
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
College of Education & Human Development
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
in Educational Leadership

Student Handbook

Welcome

The Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies (ELPS) welcomes you. We look forward to working closely with you as you work towards your Ph.D. in Educational Leadership. This handbook provides an orientation to the doctoral program with detailed information on the following:

- ◆ Program Mission
- ◆ Overview of Doctoral Program
- ◆ Admissions Process and Requirements
- ◆ Applying for Graduate Assistantships and Financial Aid
- ◆ The Doctoral Process
 - Course Requirements
 - Qualifying Examination
 - The Dissertation
- ◆ Frequently Asked Questions

Additional information is available on the ELPS website:

http://education.utsa.edu/educational_leadership_and_policy_studies/welcome/

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT (PAGE 5)

OVERVIEW OF DOCTORAL PROGRAM (PAGES 5-6)

THREE CORE ELEMENTS

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

YOUR PROGRAM ADVISOR AND DOCTORAL COMMITTEE

COHORT MODEL

INFORMATION TOOLS AND RESOURCES

ADMISSIONS (PAGES 6-8)

APPLICATION MATERIALS

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

FINANCIAL AID AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS (PAGES 8-9)

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

FIRST STEP (PAGE 9)

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (PAGES 9-19)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ACADEMIC GOOD STANDING

ACADEMIC PROBATION

ACADEMIC DISMISSAL

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

PETITION FOR REINSTATEMENT

PROGRAMS OF STUDY

P-12 LEADERSHIP EMPHASIS

HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP EMPHASIS

ANNUAL REVIEW

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

PROGRESS REVIEWS AND REPORTS

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

DISSERTATION

THE DISSERTATION (PAGES 19-21)

THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE & CHAIR

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

COMPLETING THE DISSERTATION

FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION (DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION)
DEFENSE PROCEDURES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (PAGES 24-30)

HOW DO I FIND OUT WHO MY ADVISOR IS?

WHEN SHOULD I GET ADVISED?

WHAT COURSES DO I NEED TO TAKE?

HOW MANY HOURS SHOULD I TAKE A SEMESTER?

HOW MANY HOURS OF INDEPENDENT STUDY CAN I TAKE?

HOW MANY HOURS OF DOCTORAL RESEARCH CAN I TAKE?

HOW LONG IS MY COURSEWORK GOOD FOR?

WHAT IS A DOCTORAL COMMITTEE?

WHO NEEDS TO BE ON MY DOCTORAL COMMITTEE?

WHAT IF I WANT TO HAVE AN OUTSIDE MEMBER ON MY COMMITTEE?

WHAT IS A MILESTONE AGREEMENT?

WHAT IS A QUALIFYING EXAM?

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR DISSERTATION HOURS?

WHEN DO I DEFEND MY DISSERTATION?

WHAT FORMS DO I NEED TO COMPLETE FOR THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM?

WHERE DO I FIND OUT ABOUT FINANCIAL AID?

I WANT TO TRANSFER CREDIT FROM ANOTHER UNIVERSITY. HOW DO I DO THAT?

WHAT IF I NEED TO TAKE SOME TIME OFF FROM THE PROGRAM?

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

ELPS DIRECTORY (PAGE 31)

GLOSSARY (PAGE 33)

Mission Statement

The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies prepares educators to become transformational leaders who can work effectively in diverse, ambiguous, and challenging contexts. The goals of this transformational leadership include equity, excellence, social justice, democracy, risk-taking, and responsiveness to community needs. Faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies is strongly committed to developing collaborative and responsive relationships with area schools and communities.

Program Overview

Three Core Elements

The doctoral program is comprised of three core elements -- course work, the qualifying examination and admission to candidacy, the dissertation proposal and dissertation. The Ph.D. in educational leadership program has two different emphases: (1) the P-12 emphasis and (2) the higher education emphasis. Each of these emphases has the aforementioned core elements.

The Student Development Specialist

The Student Development Specialist (SDS) is the expert on policies, procedures, and paperwork. The key communication venue used by the SDS is the Leaders Listserv (for K-12 emphasis) and the HEAD listserv (for community college/university emphasis), which is used to announce events, opportunities, and deadlines. **Make sure that you sign up for one or both of these listservs.** To join please email Jay Wells at jerney.wells@utsa.edu

Faculty Coordination of Doctoral Program

Dr. Curtis Brewer is the Graduate Advisor of Record for the whole of the PhD program. His duties include: communication with faculty, staff, administration, and students; enrollment management (marketing, enrollment, admissions); student degree plan monitoring; tracking of program graduates; program assessment; serving as an advocate for the program and coordination of curriculum issues. Please do not hesitate to contact him with any issues.

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Your Program Advisor and Doctoral Committee

When you are admitted to the doctoral program your advisor will be the PhD Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR). The GAR and the SDS will provide guidance on course selection and skill development. After you have completed 18 hours you will select a faculty advisor with the help of the GAR. Your faculty advisor will advise you on issues related to developing your academic skills and establishing a timeline for degree completion. During your first two years, you should explore and define your research interests. Prior to your qualifying examination, with the help of your program advisor, you will assemble your pre-dissertation

committee. This pre-dissertation committee will develop and administer your qualifying exam and typically, but not always, serves as your dissertation committee.

You may change advisors for your dissertation work. You are not required to keep your program advisor throughout the program. However, you may only approach tenured and tenure-track faculty to serve as dissertation chairs. If a faculty member who is not your original program advisor agrees to serve as your dissertation chair, then you are required to complete a Change of Advisor form (contact SDS for form). It is the student's responsibility to maintain communication with the dissertation chair regarding progress through the dissertation process. However, if more than one academic year has passed without the student communicating with the dissertation chair it is the responsibility of the student to verify if the dissertation chair is still available and willing to continue serving in this capacity.

Cohort Model

The Educational Leadership Doctoral program uses a cohort model. This means that you will be joining with a group of other students following a pre-planned coursework series. This group of students will be known as your cohort. A class schedule is given to each cohort indicating when classes will be offered for your cohort. Members of a cohort are expected to follow the schedule. It is strongly recommended that you contact the GAR before registering for any course that is not on your Cohort Course Schedule, as not following the schedule may delay your graduation. The cohort model has been shown to contribute to student success and completion of the program as students become resources for one another.

