



GSEHD

DOCTORAL HANDBOOK | 2021-2022 EDITION

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Please note: Important forms are available online at <http://gsehd.gwu.edu/students>.

INTRODUCTION: OVERALL FRAMEWORK

Your program, as described by the [GW Bulletin](#), is your contract with the university. This Doctoral Student Handbook states applicable policies and procedures to doctoral study at the Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD). The stated policies and procedures apply to all doctoral degree programs, but each doctoral program may impose additional requirements and most do. Please contact your program for additional program-specific information.

GSEHD may change some of the policies, requirements, and procedures stated in this handbook during subsequent years. Students will be informed of important changes that affect them via their e-mail addresses, which must be maintained in GWeb.

The GSEHD Office of the Dean and the Office of Student Services provide overall administration and support of all GSEHD doctoral programs. Most student contact will be with the Office of Student Services. The Office of Student Services is located in the GSEHD Office of Student Life townhouse at 2136 G Street, NW.

GSEHD'S OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

The Office of Student Services exists to assist students in complying with GSEHD's policies and procedures and can be reached at:

202.994.9283

<https://gsehd.gwu.edu/students>

PHASES AND STEPS OF DOCTORAL STUDY

Doctoral work at GSEHD is divided into two phases: pre-candidacy and candidacy, which involve specific sequential steps:

PHASE 1: Pre-Candidacy

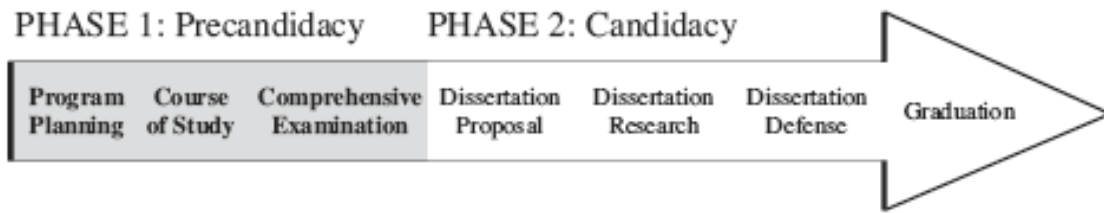
- Program Planning
- Course of Study
- Comprehensive Examination

PHASE 2: Candidacy

- Dissertation Proposal
- Dissertation Research
- Dissertation Defense
- Graduation

The remainder of this handbook details the applicable policies, regulations, and procedures for each of these phases and steps. As you progress through your program, you should plan ahead for subsequent steps with the guidance of this handbook and your advisor.

PHASE 1: PRE-CANDIDACY



Pre-Candidacy is the period from formal admission and first enrollment in a doctoral program through successful completion of the comprehensive examination. Critical aspects of pre-candidacy include program planning with your advisor, completing coursework, and the comprehensive examination.

PRIMARY ADVISOR: YOUR GUIDE TO SCHOLARLY DEVELOPMENT

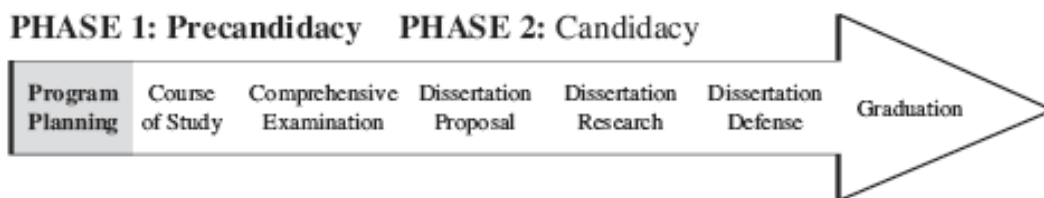
A doctoral primary advisor provides the doctoral student with guidance through the pre-candidacy period. This advisor may also become the chair or a member of the student's dissertation committee and provide further guidance through the dissertation work, if desired. You might also be assigned a secondary advisor at the time of admission, who can serve in a similar role.

The Role of the Advisor

Specific tasks of the advisor include:

- Guiding the student in the selection of appropriate electives and research courses.
- Guiding the student in the selection of appropriate field, research, and publishing experiences that support scholarly development and prepare the student for the comprehensive examination and dissertation phase.
- Mentoring the student in their development as a scholar and professional.

PROGRAM PLAN: YOUR WORKING AGREEMENT



Program Plan of Study

Your program, as described by the [GW Bulletin](#), is your contract with the university. Each candidate for a doctoral degree receives an official Program Plan of Study upon accepting an offer of admission. The program plan of study is also available electronically via DegreeMAP (see pg. 9 for more information). This plan outlines the coursework and any additional requirements you will need to complete in order to graduate. Students must successfully complete all courses and requirements outlined on the official program plan to have their degree conferred. Please note that while individual courses may be altered (see below), the total number of credits may not change.

Your program plan is a working agreement between a doctoral student and the faculty and may be modified only with agreement of the faculty. If you find inconsistencies in your program plan of study, please contact docgsehd@gwu.edu.

Making Adjustments to Courses on Your Program Plan of Study

Adjustments to the program plan of study may only be made in consultation with and approval of the primary advisor. To make adjustments, students are to complete a [Program Plan Change](#) form and submit it to the Office of Student Services at docgsehd@gwu.edu. On this form, students should indicate which changes they are making to their program plan (e.g., taking an alternate class in place of a required class). If a student is taking a Level B class that is not listed on their original program plan, they must also receive approval from the Research Methods faculty (<mailto:methodsfac@gwu.edu>).

Minimum Course and Research Requirements

All doctoral programs include a minimum of 36 credits of coursework and 12 credits of dissertation research. Most programs have additional credit requirements. The course requirements are as follows:

1. Research tool courses (9 credit hours). Students must take at least the following:
 - a. EDUC 8120, Group Comparison Designs and Analysis Analyses (3 credit hours)
 - b. EDUC 8122, Qualitative Research Methods (3 credit hours)

- c. After completing EDUC 8120 and 8122, students are to take one advanced “Level B” course in quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research methods (3 credit hours). Some programs require more than one Level B course. See Appendix B for more details on research methods courses.

2. Remaining course credits may include core program requirements and courses approved by your advisor to be taken outside of your program, department, and GSEHD. These courses can also include additional research methods courses, again with approval of your advisor.

3. CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL, or SPED 8998, Pre-dissertation Seminar (3 credit hours). Some programs require students to complete two sections (6 credits) of 8998. (Note: the PhD in Education does not require an 8998 course.)

Residency Requirement

GSEHD requires that all doctoral candidates complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of coursework (including internships and independent study but excluding dissertation research) at GSEHD (often referred to as “in residence”). Individual doctoral programs may require more credits.

The term “in residence” is used in the [GW Bulletin](#) to mean “courses that are registered for at GW and taken at GW or through the consortium of universities” after being admitted to a degree program.

Transfer Credits

Graduate credits earned in nondegree status at GW, in other degree programs at GW, or from other institutions can be applied to GSEHD doctoral programs only if all of the following criteria are met:

1. They were taken at an accredited college or university.
2. They were completed in the past five years.
3. They were passed with a grade of “B” or better.
4. They have not been used to fulfill requirements for another degree program.
5. They are not used to satisfy the 36 credit hour residency requirement.
6. They have been approved by the student’s advisors as applicable to the student’s degree program.

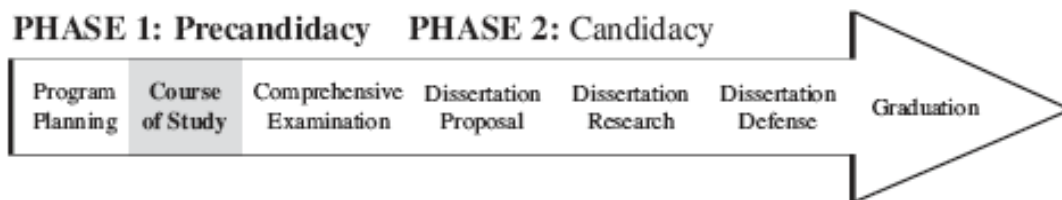
These are the minimum general requirements for credits to be applied to doctoral program plans. Individual doctoral programs may set additional requirements, and exceptions may require Dean’s review.

To seek approval for transfer credits, complete the [Program Plan Change](#) form (see previous section for more information). If the credits were earned at an

institution other than GW, you must also submit an official transcript showing the completion of those courses. This is often done at the time of admission, but can be done at any point while you are in coursework.

While enrolled in a GW degree program, Foggy Bottom campus students may take courses at other DC-area institutions through the [Consortium](#). Consortium courses count toward the residency requirement and will appear on your GW transcript automatically; you do not need to apply for transfer credit for a Consortium course. Check the GW Graduate Bulletin carefully for policies and procedures guiding consortium registration. Note: Consortium policies are set by the Presidents of the member institutions and not by GSEHD.

COURSE OF STUDY



Monitoring Your Progress: DegreeMAP

DegreeMAP allows you to see how many credits you have completed, your current GPA, and what courses you have remaining; providing a helpful "snapshot" of where you are in your program. GW uses DegreeMAP to clear students for graduation, so please check it frequently to make sure that it is accurate. If you have any questions about your DegreeMAP, please feel free to contact docgsehd@gwu.edu.

