Ph.D. in Education Program
Frequently Asked Questions

Program Requirements/Student Status

Q: How many credits do I need to get my degree?

A: A minimum of 72 credits: at least 48 credits of coursework and at least 24 credits of dissertation-related research.

Q: What's the minimum grade point average I need to maintain?

A: 3.25

Q: How many credits do I need per semester in order to be considered a full-time student?

A: You must be enrolled for nine credits per semester in order for your status to be considered full-time. Students who are enrolled for less than nine credits in a semester are considered part-time.

Q: Do I still have to register for credits even after I have completed my coursework and passed my qualifying examination?

A: Yes. If you have passed your qualifying examination and are doing laboratory work, you must register for at least one credit of research per semester until you have completed your degree, even if this results in accumulations of research credits beyond the minimum required for the degree.

Q: If I need to take a semester off, how do I do so?

A: If you are unable to be actively involved in coursework for a given semester, you may register for Matriculation Continued. This keeps you "active" in the program. Doctoral students who have not taken their qualifying exams and have completed their coursework may use this registration for a maximum of two semesters until such time that the qualifying exam has been completed and research registrations may begin.

If you register for Research in Education and are post-qualified, you cannot register for Matriculation Continued. You must register for at least one credit of research.

If you have an emergency, you may contact Barbara Sirman (sirman@grad.rutgers.edu) at the SGS (formerly GSNB) for approval.

For more information on Matriculation Continued and other changes in active status (e.g., leave of absence), please refer to Section 3.12 of the SGS Handbook, found here.
Q: If I do not register for one or more semesters and do not make any formal change in my status (i.e., Matriculation Continued, leave of absence), can I be reinstated in the program?

A: If you miss one or more semesters because you have not registered and you have not formally changed your status to Matriculation Continued or taken a leave of absence, you must complete an Application for Readmission, found here, to be reinstated. Be sure to obtain the appropriate signatures before submitting to the School of Graduate Studies (SGS).

Q: What is the time limitation on completing my degree?

A: You have a maximum of seven years to complete the Ph.D. in Education Program. If you reach seven years in the program but have not earned the degree, you must request an extension of time by completing the Application for Extension of Time found here.

Q: Where can I find the Annual Progress Form, and who must approve it?

A: The Annual Progress Form is now administered online using a survey software tool called Qualtrics. In order to access your progress form, you must request a customized web link from Colleen McDermott (colleen.mcdermott@gse.rutgers.edu). The process of completing/reviewing progress forms usually takes place every year between December and February — this should be the only time when you would need access to the form.

Q: When is the Annual Progress Form due to the Ph.D. Director?

A: The due date will vary from year to year. Generally, there is an initial due date to your faculty advisor so he/she can review and provide feedback. Then there is a final due date to the Ph.D. Director. There will be periodic emails/announcements through the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in) regarding these due dates, so please make sure to read these emails.

Courses and Research

Q: Where can I find syllabi for GSE courses?

A: http://syllabi.gse.rutgers.edu/

Q: What is the purpose of the pre-thesis courses, and what are the requirements?

A: The pre-thesis courses are independent study courses that are designed to enhance a student’s ability to conduct scholarly research. The faculty advisor, or other Ph.D. in Education faculty member as appropriate, will typically provide greater support and guidance for the first course than for the second course. Each course should result in some type of product (e.g., a research paper, literature review, etc.). The exact nature of the research that the student will engage with is to be decided with the advisor or other faculty member serving as the course instructor. The pre-thesis plan, including expected outcome(s), should be shared with Ph.D. in
Education Program upon course registration. Prior to receiving a special permission number from the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program, students and advisors/instructors are asked to complete and submit the Pre-thesis Research Form available on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in). The form simply asks for a brief explanation of the focus of the pre-thesis course along with anticipated outcomes.

Q: Where can I find information about conducting research with human subjects?

A: Visit the Office of Research Regulatory Affairs website to find information about the Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines and approval process.

Transfer of Credits

Q: When can I transfer credits from another institution?

A: You may transfer credits when you have completed as a matriculated student in the SGS 12 credits of graduate courses with grades of B or better.

Q: How many credits am I allowed to transfer?

A: The maximum number of credits that a student may transfer is 50% of the total number of required course credits for his or her program. For students in the Ph.D. in Education Program, the maximum number of credits is 24. See the Ph.D. Handbook available on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in) for guidelines for transferring credits.

Q: How do I apply to transfer credits?

A: Complete the application, found here, and submit it to the Ph.D. Director for approval. (Please submit either via email or in person to the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program in the Office of Student and Academic Services. The Administrative Assistant will obtain the program director’s signature, and you will be informed when this part of the process has been completed.) The completed application must then be submitted to the SGS.

Q: How many credits do I need to be considered a full-time student?

A: You must be enrolled for nine credits per semester in order to be considered full-time. Students who are enrolled for less than nine credits in a semester are considered part-time. If you have passed your qualifying examination and are doing laboratory work, you must register for at least one credit of research per semester until you have completed your degree, even if this results in accumulations of research credits beyond the minimum required for the degree.
Grading Policy

Q: What is the basic grading system of the GSE?
A: The following is the basic grading system of the GSE (see http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/gse_current/pg51.html)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Failing</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: If I receive an Incomplete grade for a course, what is the process for changing that grade?
A: A change of grade may be authorized by the course instructor for up to one year after the IN grade was assigned. Any student incurring grades of Incomplete will be held to the limit of one year for completion of the course. Requests for waiver of this one-year limit must be made by the student, recommended by the course instructor and Director of the Ph.D. in Education Program, and approved by the Office of the Dean of the SGS. This waiver should be sought prior to the one-year —requests for waiver should be reserved for extenuating circumstances. For more information on Incomplete grades, please refer to Sections 3.21 and 3.23 in the SGS Handbook found here.

