



RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK

Graduate School of Education

Education Doctorate Handbook

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Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Graduate School of Education

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Part I. Introduction

The Rutgers Graduate School of Education (GSE) is New Jersey's premier institution of higher education for doctoral work in education. The GSE has offered the Ed.D. since 1930 and the Ph.D. since 1997. In 2007, the GSE became a charter member of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). Through this affiliation, Rutgers GSE aims to prepare educational leaders who are scholarly practitioners with the skills and expertise to inquire into and resolve problems of practice.

The CPED Professional Doctorate in education:

- Is framed around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice.
- Prepares leaders who can construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, and communities.
- Provides opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships.
- Provides field-based opportunities to analyze problems of practice and use multiple frames to develop meaningful solutions.
- Is grounded in and develops a professional knowledge base that integrates both practical and research knowledge, which links theory with systemic and systematic inquiry.
- Emphasizes the generation, transformation, and use of professional knowledge and practice.

The Ed.D. Program is designed to be completed over three years and one summer. The coursework, along with any available or recommended writing support, is designed to expand students' understanding of the contexts in which they work, build a knowledge base of the extant research in their concentrations, and develop the research and academic writing skills necessary to complete a dissertation.

Program Goals

The Ed.D. degree helps future and current leaders develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to solve problems of practice and improve instructional quality. Graduates will learn to be change agents who improve the lives of students and their families and communities. The program is specifically designed for working professionals, providing a sequence of coursework and hands-on leadership experiences along with individualized mentoring.

Students will learn how to be change agents in educational settings by:

1. Recognizing and valuing multiple perspectives.
2. Using theory and research to frame, diagnose, and respond to problems of practice.
3. Developing a professional knowledge base that integrates practical and research knowledge.
4. Conducting research to guide improvement and inform policy, programs, and practice.
5. Identifying instances and patterns of discrimination and inequality and advocating for social justice; and
6. Communicating and collaborating to build partnerships within and across communities.

Problems of Practice

The Education Doctorate at Rutgers is designed to develop the skills of scholarly practitioners who are able to positively influence the lives of students, families and communities. Our program is founded on the belief that inquiry and decision making skills are often most effectively cultivated through investigating problems of practice, and that the student's work place is one of the most effective learning environments to test and develop these skills. Students are strongly encouraged throughout their program to model their research endeavors toward solving problems of practice and to incorporate their professional practice into all scholarly pursuits.

Program Description

The Rutgers Ed.D. Program is intended for working professionals and is designed to be summer intensive (9 credits per summer) and fall/spring light (6 credits per semester). Students begin their doctoral education as part of a cohort and are encouraged to follow the curriculum sequence outlined in Part II in order to complete the program with their cohort in approximately three-and-a-half years. Alternative sequences can be followed as needed. However, the cohort is a key element of the learning experience in this program.

Each doctoral student is required to complete a program composed of three interrelated components of 24 credits each: core courses, concentration courses, and the dissertation experience. The core is a sequence of classes designed to provide students with foundational knowledge and skills relevant to leading in educational contexts. The concentration allows students to acquire specialized knowledge within an area of interest. The Ed.D. program culminates with a 15-18 month-long dissertation experience.

The Core

The core is a group of 8 courses (24 credits) that are required of all students, regardless of their concentration. Students take 2 courses in each of four focus areas: a) Leadership, Organizations and Change b) Social Contexts of Education c) Learners and Learning and d) Inquiry. These broad areas are essential framing lenses for understanding problems of practice in education.

In the core sequence on Leadership, students learn about facilitating change at an organizational and systems level as well as the individual and classroom level. Both classes expose students to a range of cases for considering the complexities of leadership. In the core sequence on Social Contexts, students learn how to critically analyze the factors (historical, economic, political, sociological, historical, and epistemological) that contribute to shifts in educational theory and practice. In the Learners and Learning sequence, the purpose of the first class is to update students' knowledge about learning theory and its uses in practice so that educational leaders know what good learning looks like. The second class builds on these principles as they specifically relate to adult learning. The Inquiry sequence of the core is designed to help students gain an understanding of the design components that go into research including the dissertation project they will complete. Students gain experience using a range of inquiry tools for solving problems of practice and as well as an understanding of program evaluation and/or action research designs that they are likely to use as scholarly practitioners and educational leaders.