Accessing DegreeMAP

- Log in to [GWeb](#) and click on the Student Records and Registration link.
- Select the Student Records Information Menu.
- Click on the DegreeMAP link.
- Click "Launch DegreeMAP" to view your degree requirements and your individual academic history.

Academic Requirements

In order to be in good academic standing and eligible to graduate, students must earn an overall grade-point average of 3.0 (a B). No more than two grades (six credit hours) of C or a single grade of F is permitted throughout the doctoral program.

Students whose grade-point average falls below 3.0, or earn a C in more than six credits, or a single grade of F must consult with their academic advisor and prepare a written statement for the Associate Dean of Doctoral Studies explaining the cause of the academic issues and a plan for successful program completion.

In consultation with the Program Director, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Studies will then discuss the issue with the student to determine whether continuation in the program is permitted. **The student may be removed from the program in the event of more than two grades of C, a single F, or a GPA below 3.0.** Students may appeal this decision to the Post Master's Appeal Committee consistent with the procedures described in this document. If a grade of F is received, the grade is included in the grade-point average whether or not the course is repeated.

An instructor may give a grade of Incomplete (I) if a student is unable to complete the work of the course before the end of the semester. Incompletes can only be granted in advance of the date when grades must be reported, so if you plan to request an Incomplete, please discuss with your instructor as early as possible. Incompletes can also only be granted if you are in good academic standing and your prior performance and attendance in the class have been satisfactory. Students who receive a grade of I must submit an [Incomplete Contract](#). Per University policy, a grade of I will convert to F if outstanding work is not completed within one calendar year.

Except for courses that specifically state that repetition for credit is permitted, doctoral students may not repeat a course in which a grade of C- or better was received, unless required to do so by your department. A written statement indicating that the student is required to repeat the course, must be submitted to the Dean's office by the appropriate department chair. If a course is repeated, the first grade received remains on the record and both grades are included in the grade-point average.

Grading mode in internship courses varies by program; please see your individual program requirements for further information.

If you plan to withdraw from a course, please reach out to both your instructor and the Office of Student Life to let them know. You will be able to withdraw online via BannerWeb. If you stop attending a class without formally withdrawing, you will be assigned a grade of Z for "Unauthorized Withdrawal" and an academic hold will be placed on your account. You cannot graduate or register for further coursework until the grade of Z is resolved. If you are assigned a grade of Z, please reach out to the Office of Student Life to formally withdraw instead.

Students required to take an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course must earn a minimum grade of B- in the course. Students who do not earn a B- or higher in their first course must take an additional EAP course in the subsequent semester. Students who earn an F in an EAP course must repeat the course.

Maintaining Continuous Enrollment Status

Students must maintain continuous enrollment status by registering every fall and spring semester. Enrollment during the summer semester is not required unless you are sitting for the comprehensive exam, proposal defense, or dissertation defense. Doctoral students are required to maintain continuous enrollment until successful defense of their dissertation. If you "break enrollment," you will have to reapply for admission, submitting a new application and new statement of purpose. Readmission is not automatic but is at the discretion of the program faculty and school. Students who break enrollment and must reapply for admission are subject to the current criteria and regulations that have been established by the school, which may be different

from those in place at the time of initial application. Any time you have questions regarding your enrollment status, please contact docgsehd@gwu.edu.

Generally, students must be registered each semester in a minimum of three credits, but under specific circumstances, continuous enrollment may be maintained by registering for fewer than three credits. The possibilities include Continuing Doctoral Research (0940), Continuous Enrollment (CE), and a Leave of Absence (LOA). Each is briefly described below.

Continuing Research (0940)

Continuing research can be used in two different circumstances. First, if you have completed all required coursework and still need to take your comprehensive examinations, you are to enroll in one credit of Continuing Doctoral Research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL, SEHD, or SPED 0940) while preparing for and taking your exam. Note: Students may not enroll in Continuing Doctoral Research more than two semesters while preparing for the comprehensive examination.

Second, if you have completed 24 credits of Dissertation Research (8999) and have not yet successfully defended your dissertation, you can stop registering in 8999 and instead register for one credit of Continuing Doctoral Research each fall and spring semester until you complete your degree requirements. Note: Summer registration is required only for students defending their proposal or dissertation during that semester.

Continuous Enrollment (CE)

Continuous Enrollment (CE) is a zero-credit, zero-cost option which functions similarly to a Leave of Absence, but allows students to maintain library and campus access. CE is only available in a few specific circumstances. It may be used during attendance at another institution (with prior approval by the Dean's Office) or for completion of any outstanding assignments in GW courses in which a grade of Incomplete was received.

It is most frequently used for doctoral candidates who are unable to defend in the semester in which they file dissertation defense materials (generally, because the materials are filed too late to make the graduation deadlines for the current semester). If candidates submit their materials after the current semester's graduation deadline, but before the posted CE deadline (posted on GSEHD Critical Dates at <https://gsehd.gwu.edu/critical-dates>), they may register for Continuous Enrollment for the following semester in order to defend them. Students who want to enroll in Continuous Enrollment for this reason must have been enrolled the previous semester. Note: For students wanting to enroll in CE for the fall semester, this means that you will have to be registered for dissertation credits over the summer.

Continuous Enrollment status is limited to two semesters. To request additional semesters, the student must seek approval from the Post-Master's Appeals Committee. Note: International students are not permitted to register for CE.

Leave of Absence (LOA)

A student who is temporarily unable to continue their program of study may request a Leave of Absence using the [Leave of Absence Request](#) form. You may take two Leaves of Absence during

your time at GSEHD. Students who request a one-year leave of absence must submit a [Leave of Absence Request](#) form for each of the two semesters. Students who wish to register for more than two leaves of absence must seek approval from the Post-Master's Appeals Committee.

Students who are U.S. government employees assigned out of the United States for official duties or are in the military and actively deployed are exempt from LOA limitations.

Warning: During a leave of absence, you will not have access to most of the university's resources, including the library and campus buildings, and faculty members are not able to work with you on your dissertation.

Registration Procedures

Students will register for classes using the online [GWeb Information System; please see registration instructions here](#). Students who wish to enroll for Continuous Enrollment or Leave of Absence should fill out the [Leave of Absence Request](#) form and submit it to docgsehd@gwu.edu.

Concurrent Enrollment

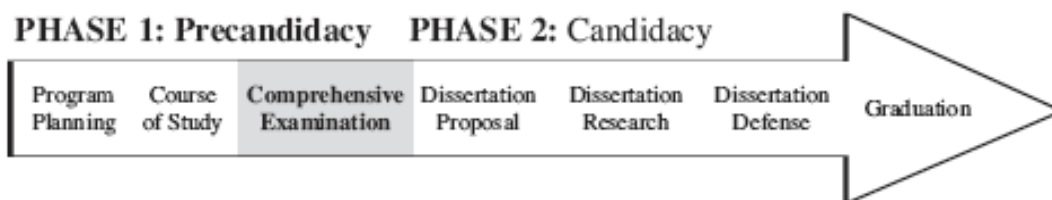
Students may not register concurrently at GW and another institution without prior permission of the faculty advisor and GSEHD Dean's Office. While registration in individual courses offered in other schools at GW is allowed, students may not simultaneously enroll in another GW program without prior GSEHD Dean's office approval. To request approval, please contact [docgsehd@gwu.edu](#).

Registration through the [GW Consortium](#) system is permitted and is not considered concurrent enrollment.

Eight-Year Limit

The doctoral dissertation must be written and defended within eight (8) years of your first semester in the doctoral program. Any leaves of absence do not count against this time limit. Exceptions to the eight-year limit are given rarely, and only with convincing evidence that the student has made all practical efforts to complete within eight years. Extensions require approval by the Post-Master's Appeals Committee.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION



You must successfully complete the doctoral comprehensive examination at the end of your doctoral coursework and within five years of beginning your program.

Eligibility

To be eligible to sit for the comprehensive exam, students must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Currently registered
2. Good academic standing
3. Successfully completed all coursework or currently registered for the last semester of coursework. (In some programs, 8998 and one Level B Research Methods course may be taken after the comprehensive exam.)
4. Have no grades of I, Z, or IPG (In Progress Grade) from a previous semester (with the exception that Counseling PhD students may sit with IPGs in CNSL 8961, 8259, and 8260)

Registration Requirements

Doctoral students must be registered in coursework during the semester they take the comp exam. If you have completed all required coursework, you must enroll in one credit of Continuing Research (0940) to maintain exam eligibility. Note: Students may not enroll in more than two semesters of 0940 while preparing for the comprehensive examination. Students requiring more than two semesters of 0940 prior to the comprehensive exam must appeal to the Post-Master's Appeals Committee.