Qualifying Examination

Q: What is the process for the qualifying exam?
A: A description of the qualifying examination structure and process can be found on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in). Please consult the “Structure of Ph.D. Qualifying Examination” document for information.

Q: What do I need to do after I pass my qualifying exam?
A: You must complete an Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy Application, found here. The completed application, as well as a signed “Oral Examination Results Form _Qualifying Examination,” found on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in), must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program in the Office of Student and Academic Services located in Room 110 of the GSE. A hard copy and electronic version of the qualifying exam must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant as well.
In the event that any committee members participate in the oral portion of the qualifying examination virtually, rather than in-person, and are unable to provide their original signature on the appropriate paperwork, committee members need to authorize the Director of the Ph.D. in Education Program to sign on their behalf. Each committee member who is not present at the oral defense of the qualifying examination must send the Director an email following a successful defense that indicates approval of the qualifying examination and authorization for the Director to sign any relevant paperwork. See the following for the appropriate language to be sent:

I, [name of committee member], have read the qualifying examination of [student’s name] and participated in the oral defense. I grant permission to the Graduate Director, Professor [name of Director of Ph.D. in Education Program], to sign on my behalf.

**Dissertation**

**Q: What are the criteria for dissertation committee membership?**

A: The dissertation committee (and the proposal committee) must have at least four members. At least three of these members must be members of the Ph.D. in Education Program faculty at Rutgers University, either as associate or full faculty members. The dissertation committee must also have one outside member. Whenever possible, “outside” shall be “outside the university,” but in all cases this person should not be a member of the Ph.D. in Education Program faculty at Rutgers University.

**Q: How do I get approval of my dissertation committee?**

A: You must complete the Dissertation Committee Form, found on the [GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal](#) (NetID and password required to log in), and submit it for approval by the Ph.D. Director. (Please submit either via email or in person to the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program in the Office of Student and Academic Services. The Administrative Assistant will obtain the program director’s signature, and you will be informed when this part of the process has been completed.) The outside committee member’s current CV must be included with the submission as well.

**Q: What do I need to do after my dissertation proposal defense?**

A: The Dissertation Proposal Title Page must be included in the final proposal submission. Following the defense of the dissertation proposal and the committee’s decision, the “Oral Examination Results Form _Dissertation Proposal” must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program in the Office of Student and Academic Services located in Room 110 of the GSE. Both the Dissertation Proposal Title Page and the “Oral Examination Results Form _Dissertation Proposal” can be found on the [GSE Ph.D. in Education](#)
Portal (NetID and password required to log in). A hard copy and electronic version of the final proposal must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant as well.

**Q: What do I need to bring to my dissertation defense?**

A: Before the final defense of the dissertation, you must go to the SGS and pick up your original Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy Application that was completed and submitted after you passed the qualifying examination. You must bring this to the final defense in order to get signatures from all members of the dissertation committee. The Dissertation Title Page must be signed by committee members as well.

**Q: What do I need to do after my dissertation defense?**

A: Following the final defense and the committee’s decision, the signed Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy Application (if applicable), the signed Dissertation Title Page, and the signed “Oral Examination Results Form _Dissertation” found on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in) must all be submitted to the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program in the Office of Student and Academic Services located in Room 110 of the GSE.

In the event that any committee members participate in the oral portion of the qualifying examination virtually, rather than in-person, and are unable to provide their original signature on the appropriate paperwork, committee members need to authorize the Director of the Ph.D. in Education Program to sign on their behalf. Each committee member who is not present at the oral defense of the qualifying examination must send the Director an email following a successful defense that indicates approval of the qualifying examination and authorization for the Director to sign any relevant paperwork. See the following for the appropriate language to be sent:

*I, [name of committee member], have read the qualifying examination of [student’s name] and participated in the oral defense. I grant permission to the Graduate Director, Professor [name of Director of Ph.D. in Education Program], to sign on my behalf.*

Note: If anything requires the program director’s signature, please submit either via email or in person to the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program in the Office of Student and Academic Services. The Administrative Assistant will obtain the program director’s signature, and you will be informed when this part of the process has been completed.

**Q: What kind of format should I use for my dissertation?**

A: Consult the “Form and Submission of the Dissertation” document available on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in) to find out the suggested format for your dissertation.
Q: How do I submit my dissertation?

A: The final copy of the dissertation should be prepared in strict accordance with the instructions given in the pamphlet, *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Style Guide*, available at the SGS or by clicking here).

After the dissertation has been accepted by the committee, it should be submitted electronically to the SGS (click here to complete the submission) no later than the announced deadlines for completion of degree requirements. In addition, a hard copy and electronic version of the dissertation must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant for the Ph.D. in Education Program in the Office of Student and Academic Services located in Room 110 of the GSE.

**Funding Opportunities**

Q: How can I get funding from the GSE?

A: Doctoral students at the GSE get funding from three sources: teaching assistantships, graduate assistantships, and miscellaneous grants and fellowships. Please consult the Ph.D. Handbook available on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in) for more detailed information.

**Conference Reimbursement**

Q: Can I get reimbursed for conference participation? If so, how?

A: Yes, you can receive reimbursement for conference participation from a number of sources, such as the GSE Student Affairs Committee (GSAC), a professor’s grant, or Dean’s Conference Support. In all instances, you must complete the application process that is required for each type of source.

For more information on applying for funding from GSAC, click here. If you would like to apply for Dean’s Support, please contact Tiffany Mayers, Senior Administrative Assistant to the Dean, to obtain an application, which must be completed and submitted before the conference.

For detailed descriptions of the expense report process, please refer to the instructions found in the “Conference Reimbursement Processes” folder on the GSE Ph.D. in Education Portal (NetID and password required to log in).