research and effective research methodologies applicable to the field of practice. Upon completion of their doctoral program coursework, graduates can employ critical theoretical frameworks, appropriate methodological approaches, and reflective analysis at an expert level.

Program Design
The D.Ed. program acknowledges the competing priorities faced daily by practicing Pre-K-12 professional educators. Therefore, the D.Ed. program is organized around a cohort model designed to create a culture of community for sustaining students’ continuous progress toward degree completion. The program provides concurrent on-campus and off-campus course delivery in a structure that is friendly to both family and job. The program utilizes the classroom and the workplace to both enhance and practice course content.

Program Emphases
The D.Ed. program focuses on several dimensions of leadership in Pre-K-12 educational systems: (a) measurement and analysis of educational outcomes to enact accountability, (b) development of policies to guide programs, (c) creation of organizational structures and functions to facilitate change. The goal is to develop leaders who can apply in practice methodological and analytical skills to improve educational performance.

The D.Ed. has five intellectual foundations upon which both of the doctoral degree programs are based:
1. Educational Research Methods
2. Learning Accountability and Educational Outcomes
3. Measurement and Instrument Development
4. Policy and Organizations
5. Leadership Development

These foundations broadly encompass faculty research and teaching to provide graduate students a rigorous and relevant educational experience through coursework and dissertation requirements.
Areas of Concentration

- **Policy Leadership** – The Policy Leadership concentration is for D.Ed. students interested in leading schools and districts, or working at state and federal agencies. This concentration emphasizes an understanding of (a) policy development, (b) policy standards and accountability systems, (c) educational reform, (d) evidence-based research practices, (3) leadership skills, argumentation, and organizational systems-thinking for change, and (f) educational outcomes analysis and actions. Coursework, advising, and dissertations in this concentration areas are offered through the lens of educational practitioners who lead effective change for enhanced student outcomes.

- **Equity Leadership** – D.Ed. students engaged in the Equity Leadership concentration will develop the critical scholarly and applied skills needed to promote inclusive excellence in education and social systems and to ensure equity in terms of policies and practices. Grounded in social justice and social ecological perspectives, the concentration provides the foundation in leadership practices and community, family, and school interventions that advance equity in terms of access, student outcomes, and institutional culture.

- **Literacy Leadership** – D.Ed. students interested in leading schools, districts, and even states with a specific focus on improving literacy outcomes in K-12 should enroll in the Literacy Leadership concentration. This concentration supports an understanding of the politics, policies, and practical realities associated with improving language and literacy outcomes for all students. Students will gain behavioral, cognitive, linguistic, social-psychological, and cultural perspectives on research, assessment, instruction, and data-based decision-making practices in literacy, as well as applied experiences working with struggling readers to ground your learning.
Program Structure

Learning Communities
The D.Ed. program uses a cohort model in which students take a prescribed set of courses taken in an intentionally sequential order. The cohort structure provides students a forum for exploring and developing a dissertation topic, a process that begins in the first academic term of the program through the professional writing course and continues through the final term in which a dissertation is completed. In the intervening terms, the dissertation topic is continually refined and enhanced, both conceptually and methodologically.

In addition to being cohort-based, the D.Ed. utilizes distributed education to reach practicing professionals throughout the state of Oregon. Courses are scheduled in the late afternoons and occasionally on weekends. State-of-the-art video-conferencing equipment allows distance students to telecommute to campus. Specific instructional pedagogy is used to ensure distance students participate and interact with instructors and fellow students. In addition, instructors periodically travel to distance sites to teach and meet with students.

Learning Experience
The D.Ed. experience is designed to cultivate high-level skills, knowledge, and habits of mind, in turn challenging students to develop their intellectual capabilities fully. The program incorporates collaboration, rigorous intellectual challenge, and a high-quality, supportive learning environment to elevate the effectiveness and engagement of professional practice.

EMPL faculty members are directly connected to schools, school districts, and state education agencies both in Oregon and across the nation. Program participants have access to this network for research and apprenticeship opportunities. Faculty involvement in educational leadership and educational research links student learning to curriculum that directly connected to educational best practices.

Cohort Model
D.Ed. students from across the state are admitted to the D.Ed. program each academic year. While students are in the same cohort, they attend class sessions at different sites. Courses are delivered from four sites:
- Eugene – University of Oregon Campus
- Portland – University of Oregon White Stag Building
- Bend – University of Oregon Bend Center
- Central Point – Central Point School District Office

A cohort model provides students with two critical elements throughout their doctoral program: a group for social support and support and diversity in studying problems of practice. The social group supports collective and self-directed learning for studying problems of practice. Most courses employ a modified form of problem-based learning to engage students. Rather than bringing structured problems to students, faculty guide students in thinking through problems that students themselves bring from the field. The cohort structure creates a learning community in which students become adept at solving problems of practice with in a context
where they contribute to the solutions and receive feedback on their contributions from peer cohort members. Throughout their coursework, students present and report their work, as provide and receive feedback from other students and faculty.

The E.M.P.L. Department’s focus is assessment, methodology, policy, and leadership. D.Ed. students take core courses as an entire cohort, and then take courses aligned with their concentration. The program signature is student skill development in research design, measurement, development, and rigorous data analysis. Students gain skills in systems understanding to allow them to properly frame problems as well as develop appropriate analysis and interpretations.

**Distributed Education**

The program utilizes state-of-the-art video-conferencing technology to create opportunities for students to interact with their peers throughout the state without travel time and expense. This approach codifies a variety of students who work in different districts and have varying roles and responsibilities. This exposure to different professionals who work at schools that vary in demographics, location, and external influences, allow for more robust learning while building a diverse and extensive professional network.

Distributed Education also requires that students participate in a manner that is different from participation in a traditional classroom. For example, instructors attempt to actively engage students at both ends of the instructional site. Some courses have opportunities for all students to come together at the same location. Lectures are likely to be punctuated with activities that specifically engage students at both instructional sites. In the end, this model enables students to take an active role in the delivery of instruction and to experience engagement across boundaries that usually limit instruction delivered in traditional formats.
# General Requirements


*Subject to Change*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total credits required by Grad School &amp; EMPL</strong></td>
<td>143* (*at least 77 earned after admission to EMPL’s EDLD program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transferable Credits</strong></td>
<td>Up to 48 credits from prior related master’s degree or from other accredited university, which were completed within 15 years of application to this program. All credits require departmental approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDLD 603 Dissertation credits minimum</strong></td>
<td>18 credits <em>after</em> advancement to candidacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRADED courses</strong></td>
<td>50 credits <em>(See Program Manual for current list of courses required to be taken on a GRADED basis)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum over all GPA to remain “in good standing”</strong></td>
<td>3.0 (B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time limit for program completion</strong></td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuous enrollment minimum graduate credits per term</strong></td>
<td>Students must be registered for a minimum of three credits each term, except summer. Students <strong>must</strong> be registered for at least three credits the term that they graduate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UO Residency Requirement</strong></td>
<td>Three <strong>consecutive</strong> full-time (*= nine-credit) Terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Bac Full-Time Requirement</strong></td>
<td>Nine Full-time terms* <em>(credit for three terms MAY be able to be applied from a related M.S. degree or coursework from another university)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advancement to Candidacy after coursework is complete</strong></td>
<td>Via <strong>Portfolio of Competencies</strong> &amp; related materials accepted &amp; signed off by advisor on Planned Program. See Program Manual for details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissertation and Defense</strong></td>
<td>See Grad School website and “Dissertation &amp; Defense Process Checklist” on EMPL website for details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planned Program signed by advisor &amp; student</strong></td>
<td>First draft by the end of first year of study; updated at the time of advancement to candidacy; then updated again at time of application to graduate.</td>
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</table>
Policies, Procedures, and Deadlines

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with all University of Oregon, Graduate School, College of Education, and EMPL’s policies, procedures, and deadlines. For current information, please visit their websites.