If you take the comprehensive exam before completing 8998 and/or one Level B Research Methods course, you **MUST TAKE** 8998 in the next regular semester (fall or spring) and you **MUST COMPLETE** the last Level B course on your program plan no later than the second regular semester after your comprehensive exam. **Please be aware that enrolling in only 3 credits of 8998 or only a Level B does not qualify for semester half-time or full-time certification with federal financial aid. Please plan accordingly.**

You cannot enroll in 8999 (Dissertation Research) until the semester after you have passed your comprehensive exam and completed ALL required coursework, including 8998 and your last Level B Research Methods course. Students may enroll in Dissertation Research with a grade of "IPG" in 8998, Pre-Dissertation Seminar. An instructor may enter a grade of "CR" for the 8998 course after students successfully defend their dissertation proposals. At the point of dissertation defense, if a student's 8998 course has not been assigned a credit by the course instructor, credit will be arranged by the Office of Student Services.

Taking only 8998 or one Level B course during a regular semester (fall or spring) could adversely affect the visa status of international students, the repayment schedule for student loans, and other matters. Check carefully with the appropriate University offices to see how this might affect you.

Scheduling Comprehensive Exams

Comprehensive exams may be administered by your program or by the GSEHD Office of Student Life; please check with your program to see which applies to you. OSL administers examinations once per semester, usually in December, April, and July. Students must submit an [online application](#) for the comprehensive examination by the [published deadline](#) (October 1st for the fall semester, February 1st for the spring semester, and June 1st for the summer semester). Note: Not all programs offer a summer comprehensive exam. Please check with your program about exam availability.

If your program uses OSL to administer the exam, it is expected that students will take the comprehensive examination when it is scheduled in December, April, and July. For a compelling reason, it may be necessary to schedule a special sitting by submitting the [Special Sitting](#) form to the Office of Student Services at least 10 working days in advance.

By signing the [Special Sitting](#) form, the faculty advisor is accepting responsibility for administering the examination. The advisor is to reserve a room, provide a copy of the examination to the student, and proctor the examination. The advisor may designate a qualified person to proctor the examination, but must be available during the session.

Comprehensive Exam Structure and Preparation

All doctoral programs include a comprehensive examination. The format and questions may vary depending on department and program area. The program area faculty construct the questions and determine the criteria for satisfactory responses; therefore, students should consult with them for guidance on how to prepare for the examination and how their responses will be evaluated.

We strongly recommend you download all course materials from Blackboard throughout your program to ensure that you have all your prior materials available for review while preparing for the exam. Blackboard automatically ends student access to courses at the end of each semester, so if you wait until the semester of your exam, you may not be able to access previous materials.

Exam Day Guidelines

Doctoral comprehensive exams are currently offered in a variety of formats, depending on the program (please see your program advisor for guidance on your exam format). For those taking a proctored, timed exam, please note the following guidelines:

1. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to the exam start time and check in with the proctor. Please be prepared to show a photo ID. You may not bring in or use any outside materials, but will be provided with scratch paper. If you arrive late, the proctor will not be able to provide you with any additional time.
2. Exam proctors are available to provide administrative support only. They will designate seating, indicate the time an exam begins and ends, and address concerns about technology. Please understand that proctors cannot answer questions about the content or organization of the exam.
3. If you have a question that exceeds a proctor's administrative role, a faculty member will be consulted.
4. If a proctor suspects any action inconsistent with the GW Code of Academic Integrity, the proctor will call a faculty member or the Office of the Dean to address the concern. Proctors will not engage in any conversation with students about academic integrity.
5. In the event that an exam is interrupted by an unexpected event (e.g., fire drill, sudden illness) the proctor will consult with the Office of the Dean and then advise test takers on a course of action.

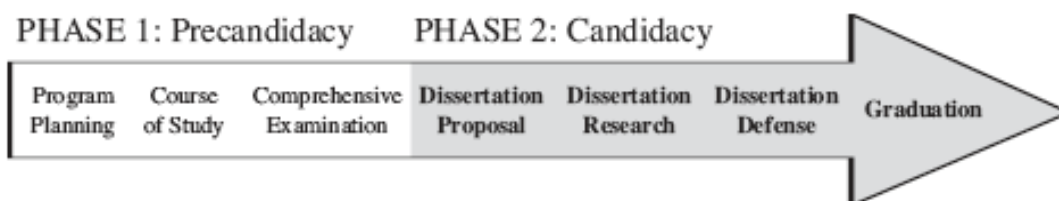
Comprehensive Exam Evaluation

Each examination question is read by two or more faculty members, and this process normally takes several weeks to complete. You will receive a letter from the Office of Student Services notifying you of the outcome of your examination.

If you fail one or more parts of the examination, a retake is allowed. Following a failure, you should speak with your program faculty to determine when you should retake the exam and what coursework you should register in while retaking.

If you fail part or all of the retake, your only recourse is to petition the Post Master's Appeals Committee to request a second retake. Approval is not assured.

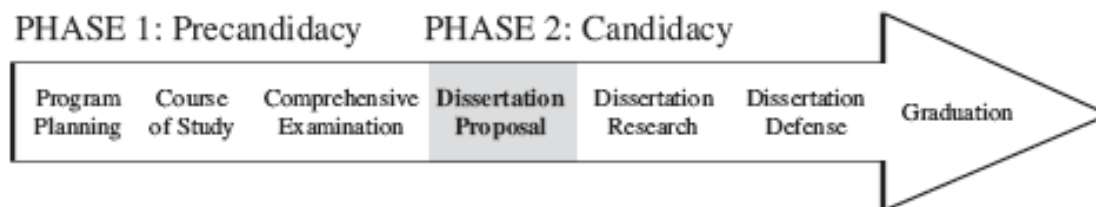
PHASE 2: CANDIDACY



After completing all coursework and successfully passing the comprehensive examination, you become a doctoral candidate and are ready to begin dissertation research.

The dissertation research and defense is the culminating, integrative, scholarly experience of doctoral study. The purpose of the dissertation research is to (a) make an original contribution to knowledge, in the candidate's field of specialization; (b) demonstrate an advanced command of research skills; and (c) demonstrate an advanced ability to communicate findings so that others in the field can understand and use them.

DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL



Successfully defending your dissertation proposal provides evidence that you and the committee have arrived at a sound methodology that will address a worthwhile research question(s). The proposal forms a working plan that is used by you and the committee to guide the research, to evaluate progress, and to provide ongoing feedback.

To move successfully through the dissertation process, you must take responsibility to meet deadlines agreed upon with your committee and deadlines set by the School for defense of the dissertation and graduation. Your dissertation chair and the Dean's Office will make efforts to assist you in the process, but the responsibility to meet deadlines is yours.

Dissertation Committee

You are expected to have informal conversations with your primary advisor about possible dissertation topics throughout the pre-candidacy phase of your program. As you near the end of coursework, there should also be discussions about who will chair your dissertation committee and perhaps who will be the other committee members. Your primary advisor might serve as chair of the committee, or another faculty member may assume that position. The dissertation committee guides the candidate in development of the dissertation research proposal, makes final judgments

about the adequacy of the proposal, is available for consultation during the research work, guides the candidate in preparation of the dissertation document, and decides when the dissertation is ready for defense.

A dissertation committee is established when the chair and student, in consultation, secure agreement of two qualified persons to serve on the committee and to begin assisting the student with the development of their proposal. The committee is *formally* constituted when all three members have signed the [Dissertation Committee Membership](#) form and submitted it to the Office of Student Services. All three signatures can appear on the same form or the form can be signed and submitted separately as each member is identified and agrees to serve.

Dissertation Committee Chair

The role of the dissertation committee chair is to:

1. Guide the candidate in the preparation of the dissertation proposal, including specification of the research problem, the literature review that helps point the way toward the research, the questions or hypotheses for investigation, and the methodology.
2. Guide the candidate in selection of two additional committee members.
3. Provide guidance on the research proposal structure and content and set clear expectations for timely completion of the proposal.
4. Provide guidance on the dissertation structure and content and set clear expectations for high quality writing.
5. Set clear expectations for timely completion, and guide the candidate toward achieving a high level of quality (technical and ethical) in the dissertation research and document.
6. In consultation with the candidate, select additional examiners (i.e., readers) for the oral defense of the dissertation.
7. Prepare the candidate for the oral defense process.
8. Encourage the candidate to publish his or her dissertation after successful completion.

Note: the Doctoral Studies Committee created a “Dissertation Chair Checklist” to guide chairs in their work with students. You may request to work on this checklist with your chair.

The dissertation committee chair must have the following qualifications:

1. Hold an earned academic doctorate.
2. Hold a GSEHD regular faculty appointment, either full- or part-time. Selection of dissertation chairs who do not hold a regular faculty appointment or are outside the program area require the concurrence of the candidate’s primary advisor and approval by the Dean’s Office. In this case, a member of the candidate’s program faculty must participate as either a member of the research committee or the examining committee at the point of defense.
3. Have expertise that well matches the candidate’s topic area.
4. Either (a) have experience serving as a member in no fewer than two dissertation committees, including the defense of the dissertation, or (b) in the absence of such experience, be mentored by an experienced GSEHD dissertation chair selected by the faculty member’s department chair.

5. Have an active research agenda as characterized by the departmental personnel guidelines.

Emeritus and departing faculty may continue to serve as the dissertation chair for a period not to exceed two years, assuming the student has an approved proposal. After two years, the student must reconstitute the dissertation committee by selecting a new chair (See Appendix C for a summary of committee structure).