The Concentrations

The Ed.D. Program at Rutgers allows students to choose among one of five areas of specialization. This provides the opportunity for students to acquire context-specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to particular change agent roles. The concentration is composed of 8 courses (24 credits). The concentrations available for study are:

1. Design of Learning Environments

The goal of this concentration is to educate students on the "science" of designing learning environments/contexts, and on the principles, frameworks, and theories of learning that undergird the design of learning environments. This concentration will prepare students to engage in the various aspects of design and evaluation. The concentration is intended for individuals who have a particular focus on the design of learning contexts and interventions in a wide range of settings from formal to informal, in-person to online, and who may benefit from the use of tools that include collaboration and technology. This includes individuals who work in museums or libraries, are extension educators (4H), educators in other informal environments, corporate training staff, education software designers,

classroom teachers, district curriculum developers, teacher educators, or various higher education professionals.

2. Educational Leadership

This concentration prepares K-12 educators to lead a range of improvement efforts in their schools and districts. Students deepen their knowledge of multiple leadership dimensions including equity leadership, instructional leadership, and organizational leadership. The typical student is interested in holding formal leadership roles such as supervisor, principal, administrator, and/or superintendent. It is not assumed that applicants are already serving in a formal leadership role; however, successful applicants must have completed a master's in educational leadership and hold principal certification. Principal certification cannot be earned as part of the Educational Leadership concentration.

3. Education, Culture and Society

This concentration is designed to attract a diverse cohort of students who desire systematic and rigorous advanced study of theoretical and practical issues of social and educational equity, change, and reform. The intended audience for this concentration is school and higher education leaders, reformers, policymakers, and teachers. The goal is to enact improvements to practice and thus to improve the process of education. Students in this concentration will be challenged to understand and use research and data effectively in meeting problems of practice related to equity and social justice.

4. Special Education

This concentration is designed to provide students with opportunities to learn about supervision, preparing teachers, and developing policy within the field of special education. The intended audience for this concentration is special education teachers, administrators of special education, teacher educators, leaders in allied service agencies and organizations, and policy-makers, and teachers. The goal is to enact improvements to practice and thus to improve the process of education for students with special needs. Students in this concentration will be challenged to understand and use research and data effectively in meeting problems of practice related to special education.

5. Teacher Leadership

This concentration enables students to learn how to design research-informed professional development and teacher learning opportunities in their focus area, whether that is science, literacy, early childhood/elementary education, language education, social studies education, mathematics education, special education, etc. The intended audience for this concentration is people who are, or will be, working as a teacher educator in a college or university setting or who are responsible for professional development of educators in

some kind of educational setting, such as a curriculum coach, a coordinator of curriculum and instruction or a subject area coordinator, as well as principals or other educational leaders who want to know more about professional learning and educational opportunities that lead to practitioner improvement.

The Dissertation

After successful completion of the qualifying exam process (see page 19), students are required to complete a dissertation. The dissertation requires students to identify and investigate a problem of practice systematically using current literature and inquiry methodology. Most students will work in assigned dissertation groups under the supervision of a dissertation chair.

Part II. Program Requirements

The Ed.D. Program consists of three interrelated program components: the core, a concentration, and a dissertation experience. Students are also required to pass a Qualifying Exam immediately prior to engaging in the dissertation experience. The Core is required of all students, regardless of Concentration. It is composed of 8 courses, which are broken into four sub-categories.

The Core (24 credits)

Leadership, Organizations and Change (6 credits):

Leadership 1: Leadership in Schools and Communities (15:255:611)

Leadership 2: Change Process (15:255:612)

Social Contexts (6 credits):

Social Contexts 1: Sociocultural Foundations of Education (15:255:615)

Social Contexts 2: History of Educational Reform (15:255:617)

Learners and Learning (6 credits):

Learners and Learning 1: Key Principles of Learning (15:255:606)

Learners and Learning 2: Adult Learning (15:255:607)

Inquiry (6 credits):

Inquiry 1: Inquiry I (15:255:603)

Inquiry 2: Inquiry II (15:255:602)

The Concentrations

Each student is required to choose one concentration area of study. Suggested timelines for program completion are provided below. Students who need to extend their program timeline should do so with the guidance of their concentration coordinator. Concentration coordinators have the expertise necessary to formulate an appropriate alternative timeline, based students' needs and course schedules and availability.