University of Oregon:  [www.uoregon.edu](http://www.uoregon.edu)
Registrar:  [registrar.uoregon.edu](http://registrar.uoregon.edu)
Graduate School:  [gradschool.uoregon.edu](http://gradschool.uoregon.edu)
College of Education:  [education.uoregon.edu](http://education.uoregon.edu)
EMPL Department:  [education.uoregon.edu/department/educational-methodology-policy-and-leadership](http://education.uoregon.edu/department/educational-methodology-policy-and-leadership)

Advising

Advising is an important professional responsibility of faculty in EMPL. Advising focuses on the following critical activities:

- Guiding students through applicable department, college, and graduate school policies and requirements
- Completing and processing required forms for which the advisor is responsible
- Monitoring student progress toward degree completion
- Acting as or assisting student in acquiring an appropriate dissertation committee chair

Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor upon entry into the department. Faculty recommends advisor assignments based on congruence of the applicant’s major professional interests with the faculty. Every effort is made to align student interests to faculty expertise as advisors are assigned. Due to faculty research, sabbaticals, and advising loads, an exact match for every student is not possible. Faculty advisors assist students in determining appropriate dissertation committee members. A current list of Graduate School approval dissertation committee members can be found on our website.

Faculty advisors work with the student to support the completion of degree requirements. The faculty advisor serves as a facilitator to help the student accomplish his or her goals. While students are ultimately responsible for knowing and fulfilling degree requirements, the advisor and departmental staff will monitor the students’ progress toward completing the program, and process necessary paperwork for degree completion. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the advisor for advising appointments or to engage with the advisor during his or her office hours.
Coursework
The D.Ed. program has a structured sequence of coursework designed for completion in three years. To ensure that students have the opportunity to complete all required evidences, course substitutions are strictly discouraged and considered only on individual basis. If a student takes a leave of absence, the student will be required to take the missed course or course sequence during the first year of reinstatement.

Course Sequence
Year 1 in the D.Ed. program focuses on foundational knowledge to scaffold future coursework. Year 1 solidifies student thinking and experience in data, methodology, applications, and interpretations. By the end of Year 1, students have mastered foundational methodological skills required to conduct a high-quality research study. By the end of the first year, students should have a well-defined target area to focus their dissertation.

Year 2 of the D.Ed. program emphasizes acquisition, application, transfer, integration, and use of the students’ accumulating research knowledge, along with understanding policy and organizational leadership. During Year 2 of the D.Ed. program, students refine their focus on a specific problem of practice and conduct a detailed literature review and research design plan. Students select from one of the three dissertation options at this time. The EDLD 607 Research Writing course sequence targets more focused and in-depth preparation on the methods as part of the dissertation study. In addition, this course is used to monitor and ensure portfolio completion, advance students to candidacy, and ensure completion of the dissertation proposal.

During the summer after the second year, students enroll in an EDLD 610 Dissertation Methods Apprenticeship. This course is designed for students to complete their formal dissertation proposal and present it to their committee.

Year 3 is designed to complete a high-quality dissertation, drawing from skills and knowledge mastered throughout the first two program years.

The completion of the process includes a dissertation defense to the student’s committee. These defenses are scheduled on campus and are open to the public. Students may extend completion of the dissertation beyond the third year as needed.

Between Years 2 and 3, students are required to advance to candidacy officially. During Year 3, students enroll in EDLD 603 Dissertation. Students are expected to either substantially advance or complete their dissertation by the end of spring term of Year 3. Dissertation credits are earned by working one-on-one with one’s dissertation chair and are more similar to a seminar than to traditional coursework.
### Course Sequence – D.Ed. Program 2014-15

**POLICY LEADERSHIP CONCENTRATION**

*Subject to Change*

**YEAR 1** – (35 Credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer (8)</th>
<th>Fall (9)</th>
<th>Winter (9)</th>
<th>Spring (9)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDLD 550 Data &amp; Info Retrieval (1)</td>
<td>EDLD 560 Measurement and Assessment (2)</td>
<td>EDLD 614 Educational Statistics (4)</td>
<td>EDLD 640 Applied Statistical Design &amp; Analysis (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDLD 607 Executive Leadership Institute (3)</td>
<td>EDLD 647 Prof. Issues in Ed I – Survey of Dissertation Options(1)</td>
<td>EDLD 644 Learning Organizations (4)</td>
<td>EDLD 621 Equity &amp; Achievement (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDLD 683 State &amp; Local Policy (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>EDLD 649 Prof. Issues in Ed III Res/Grant/Policy Critique (1)</td>
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**YEAR 2** – (35 credits)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Summer (8)</th>
<th>Fall (9)</th>
<th>Winter (9)</th>
<th>Spring (9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDLD 659 Professional Writing (4)</td>
<td>EDLD 607 Research Writing I – Scholarly Questions (1)</td>
<td>EDLD 607 Research Writing II – Methods to RQs (1)</td>
<td>EDLD 607 Research Writing III – Interpretation (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDLD 620 Educational Leadership (4)</td>
<td>EDLD 625 Survey and Questionnaire Design (4)</td>
<td>EDLD 610 Data-based Decision-Making (2)</td>
<td>EDLD 610 School Systems Reform (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDLD 622 Leading Change (4)</td>
<td>EDLD 638 Adv. School Law 1 (2)</td>
<td>EDLD 607 D.Ed. LL/Equity/Policy Seminar II (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDLD 636 Education Policy Analysis (4)</td>
<td>EDLD 641 Standards &amp; Accountability Systems (4)</td>
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**YEAR 3** – (25 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer (3)</th>
<th>Fall (10)</th>
<th>Winter (6)</th>
<th>Spring (6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDLD 610 Dissertation Methods Apprenticeship (3)</td>
<td>EDLD 603 Dissertation (6)</td>
<td>EDLD 603 Dissertation (6)</td>
<td>EDLD 603 Dissertation (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDLD 610 Info Tech for Curriculum Design (4)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Courses
Course numbers, descriptions, credits, and outcomes are subject to change.