Dissertation Committee Members (Other than the Chair)

The role of the two other dissertation committee members is to guide the candidate, in conjunction with the chair, through development of their independent research and the achievement of a high-quality product and oral defense, as specified above for the chair of the dissertation committee.

These committee members must have the following qualifications:

1. Hold an earned academic doctorate or an earned terminal degree for a period of one year prior to joining the committee.
2. Have expertise that well matches the candidate's topic area.
3. Among the chair and the two other committee members, at least one is to be knowledgeable about the methodology to be used in the dissertation research and designated as taking responsibility for guiding the research methodology.
4. It is strongly recommended that one committee member come from outside the candidate's home program; he or she may come from outside of GSEHD and even outside of GW.
5. Committee members must not have a relationship with the candidate that poses a potential conflict of interest (for example, serving as the candidate's job supervisor, friend, or colleague).
6. If not a current GW regular-status member, a copy of the prospective committee member's curriculum vitae must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.

When a change in an established dissertation committee is proposed, a memorandum requesting the change and the reasons for it should be sent to the Office of Student Services. The chair, the candidate, and the committee members being dropped and added should sign a memorandum indicating their concurrence with the requested change.

GSEHD sets certain requirements for the dissertation proposal and dissertation defense that are indicated below. In addition, the dissertation chair establishes procedures regarding proposal development and dissertation draft review.

You should have a discussion with your dissertation committee about their expectations for submitting drafts of your dissertation and the amount of time they will need to review the document and provide feedback. Faculty members generally require a minimum of 10 to 20 business days to review documents. More time may be needed if they receive a draft just as the

semester begins, as it is ending, during winter break, or throughout the summer. It is advisable to notify committee members in advance when drafts will be submitted for review and feedback.

Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal should include those elements normally found in Chapters 1 to 3 and the References of the dissertation, as indicated by the dissertation guidelines in the [GSEHD Dissertation Content and Style Guide](#). Depending on the form your dissertation takes, your proposal may not include Chapters 1 to 3, but should include an introduction, a literature review, and an explanation of the methodology that you propose to use. Under certain circumstances, the time needed to provide this breadth and depth of information may preclude taking advantage of a fleeting research opportunity, may be inappropriate for the type of research being proposed, or have other negative tradeoffs. In such situations, at the request of the full committee, the Academic Dean may allow approval of a proposal with less information.

The proposal should be prepared according to a recognized scholarly format, usually the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Seventh Edition) and the [GSEHD Dissertation Formatting Guide](#). The guidelines in the GSEHD Dissertation Content and Style Guide introduce you to the organization and elements of GSEHD dissertations. The chair of your dissertation committee and the instructor of your Pre-Dissertation Seminar (8998) will usually provide additional guidelines for the proposal.

Approval of a proposal does not ensure approval of Chapters 1-3 when defending your final dissertation. Some revisions are likely to be needed to those chapters. For instance, new literature that helps in the interpretation of your results may have appeared, a few additional research questions may have been added as the research progressed, there may have been some changes in the methods that were actually used, and other limitations or delimitations may have become apparent. In addition, the dissertation oral examination committee adds two additional external readers, who may identify some shortcoming in the first three chapters of the dissertation.

Proposal Approval Process

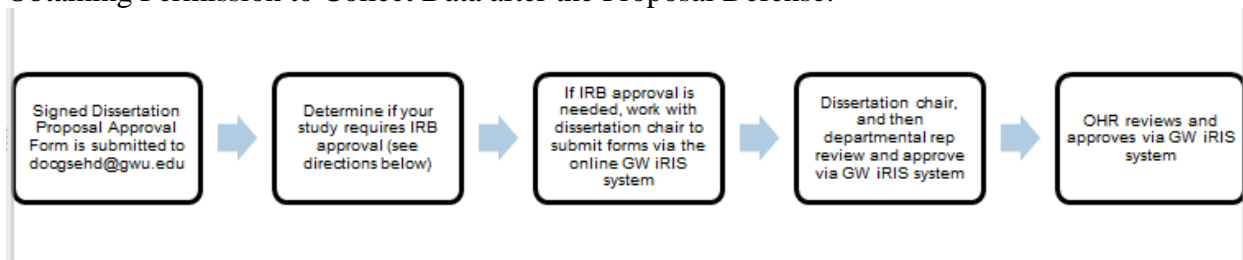
Before conducting dissertation research, your research proposal must be reviewed in an open forum (the proposal defense) and approved by the following:

1. Your dissertation committee
2. Your department chair
3. The GW Office of Human Research (IRB)

Please work with your dissertation chair to schedule your proposal defense, as each program has different policies regarding when and how proposal defenses take place.

You are NOT to begin actual data collection until you have all the necessary written approvals, as this violates the GW Office of Human Research and GSEHD policies. Noncompliance may result in a prohibition against the use of the data in your dissertation and possibly misconduct charges.

Obtaining Permission to Collect Data after the Proposal Defense:



Dissertation Committee Approval of Proposal: The dissertation committee approves the proposal after a dissertation proposal defense, which is sometimes referred to as an “oral defense of the proposal.” The committee has a responsibility to review the proposal and ensure that it will produce worthwhile and high-quality research. During the defense, you may be asked about your rationale for certain aspects of the proposal, asked for more details about the literature or the proposed methods, or challenged about the appropriateness of proposed procedures. Your competency with the research methods will be assessed. The “defense” is also a consultation in which the committee members suggest, and sometimes require, changes to improve the research. The proposal defense is an informal proceeding and the format is at the discretion of the dissertation chair. You should ask your chair for a briefing on the format. Note: Students must be enrolled in the semester in which they defend their proposal.

Usually some refinements are expected following the proposal defense. Those changes may be reviewed by the full committee or just by the chair. Formal approval is indicated by committee members’ signatures on the [Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form. This form, along with the CV of any Committee member who is not on the GSEHD faculty, must be submitted to the Office of Student Life (docgsehd@gwu.edu) to become an official part of your academic record.

Office of Human Research (OHR or IRB) Approval of Proposal: The Office of Human Research assesses whether (a) the proposed research will expose human participants to risks, (b) practical precautions have been taken to minimize and inform the participants of those risks, and (c) the remaining risks are justified by the potential benefits of the research.

The Office of Human Research may communicate directly with you to ask for further clarifications or additional protections for human participants. If you do not receive approval, you should consult with your dissertation committee chair about how to proceed.

It is important to note that unless you successfully defend your dissertation within one year of the proposal approval, students who have an IRB designation of “expedited” or “full review” must submit a Continuing Review form to the [Office of Human Research](#) every 12 months.

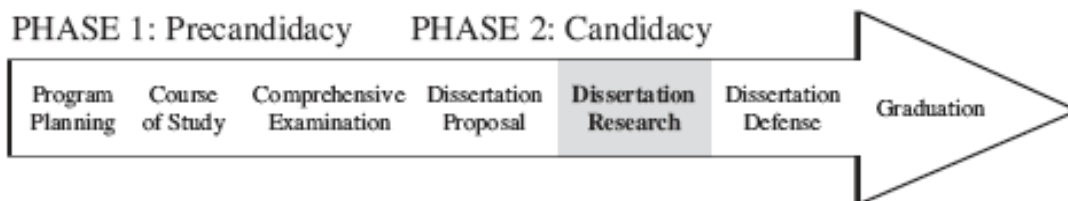
IRB Submission Process

After you have submitted your signed [Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form to docgsehd@gwu.edu, submit to IRB via the [online GW iRIS system](#). This system will walk you through the online submission of all required documentation to get your study approved by IRB.

1. To determine if your study requires IRB review, submit a Human Research Determination form in the [GW iRIS system](#), found under My Assistant > Special Purpose Submission Forms > Human Research Determination Form > Add a New Form.
 - a. If you determine that you do not need to submit to IRB, please complete the [Certification of Research Exclusion](#) form and submit it to IRB.
2. If your study requires IRB approval, please work with your dissertation chair to prepare and submit your electronic IRB approval forms via the GW iRIS system.
 - a. Note: you must list your dissertation chair as the “Principal Investigator” and your department chair as the “Departmental Reviewer.” If your dissertation chair is also the department chair, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Studies will need to sign as department chair.

You are NOT authorized to collect data for your dissertation until you have received approval from the IRB! If you need to make changes to your study after it has been approved, you need to file a request with the IRB to modify your study. No modifications can be made until you receive approval.

DISSERTATION RESEARCH



Dissertation research involves data collection, analysis, interpretation, and writing of the dissertation. Data collection can begin only after approval of the proposal by your dissertation committee, department chair, and the GW Office of Human Research.