Information Tools and Resources

Technology has become increasingly important in support of learning, communication, and professional practice. Using appropriate tools of different technologies, and knowing how to support others in the adoption and use of these resources will enhance your leadership ability. As an initial step to developing your skills with technology, you will be expected to join either the Leaders Listserv (for K-12 emphasis) or the HEAD listserv (for community college/university emphasis), and to check regularly for emails from these listservs.

Admissions

Application Materials

- Application Form <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/admissions/graduate-application/index.html>
- Official transcripts of all post-secondary work
- TOEFL scores if native language is not English
<https://catalog.utsa.edu/policies/admission/graduate/internationalgraduatestudents/>
- Application fee
- Three Letters of Recommendation

- Statement of Purpose
- Resume

Admissions Requirements:

- **Bachelor's degree from accredited institution**
- **Master's degree in education or other appropriate field with a 3.5 or higher GPA**
- **Submission of an official score** for applicants whose native language is not English, a score of at least 550 on the Test of English as a Second Language (TOEFL)
- **Demonstrated experience in a work environment where education is the primary professional emphasis**
- **Three letters of recommendation**
 - From those who have supervised you in an academic, community service, or employment capacity
 - References should comment on your intellectual ability, discipline, creativity, sensitivity to others, and cite examples of leadership & scholarly potential
 - At least one letter should come from a university professor who is familiar with your academic work
- **Statement of purpose which includes:**
 1. Reasons for pursuing doctorate in educational leadership
 2. Biographical sketch of experiences related to education
 3. Career plans
 4. Scholarly interests
 5. View on and roles in current and future educational reform efforts
 - Please limit to no more than 5 typed, double- spaced pages
- **Resume which includes:**
 1. Employment history
 2. Educational background
 3. Courses taught
 4. Community service
 5. Honors and awards
 6. Consultantships
 7. Memberships in professional organizations

8. Leadership experience

–Please limit your resume to no more than 5 typed, double- spaced pages

Admission Process

- **Stage 1**—Applicant submits all the required materials as stipulated above by the application deadline. ALL application materials **MUST** be received by the application deadline, otherwise your application will not be considered.
- **Stage 2**—General screening via published criteria.
- **Stage 3**—Interview and/or extemporaneous writing sample of finalists who progress through first stage*

Typically, students apply for Financial Aid at the same time they apply for admission.

Financial Aid & Graduate Assistantships

Doctoral students may be supported in their studies in a number of ways. The department recommends that you apply for Graduate assistantships as early as possible. Additional funds may become available as the calendar year progresses. (Be sure to contact the Office of Financial Aid for additional information.)

Financial Aid Websites

UTSA Scholarship Opportunities: <https://onestop.utsa.edu/scholarships/>

UTSA Office of Financial Aid: <https://onestop.utsa.edu/financialaid/>

U.S. Dept. of Education Application for Federal Student Aid Web Site:
www.fafsa.ed.gov/

Graduate Research Assistantships

Graduate Research Assistantships are available for admitted doctoral students within the College of Education and Human Development. Opportunities include working with faculty members on research studies, working in computer labs, or helping with development projects. Graduate Research Assistants typically work for 19 hours per week. Please check with the SDS for current compensation rates for graduate research assistantships. Additional information is available online at: <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/tuition-funding/category/assistantships1/index.html>

Research Assistantships

A number of externally sponsored research and development projects are undertaken by College faculty. Depending on your interests and expertise, you may arrange to work on a special project, assisting in research, development, evaluation, or training activities. Pay will be

* The admissions committee retains the prerogative to recommend applicants for admission without having to progress through Stage 3.

similar to internally funded assistantships. Additional information is available online at: <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/tuition-funding/category/assistantships1/index.html>

Doctoral Fellowships

Pending annual budget approval, Doctoral Fellowship stipends that cover up to 21 semester credit hours of tuition and fees (9 semester credit hours in the fall, 9 semester credit hours in the spring, and 3 semester credit hours in the summer) as well as a stipend for performing research assistant duties for 20 hours per week are available.

Announcements about the application period for Doctoral Fellowships are sent by email to doctoral students during the Spring Semester. Preference for Doctoral Fellowships are given to those admitted students who are able to pursue doctoral studies as full-time resident students (i.e., do not work elsewhere), and take at least 9 SCH (semester credit hours) in both the fall and spring semesters and at least 3 SCH during the summer.

First Step

An orientation for the newly admitted cohort is held each August. Important information about course schedules and program expectations is shared. This orientation also serves as an opportunity for students to meet other members of the cohort and faculty.

Program Requirements

Course Requirements

A minimum of 60 semester hours of course work beyond the master's degree is required. These 60 credit hours include:

- Cultural Core (6 semester hours)
- Leadership Core (9 semester hours)
- Methodology Core (15 semester hours)
- Administrative Leadership (15 semester hours)
- Cognates (6 semester hours)
- Dissertation (9 semester hours)

Possible Cognates Outside of the Department (subject to change)

Students are expected to consult with their academic advisor when selecting cognates.

Prefix and Number	Free Elective Courses	SCH
Cognates (any 6 SCH – example UTSA courses listed below, not an exhaustive list)		
EDL 7783*	Special Topics: Theoretical Inquiry – Engaging and Building Theory	3
BBL 7033	Seminar in Cultural Studies Research	3

BBL 7253	Seminar in Mexican American and Latino/a Issues in Education	3
BBL 7213	Ethnological Theory	3
DEM 7113	Demography of Race and Ethnicity	3
FIN 7013	Financial Theory	3
MGT 7013	Seminar in Organizational Behavior	3
MGT 7023	Seminar in Organizational Theory	3
PSY 7123	Advanced Topics in Applied Social Psychology	3
BBL 7083	Technology for Qualitative Research	3
DEM 7253	Survey Methods for Demographers	3
PSY 7003	Multivariate Statistical Analysis	3
PSY 7013	Program Evaluation	3
STA 7033	Multivariate Statistical Analysis	3
STA 7083	Time Series Analysis	3
STA 7113	Bayesian Statistics	3

Academic Good Standing

Good standing is the absence of any contingency that would result in the student's being on academic probation or academic dismissal.