EMPL Course Syllabi
Sample syllabi from previous terms are available online for reference at:
https://education.uoregon.edu/educational-methodology-policy-and-leadership/edld-syllabi

UO Course Catalog
http://uocatalog.uoregon.edu/education/education

UO Class Schedule
http://classes.uoregon.edu/

Graded Courses Policy

The following courses must be taken GRADED (no P/N option): (course numbers, particularly those with temporary number "607, 610, are subject to change)

Because many of these courses are open to student outside of the department who need to take these courses on a P/NP basis, the courses are set up as OPTIONAL grading. **EMPL STUDENTS MUST BE SURE TO CHANGE THIS GRADING OPTION TO <GRADED> WHEN REGISTERING FOR COURSES.**

All research and writing courses MUST be taken <GRADED>, including:
- EDLD 607 Research Writing I, II, and III
- EDUC 612 Social Science Research Design
- EDUC 614 Ed Statistics
- EDLD 560 Measurement & Assessment I
- EDLD 610 Dissertation Methods Apprenticeship
- EDLD 659 Professional Writing

All courses that contribute with deliverables that contribute to a student’s Portfolio of Competencies MUST be taken <GRADED>, including:
- EDLD 621 Equity and Achievement
- EDLD 644 Learning Organizations
- EDLD 659 Professional Writing
- EDLD 683 State & Local Policy Development
- EDLD 610 Data-based Decision-making
- *Exception: EDLD 647-648-649 Professional Issues in Ed I, II, III (This course is only offered P/NP)

At least 12 additional credits of other courses MUST be taken <GRADED>. These include, but are not limited to:
- All courses in CONCENTRATION AREAS must be taken GRADED.

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Graded requirements are only for students matriculated into the EMPL programs. Students from other departments are allowed to take courses pass/no pass.
Planned Program
In the spring of their first year of study, students meet with their advisors to establish and document their Planned Program. The D.Ed. program follows a prescribed course of study. Fillable planned program templates are available on the EMPL website. The Planned Program is signed by the student and advisor and then sent to the EMPL Student Services Coordinator. Any changes or updates to this Planned Program must be signed and submitted in the same manner. Upon program completion, a final version of the Planned Program must match the student’s final transcript exactly.

Transfer of Graduate Credits
Up to 48 graduate credits may be transferred, but cannot be used to replace the required courses of the first two years. Credits must be from courses which were completed within 15 years of application to this program.

The process of transferring these credits is done via the Planned Program. Specific courses transferred may not appear on the UO transcript since they were not earned as part of the D.Ed. program.

All transfer credits must meet the following criteria and then be approved by EMPL faculty:

- The institutions from which credits are transferred are accredited
- Courses are taken as graded, rather than pass/no pass
- The credits represent graduate (not undergraduate) credits taken as part of a graduate program and reflect passing grades of B- or higher.
- The courses reflect content that is relevant to the Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership degree.
- Practicum, research, reading and conference, Master’s thesis, field experience, or supervision credits will NOT count as transfer credits.
- Educational content courses outside of EMPL (e.g., special education or speech language) are acceptable.
- Non-educational courses with some relevance to education (e.g. psychology or linguistics) are acceptable.
- Non-educational courses with slim relevance to education are not acceptable.
- Courses must have been taken within fifteen years of admission to this program.

Students submit a list of these courses in a tabular format on their Planned Program, which is an Excel spreadsheet, listing the following: (a) term, (b) year, (c) course title, (d) number of credits, and (e) grade earned. Proposed transfer credits from multiple schools should be grouped by like-institution. The total number of proposed transfer credits across all institutions should then be presented at the bottom. To convert semester credits into quarter hours, multiply by 1.5. Transfer credits may only be transferred for purposes of meeting the total credits required for the degree (143 for doctoral programs); they may not be used for waiving required courses in the degree programs.
Portfolio of Competencies

Competency Domains
The D.Ed. is organized around five general competencies, integrated as a function of coursework completion. Competency domains focus on the fundamentals needed to interpret and develop evidence-based programs, apply and evaluate effective interventions in schools, lead and manage educational systems, understand and analyze policy, and finally, communicate with critical stakeholders. Throughout their coursework, doctoral students acquire foundational knowledge and skills necessary for designing and conducting their dissertations. In the D.Ed. program, students use a collection of evidence assembled in a portfolio to meet the requirements for the comprehensive examination. The contents of the portfolio are generated from class assignments to demonstrate student knowledge and skill in each of the program competency areas.

1. Evidence-Based Programs
   - Read and critically consume research
   - Translate research into practice, decisions, and policy
   - Gather and apply empirical evidence in practice
   - Understand how to conduct / supervise field based research

2. Teaching, Learning, & Assessment
   - Knowledge and understanding of classroom and large scale assessment
   - Knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning issues in schools
   - Application of program planning and development

3. Management & Organization
   - Knowledge and understanding of leadership systems and methods
   - Knowledge and understanding to manage educational organizations
   - Personnel management

4. Policy Development & Implementation
   - Policy development, governance, and implementation
   - Knowledge and understanding of school law and ethics
   - Knowledge and understanding of national, state, and local policy issues

5. Communication
   - Effective oral and written communication with diverse stakeholders
   - Knowledge and understanding of diversity issues
   - Knowledge and understanding of organizational identity
   - Knowledge and understanding of strategic communication

As part of the first two years of study, D.Ed. students compile evidence for an academic portfolio that demonstrates they have successfully mastered the competencies required to advance to the dissertation phase. In general, evidence includes key course assignments specifically designed to document mastery of foundational concepts and other evidence of mastery of skills and knowledge gained in a specialized interest area. Such evidence includes:
- Papers analyzing the impact of educational policy within the context of historical, social, economic, and political forces
- Proposals for how to address a complex management issue that situates the problem and its proposed solution within an appropriate literature base and conceptual framework
- Evaluations of published studies that utilize different research methodologies
- Literature reviews tied to the student's dissertation topic
- Presentations documenting effective communication skills
- Analytic reflections on design, measurement, and analysis-interpretation

**Portfolio Items**

**Competencies from Year 1: Research Foundations Applied to Practice**
During the first year, students learn about measurement and research methodologies that relate to their potential areas of interest. The research sequence introduces and develops specific methodological skills. The Professional Issues in Education course sequence offers opportunities for students to apply the knowledge and skills to a problem of practice.

- **Research Poster Presentation from EDLD 649 Professional Issues in Education III.** Students will develop the technical skills necessary to evaluate research, understand research designs, consider measurement options, and select analytical tools. Students use these foundational research methods to analyze their area of interest from a methodological perspective: identifying variables to control and study, selecting measures to use to document performance or progress, and utilizing analytical tools to make inferences. In Professional Issues in Education III, students create a poster to present to the cohort (and sometimes EMPL faculty) to fulfill this requirement. This poster presentation may be in person or electronic. (Students email a copy of the final product to Student Services Coordinator as filename: LASTNAME_F_RschPoster.doc)

- **Equity Scan from EDLD 621 Equity & Achievement.** The degree program emphasizes validity, which necessarily focuses on decision-making. A critical issue within validity is the consequences (both intended and unintended) that result from interventions and outcomes. In the equity scan, validity is considered from two perspectives: (a) the constructs being studied, and (b) the educational policies being addressed. As part of an equity scan, students submit a paper that considers organizational variables and analyses of policies as well as viewpoints of critical stakeholders. The equity scan presents a conceptual analysis of social and organizational variables. (Students email a copy of the final product to Student Services Coordinator as filename: LASTNAME_F_EquityScan.doc)

- **Policy Analysis Paper from EDLD 683 State and Local Policy.** During EDLD 683 State and Local Policy, students complete a policy analysis paper that views policy as the result of a complex intermix of forces and values and represents this complexity in a
cogent fashion. This paper identifies the values underlying the policy and suggests possible values conflicts and contradictions. It shows evidence of knowledge of key policy actors and their role in the policy’s development and passage, and contains a cogent narrative of the history of the policy, including evidence of consultation with one or more key policy players. (Students email a copy of the final product to Student Services Coordinator as filename: LASTNAME_F_PolAnalysis.doc)

Competencies from Year 2: The Practice of Research Foundations
The second year of the program introduces students to ways of thinking that help them understand problems of practice within a broader context. These include sociological frameworks, policy systems, and organizational considerations of teaching and learning, diversity perspectives, and leadership. Students also take an advanced research and writing sequence that helps them further develop the skills they need to complete their dissertation successfully.