Dissertation Research Registration: 8999 and 0940

1. Candidates are to enroll in CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL, SEHD, or SPED 8999 while involved in dissertation research. Candidates are to begin enrolling in 8999 the first fall or spring semester after having completed all coursework, passed the comprehensive examination, and taken the pre-dissertation seminar (8998).
2. Candidates will take a minimum of 12 and maximum of 24 credits of 8999, at a rate of three to six credit hours each fall and spring semester, until they successfully defend their dissertation or reach a total of 24 credits. If you need substantial advising or feedback on drafts of your dissertation during the summer, you are also to register for 8999 during the summer. (Note that for most financial assistance, three credits of 8999 can constitute “at least half-time” enrollment [using a Half-Time/Full-Time Certification Form](#), but this requires making good progress, certification by your advisor and the GSEHD Office of Student Services, and approval by the source of the financial assistance.)
3. If you have not defended your dissertation after 24 credit hours of 8999, you must register for one credit hour of Continuing Doctoral Research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL, SEHD, or SPED 0940) each fall and spring semester until you defend your dissertation.
4. To defend your dissertation, you must be registered for at least three credits of 8999 in the semester of the defense, including the summer semester, unless you meet one of the following two exceptions:
 - a. You have already completed 24 credit hours of 8999, in which case you only have to register for one credit of Continuing Doctoral Research (0940).
 - b. You are unable to defend in the semester in which you file dissertation defense materials, usually because they were filed after graduation deadlines. In this situation, you are eligible to apply for Continuous Enrollment (CE) if you submit materials before the CE deadline, which is posted on the [GSEHD Critical Dates page](#). To apply, you must have been enrolled in the correct number of dissertation credits the previous semester. Note: For students wanting to enroll in CE for the fall semester, this means that you will have to be registered for dissertation credits over the summer. Students registered in CE cannot be

certified as half-time for the purposes of student loans. International students are not permitted to register for CE.

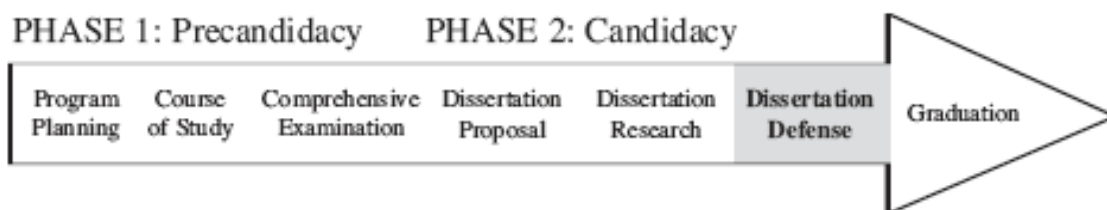
Guidelines for the Dissertation

Dissertation guidelines are provided in the [GSEHD Dissertation Content and Style Guide](#). Please note, these are guidelines only and alternative formats are permitted, with permission. For example, this may be an alteration in the number of chapters, a reorganization of the order, or the publication of a number of shorter studies. The dissertation must follow an established scholarly form, but that form may vary at the discretion of your chair and committee with final approval from the Associate Dean of Doctoral Studies. The dissertation is an individual research project; group or partner dissertations are not permitted. These guidelines are designed to assist you with the development of your dissertation. The dissertation is to be written in good formal English. It is not unusual for students to need the assistance of the GW Writing Center or a professional editor.

In addition, you are required to use a recognized scholarly format for the dissertation. The style of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Seventh Edition)* is the dominant style for educational research journals, though it may be less applicable for some other programs and fields of study. Students should also consult the [GW Dissertation Formatting Regulations](#) and the [GSEHD Dissertation Formatting Guide](#), especially when formatting the preliminary pages of the dissertation.

It is the student's responsibility to maintain regular contact with their dissertation chair. Please be aware that faculty members have many responsibilities and deadlines to meet. If you are not actively engaged or do not provide advance notice before seeking feedback on your draft, then it may take a significant amount of time for your chair to provide feedback. Please note, most faculty are on 9-month appointments and do not work during the summer.

THE DISSERTATION DEFENSE



The purpose of the dissertation defense (dissertation oral examination) is to determine whether the dissertation is acceptable and whether you satisfactorily defend it. These decisions will be made at the conclusion of the examination by the dissertation oral examination committee.

The dissertation oral examination is in an open meeting that is publicly announced. The candidate may bring colleagues, family members, or friends. Other doctoral students may choose to attend. You may want to attend another defense before your own to become familiar with the process. If you would like to attend another student's defense, out of courtesy, please contact the defending student before you attend.

Dissertation Oral Examination Committee

The dissertation oral examination committee is to include five members:

1. The dissertation committee chair (nonvoting, described on pg. 15)
2. The two other committee members (described on pg. 16)
3. Two additional examiners
4. If desired, the student can ask an additional GSEHD faculty member to participate as a nonvoting, nonquestioning presider. Students may choose to do so if there is a faculty member who they would like to be involved without taking on official committee duties.

At least one of the five is to be from outside the candidate's home program and at least one other is to be from outside GSEHD. (Both can be from outside GSEHD.) One of the committee, other than the chair, will also serve as the presider. The presider must be a GSEHD faculty member (tenure, tenure track, contract, or visiting). See Appendix C for a summary of the committee structure.

Additional Examiners

The additional examiners are selected based on their interest and expertise in the area of the candidate's research and their ability to contribute to a fair and high-quality examination process.

The dissertation chair, usually in consultation with the candidate, is to contact and secure the additional examiners. All committee members and examiners must agree about the date and time of the defense. Please note that the Dean for Doctoral Studies has final approval of the membership of all dissertation oral examination committees.

Qualifications: The additional examiners must also meet the following criteria:

1. Must have held an earned doctorate for at least one year prior to the defense.
2. Must have professional background and experience that is relevant to the candidate's topic and research.
3. Must not have a relationship with the candidate that poses a potential conflict of interest (such as being the candidate's job supervisor, friend, or colleague).
4. If not a current GW faculty member, a copy of the person's curriculum vitae must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.

It is expected that the candidate and members of the examining committee will be present for the oral examination at one of GW's official campuses or centers¹. In the event that a member of the examining committee is unable to be at the site of the examination, this should be indicated on the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination](#) form. No more than one committee member may participate virtually, and the candidate and the chair must be present at the site of the examination. The Office of Student Life has phone and video conference software that will be used for distance participation.

¹ Please note: these rules apply in the case of a face-to-face defense during normal university operation. These do not apply if the university is currently operating virtually and/or the defense is being conducted virtually.

Dissertation Defense Planning and Procedures

Be sure to check the [GSEHD Critical Dates page](#) for each semester's deadlines for submitting materials and scheduling defenses. Usually, dissertation materials are due 30 days in advance of the defense, and the defense must be 30 days before the library's posted ETD deadlines to allow students to make edits after the defense, so please plan accordingly.

The following actions are required prior to the defense:

Chair Responsibilities:

1. Assist candidate in completing and submitting the following forms to the Office of Student Services no less than 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the exam.
 - a. [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#) (online form)
 - b. [Dissertation Approval](#) form (submitted through online form above)

Before signing the Dissertation Approval Form, committee members should be satisfied that the document is ready to defend. Once the dissertation is submitted to the Office of Student Services, no changes can be made to the document before the oral examination.

2. The chair, usually in collaboration with the candidate, is to arrange for additional examiners to join the committee and arrange a date and time for the oral examination. These steps are indicated on the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#).

Doctoral Candidate Responsibilities:

1. Submit the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#) online **at least 30 calendar days in advance of your dissertation defense and in agreement with all deadlines specified by [GSEHD Critical Dates](#)**. While completing this form, which constitutes your formal submission of materials and request for defense, you will be asked to attach the following additional materials:
 - a. [Dissertation Approval Form](#)
 - b. Your completed dissertation in Word format
 - c. CVs of any committee members or readers who are not current GW faculty members, if not previously submitted
2. Submit an online [Application to Graduate](#) for the appropriate semester, if it is open.
3. Distribute copies of the final dissertation to the members of the examining committee no **fewer than 30 days prior to the scheduled date of the oral examination**.

Office of Student Services Responsibilities:

As part of the preparation for the dissertation defense, the Office of Student Services will review the student's academic history and report any discrepancies to the student. Any remaining grades of "IPG" in 8998, 8999, or 0940 will be converted to grades of "credit" as part of the review process.

An Office of Student Services representative will review the membership of the proposed dissertation oral examination committee for compliance with GSEHD regulations, and will make logistical arrangements for the defense (i.e., reserving the physical room or creating the virtual meeting).

Presider Responsibilities:

The dissertation defense (oral examination) is a formal proceeding conducted according to set rules. One of the committee members, other than the chair, will also serve as the presider. The presider is to direct the defense according to the Instructions for the Presider, which will be emailed to them by the Office of Student Life. The committee member serving as presider shall also be an active examiner, participating in the questioning of the candidate and the votes. If the presider is not a member of the examining committee, they are present solely to moderate, and do not have a voting or examining role.

Defenses are open to the public but seating for observers is usually limited to four to six people. Family members may attend, but candidates should realize that the shortcomings and limitations of their work will be discussed.

Dissertation Defense Outcomes

At the conclusion of the examination phase of the defense, the candidate and all observers are asked to leave the room while the committee considers the acceptability of the dissertation defense and the dissertation document. The examining committee makes two decisions: the acceptability of the document and the acceptability of the oral defense.

Even if the dissertation defense is successful, the work is not finished. The oral examination committee usually requests several refinements to the document. Then several auxiliary materials have to be prepared and copies of the final dissertation distributed. These requirements are discussed in the graduation section below.