Academic Probation

Academic probation describes the standing of a student at the graduate level who is in one of the following categories:

1. A student who fails to achieve a grade point average in any term at UTSA of 3.0 or higher, irrespective of level of courses taken.
2. A student who received a grade of "D+," "D," or "D-" in any course in a term and a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.
3. A student who does not meet all requirements for unconditional or regular admission and who, by special action, is admitted on academic probation.
4. A student who has been reinstated following academic dismissal.
5. To graduate, all graduate students must have a grade point average of at least a 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) and be in good academic standing.

Academic Dismissal

Academic dismissal occurs:

1. When a student at the graduate level earns a grade point average of less than 2.0 in any term.
2. When a student at the graduate level earns a grade of “F” in any course.
3. When a student at the graduate level is admitted on probation with conditions and fails to meet a condition.
4. When a student at the graduate level who is on academic probation during a term would again be placed on academic probation under the provisions of academic probation set forth above. If, however, the student’s UTSA grade point average for the term is at least 3.0, he or she will continue on academic probation.
5. When a student at the graduate level is unable to pass an oral or written exam (such as the Comprehensive Examination or Qualifying Examination) required for the degree after the maximum of two attempts. Some programs may have more stringent requirements.
6. When a student at the graduate level fails to make satisfactory progress toward the degree, as defined by University regulations and the regulations of the graduate program in which the student is enrolled.

Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence Policies and Procedures

As per the Graduate School policy on Continuous Doctoral Enrollment, doctoral students must be enrolled each Fall and Spring semester until final completion of all degree requirements. Otherwise students must complete a Leave of Absence (LOA) form. Not doing so could result in your applying for readmission to the Graduate School and ELPS program. You can find more information about these policies and procedures at <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/doctoral-leave-of-absence/>.

Petition for Reinstatement

A student who has been dismissed academically may petition for reinstatement after one long semester (Fall or Spring) has elapsed from the date of dismissal. Under exceptional circumstances, a petition may be considered earlier. Students are required to complete a reinstatement packet along with a letter containing all explanations, recommendations, or doctors’ statements in support of the student’s request for reinstatement and submit them to the Dean of the Graduate School on or before June 15 for Fall Semesters, October 15 for Spring Semesters, or March 15 for Summer Semesters.

The Graduate School prepares the petition for reinstatement and submits it to the Department’s Graduate Program Committee. The Graduate Program Committee will review the petitioner’s letter and academic record and make a recommendation concerning reinstatement to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the Petition for Reinstatement is disapproved, the student may not file another petition until the following semester.

Programs of Study:

Before admission to candidacy, the student's proposed program of study is under the direction of the Graduate Program Committee in the major program area through an appropriate program advisor, as designated, and the Graduate Advisor of Record. Upon admission to candidacy and the formation of the student's dissertation committee, the program of study comes under the purview of the Dissertation Committee, which reviews the proposed program of study and recommends to the Graduate Program Committee any additional course requirements. The final program of study, as approved by the Graduate Program Committee, is then recommended to the Graduate School for approval. Approval of the final program of study by the Graduate School is a degree requirement. All completed coursework included in the final program of study must have been taken within the preceding eight years. No course for which a grade of less than "C" was earned can be applied to the doctoral degree.

The following pages present the programs of study for the two different emphases of the Educational Leadership Doctorate: The P-12 Leadership emphasis (pages 13-14) and the higher education administration emphasis (pages 15-16).

Ph.D. in Educational Leadership *P-12 Leadership Emphasis*
Program of Study and Course Outline
College of Education and Human Development at The University of Texas, San Antonio

Student Name: _____ Banner ID Number: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Phone: _____
 Program Advisor: _____ Catalog of Admission: _____ Email: _____

Cultural Core

6 required SCH from the following courses:

	<u>Course Substitution</u>	<u>Grade & Semester</u>
EDU 7213 Educational Reform	_____	_____
EDU 7223 Learning in a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Society	_____	_____

Methodology Core and Support

15 required SCH from the following courses:

EDU 7023 Theory and Inquiry	_____	_____
EDU 7003 Survey of Research Methods	_____	_____
EDU 7103 Qualitative Research Traditions	_____	_____
EDU 7043 Educational Research Statistics: Descriptive and Comparative	_____	_____
EDU 7063 Inferential Statistics (Prerequisites: EDU 7043 or equivalent)	_____	_____
Or		
EDU 7123 Advanced Qualitative Research (Prerequisites: EDU 7103 or equivalent)	_____	_____

Leadership Core and Support

9 required SCH from the following courses:

LDR 7003 Proseminar in Educational Leadership	_____	_____
LDR 7343 Principles of Ethical Leadership	_____	_____
LDR 7303 Organizational Theory	_____	_____

P-12 Administrative Leadership Emphasis

15 required SCH from the following courses:

EDL 7103 Administration of Urban/Multicultural Institutions	_____	_____
LDR 7153 Reflective Leadership: The Personal Dimension.	_____	_____
EDL 7433 Frameworks and Theories of Education Policy Analysis	_____	_____
EDL 7343 The Politics of Educational Change	_____	_____
EDL 7273 Examining School Populations, Structures, and Culture	_____	_____
EDL 7563 Research in Leadership Laboratory	_____	_____
LDR 7133 Majority-Minority Settings: Creating a Community of Leaders	_____	_____

LDR 7183 Emerging Paradigms in Leadership	_____	_____
LDR 7413 Sponsored Internship in Educational Leadership	_____	_____
EDL 7573 Research Theory and Design in Educational Administration	_____	_____
EDL 7773 Independent Study	_____	_____
EDL 7783 Special Problems	_____	_____
EDL 7893 Doctoral Research	_____	_____

Cognate: 6 hours (to be selected in consultation with your program advisor)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Dissertation: 9 hours

LDR 7993 (1-6hrs) Dissertation	_____	_____
LDR 7993 (1-6hrs) Dissertation	_____	_____
LDR 7993 (1-6hrs) Dissertation	_____	_____

Notes:

Link to EDU courses: <http://www.utsa.edu/gcat/chapter7/coehd/EDU.cfm>

Link to LDR courses: <https://www.utsa.edu/gcat/chapter7/coehd/LDR.cfm>

Link to EDL courses: <http://www.utsa.edu/gcat/chapter7/coehd/EDL.cfm>

Approvals:

Student _____	Date _____
Program Advisor _____	Date _____
Committee Member _____	Date _____
Committee Member _____	Date _____
Committee Member _____	Date _____
Graduate Advisor of Record _____	Date _____
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies & Research _____	Date _____
Dean of Graduate Studies _____	Date _____

Ph.D. in Educational Leadership *Higher Education Leadership Emphasis*
Program of Study and Course Outline
College of Education and Human Development at The University of Texas, San Antonio

Student Name: _____ Banner ID Number: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Phone: _____

Program Advisor: _____ Catalog of Admission: _____ Email: _____

/

Cultural Core

6 required SCH from the following courses:

	<u>Course Substitution</u>	<u>Grade & Semester</u>
EDU 7213 Educational Reform	_____	_____
EDU 7223 Learning in a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Society	_____	_____

Methodology Core and Support

15 required SCH from the following courses:

EDU 7023 Theory and Inquiry	_____	_____
EDU 7003 Survey of Research Methods	_____	_____
EDU 7103 Qualitative Research Traditions	_____	_____
EDU 7043 Educational Research Statistics: Descriptive and Comparative	_____	_____
EDU 7063 Inferential Statistics (Prerequisites: EDU 7043 or equivalent)	_____	_____
Or		
EDU 7123 Advanced Qualitative Research (Prerequisites: EDU 7103 or equivalent)	_____	_____

Leadership Core and Support

9 required SCH from the following courses:

LDR 7003 Proseminar in Educational Leadership	_____	_____
LDR 7343 Principles of Ethical Leadership	_____	_____
LDR 7303 Organizational Theory	_____	_____

Higher Education Leadership Emphasis

15 required SCH from the following courses: (* denotes required)

EDL 7213 Foundations of Higher Education*	_____	_____
EDL 7243 Diversity, Equity, and Access in Higher Education	_____	_____
EDL 7333 Organizations and Systems in Higher Education	_____	_____
EDL 7413 Policy and Politics in Higher Education	_____	_____
EDL 7423 Theoretical Frameworks in Higher Education	_____	_____

EDL 7573 Research Theory and Design in Educational Administration _____

EDL 7773 Independent Study[√] _____

EDL 7783 Special Problems[√] _____

EDL 7893 Doctoral Research _____

[√]Only 1 three-hour independent study or special problems course may count toward fulfilling the requirements for the HEA emphasis. On rare occasions and with approval of the advisor, students may be permitted to take a second such course as part of the higher education emphasis. Courses may be retaken when topics vary.

Cognate: 6 hours (to be selected in consultation with your program advisor)

Dissertation: 9 hours

LDR 7993 (1-6hrs) Dissertation _____

LDR 7993 (1-6hrs) Dissertation _____

LDR 7993 (1-6hrs) Dissertation _____

Notes:

Link to EDU courses: <http://www.utsa.edu/gcat/chapter7/coehd/EDU.cfm>

Link to LDR courses: <https://www.utsa.edu/gcat/chapter7/coehd/LDR.cfm>

Link to EDL courses: <http://www.utsa.edu/gcat/chapter7/coehd/EDL.cfm>

Approvals:

Student _____ Date _____

Program Advisor _____ Date _____

Committee Member _____ Date _____

Committee Member _____ Date _____

Committee Member _____ Date _____

Graduate Advisor of Record _____ Date _____

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies & Research _____ Date _____

Dean of Graduate Studies _____ Date _____

Progress Reviews and Report

During your first two years of study, you will be provided with formal feedback about your progress in the program. During their second semester of study, Ph.D. students will receive feedback on their progress in the program. All faculty who have had formal and informal contact with the student will provide input to the GAR. Following faculty discussion, the GAR writes a report with specific feedback to their advisees regarding demonstrated strengths and recommended or required areas for improvement. If changes or improvements are expected, well defined time-frames and deadlines will be included.

The second progress review will occur in the spring semester of doctoral students' second year of study. Once again, faculty will collectively review students' program progress. In cases where improvement was identified in the first review, faculty will examine progress towards achieving improved performance. If these concerns have not been adequately addressed or new issues have arisen, these will be summarized in a letter from the advisor. Students will meet with their advisors to discuss their improvement plans before the end of the semester.

Qualifying examinations may not be scheduled until the required improvements have been achieved.

Milestones Agreement Form

During the first semester of your program, you will be asked to review and sign a Milestones Agreement Form in coordination with your program advisor. Then each year your program advisor (prior to your admission to candidacy) or dissertation chair (after admission to candidacy) will report to the graduate studies on your progress. These annual assessments provide benchmarks and opportunities to give feedback to doctoral students about their progress. You are expected to make demonstrable progress in your annual reviews throughout the program including the dissertation.

Qualifying Examination

- All students seeking a doctoral degree must pass a qualifying examination. This examination consists of questions to test the candidate's knowledge and command of the major field. An examination covering support work is not a University-wide requirement, but it may be required at the discretion of the Graduate Program Committee or the Dissertation Committee.
- You must be enrolled during the semester in which you write and defend your qualifying examination.
- The Qualifying Examination is typically scheduled once you have completed the necessary requirements (see following explanation) and your committee chair believes you are ready to take the exam and you have created your doctoral committee. You may take your qualifying examination after successful completion of all core classes (45 credits that comprise the cultural core, research methods core, leadership core, and emphasis). Cognates (electives) may be taken prior to or during the semester in which you complete your exam as advised by your program advisor. You must be in good academic standing when you schedule your qualifying examination. Your qualifying examination typically serves two purposes:
 - Demonstrates that you can apply the knowledge and skills you have gained during your coursework to answer questions crafted by your doctoral committee.

– Typically, but not always, the questions asked are crafted by your doctoral committee to lay the groundwork for developing your dissertation proposal.*

- The qualifying examination has a written and oral component.
- Students must be registered when they take the qualifying examination.
- The student's program advisor and doctoral committee will administer the qualifying examination.
- Students generally use one semester to write their qualifying examination.
 - The questions are usually given to the student at the beginning of the semester.
 - The student uses the majority of the semester to independently write the answers to the qualifying examination questions **unassisted by anyone**
 - Near the end of that semester and with the approval of the program advisor, students take the oral part of the qualifying examination. The student is responsible for scheduling the place and date of the exam after consulting with their program advisor and doctoral committee members to determine a date and time that will work for all committee members.
- A majority vote by the committee is necessary to pass the qualifying examination (see the certifying form in the appendix).