- Literature Review Paper from EDLD 659 Professional Writing. Students begin the second year of their doctoral studies by taking the Professional Writing course during the summer, which focuses on technical writing and use of the American Psychological Association (APA) style guide. In this course, each student writes a review of the professional literature that synthesizes empirical research within their chosen dissertation area. The paper is submitted to the comprehensive academic portfolio as evidence of research and writing skill. (Students email a copy of the final product to Student Services Coordinator as filename: LASTNAME_F_ProfWrite.doc)

- School Improvement Plan with Communication Strategy from EDLD 610 Data-based Decision-Making. Students are expected to develop a plan for school improvement that includes a strategic communication goal. This goal must benefit the target audiences by creating a beneficial exchange. The strategic communication plan evidences a planning process that helps program managers know where to start, how to proceed through a logical program-design process, and what types of questions to ask and answer at each of the organizing stages of exchange, segmentation, and persuasion. Students submit their communication plan of five cyclical and iterative action research steps: assess, plan, develop and pretest, deliver and monitor, and revise. The last step revises their plan based on their deeper understanding of the problem and audience, which requires adjustments and rethinking. (Students email a copy of the final product to Student Services Coordinator as filename: LASTNAME_F_CommPlan.doc)

- Organizational Audit from EDLD 644 Learning Organizations. The organizational audit is designed to require the student to acquire the declarative and procedural knowledge to conduct a situated conditional analysis of an organizational unit. This analysis requires students to integrate organizational theory, system processes, and organization design principles, structural configurations, and communication. Students are required to obtain access to an organizational unit in order to conduct their audit, prepare an audit report, and present their report in class.
(Students email a copy of the final product to Student Services Coordinator as filename: LASTNAME_F_OrgAudit.doc)

- Updated Professional Résumé / Curriculum Vita. By the spring term of their second year, students will have accumulated significant real-world and academic experience. Students are asked to update their résumé / CV and submit it to the department. (Students email a copy of the final product to Student Services Coordinator as filename: LASTNAME_F_CV.doc)

Submission of Portfolio Items
At the end of each academic year, students email an electronic copy of the individual evidences to the EMPL Department’s Student Services Coordinator. Students have until the end of spring term to submit the requisite products. Failure to submit documents in a timely manner can result in a delay in progress toward advancement to candidacy. The advisory committee reserves the right to conduct a secondary review of the portfolio. This review may require the student to revise one or more products or submit additional evidentiary products before advancement to candidacy is granted.

Preparation for Advancement to Candidacy
Advancing to Candidacy is the official transition of status within the Graduate School. This transition grants students approval to begin work on the dissertation phase of their program.

Official advancement to candidacy is contingent upon the student:
- Successfully completing all required coursework and credits with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher with no outstanding “incompletes.”
- Submitting electronic copies of all portfolio items.
- Submitting an updated Planned Program signed by the student and advisor. This final version must match the current transcript exactly and include all pre-requirements and transfer credits.

The Graduate School notifies students via email when they advance to candidacy officially. Included in this Graduate School email is a link to a report that shows the OFFICIAL status of the student’s advancement. This report also provides several critical items of information regarding the student’s progress towards completion of required residency and full-time credit requirements, plus deadlines for completion of the program. Students are responsible to monitor this information closely. They should realize that failure to complete these important actions could result in delays in either dissertation defense or graduation.
Advancement to Candidacy
After advancing to candidacy, students move to an individualized program in which they
1. establish a committee
2. propose a dissertation topic
3. develop a plan of action
4. conduct research
5. write
6. defend their dissertation

This phase usually takes at least three terms, throughout which time students need to be continuously enrolled in a minimum of three credits.

EDLD 603 Dissertation. After advancement to candidacy is officially granted, students must enroll for at least three credits of EDLD 603 Dissertation each term (summers optional). A total of at least 18 credits of EDLD 603 Dissertation must be completed before graduating. Students must be enrolled for at least three credits of dissertation during the term of their dissertation. Transcripts will indicate grades of “Incomplete” on these credits until the successful completion of the dissertation defense, at which time incomplete grades will automatically be changed by the Graduate School to “Pass” grades.
Dissertation

Dissertation policies and procedures are subject to change. See website for most current information:

See: Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Overview:

See: EMPL Department Website for the Dissertation Resources:
https://education.uoregon.edu/educational-methodology-policy-and-leadership/dissertation-resources

The D.Ed. dissertation emphasizes applied research with a focus on regional or local problems of practice within educational settings. Both the degree program and dissertation process focus on specialized practitioner skills with an emphasis on applications in the schools and related educational working environments.

Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership has shifted away from the traditional dissertation model and towards an outcome that is more aligned with the actual practices of educational leaders. To fulfill the dissertation requirement for the D.Ed. program, students will select one of three dissertation options: Scholarly Article, Grant Proposal, or Policy Analysis. Information on each of the dissertation options is located below. All dissertation options will include the same five elements in common:

1. title page, (2) abstract, (3) outline (see below), (4) references, and (5) appendices

While the elements are same, they will differ across dimensions, as stated in the table within each options element section.

Dissertation selection and declaration process

Students select one of the three dissertation options: Scholarly Article, Grant Proposal, or Policy Analysis at the end of Year 1. Before the start of Year 2, each student must meet with the advisor to discuss their selection. Upon advisor’s approval, the student drafts a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), reflecting the dissertation topic and option that was approved. Next, the student obtains his or her advisor’s signature and then submits the MOU to the Student Services Coordinator, who places the MOU in the student’s official program file.
Dissertation Options

Scholarly Article Elements

Rationale

Scholarly articles are a major means of disseminating research findings. Most journals publishing empirical articles target researchers as their readership, but many top-tier research journals, especially those that are the product of professional associations, also have companion titles that target education professionals and practitioners as a means of conveying research more rapidly into practice. For example, Reading Research Quarterly is the top-tier title of the International Reading Association, which also publishes The Reading Teacher and Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, which are aimed more at reading professionals. Similarly, ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) maintains International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership, which is aimed more squarely at researchers, and Educational Leadership, which is aimed more at practitioners. D.Ed. candidates undertaking a new, empirical study should think carefully about the audiences, and thus type of journal, best suited to their studies.

A dissertation designed as a scholarly article follows much the same structure as the traditional dissertation, but it does so in a more concise and targeted fashion. Scholarly articles in manuscript form rarely exceed 50 pages and more commonly are between 25 and 35 pages in length with appendices as necessary.

The article option is intended for the reporting of original empirical research, both quantitative and qualitative, in a manner that it could be submitted to a scholarly journal in an appropriate field. As such, the article is expected to comply not only with the American Psychological Association Publication Manual (2009), but also with American Educational Research Association “Standards for Reporting on Empirical Social Science Research” (2006). What primarily distinguishes the article dissertation option from other dissertation options for D.Ed. candidates is that we assume the audience is constituted of scholars, researchers, and other doctoral-level readers.
Elements

All dissertations have five elements in common: (a) title page, (b) abstract, (c) outline (see below), (d) references, and (e) appendices. They would differ, however, in the dimensions noted below.