A student who is unable to make the required revisions in time to meet the [deadlines for degree clearance](#) may enroll in Continuous Enrollment (CE) in the subsequent semester and finish and submit the revisions then, graduating in the subsequent semester. CE status is limited to two semesters. A student who does not have final committee approval for the dissertation within two semesters will be terminated from the doctoral program.

Students are allowed a maximum of two dissertation oral defenses, in which they have an opportunity to successfully defend their dissertation. On the second attempt, a student must pass the oral defense and have the dissertation voted acceptable by the committee. If the student fails both oral defenses, the student is automatically removed from the doctoral program, and must appeal to the Post-Master's Appeals Committee for reinstatement if interested in continuing.

Final Steps After Dissertation Defense

1. **Determine your final due date:** In order to graduate, you must submit your final dissertation to ProQuest. Because of this, the final due date to graduate each semester is the [ETD Approval Deadline](#) set by Gelman Library. All of the steps below must be completed, and your final dissertation must be uploaded to ProQuest, before the posted date. **Please be sure to check the [ETD Approval Dates](#) to ensure you are aware of your due date and plan accordingly. If you do not submit your final dissertation before the ETD deadline, you will have to wait until the next semester to graduate.**
2. **Decide whether you want to copyright your work:** GW generally discourages students from copyrighting their dissertation unless the research has some commercial value. Please see the [Best Practices Section](#) of the GW ETD website for more information regarding open access and copyright. ProQuest will assess a \$95 fee for open access publishing.
3. **Work with chair to make edits:** Work with your chair to make final edits to the document based on your committee's feedback, and, if necessary, obtain approval/signatures from committee members, then complete the remaining steps.
4. **Submit ETD Approval Form:** After your chair approves the final draft, both you and your chair must sign the [ETD Approval Form](#) and submit it to docgsehd@gwu.edu. If you do not yet have an ETD submission number when you are filling out the form, you may leave that item blank.
5. **Submit SED:** The University requires students to submit the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) before clearing you for graduation. Please complete the questionnaire online at <https://sed-ncses.org> and send your certificate of completion to docgsehd@gwu.edu.
6. **Upload your final dissertation and receive formatting approval:** The GW ETD website (<https://library.gwu.edu/etd>) will guide you through the process of electronically submitting your dissertation to Gelman Library and ProQuest. Your dissertation must follow the [University Formatting Guidelines](#) and match the template provided on the [GSEHD Style Guide](#). Gelman Library will review your submission and may require you to make formatting edits and re-submit your document before accepting it if your document does not follow the above formatting guidelines. They will notify you via email if your submission requires edits and when your submission has been accepted. **Your dissertation is not considered final until Gelman Library has accepted it.** If you have substantial formatting edits to make, this approval process can take several business days. Be sure to submit your dissertation in advance of the deadline to ensure you have left time for this formatting review.
7. **Finalize IRB logistics:** If required, go to <http://humanresearch.gwu.edu/closing-studies>, fill out the Study Closure Form to terminate your research, and submit it to the Principal Investigator (PI) for signature. Exempt studies do not require a closure form. You should

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

THE STUDENT APPEALS PROCESS

GSEHD students in doctoral programs have the right to appeal a decision. Students should first attempt to resolve informally and, if necessary, may appeal to the Post-Master's Appeals Committee (PMAC). The PMAC meets four times per year, typically in September, November, February, and April. Students must file an appeal with PMAC within six months of the incident in question.

Informal Attempts at Resolution

Prior to appealing a decision through the Post-Master's Appeals Committee (PMAC), the student first should attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty member(s) most directly responsible. If no resolution can be achieved or the issue is a matter of seeking an exception to GSEHD policy, the student may appeal to PMAC. Any such informal attempts must occur within the six-month time frame for filing the appeal.

Post-Master's Appeals Committee: Policies and Procedures

1. The Committee

One representative from each doctoral program and one representative from the research methods faculty comprise the PMAC. Committee members serve staggered two-year terms and may be re-elected. A representative of the Dean's office will serve as a nonvoting member.

2. Justification

For matters not resolved informally, students may appeal the following:

- A. An admissions or academic matter on the basis of a violation of GSEHD policies or procedures. The student must submit clear evidence of divergence from prescribed procedures to the PMAC. This most frequently consists of appealing a grade or appealing for a second retake of the comprehensive examination.
- B. An academic matter on the basis of extenuating circumstances that would render the application of established policies and procedures unfair. Extenuating circumstances are generally an event or series of events that are beyond the student's control that prevented the student from fulfilling degree requirements consistent with GSEHD policies and procedures. To prevail on an appeal, a student must submit clear evidence of extenuating circumstances. This most frequently consists of seeking an additional Leave of Absence or seeking an extension of the program time limit.

4. Student Procedures

For an appeal to be considered by the PMAC, students must adhere to the following process:

- A. Students must present their case within six months of the date of the decision being appealed. All documents must be submitted to the Office of Student Services two weeks prior to the meeting of the PMAC. Students should expect to provide the following information:
 - Student Statement of Appeal: An explanation of the policy, procedure or decision being appealed, the circumstances leading to the appeal, the progress made, and factors which will lead to successful resolution.
 - Student Timeline: An outline of the exact steps which will be taken to complete any pending requirements successfully, if requesting an extension of time.
 - Two letters of support from program faculty. It is preferable if one letter is from your dissertation chair. If your chair is outside of your program, they can submit a letter in addition to the two letters of faculty support from your program.. *The Educational Leadership and Administration program submits one program letter instead of two faculty letters.*

The Office of Student Services will provide additional guidance should other materials be required.

- B. The appeal will be placed on the PMAC agenda for the next meeting during the academic year only when the student has submitted all case materials.
- C. Procedures outlined in Section 5 below govern the conduct of the hearing and the notification of the Committee's decision.
- D. The student may appeal the decision of the PMAC by submitting a written appeal to the Dean within 30 calendar days after the written date of the PMAC decision. A delay in filing an appeal may constitute grounds for rejection of the appeal. The Dean's decision is final.

5. Committee Procedures

- A. The Office of Student Services provides copies of all documents related to the appeals case to each Committee member including a summary of the appeal, the student's submitted statement, student timeline, and faculty letters of support.
- B. The Office of Student Services coordinates communication between the student, the faculty advisor(s), the Office of the Dean, the PMAC Chair, and when necessary, other parties associated with the appeal. The Office of Student Services is responsible for notifying in writing the student, faculty associated with the appeal of the day, date, and time of the hearing. The student, and faculty have the option of attending the meeting to explain the appeal if they notify the Office of Student Services at least one week prior to the hearing. The student may have another

- individual present for support but the person will not be permitted to speak or participate in the hearing. If the individual is an attorney, the student must inform the PMAC chair no later than one week prior to the hearing. Faculty opposing the appeal may also be invited to attend at a separate time from the student's appearance.
- C. The PMAC Chair is responsible for the conduct of the hearing including allotting time should a student or faculty member appear in person.
 - D. The Committee will conduct a confidential discussion to reach a decision attained by majority vote. Any Committee member involved in supporting the appeal must recuse themselves from the Committee's proceedings, deliberations, and decision. The Committee has the prerogative to include in their decision conditions or terms required of student's to remain in the program.
 - E. An official decision letter is issued no later than 10 business days after the meeting date.
 - F. Should the student appeal the PMAC decision, the Office of Student Services will inform the Dean of the Committee's deliberations.
 - G. The Office of Student Services shall keep a copy of all written records along with the committee's rulings, recommendations, and justifications for the decisions. Decision letters become a part of the student's official student record.

Exiting the Doctoral Program and Graduating with an MA or EdS Degree

Students who determine that an EdD no longer fits their goals or whose circumstances change such that they are unable to complete their doctoral research have the option to change their program to an Educational Specialist or Masters degree and graduate with that credential. These steps can be taken after the appeals process or independently of it.

Current students who wish to pursue an EdS or MA in lieu of the EdD must first consult with their chair and determine the appropriate program of study for the new degree. In many cases, the student will have already completed the necessary coursework. Once the student and academic program have determined that the student is eligible for an EdS or MA, the student must complete and submit a Degree Status Agreement to Student Services (docgsehd@gwu.edu). With this form, the student agrees that by choosing the EdS or MA, they are no longer eligible for the EdD, and that should they wish to continue doctoral study at a later time, they would have to reapply and complete all program requirements. Once this form is filed, Student Services will have the Registrar change the student's program of record and then instruct the student on next steps to graduate with the new degree.

If a doctoral student has broken enrollment and wishes to use prior GSEHD coursework towards an

EdS or MA, they must submit a new application to the EdS or MA through GSEHD Admissions in order to graduate with this credential. Students must submit a new resume and statement of purpose but may be able to use other previously submitted application materials (e.g., recommendation letters, test scores) and should contact gsehdadm@gwu.edu to inquire about this. Students may also request an application fee waiver by entering “Mail payment” and notifying Admissions of the waiver request.

In this case, once the student has been admitted and accepted their admission, the student will enroll in Continuous Enrollment for the current semester and then submit an application to graduate for that same term. Student Services (docgsehd@gwu.edu) can assist with this process.