Students who fail the qualifying examination, will be required to retake the entire written and oral portions of the examination. Qualifying examinations cannot be taken more than once in a given semester. After two failures the student's academic standing will be evaluated by the program advisor, the graduate advisor of record, and doctoral program faculty on a case-by-case basis. In extenuating circumstances, the student may apply for an extension to the time period allowed for taking their qualifying examination.

Qualifying Exam paperwork can be found on the Graduate School's website:
<https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/faculty-staff/doctoral-forms/>

Admission to Candidacy

Students seeking a doctoral degree at UTSA must be admitted to candidacy. In order to be admitted to candidacy, the student must comply with the following requirements:

1. Fulfill the requirements for unconditional admission as a graduate degree-seeking student, which entails the removal of any conditions assigned at the time of admission.
2. Satisfy any special admission requirements established for the degree program.
3. Be in good standing.
4. Have passed a qualifying examination prepared by the Graduate Program Committee and have met any other requirements specified by the Graduate Program Committee for the specific degree program.

* Whether the written portion of the qualifying examination is used to lay the groundwork for the dissertation proposal will be determined by the dissertation committee.

5. Submit a proposed program of study.
6. Having satisfied the above requirements, be recommended for admission to candidacy by the appropriate Graduate Program Committee, which in the case of interdisciplinary programs is a committee appointed by the Graduate School, consisting of no fewer than four members of the Graduate Faculty, with at least one representative from each of the disciplines included in the program.
7. Having satisfied the above requirements, be approved for admission to candidacy by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Dissertation

After you have passed your qualifying examination, you will begin the dissertation process. The description of this process follows:

The Dissertation

A dissertation is required of every candidate and must be an original contribution to scholarship, based on independent investigation in the major area. It must be approved by the Dissertation Committee. Registration for dissertation hours must be for a period of more than one semester and during each semester that a student receives advice and/or assistance from a faculty advisor or supervision by the Dissertation Committee.

Dissertation Committee & Chair

Upon admission to candidacy, the student selects their dissertation chair with that professor's consent. Upon recommendation of the Graduate Program Committee, the Graduate School appoints the Dissertation Committee. The committee must consist of at least four members, including the dissertation chair, who consults with other members of the committee as work proceeds.

The Dissertation Chair and committee advise the student on the research and writing of the dissertation, conducts the final oral examination, and approves the dissertation. The chair of the Dissertation Committee ordinarily serves as the supervisor of research. Other members of the committee should be consulted as appropriate. Occasionally, a research professor or researcher who is not a member of the Graduate Faculty may be recommended to serve as a member or the supervisor for a specific dissertation because his or her expertise would be valuable to the student. When the research supervisor, or the external committee member is not a member of the Graduate Faculty in the student's area of study, a member of the Graduate Faculty will be appointed as co-chair of the Dissertation Committee. External members must be approved by the department's Doctoral Program Committee and the Graduate Council prior to serving in Doctoral Dissertation Committees.

In addition to recommending the student's final program of study to the Graduate Program Committee and supervising the research and writing of the dissertation, the Dissertation Committee certifies to the Graduate School that all degree requirements have been fulfilled.

The Dissertation Committee consists of your chair and at least three other faculty members. All Dissertation Committee members must have Graduate Faculty status in order to be on dissertation committees. Your advisor can inform you as to whether or not a faculty member has Graduate

Faculty Status. All dissertation committee members' signatures are required on the qualifying examination form and the final dissertation.. The form for dissertations is described in the *Guidelines for Theses and Dissertations*, available from the Graduate School. You can also find the Formatting Requirements and Template at <http://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/formatting-requirements/>.

The Dissertation Chair's signature is also required on the final dissertation. The Chair serves a critical, long-term role, and selection should be given careful consideration. The Chair usually provides key recommendations and on-going professional support long after graduation.

The Dissertation Chair should have expertise in the dissertation topic and, therefore, depending on your topic choice, they might not be the same person as your initial program advisor. You are responsible for obtaining the Dissertation Chair's agreement to serve as your Chair. It is your prerogative to maintain regular contact with your Dissertation Chair. Failing to contact your dissertation chair for over an academic year, may require you to renegotiate the participation of, or locate a new chair. If you change Dissertation chairs, you should notify your previous Chair and use the appropriate form to indicate the new chair. The form is available in the student development office.

Dissertation Proposal

The Dissertation Committee will guide you through the proposal-writing process. The proposal clearly states the problem and justifies the need for the study in terms of its conceptual and theoretical foundation. It also specifies the research methodology that will be used to conduct the investigation. The proposal must be approved by a majority of committee members, and the "Proposal Approval Form" (which can be obtained from the Student Development Specialist) must be signed and filed with the Associate Dean. You must be enrolled during the semester in which you defend your dissertation proposal.

Dissertation Proposal paperwork can be found on the Graduate School's website: <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/faculty-staff/doctoral-forms/>

Human Subjects Review

You submit and receive approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) - Human Subject Research as appropriate **before** dissertation data are collected. A copy of the approved form should be filed with the Dissertation Advisor and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs before data collection begins. Further information about the IRB can be found at <http://research.utsa.edu/research-funding/human-subjects/>.

Completing the Dissertation

Following successful completion of your doctoral qualifying examination, you must register for at least one dissertation credit each fall and spring semester. You must be registered during the semester in which you defend your dissertation and you must complete your program of study with no fewer than 9 semester credit hours of dissertation credits. Please consult with the Graduate School for details.

A maximum of 9 hours of dissertation credit hours may be taken in any one semester. After successfully completing the qualifying exam, you may register for 1-9 credits in any given semester. However, the total number of hours before successful completion of the qualifying examination may not exceed 6 hours.

Final Oral Examination (Defense of Dissertation)

A satisfactory final oral examination is required for the approval of a dissertation. After the Dissertation Committee makes a decision, which must be unanimous, to accept a dissertation for examination, the chair notifies the College's Dean's Office at least two weeks in advance of the date of the final oral examination.

The examination covers the dissertation and the general field of the dissertation, and other parts of the student's program as determined by the committee. All members of the Dissertation Committee must be satisfied that the student has:

1. Completed the work assigned by the committee;
2. Passed all examinations required by the program's Graduate Program Committee, including the final oral examination;
3. Completed a dissertation that is an independent investigation in the major field, and that itself constitutes a contribution to knowledge; and
4. Submitted an abstract for publication in Dissertation Abstracts International that meets with the approval of the committee.