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<td>Outline of Dissertation</td>
<td>Introduction Methods Results Discussion</td>
<td>Introduction and Specific Aims Significance Preliminary Studies Project Design Evaluation Dissemination Plan Budget/Resources</td>
<td>• Legal Statutes • Regulations • Practices • Implications</td>
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Project Features and Key Elements for Scholarly Articles

The scholarly article dissertation includes the following sections: (A) title page, (B) abstract, (C) introduction and literature review, (D) method, (E) results, (F) discussion, (G) references, and (H) appendices. In order not to exceed the typical article manuscript length, students should consider relegating any exhaustive documentation or copies of instruments to the appendices. The introduction and method sections, along with appropriate references and appendices, should be completed as part of the proposal process. Composition of the results, discussion, and abstract and revision of the proposal materials follows completion of the original empirical study. Additional requirements for each of these sections are detailed below.

A. Title Page. The title page includes the title of the article and the student’s name, as well as the date, the chair of the dissertation committee, and the names of additional committee members.

B. Abstract. The abstract briefly summarizes the entirety of the article. As such, each of the sections of an article has some representation in the abstract, although more emphasis is typically given to the findings and their biggest implications. An abstract should give the casual reader a solid sense of what the study is about, what the findings were, and what their implications are for practice and, to the extent relevant, further research.
C. Introduction and Literature Review. The literature synthesis is the beginning of the prospectus, students conduct a thorough review of all relevant literature, organizing it in such a way that it is clear to the reader how different pieces of the literature fit together and frame the student’s study. The proposal needs to articulate why the study should be done. Students concentrate on weaving the literature into a coherent structure that can act as a conceptual framework for the study, helping guide the student through the process of structuring the problem and interpreting the findings. The literature cited must be of sufficient depth and breadth, and must include high-quality, empirical work. In the proposal, the constructs and variables need to be identified explicitly.

Components of the Introduction and Literature Review Section

- State the problems and research questions that will form the basis for research.
- Summarize guiding principles and key points from the literature related to the problem. Highlight critical issues from the literature related to the context for the problem.
- Summarize seminal articles that can be used to orient the research focus.
- Highlight the literature that will be used to document the problem and selected research focus.

D. Methods. To complete the methodology section, the student describes a methodology for conducting the research and provides a rationale for using the selected methodology. Students should highlight advantages and disadvantages for using this approach. Following this, the constructs and variables need to be identified explicitly. Students must operationalize each variable of interest, so it is clear to a reader unfamiliar with the study how each variable is measured. In addition, students should thoroughly describe the methodology (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method), participants, sampling plan, and setting used for the study. Students should specify the research design and intended methods of analysis in reasonable detail, as well as complete descriptions of the types of data they plan to gather and analyze. Students should also explain how they plan to control for reliability and validity and potential problems with data analysis. This section must include a timeline for completion of the dissertation.

Components of the Methods Section

- Propose specific measure(s) to be used to conduct the research. Consider specific issues in establishing and/or evaluating reliability and validity.
- Describe the type of data that will be collected in the research.
- Propose a strategy for analyzing the data.
- Include a timeline for the analysis. The timeline should delineate major milestones to be accomplished, chronologically, month-by-month. It should also list projected dates of committee appointment, proposal approval, IRB Human Subjects Office’s approval, when dissertation sections go to committee or chair, data collection and analysis periods, and proposed or projected date of defense.

E. Results. In the Results section of the dissertation, report—but do not interpret—all the findings. Check the Graduate School Dissertation Style guide for information about formatting tables and be sure to explain the results fully. If students completed a qualitative study, be sure to include a sufficient description to convey the findings adequately. Qualitative findings, for
instance, are sometimes grouped into 3-5 emergent themes from coded data, which become the subheadings in the Results section.

F. Discussion. In the Conclusion/Discussion / Implications section, explain the findings. Interpret the results and their significance. Discuss any problems that arose during the study that might have influenced the findings. Link the findings back to the literature synthesis and discuss the ways in which the results add to knowledge of the topic studied. Discuss the implications of the findings for educational research and practice.

G. References. The reference list should include any and all works cited in the article and must comply with APA style.

H. Appendices. Appendices should be used for any additional documentation needed of measures used, reliability checks, full analysis results, etc. If students would not find something in a typical journal article, then it probably belongs in an appendix.
Grant Proposal Elements

Rationale

The ability to compete for grant funds is an essential skill for educational leaders. In applied settings, grant proposals are written for a variety of reasons, including seeking funds to support program development, delivery, or large-scale dissemination; research projects designed to better understand the pathways towards negative and positive educational outcomes for students, schools, and educational systems; and research to evaluate the effectiveness of a particular intervention, policy, or practice in schools. Preparation of competitive grant applications requires the ability to: (1) synthesize empirical research with an eye towards its relevance in applied settings, (2) identify gaps in extant knowledge or practice and turn these into addressable aims, (3) prospectively design and plan for research or intervention to address gaps, (4) evaluate outcomes and program effects using valid metrics and measures, and (5) complete a budget template.

Elements

All dissertations have five elements in common: (a) title page, (b) abstract, (c) outline (see below), (d) references, and (e) appendices. They would differ, however, in the dimensions noted below.

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|                      |                                                        |                                                               | • Results  
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| **Argument**         | Empirical-operational: What was done and with what threats to validity | What will be done with connectivity to previous or current practices to move the field forward | Why do / don't do something in practice in relation to (audience) contexts |
| **Discourse**        |                                                        |                                                               |                                                      |
| **Narrative**        |                                                        |                                                               |                                                      |
Project Features and Key Elements for Grant Proposals

The grant proposal dissertation includes the following sections: (A) title page, (B) abstract, (C) introduction and specific aims (executive summary), (D) background and significance (literature review), (E) preliminary studies, (F) project design and strategy, (G) outcome measures and evaluation, (H) results dissemination, (I) budget overview/financial impact, (J) references, and (K) appendices. Students should consider relegating any exhaustive documentation or copies of instruments to the appendices. The introduction, background and significance (literature review) and preliminary studies sections, along with appropriate references and appendices, should be completed as part of the proposal process. Composition of the preliminary studies, project design and strategy, outcome measures and evaluation, results dissemination, budget overview/financial impact, and abstract and revision of the proposal materials comprises the completion of the dissertation. Additional requirements for each of these sections are detailed below.

A. Title Page. The title page includes the title of the article and the student’s name, as well as the date, the chair of the dissertation committee, and the names of additional committee members.

B. Abstract. The abstract briefly summarizes the entirety of the grant proposal. An abstract should give the casual reader a solid sense of what the grant proposal is about, along with a brief overview of the rationale for the project, the problem being addressed, and the overarching goals of the proposal.

C. Introduction and Specific Aims (Executive Summary). Provide an overview of the rationale for the project, the problem being addressed, and the overarching goals of the proposal.

D. Background and Significance (Literature Review). Summarize and synthesize the major empirical research in the student’s topic area emphasizing what is known from the extant literature, where findings have been equivocal and where gaps in knowledge persist. Provide rationale, based on the literature, for why the student’s project would make a significant impact on the identified problem. This section should also include a theory of action or guiding conceptual frame for the student’s proposed project.