Financing Your Graduate Education

GSEHD admission decisions are made without regard to financial need. Descriptions of available financial assistance are provided on the [GSEHD website](#) and the [GW Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships](#) website. Students enrolled at other campuses or in online programs should contact their program faculty to determine if there is tuition support available.

Graduate Assistantships

GSEHD has graduate assistantships available for full-time doctoral candidates enrolled at the Foggy Bottom campus. Each assistantship includes a stipend, salary, and tuition support. Graduate Assistants are expected to work 20 hours per week during the academic year. Contact GSEHD Admissions at gsehdadm@gwu.edu for more information. Tuition benefits cannot be applied to courses taken off campus.

Tuition Awards

GSEHD has a limited number of tuition awards available for both part time (six credits) and full-time (nine credits) doctoral students. Several programs in GSEHD also have tuition awards available through research or training grant funds. More information is available on the [GSEHD Admissions](#) website.

Endowment Awards

GSEHD offers support from privately endowed funds. Please see the [GSEHD website](#) for more information and application information.

Student Loans and Work Study Opportunities

If you indicated on your application for admission that you plan to apply for a loan or for a work/study program at GW, a packet containing loan questionnaire and application information will be forwarded to you by the Office of Student Financial Assistance. If you have not received this packet, contact [Colonial Central](#). Colonial Central is located in the lower level of the Marvin Center (800 21st Street, NW). Students applying for federal financial aid must re-apply every year. Please see the [GW Office of Student Financial Assistance](#) website for directions.

Maintaining Federal Student Loan Eligibility

Federal regulations require students to maintain good academic standing and make Satisfactory

Academic Progress (SAP) to remain eligible to receive federal student loans. For more information on SAP, please refer to the [GW Office of Student Financial Assistance](#) website. The website also includes information on Evaluation of SAP and the appeals process.

Half-Time/Full-Time Certification

To be eligible to receive federal financial aid, students must be enrolled at least half-time. In the fall and spring semesters, GW considers 9 credits to be full-time study and 4.5 credits to be half-time. In the summer, full-time status requires 6 credits and half-time status requires 3.

Students in the following situations are eligible to complete the [Half-Time/Full-Time Certification](#) form, which will allow certification of full- or half-time study with a registration of fewer credits than officially required:

- Students enrolled in an internship
- Students enrolled in dissertation research (8999 or, in certain cases, 0940)
- Students taking the comprehensive exam (limited to 2 semesters)

Please note that this form must be completed each semester, as registration is required before this can be approved. The student is responsible for completing the form, obtaining advisor/chair signature, and then submitting the form to docgsehd@gwu.edu for dean-level signature.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

GW's Code of Academic Integrity is available through [GW's Student Conduct Office](#). This code is designed to promote academic honesty and describes how violations of the GW's Code of Academic Integrity are handled.

Change of Personal Information

An official name change or social security number change should be made at the Office of the Registrar by submitting a [Request to Change Name/Social Security Number](#). Students may update their address online through [GWeb](#) or by mailing or faxing an [Address Change](#) form to the Office of the Registrar, 2121 I Street, NW, Suite 101, Washington, D.C. 20052; fax (202) 994-3445. Failure to do so may result in a delay in receiving important correspondence from GSEHD and GW.

Immunization Requirement

All students under age 26, regardless of program of study, location of study, part-time or full-time status, degree or nondegree status, must comply with the immunization requirement as set forth by the Law of the District of Columbia. It is important that you comply as soon as possible so that your registration is not hindered. You can find more information about the immunization requirement on the website of GW Student Health: <https://healthcenter.gwu.edu/immunizations..>

Privacy of Records

The Graduate School of Education and Human Development complies with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), commonly referred to as the "Buckley

Agreement." Students should refer to the [GW Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) for information regarding this policy. All applications and supporting documents become the property of The George Washington University once received and cannot be returned.

Student Conduct

The [GW Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) includes the Code of Student Conduct, which defines student behavior considered to be disruptive to the academic enterprise and life within the campus community. The code also details the process through which disciplinary action is taken by GW when students are charged with violations of its provisions. Students who are charged with serious offenses may have their cases heard by boards that include students as members of the hearing panels; those charged with minor offenses are subject to a disciplinary conference.

Equal Opportunity Policy

The George Washington University does not unlawfully discriminate against any person on any basis prohibited by federal law, the District of Columbia Human Rights Act, or other applicable law, including without limitation, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. This policy covers all programs, services, policies, and procedures of the university, including admission to education programs and employment.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The George Washington University is committed to maintaining a positive climate for study and work, in which individuals are judged solely on relevant factors, such as ability and performance, and can pursue their activities in an atmosphere that is free from coercion, intimidation, and violence. The university mission statement provides that the university "values a dynamic, student-focused community stimulated by cultural and intellectual diversity and built upon a foundation of integrity, creativity, and openness to exploration of new ideas." The university is committed to free inquiry, free expression, and the vigorous discussion and debate on which advancement of its mission depends. Sexual harassment is destructive of such a climate and will not be tolerated in the university community.

Sexual harassment of students by faculty or administrators or of employees by those in a position to affect their The GW Graduate School of Education and Human Development employment status or by other employees in the work unit is inimical to such an atmosphere and will not be condoned.

If you have any questions about the university's Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy and Procedures please direct them to the university's Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion, who also serves as the university's Title IX Coordinator, at (202) 994-7440 or via email at diverse@gwu.edu. You may also contact the university's Assistant Title IX Coordinators identified in the section entitled "Contacts" in the [Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy](#). Additional information can be obtained from visiting the university's [Haven](#) website.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DOCTORAL STUDENT CHECKLIST

PHASE 1: Pre-Candidacy

- Connect with advisor and program/OSL staff to plan your first semester
- Complete any prerequisite work (or other conditions of admission) as listed on your admission decision letter.
- Ensure that you are enrolled (or registered for a leave of absence) each fall and spring semester. Summer enrollment is not required.
- Complete all course requirements on your Program Plan of Study, with the possible exception of the Pre-Dissertation Seminar (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 8998), and/or your Level B Research Methods course.
- Be actively enrolled in at least one credit hour during the semester in which you intend to sit for the comprehensive examination. **Consult with your academic advisor and student services representative to determine your best course of enrollment.**
- Complete the [Comprehensive Exam Application](#) by the appropriate deadline and successfully complete the comprehensive examination..
- Successfully complete the Pre-Dissertation Seminar (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL or SPED 8998) and your Level B Research Methods course, if not previously completed. **Please be aware that enrolling in only 3 credits of 8998 or Level B do not qualify for semester half-time or full-time certification with federal financial aid.** Please plan accordingly.