Once this is complete, the Dissertation Committee members sign the approval sheets for the doctoral dissertation and make an official recommendation to the Graduate School that the doctoral degree be awarded. Approval must be unanimous.

In ELPS, the Dissertation Defense is the final oral examination that provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate broad understanding of the substantive and methodological issues in the dissertation. The following aspects of your work will be evaluated:

- Independent and originality thought
- Adequacy and appropriateness of citations and references to authors
- Logic and coherence of reasoning and argumentation
- Soundness of your research methodology/Analysis
- Clarity and organization of writing
- Professional presentation of material
- Coherency and accessibility of writing.

In determining whether or not you pass your dissertation defense, faculty members need to be able to clearly see how your dissertation meets the above evaluative criteria.

You should clarify expectations with your chair ahead of time about the scope of questions that may be asked. Passing the oral defense does not indicate that the dissertation is complete and has final approval. The evaluation of your dissertation defense usually results in recommended revisions to the dissertation, possibly including reanalysis of data or significant rewriting. You should be prepared to make changes and schedule enough time to do so before you plan to graduate (more than two weeks). You can find Graduate School Deadlines at

https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/thesis_and_dissertation_deadlines/index.html.

Each semester, the university has deadlines that must be followed. It is your responsibility to contact the graduate school to obtain these dates.

Completion of Dissertation paperwork can be found on the Graduate School's website:

<https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/faculty-staff/doctoral-forms/>

Defense Procedures

The student's approved dissertation committee conducts the final oral defense. The student is responsible for contacting the Student Development Specialist with the date of their defense so that the SDS can check on required paperwork. The student is responsible for scheduling the defense at a time when all dissertation members can meet. The defense is open to the public. Assent of all dissertation committee members is required for the student to pass. The Dissertation Committee should agree on which members will supervise recommended changes in the dissertation, usually the Dissertation Chair assisted by others as appropriate. The final draft of the dissertation is submitted electronically to ProQuest. This submission serves as the UTSA archival copy. Your ProQuest submission must be correctly formatted according to the Graduate School's formatting requirements and template; incorrectly formatted final submissions will not be accepted.

For further information on final submission requirements and formatting requirements, please visit the following website, <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/final-submission-requirements/index.html>.

You must be enrolled during the semester in which your dissertation defense occurs and when you submit the archive document to the Graduate school.

Alternative Dissertation - Three Paper Dissertation

The article format is an alternative to the traditional dissertation formats within the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies. The traditional model of a dissertation would probably still be followed by most, but students who were interested in joining the professoriate could also select this one. For those students who follow the three-paper format, dissertation chairs and committees are making a commitment to help the student publish those papers in reputable peer-reviewed journals.

Qualifying exam

(same format as we now follow)

Proposal

Students will still write a traditional proposal to gain permission to begin their study. The traditional proposal encompasses three chapters – introduction, literature review, and methods.

Dissertation

Student's final dissertation will consist of 5 parts – an introduction, Literature Review and 2-3 completed papers (each one would be a separate chapter), a possible concluding chapter, and a reference section—all of which are judged by the dissertation committee to be of dissertation quality. There may be instances where the data does not support the publication of three data supported journal articles in which case the student, in consultation with his/her committee, must have no less than two manuscripts of dissertation quality plus a concluding chapter. The concluding chapter ties everything together and focuses on helping the reader see how the manuscripts make a contribution to a particular field. The conclusion chapter may present/discuss future research not visible when manuscripts are read individually.

Description of Papers

The 2-3 papers are each free standing (in the sense that each can be read and understood independently) but should be on related themes.

Therefore, the 'three papers' PhD dissertation looks like this:

1. Introduction – Chapter 1
2. Literature review – Chapter 2
3. First paper – Chapter 3
4. Second paper – Chapter 4
5. Third paper/concluding chapter – Chapter 5
6. References

The total number of chapters is thus usually five. As with the conventional dissertations, appendices of unlimited length may be added.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When should I get advised?

Generally, there is no set schedule for advising. After the first 18 hours of course work, you will need to work with your chosen advisor to determine the times, dates, and frequency of your meetings. Typically, it is suggested that you meet with your advisor at least once a semester to discuss your coursework. If you are having a difficult time coordinating with your advisor and need to enroll in classes soon, you are encouraged to refer to your cohort's Scope and Sequence for information on the recommended sequence of coursework. If you need a copy of your cohort's Scope and Sequence, please email the SDS at jeremy.wells@utsa.edu.

2. What courses do I need to take?

You should have received a copy of your cohort's Scope and Sequence with your acceptance letter from the department upon admission to the program. The Scope and Sequence provides information on the recommended courses and sequence of coursework for your doctoral program. The Ph.D. in Educational Leadership requires 60 hours of coursework total, nine (9) of which are dissertation hours. Any course substitutions or deviations from the scope and sequence should be discussed with your advisor.

Please note: you are required to be enrolled in courses every fall and spring semester for the duration of your doctoral program (until the time of graduation).

3. How many hours should I take a semester?

The Ph.D. in Educational Leadership is a cohort-based program. As such, you will typically take six (6) hours or two (2) courses a semester if you are attending on a part-time basis. If you are attending on a full-time basis, you will enroll in nine (9) hours or three (3) courses a semester. Your cohort's Scope and Sequence outlines the number of courses you should take in a given semester.

If you are receiving funding from the department or college, please refer to your award letter, which includes the number of hours per semester you are required to be enrolled in.

Please note: you must be enrolled in at least four (4) hours during the fall and spring semester and three

(3) hours during the summer to be eligible to receive financial aid. More information about financial aid for graduate students can be found here:

<https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/admissions/financial-aid-for-graduate-students/>

4. How many hours of Independent Study can I take?

You are allowed to take up to six (6) hours or two (2) classes of independent study courses for credit towards your degree.

5. How many hours of Doctoral Research can I take?

You are allowed to take up to six (6) hours or two (2) classes of doctoral research courses for credit towards your degree.