E. Preliminary Studies. Present initial evidence that show the project is feasible and has promise. If pilot work has been conducted or initial data analyzed, provide details about that work and preliminary findings.

F. Project Design and Strategy. Describe the project components in detail. Discuss the phases of the project, the methods that will be employed, and how the project would be implemented and monitored (e.g., for program fidelity). Provide a timeline for project milestones.

G. Outcome Measures and Evaluation. Discuss plan and methodology for collecting rigorous data about the project effects. Include details about when the data will be collected, and how they will be managed, analyzed, and reported. Provide information about the variables and constructs that would be assessed. Describe the measures that would be used to assess relevant variables, and include information about the internal and external validity of the planned assessment, and details about potential measurement limitations.

H. Results Dissemination. Describe plans for how results of the project would be shared with relevant audiences. Provide information about the potential implication of the project, and how results would be analyzed in terms of their impact on educational
policy and/or practice in applied settings. Include details about when the data will be collected and how they will be managed, analyzed, and reported.

I. **Budget Overview/Financial Impact.** Provide details for major projected costs related to the project (e.g., staff FTE, supplies, evaluation, dissemination). Also provide information about other "in kind" resources that could be utilized in carrying out the proposed work.

J. **References.** The reference list should include any and all works cited in the dissertations and must comply with APA style.

K. **Appendices.** Appendices should be used for any additional documentation needed of measures used, policies examined, or other information.

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**Policy Analysis Elements**

**Rationale**

A dissertation designed as a policy analysis follows the structure listed below in a concise and targeted fashion. The policy analysis option focuses on the facilitation, discussion, and dissemination of a policy analysis regarding some aspect of public or private education. As such, the policy analysis is expected to comply not only with the American Psychological Association *Publication Manual* (2009), but also with any concomitant American Educational Research Association special interest group (SIGs) that has a policymaking agenda. Policy analysis in manuscript form may range from 50 to 75 pages, with a high-quality executive summary and appendices as necessary. This page limitation is a necessary component because both public and private policy groups have limited time to digest information necessary for policy consumption/policy making agendas. The analysis option is intended for the reporting of original research, both quantitative and qualitative, in a manner that it could be submitted to a public or private policy agency in an appropriate field. What primarily distinguishes the policy analysis dissertation option from other dissertation options for D.Ed. candidates is that we assume the audience is constituted of policy-level readers that are consumers of policy analysis with policy-making agendas.
Elements
All dissertations have five elements in common: (a) title page, (b) abstract, (c) outline (see below), (d) references, and (e) appendices. They would differ, however, in the dimensions noted below.

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Project Features and Key Elements for Policy Analysis
The policy analysis dissertation includes the following sections: (A) title page, (B) abstract, (C) executive summary, (D) introduction and literature review, (E) methods, (F) results, (G) discussion, (H) references, and (I) appendices. In order not to exceed the typical 50-75 page length, students should consider relegating any exhaustive documentation or copies of instruments to the appendices. The introduction and methods sections, along with appropriate references and appendices, should be completed as part of the proposal process. Composition of the results, discussion, and abstract and revision of the proposal materials follows completion of the data for the policy analysis. Additional requirements for each of these sections are detailed below.

A. **Title Page.** The title page includes the title of the article and the student’s name, as well as the date, the chair of the dissertation committee, and the names of additional committee members.

B. **Abstract.** The abstract briefly summarizes the entirety of the policy analysis. As such, each of the sections of the policy analysis has some representation in the abstract, although more emphasis is typically given to the findings and their biggest implications. An abstract should give the casual reader a solid sense of what the policy analysis is
about, what the findings were, and what their implications are for practice and, to the extent relevant, further research.

C. Executive Summary. Provide an overview of the rationale for the policy analysis, the problem being explored, and the data being analyzed.

D. Introduction and Literature Review. The literature review provides a clear and concise summary of the genesis of the specific policy issue, along with a clear statement of the policy problem or key issues the policy served to address.

Components of the Literature Review Section

A. State the policy issue you wish to examine.
B. Examine the role of key policy actors and explanation of how the issue got on the policy agenda. Provide historical and legal context for the policy. Clearly explain the process by which the policy arrived on the policy agenda, including an examination of the major forces operating to move the policy onto the policy agenda.
C. Summarize the key points from the literature related to the policy. Highlight critical issues (social, political, or legal) from the literature related to the policy. Demonstrate an understanding of power dynamics (social, political, or legal), with reference to conceptions of power.
D. Examine strengths and weaknesses of the current policy.
E. Identify the values underlying the policy and identify possible value conflicts and contradictions.

E. Methods. Describe the student’s methodology for analyzing your chosen policy and provide a rationale for using the selected methodology. Students should highlight the advantages and disadvantages of using a given approach.

Data analysis could include: (a) qualitative – focus groups, guided interviews, surveys or (b) quantitative – parametric or nonparametric statistics of administrative, teacher, or student data. Alternatively, data analysis could be specific to an analysis of the policy’s costs and potential benefits in fiscal or other terms [e.g., (a) cost benefit analysis, (b) cost utility analysis, or (c) cost effectiveness analysis].

Components of the Methods Section

- Propose the specific measure(s) being used to analyze a policy. Consider specific issues in establishing and / or evaluating reliability and validity of the student’s data sources.
- Describe the type of data that was examined in the research.
- Propose a strategy for analyzing the data.

F. Results. In the Results section, report—but do not interpret—all the findings. Check the Graduate School Dissertation Style guide for information about formatting tables and be sure to explain the results fully. If you use qualitative data, be sure to include a sufficient description to convey the findings adequately. Qualitative findings, for instance, are sometimes grouped into 3-5 emergent themes from coded data, which become the subheadings in the Results section.

G. Discussion. In the Discussion section, explain the findings. Interpret the results and their significance. Discuss any problems that arose during the analysis that might have influenced the findings. Link the findings back to the literature synthesis and discuss the ways in which the results add to knowledge of the topic studied. Discuss the implications of the findings for educational research and practice.
The policy analysis dissertation describes and explains the roles of each level of government in terms of power and control in relation to a specific policy’s development and / or implementation. The policy analysis dissertation will describe the costs and benefits of a policy, along with unintended consequences and implementation challenges. Describe implementation challenges with reference to concepts from the literature review. Propose comprehensive criteria for measuring the success of policy. Discuss the effect of a policy on future regulations and implications for future practice.

H. References. The reference list should include any and all works cited in the dissertations and must comply with APA style.

I. Appendices. Appendices should be used for any additional documentation needed of measures used, policies examined, or other information.

Dissertation Process

Students choose a problem of practice in their first year (as part of the spring Professional Issues III course). An important feature of the topic is specificity: Students must propose to study a topic that is sufficiently narrow so that the literature review can be bounded and the outcomes interpreted.

Dissertation Proposal

Please see EMPL Department Website for the Dissertation Proposal Approval form

The dissertation focus should be on a current, field-based problem of policy or practice, and is designed to effect change rather than merely identify the cause or explain a change. The dissertation is designed to be practice grounded, focusing on problems situated in a real context having relevance for a variety of stakeholders. Practical implications are critical.

A proposal is a 10-15 page paper written in two sections. The first section provides a brief literature synthesis that locates the major concepts and previous research in the area being studied. The second chapter provides a clear description of research methods being proposed including data analysis techniques.