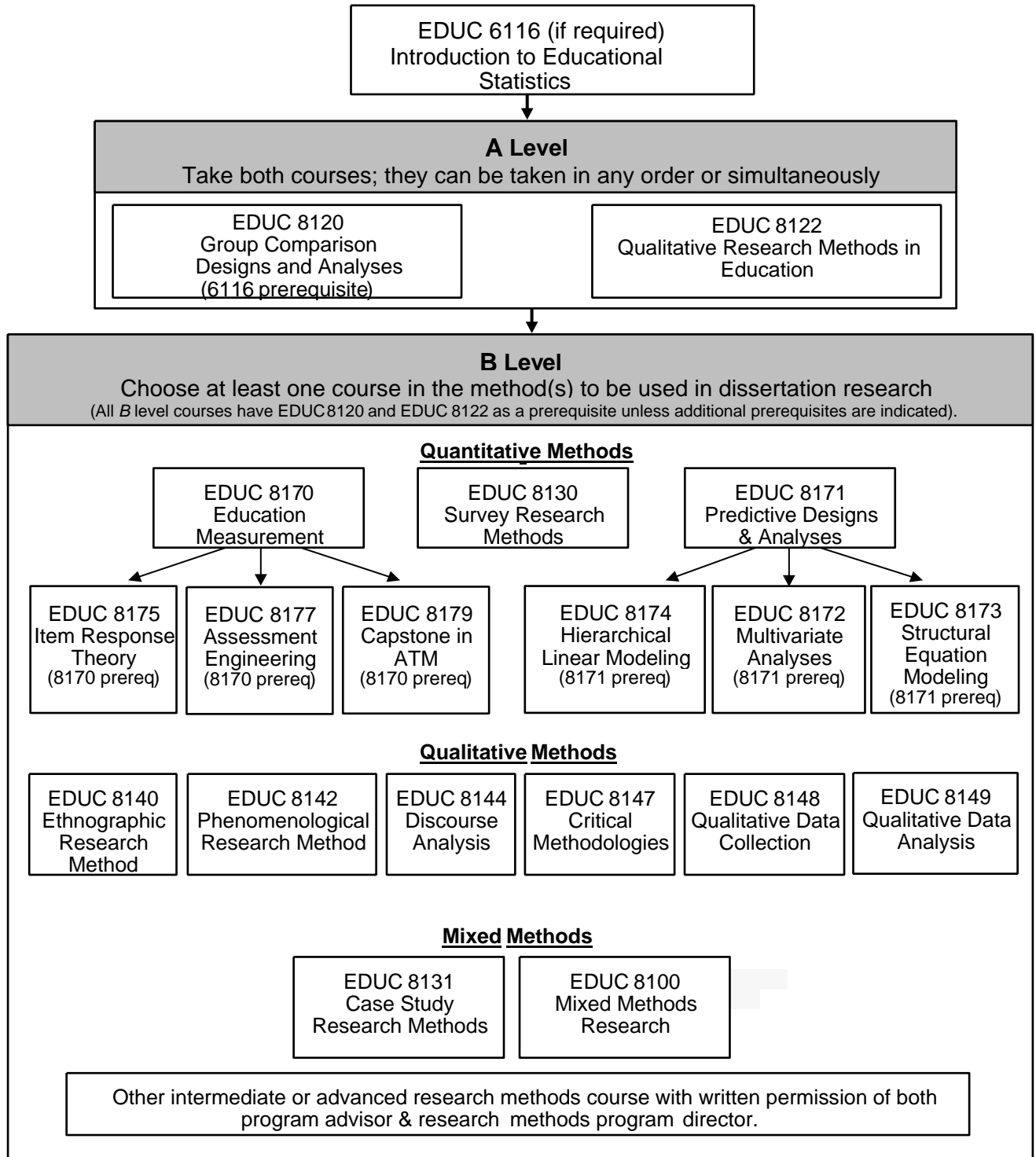
PHASE 2: Candidacy

- Begin registering for dissertation research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL, SEHD, or SPED 8999) at a rate of 3 or 6 credits each semester. Consult with your advisor as to the appropriate number of credits.

- If you have not already done so, establish a doctoral dissertation committee and file the [Dissertation Committee Membership](#) form. Review the criteria for establishing a committee as listed on the back of the form.
- Submit the CV for any committee members outside of GW to docgsehd@gwu.edu
- Work with your chair to schedule a dissertation proposal defense
- Obtain your dissertation committee's approval of your proposal. Complete the [Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form. Submit completed form to the Office of Student Services.
- Obtain IRB approval, submitting your application through the [GWiRIS system](#)
- Submit drafts of your dissertation to your dissertation chair and committee members for review and feedback, as requested by the chair. Work with your chair to establish a timeline for degree completion.
- Enroll in a minimum of 12 credit hours total of Dissertation Research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL, SEHD, or SPED 8999). If you have not completed all degree requirements and graduated by the time you reach 12 credit hours of Dissertation Research, you must continue to register for Dissertation Research at a rate of 3-6 credits per semester until you either successfully complete all degree requirements or reach 24 credits. If you reach 24 credits of Dissertation Research, you will become eligible to register for 1 credit a semester of Continuing Research (CNSL, CPED, EDUC, HOL, SEHD, or SPED 0940).
- Submit an online [Application for Graduation](#) in the semester in which you plan to graduate by the appropriate deadline.
- Establish a dissertation oral examination committee with the assistance of your dissertation chairperson; this will include two external readers in addition to the existing three-member committee. See the regulations in the Doctoral Student Handbook. Agree upon a date and time for the dissertation defense with all committee members, and distribute copies of your dissertation to all members for review at least 30 days in advance of that date.
- Submit the [Request for Dissertation Oral Examination form](#) and all accompanying materials **at least 30 days before your scheduled defense.**
- Successfully defend your dissertation in the oral examination.

- Make any revisions requested by the oral examination committee, submit final documents to the Office of Student Services, and upload your document for acceptance by Gelman Library **by the [ProQuest submission deadline](#) for the semester in which you defend.** All dissertation deadlines can be found on the Office of Student Services [Critical Dates](#) website.
- Submit the [ETD Approval](#) form signed by you and your dissertation chair to docgsehd@gwu.edu, and complete your [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) and send a copy to the Office of Student Services.
- Close the IRB study by submitting the Study Closure Form through the [GWiRIS system](#). *Exempt studies do not require a study closure form.*
- Walk across the stage at graduation!!!

APPENDIX B: GSEHD DOCTORAL RESEARCH METHODS SEQUENCE



Detailed course descriptions can be found on the GW Bulletin at: <http://bulletin.gwu.edu/>.

The intermediate/advanced methodology course requirement may also be met with courses offered by other departments (such as anthropology, sociology, and statistics) at GW or consortium universities for Foggy Bottom campus students who are part of the Consortium agreement—with approval of the student’s advisor and the director of the research methods. Independent Study cannot be used for Level B credit.

- a. Entering students with considerable competence in the material covered by EDUC 8120 and/or EDUC 8122 may request an opportunity to “test out” of the course from the director of research methods. If successful, the student will not be required to take the corresponding course(s). If a student “tests out” of one or both of these courses, they will be required to take two advanced methods courses rather than the normally required one. Note that “testing out” of EDUC 8120 or 8122 does not earn credit for those courses.

APPENDIX C: DISSERTATION COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The three-member dissertation committee includes a dissertation chair and two additional committee members. Prior to the dissertation defense, two additional examiners join the committee.

- Out of the five members, one must be outside the candidate's home program and one must be outside GSEHD.
- One of the committee members, other than the chair, will also serve as the presider. The committee member serving as presider shall also be an active examiner, participating in the questioning of the candidate and the votes. If the presider is not a member of the examining committee, they are present solely to moderate, and do not have a voting or examining role. The presider must be a GSEHD faculty member (tenure track, contract, or visiting).

Three-Member Dissertation Committee

DISSERTATION CHAIR (NONVOTING AT THE TIME OF DEFENSE)

- Hold an earned doctorate.
- Hold a full-time or part-time GSEHD faculty appointment (regular status, nonvisiting). Appointment outside program area requires approval of candidate's primary advisor.
- Have expertise in candidate's topic area.
- Have an active research agenda as characterized by the departmental personnel guidelines.
- Either (a) have experience serving as a member on no less than two dissertation committees, including the defense of the dissertation, or (b) in the absence of such experience, be mentored by an experienced GSEHD dissertation chair selected by the faculty member's department chair.

Emeritus and departing faculty may continue to serve as the dissertation chair for a period not to exceed two years, if the student has an approved proposal. After two years the student must reconstitute the dissertation committee by selecting a new chair.

TWO ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS (VOTING)

- Hold an earned doctorate, or a terminal degree and a faculty appointment, for at least one year.
- Have expertise that matches the candidate's topic area and research.
- Among the chair and the two other committee members, at least one will be knowledgeable about the methodology to be used in the dissertation research and designated as taking responsibility for guiding the research methodology.
- It is strongly recommended that one member come from outside the candidate's home program.
- Committee member cannot have a relationship with the candidate that might pose a conflict of interest.
- If a member does not hold a GW faculty appointment, they must submit a copy of their curriculum vitae to the Office of Student Services.

Two Additional Examiners for the Defense of Dissertation

TWO ADDITIONAL EXAMINERS FOR THE DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION (VOTING)

Two additional examiners are selected on the basis of their expertise and interest in the candidate's topic area

- Hold an earned doctorate for at least one year prior to the defense.
- Have a professional background and experience that is relevant to the candidate's topic area.
- Committee members must not have a relationship with the candidate that might pose a conflict of interest.
- If not a current or former GW faculty member, a copy of their curriculum vitae must be submitted to the Office of Student Services.

APPENDIX D: Sequence of Events During the Dissertation Oral Defense

- A. Set-up of the room
 - a. Candidate and chairperson at one end of table, presider at other end, examiners along sides, any observers along walls.
- B. Examination Session
 - a. Open the examination by indicating name of the candidate and degree
 - b. Statement of the purpose of the examination, which is to determine whether the dissertation is acceptable and whether the candidate satisfactorily defends it.
 - i. These decisions will be made at the conclusion of the examination by the four examiners. (The chair is present but does not participate in the examination or the decision.)
 - c. Permit the candidate to make a brief introductory statement
 - i. Keep the statement to about five minutes (optional). It is not necessary to summarize the content of the dissertation. Tell the examiners anything that may be helpful to them in understanding the research, your background, or the relationship between the two.
 - d. Each examiner will be given an opportunity to introduce questions. Once a question has been introduced, any other examiner who is interested in the same general area may feel free to enter the questioning at that point.
 - e. It is hoped that the initial questioning will proceed expeditiously enough that there will be an opportunity for a second round.
- C. Decision Period
 - a. The candidate and all observers will leave the room while the committee considers the acceptability of the dissertation document.
 - b. Possible decisions:
 - i. Accept: All errors are corrected, and recommendations which had consensus in the course of the examination are incorporated. The examiners delegate to the chairperson the responsibility for seeing that this is done.
 - ii. Accept conditionally: Any examiner who cares to do so may withhold his or her approval until the revised document has been submitted to him or her and is approved.
 - iii. Reject conditionally: The examiners establish conditions under which the dissertation may be reconsidered and accepted. This may or may not include another oral.
 - iv. Reject: The dissertation is judged totally unacceptable. The candidate has no alternative except to produce a new study, if permitted to continue.
 - c. The committee gets a motion and a second, and votes on the motion. Two negative votes defeat a motion.
- D. After decision is made – bring the candidate and guests back into the room and announce the results.