6. How long is my coursework good for?

Doctoral-level coursework is valid for up to eight (8) years, exclusive of any approved leave of absence time taken (more information about Leave of Absences can be found in question #18). After eight (8) years, your coursework will expire and you must complete a Course(s) Exceeding Time Limit Petition for the expiring coursework to count towards your degree. Final approval of the expired coursework is determined by the Graduate School. If you believe you have expiring coursework, please contact the SDS (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu) to begin the petition process.

The following items may be required for the petition: a letter from the student stating why they are requesting the time limit petition; a letter of support from the student's advisor; course syllabi, course descriptions, and any other supporting documents from the course(s); and letters of support from faculty currently teaching the expired courses.

7. What is a doctoral committee?

A doctoral committee is a group of people who will help guide you and oversee your progress as you begin the dissertation portion of your doctoral program. They will also be the ones to administer your Qualifying Exam. Your doctoral committee is comprised of at least four (4) faculty members from the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, including a committee chair and three additional members. You will be the one to choose who you would like to serve on your committee.

8. *Who needs to be on my doctoral committee?*

Your committee needs to include at least four (4) members. At least half (50%) of your committee, including your committee chair, must be a tenured/tenure-track faculty member in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. You may have an outside member on your committee, however, their membership must be submitted to and approved by the UTSA Graduate School. These are known as “special members” and can include adjunct or non-tenure track faculty, graduate faculty from other institutions, retired/emeritus faculty members, etc.

When choosing your doctoral committee, please keep in mind the research interests and work of those you are asking to serve.

9. *What if I want to have an outside member on my committee?*

Any individual you would like to have serve on your committee that is not a tenured/tenure-track faculty member in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies will have to apply for special membership through the UTSA Graduate School. You will need to, first, notify your committee chair of your intent to include an outside member on your committee. Your committee chair will work with the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR) and SDS to complete the necessary paperwork. The completed paperwork will be sent to the UTSA Graduate School Council for a vote. You and your committee chair will be notified with the outcome of the vote as soon as it is available. Until special membership status is approved, the outside member cannot serve on your committee.

If your outside committee member’s membership is expiring soon, they can apply for special membership renewal. Your committee chair can work with the SDS and GAR to complete the required renewal paperwork.

10. *What is a Milestone Agreement?*

When you begin your doctoral program, you are provided with an initial Milestone Agreement. This document provides an overview of the program expectations, including a timeline for different milestones in the program. You and your advisor are required to review this form, sign, and return to the SDS either via email (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu) or in person (BV 4.310). If you need a copy of your Milestone Agreement form, please email the SDS. This form will become part of your student record.

After the initial Milestone Agreement, you will receive a Milestone Agreement: Written Annual Feedback form (also known as a progress report) each year in the fall semester through the duration of your program. The form is completed by your advisor and provides feedback about your progress in the program. You will be contacted by your SDS to review and sign the form each year.

11. *What is a Qualifying Exam?*

A Qualifying Exam is an exam administered by your committee chair and/or another departmental faculty member that tests the knowledge you have gained through your coursework in the program. The exam

includes both a written and oral portion. Each exam varies by student and is developed by your committee. You will work with your committee chair to schedule the exam.

12. How do I sign up for dissertation hours?

The Ph.D. in Educational Leadership requires at least nine (9) hours of dissertation. You can enroll in one (1), three (3), four (4), or six (6) hours of dissertation in a given semester. The number of hours is determined by your advisor and you will need to be cleared to enroll. To sign up for dissertation hours, you need to first receive approval for the hours from your advisor. Once obtained, please forward the approval and request for dissertation hour clearance to the SDS (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu). In the request, please include the semester and number of hours you want to enroll in, and be sure to copy your advisor.

13. When do I defend my dissertation?

You typically defend your dissertation in your last semester (the semester in which you intend to graduate). You will work with your committee chair to schedule your defense, which should be done at least 2 weeks prior to the final dissertation submission deadline from the Graduate School. This defense is open to the public and announced on the Graduate School website as well as within the College. Please send the SDS (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu) the following information no later than 1 week before your defense:

- Name:
- Dissertation Title:
- Date:
- Time:
- Location:
- Dissertation Chair:
- Committee Members:

Please note: The Graduate School requires that you submit your dissertation (including any edits you may have) by a specific deadline. This deadline is determined by the Graduate School and is final. You can find the deadline for the current semester at the following link: https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/thesis_and_dissertation_deadlines/index.html. You will not be able to graduate unless you have submitted your dissertation through ProQuest by the deadline.

14. What forms do I need to complete for the doctoral program?

Doctoral forms are a very important part of the program! These are the official record of milestone completion for the department, college, and university. There are a total of six (6) forms that are required for the Ph.D. in Educational Leadership program. You will begin completing these forms typically after completing your coursework. The required forms are as follows:

- **Program of Study:** This form is a record of the courses you've taken in your doctoral program as well as the grades received for these courses. You can access your unofficial transcript (which lists all of your coursework) through your ASAP account. Please contact your advisor or the SDS (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu) for a copy of the blank Program of Study form.
- **Completion of Qualifying Exam:** The Completion of Qualifying Exam form is completed after you have taken, and passed, your written and oral qualifying exam. Before you take your exam, please download the form, complete the Student Information and UTSA Academic Record sections to the best of your ability, and bring the form to your defense. When you pass your qualifying exam, you will work with your committee chair to complete the rest of the form.
- **Admission to Candidacy:** The Admission to Candidacy form is completed by both you and your advisor when you are ready to begin work on your dissertation.
- **Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee:** This form is the official record of your doctoral dissertation committee. If at any point in the dissertation process you change your committee, you will need complete this form again.
- **Dissertation Proposal Approval:** The Dissertation Proposal Approval form is completed once you present and defend your dissertation proposal. Before you present your proposal, please download the form, complete the Student Information section, and bring the form to your proposal. When your dissertation proposal is approved, you will work with your committee chair to complete the rest of the form.
- **Certification of Completion of Dissertation Requirements:** This form is completed once you have successfully defended your dissertation and, therefore, have met all of the requirements to graduate from the program. Before you defend your dissertation, please download the form, complete the Student Information section, and bring the form to your defense. When you have successfully defended your dissertation (as deemed so by your committee), you will work with your committee chair to complete the rest of the form.