Students write section numbers one and two during Research Writing I, II, III during Year 2. Students are encouraged to complete a strong, clear dissertation proposal during these courses. During Year 2, students are supported in creating their dissertation committees. By the end of spring term, students should have a proposal meeting set with their committees. Further information about dissertation committee approval is listed below.

Students conduct a meeting of all members of the committee to present their proposal, and obtain their signatures on a “Proposal Approval Form.” (See EMPL website, under STUDENT RESOURCES – DISSERTATION RESOURCES: https://education.uoregon.edu/educational-methodology-policy-and-leadership/dissertation-resources ). Students submit a copy of this signed form to the department Students Services Coordinator directly after the meeting.
The proposal is a formal document that provides a thorough analysis of the literature addressing a problem of practice. A specific, detailed methodology used in the selected dissertation option is also included.

1) **Introduction and Literature Review in Alignment with Concentration**
   
The literature synthesis is the beginning of the proposal. Students conduct a thorough review of all relevant literature, organizing it in such a way that it is clear to the reader how the different pieces of literature fit together and frame the student’s dissertation. The proposal needs to articulate why the dissertation is important and should be completed. Students concentrate on weaving the literature into a coherent structure that can act as a conceptual framework for the dissertation, helping guide the student through the process of structuring the problem and interpreting findings. The literature cited must be of sufficient depth and breadth, and must include high-quality, empirical work. In the proposal, the constructs and variables need to be identified explicitly.

2) **Methodology**
   
   Students further develop the methodology by operationalizing the independent and dependent variables so it is clear to a reader unfamiliar with the study what is to be done. Students should also specify the research design and intended methods so it is clear how the study is to be conducted and the data analyzed. Students should thoroughly describe the methodology, as well as the participants, sampling plan (how people or measures are developed and drawn from a universe of possible people or items), and the setting used for the study. Students should explain how they plan to control for reliability and validity of interpretations, as well as potential problems with data analysis. This section must include a timeline for completion of the dissertation.

Once approved, the proposal becomes a compact between the student and the committee, outlining the specific steps the student has committed to follow and the theoretical / conceptual lens through which the student has viewed the study. When committee members sign off on the proposal, they agree that the dissertation design is fully ready to implement, and that the student will not be asked to perform any more or any less to satisfy degree completion.

**Research**

The goal of the D.Ed. program is to develop leaders capable of designing and implementing effective and accountable programs. In the course of study, candidates address various issues in leadership practices, learning systems, and policy development and implementation. Students take courses focusing on content essential for educational leadership and complementary research methods that teach key analytical tools. Students are encouraged to formulate a problem of practice in which they are interested, that is relevant to their current (or future) position, and for which faculty have expertise, experience, and interest.

Research skills emphasized in the program are the keystone for students to complete a high-quality executive dissertation. Students first learn about research designs that can be implemented in the field through a specific set of methods: (a) action research, (b) survey methodologies, (c) case studies, (d) policy analyses, and (e) program evaluation (non-experimental methodologies). Students then become proficient with measurement systems that allow them to describe and scale behavior for individuals or groups. Finally, students
become familiar with basic analytic and statistical skills. In this process, the acquired knowledge and skills are used to formulate problems and complete dissertations that are realistic and practical. Students may be provided with existing or institution-sponsored data sets. In some cases, students may use data sets from their schools or districts, or data provided by their faculty advisors.

The sequences serve to integrate the students’ programs of research by addressing research methods and writing skills simultaneously.

All theses and dissertations must be formatted to conform to the UO Graduate School’s on-line Style and Policy Manual for Theses and Dissertation.

Dissertation Committee Approval

Within 30 days after official advancement to candidacy by the Graduate School, students must submit a Committee and Proposal Approval form to the department. This form provides the proposed title of the dissertation, a very brief description of the project, a roster of names of people who are qualified and who have agreed to serve on their dissertation committee, and whether or not an Human Subjects Research will be involved. (See EMPL Forms on the department website under STUDENT RESOURCES – DISSERTATION RESOURCES: https://education.uoregon.edu/educational-methodology-policy-and-leadership/dissertation-resources.

Qualifications and requirements for who can serve in given roles on any given committee are very specific. Carefully review the policies for the establishment of a committee on the Graduate School’s website at: http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/committee-policy.

Students may email this form with signatures and role titles to the Student Services Coordinator, who will submit it to the Graduate School for consideration of approval.

The Graduate School automatically sends an email to each prospective committee member, notifying them of this assignment and confirming their agreement to serve. Until the Graduate School has emailed official approval of the committee to the student and department, the committee is not official. Students MAY NOT conduct research until this process is complete. Once approved, the dissertation committee Chair becomes the official “Academic Advisor” for the remainder of the student’s studies.

Committees must be established and chairs remain constant for at least six months before a student can defend a dissertation.
Preparing and Defending the Dissertation

Upon successful completion of the Dissertation Proposal, the first two sections of the dissertation should be mostly complete. Only three new documents remain to be written: an Abstract, the Results section, and the Conclusions section. The Graduate School has several additional pages that must be included. Please refer to the Graduate School Style and Policy Manual for Theses and Dissertations (http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/policies-procedures/doctoral) for detailed information about components required in all University of Oregon dissertations.

The abstract is written for the Graduate School, and they have very specific requirements about its length, content, formatting, timing, and methodology of submission. Students are expected to graduate during the term of your oral defense. It is critical that students identify and track timelines and deadlines carefully. For current detailed instructions, please see the Graduate School’s website using the link above.

Dissertation Contents

The D.Ed. Dissertation represents scholarly descriptions and reflections on a problem of practice with an emphasis on application and relevance to applications in the field. The following considerations should be noted in completing the dissertation, using four sections to structure the scholarly descriptions and reflections.

Section 1 – Literature (and Problem Analysis)
This section describes the problem of practice and synthesizes the literature relevant to it. The section should be structured with a description of a practice or intervention (at some level of application) that has previously been studied: a rationale for studying the problem, a review of previous research (more than a simple summary of previous findings), an analysis of assumptions in the literature and the terminology used, and finally, an analysis of the quality of this research.

Practices and interventions are complex, multi-faceted, and based on multiple perspectives that have varying theoretical bases, not all of which are consonant with each other. Often practices are developed with little research basis to vindicate their adoption or have such broad bases that they span entirely different literature bases. Students need to describe these practices and interventions by clearly highlighting assumptions, appropriate constructs, and relevant conditions. Students should consider the level of application when analyzing interventions, whether it is students, teachers, or systems. When using complex practices and interventions, students need to locate the various streams of influence within the literature in which specific practices have been shaped.

Literature from various areas of educational practices needs to be publicly available in some form for practitioners to review the history of adoption, the changes of practice over time, the data supporting the practice, and the effect on students, teachers, and administrators. Beginning with a survey of the literature of educational research on the problems of practice, educators need to consider the quality of outlets in which the problem of practice is disseminated. Students should consider the fact that a wide range of expertise is used in
vindicating practices, from specific journals that specialize in this process (e.g. *Review of Educational Research*) to public forums with no vindication whatsoever (e.g. the page ranking system of Google®). In the end, an empirical basis of change must be embraced. All available information is not equally strong, robust, or relevant. It is important for the literature supporting a problem of practice be situated in prior research, and that this literature be analyzed for quality.