All of the forms, with the exception of the Program of Study, can be found on the UTSA Graduate School website: <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/faculty-staff/doctoral-forms/>. **If you would like the SDS to review any of the above forms for accuracy before they are signed, please drop them off in BV 4.310.**

Each of these forms are signed by your committee, the program's Graduate Advisor of Record, the Department Chair, the College's Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, and the Graduate School. If you need assistance obtaining the signatures of your committee members, the Graduate Advisor of Record, or the Department Chair, please reach out to the SDS (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu). It is usually easiest to download the forms and bring them with you when you meet with your committee (for your qualifying exam, dissertation proposal, or a scheduled meeting) so that you can collect your committee's signatures all at one time.

The SDS will submit your paperwork to the College's Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and the Graduate School for review and approval on your behalf. Please give your form to your advisor or drop the form off to the SDS in person in the ELPS Office (Downtown Campus, Buena Vista 4.310).

If you have any questions or need assistance with any of the forms, please contact the SDS at jeremy.wells@utsa.edu or 210-458-6620.

Please note: you are required meet all of the degree requirements and to have all of the forms completed and on file before you can graduate from the university.

15. Where do I find out about financial aid?

Information on financial aid can be found on the One Stop Enrollment Center website. Students who are interested in finding out more about financial aid should make an appointment with the One Stop Enrollment Center.

One Stop Enrollment Center: <http://www.utsa.edu/financialaid/about/>

Information about filling out FAFSA, grants, loans, etc., can be found at <http://www.utsa.edu/financialaid>. UTSA does set aside grant money for graduate students and there are opportunities for free money! The best advice we can give you is to do your research and apply early and often.

16. I want to transfer in credits from another university. How do I do that?

Students are expected to complete all doctoral coursework at UTSA, however, transfers of credit of appropriate doctoral-level coursework may be allowed pending approval through the UTSA Graduate School. This coursework cannot have already been used toward a degree. The first step to transferring course work is to meet with your advisor to decide whether courses from outside universities are acceptable and where they fit into your degree plan. Afterwards, contact the SDS (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu) so she can help you with the paperwork.

The following items may be required: a letter from the student stating why they are requesting the transfer, a letter of support from the student's advisor, course syllabi, course descriptions, an official transcript from the institution reflecting the course term and grade awarded, and any other supporting documents from the course. Students should be advised that the coursework taken in the course for which transfer credit is being requested must align extremely closely with the courses offered in the UTSA curriculum. Additionally, any courses you are requesting to transfer require a grade of a "B" or better.

Additional information on transfers of credit can be found here: <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/transfer-of-credit/>

17. What if I need to take some time off from the program?

As a doctoral student, you are able to request a leave of absence for a fall and/or spring semester, not to exceed one year. You must complete the Leave of Absence Request for Doctoral Students form and attach a letter explaining why you are requesting a leave of absence. A copy of the form can be found here: <https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/faculty-staff/doctoral-forms/>. Please complete the first page of the

form and submit the form along with your letter to the SDS (jeremy.wells@utsa.edu). The SDS will send to the College's Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and the Graduate School on your behalf. Final approval for the leave of absence request is determined by the Graduate School.

If you previously applied for a leave of absence for a semester and would like to extend for an additional semester (not to exceed one year), you would need to complete the Leave of Absence Extension Request form and attach a letter explaining why you are requesting a leave of absence extension. You would submit the form and the letter to the SDS to obtain the appropriate signatures and route to the Graduate School for review.

18. Have more questions?

Jay Wells: jeremy.wells@utsa.edu (210) 458-6620

Office location: Buena Vista Building, BV 4.310 at the UTSA Downtown Campus

ELPS Faculty & Staff Directory (Website: http://education.utsa.edu/educational_leadership_and_policy_studies/welcome/)

ELPS Department Chair

- Dr. Alonzo Flowers 458-7960 alonzo.flowers@utsa.edu

ELPS Administrative Staff

- Dawn Morales (Admin. Services Officer) 458-4816

ELPS Doctoral Program Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR)

- Dr. Curtis Brewer 458-5404 curtis.brewer@utsa.edu

ELPS Student Development Specialist (SDS)

- Jay Wells 458-6620 jeremy.wells@utsa.edu

ELPS Faculty

- Sofia Bahena (Assistant Professor) 458-8009 sofia.bahena@utsa.edu
- Curtis Brewer (Professor) 458-5404 curtis.brewer@utsa.edu
- Abraham DeLeon (Professor) 458-5486 abraham.deleon@utsa.edu
- Michael Denton (Associate Professor)
- Alonzo Flowers (Professor)
- Claudia García-Louis (Associate Professor) 458-5415 claudia.garcia-louis@utsa.edu
- Victoria Kim (Assistant Professor) 458-5404 victoria.kim@utsa.edu
- Betty Merchant (Professor) 458-4480 betty.merchant@utsa.edu
- Juan Niño (Professor) 458-5840 juan.nino@utsa.edu
- [Janet Rodríguez \(Assistant Professor\)](#)
- Mariela A. Rodríguez (Professor) 458-7960 mariela.rodriguez@utsa.edu
- Vanessa Sansone (Associate Professor) 458-4114 vanessa.sansone@utsa.edu
- David Thompson (Professor) 458-6821 david.thompson@utsa.edu

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Glossary

Annual Review. Each student's program committee evaluates the student's portfolio and considers other information about the student's performance in the program. The student receives written feedback from this review and may include a discussion with the program advisor.

Dissertation Advisor/Dissertation Chair. The student selects the dissertation advisor, who chairs the dissertation committee and acts as the primary guide for the dissertation. The dissertation advisor can be the same individual as the program advisor, but this may not always be the case.

Dissertation Committee. The committee members are selected by the student with the assistance of the advisor. The dissertation committee consists of at least four members, preferably one of which will be from another department.

Doctoral Committee. During the second year, prior to the qualifying examination, each student constructs a Doctoral Committee consisting of an advisor and three other faculty members. The doctoral committee is the committee that develops and administers the qualifying exam. Usually the doctoral committee becomes the dissertation committee.

Doctoral/Graduate Faculty. All College of Education and Human Development faculty designated as active participants in the ELPS doctoral program. They are responsible for managing the program.

Program Advisor. The student's advisor after 18 hours of coursework. Provides guidance through the coursework portion of the doctoral program.

Qualifying Examination. This examination includes a written and oral component. The qualifying examination requires students to demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge, methodological skills, and knowledge application gained during their coursework and relevant to their dissertation.