**Section 2 – Methodology**

The second section must present a description of the independent variable or practice, the type of data to be collected, and the research design for conducting the study. The intervention should be descriptive in practice and analytical in assumptions. Data considerations should include both what information is to be collected and how it is to be analyzed for its technical quality. The research design should clearly articulate operational strategies used for collecting all information that documents (describes) the intervention and articulates the data.

**Primary data** need to be collected and presented but students may include extant data or pilot data (whether of implementation of a specific practice or documentation of its effects). Students may be interested in working on a problem of practice that is part of their current work and the data they have available is limited, but practically important. These data may not be definitive in resolving the problem, but are primary in current use. Students need to consider the conditions under which data are collected, the scales upon which they are based, and the manner in which data are rendered. When using extant or pilot data, the dissertation should voice limitations and suggest more technically adequate practices and measures. Issues need to be presented both in understanding the limitations and proposing better alternatives. Students should base their analyses on straightforward techniques for presenting and analyzing data that avoid complex statistical procedures, but, nevertheless, provide an effective reduction for displaying patterns and supporting conclusions.

**Research procedures** are often difficult to control in the environments in which D.Ed. students work. When conducting experimental or quasi-experimental research studies, variables are controlled explicitly (directly manipulated or systematically blocked) to eliminate confounding influences or multiple explanations. Outcomes from this type of research may provide conclusions that are more constrained, but also more clear. In the D.Ed. program, students are likely to study problems of practice that fail to have such clear manipulations, but then they need to address the various threats to the validity of conclusions. The dissertation then becomes situated with students needing to describe and explain threats to internal validity (explanations of cause–effect relations) and consider the limited external validity of their study by constraining interpretations to specific populations and procedures.

**Section 3 – Results**

This section communicates all outcomes in text, tables, and graphs. The section needs to provide an objective analysis of data and present findings only (without interpretation).

**Outcomes** in a field of study or problem of practice need to incorporate various representations of data. Tables and graphic displays of data will be used to help the student communicate complex relations and patterns. Although the written word (and technical argument) is still primary, dissertations need to include multiple displays of data to represent
analyses of the problem of practice. These representations need to enhance and supplement understanding and lead to clear conclusions. The text, tables, and graphs of all outcomes (documents and presentations) must follow guidelines of professional organizations (e.g. APA), be clear and succinct, and be structured to form a technical argument.

Section 4 – Conclusions
In the Conclusion section, problems are noted that arose during the study and then the findings are interpreted and qualified (relative to the literature analysis) with implications highlighted for educational leadership.

Conclusions and recommendations need to be made, even without clarity of data (in consistency or quality). Furthermore, local, state, and federal educational agencies cannot provide sufficient regulatory authority for adopting (or avoiding) certain practices. Nevertheless, adoption should be based on data that are more compelling than popular appeal and more substantive than procedural compliance. In the end, problems of practice often provide a unique application that reflects a logical rationale reflecting values of stakeholders and perspectives of satisfying the needs of many, in addition to the data that support the practice. Therefore, it is likely that criteria for adoption of practices need to be considered that go beyond empirical support. Although the high bar of empiricism may serve as a useful heuristic, it often is eclipsed in the hurried rush to judgment that must be made under realities of limited available time and resources. Students should consider criteria for adoption of practices (e.g., see What Works Clearinghouse as a model for making judgments on practice). Students also then need to consider the unintended consequences (both positive and negative) that come to bear when practices are adopted and implicitly serve as the catalyst for (future) problems.
Oral Defense

Oral defense of a dissertation is the final component of the degree, in which the student presents the student’s dissertation to the committee. In the defense, the student describes a problem of practice by clarifying independent variables (the practice itself), justifies the practice in the context of the professional literature (of varying quality), utilizes various dependent variables to document outcomes and display results, organizes and operationalizes a research design to study the practice, and comes to conclusions by considering explicit criteria and perspectives of various stakeholders. The defense must be appropriate to the problem, reflect the capabilities of the student (given the courses that are taken), and be presented to an audience for whom the problem of practice is relevant. All members should be present to hear the arguments and provide input into the judgment.

At least one term before student intends to hold the student’s Final Oral Defense and graduate, he or she needs to:

- Review his or her unofficial transcript to ensure they have met all residency and full-time requirements, and check for any unresolved incompletes (except EDLD 603 Dissertation)
- Update his or her Planned Program to ensure that the contents of both documents exactly match and that all requirements will have been met before defending
- Check the Graduate School’s Calendar of Deadlines (http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/node/263) to establish the deadlines for the final milestone tasks, including the last possible date for possible defense in the coming term.

Students use this date to then:

- Communicate with his or her committee about possible dates for the defense
- Research availability for a meeting room in which to hold the defense (see suggestions and contact information on the department website under STUDENT RESOURCES – DISSERTATION RESOURCES https://education.uoregon.edu/educational-methodology-policy-and-leadership/dissertation-resources
- Make reservations for the room, and communicate the date and time to all committee members

- Students return to the Graduate School’s Calendar of Deadlines and submit the following applications by the given deadlines:
  - Application for Degree (graduation)
  - Application for Final Oral Defense

In response to the Application for Final Oral Defense, the Graduate School sends an official email to each committee member asking him or her to confirm his or her planned attendance.

- After ALL members have logged into GradWeb and confirmed their attendance, an automatic email enables the department to generate an approval of the Application for Final Oral Defense (this form must be signed by the Department Head).
- When this is signed, a copy of this form is placed in the student’s file, an email is sent to the student notifying him or her that and the original is now available to them for the required submission with the final abstracts to the Graduate School. The student can either pick this document up personally, or have the department mail it to him or her at risk of delivery and timeliness of the postal service.
This step must be completed in time for the student to deliver it, along with the final abstracts to the Graduate School, AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE FINAL ORAL DEFENSE.

We recommend that students use this remaining three-week timeframe time to
  o Order their regalia for spring graduation, using the instructions on the College of Education website, at education.uoregon.edu
  o Submit the final copy of the final signed planned program and transcript to the department’s Student Services Coordinator
  o Confirm reservations for their meeting room, and equipment they have ordered
  o Remind committee members and guests of the time, date, and location (including directions and parking information)

A few days before the defense, the Graduate School sends a Certificate of Completion form to the Committee Chair with instructions to bring it to the Final Oral Defense meeting. At the conclusion of the defense, the committee meets privately to discuss the result and uses this form for each committee member to confirm by signature whether or not the student agrees that the defense was successful. If all committee members agree and sign off, the Chair delivers this form to the department’s Student Services Coordinator so that he or she can insert a copy into the student’s file, and send the original to the Graduate School.

Completion

Students submit any required final revisions of their dissertations to the Graduate School by uploading them via the internet using the instructions and deadlines listed on the Graduate School’s Calendar of Deadlines http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/node/263 .

Graduation and Commencement

The schedule and instructions for participating in University and / or College of Education Commencement Exercises are posted during spring term on the College of Education’s website, at: http://education.uoregon.edu.

On-Leave or Withdrawal from the Program

Taking a leave of absence, or completely withdrawing from the program can have serious long-term consequences if specific steps are not followed in a timely manner. Please contact the department’s Student Services Coordinator for complete instructions the term BEFORE you intend to either take time off or completely withdraw from the program.