Design of Learning Environments (24 Credits)

Design of Learning Environments (DLE) Concentration Learning Goals

Students will learn to:

- Understand the process of design and how it applies specifically to the design of learning environments.
- Know the theoretical foundation and empirical support for common learning environment approaches or features.
- Engage in the process of designing learning environments.
- Understand how to conduct design-based research.
- Design, evaluate, and revise existing learning environment designs enacted in real settings.

This concentration has 3 required courses. Students must also take at least 2 courses out of 4 concentration electives (listed below). There are 3 additional electives for which students can select courses that will enhance content area knowledge or technical/methodological expertise.

Summer 1	Fall 1		Spring 1
Leadership I (15:255:611)	Inquiry I (15:255:603)		Inquiry 2 (15:255:602)
Learners & Learning I (15:255:606)	Design of Learning Environments (15:262:603) OR Design Based Research (15:262:610)		Design Research Practicum (15:262:625) OR Concentration Elective
Social Contexts I (15:255:615)			
Summer 2	Fall 2	Winter 2	Spring 2
Leadership 2 (15:255:612)	Learners & Learning 2 (15:255:607)	Qualifying Process	Design Research Practicum (15:262:625) OR Concentration Elective
Social Contexts 2 (15:255:617)	Design of Learning Environments (15:262:603) OR Design Based Research (15:262:610)		Design Research Practicum (15:262:625) OR Concentration Elective Concentration Elective
Concentration Elective	Design of Learning Environments (15:262:603) OR		
Summer 3			Spring 3

	Design Based Research (15:262:610) Fall 3		
Concentration Elective	Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Data Collection		Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis
Concentration Elective			
Dissertation credits(3) (15:255:700): Proposal			
Summer 4			
Dissertation credits(9) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis			

DLE Required Courses:

- Design of Learning Environments (15:262:603)
- Design Based Research (15:262:610)
- Design research Practicum (15:262:625)

DLE Concentration Electives (students must take at least 2):

- Cognition, Collaboration and Technology (15:262:622)
- Problem-based Learning (15:295:620)
- Cooperative and Collaborative Learning (15:295:510)
- Learning in Informal Contexts (15:262:620)

Other Electives (in consultation with concentration coordinator):

- Race, Empire, and Education (15:310:512)
- Urban Education (15:310:542)
- Introduction to Teaching with Digital Tools (15:255:503)
- Curriculum and Instruction (15:310:500)
- Developing Digital E-Learning Environments (15:255:506)
- Multimodal and Digital Literacies (15:252:522)
- Psychology of Learning (15:295:580)
- Motivation in the Classroom (15:295:518)
- Educational Psychology II: Theories of Cognition and Instruction (16:300:582)
- Web-Based Multimedia Design for Educators (15:255:504)
- Gender and Education (15:310:540)
- Foundations of Human Resources Development (15:233:560)
- Models of Professional Development and Change (15:267:604)

Educational Leadership (24 Credits)

Educational Leadership (EL) Concentration Learning Goals

Students will learn to:

- Lead organizational learning and change so that there is a collective sense of ownership and improvements can be sustained over time.
- Serve as learning-focused leaders who create the conditions and engage in the practices necessary for educators to experience effective professional learning.
- Serve as equity-focused leaders who confront and alter institutional biases that contribute to student marginalization, deficit-based schooling and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status.

This concentration consists of 4 required concentration courses and 4 electives. Electives must be chosen in consultation with your concentration coordinator. Students have the option of choosing one of the following focus areas: Equity, Learning, or Policy.

Summer 1	Fall 1		Spring 1
Leadership I (15:255:611)	Inquiry I (15:255:603)		Inquiry 2 (15:255:602)
Learners & Learning I (15:255:606)	Leading for Instructional Equity (15:230:624)		Leading for Social Justice (15:230:609)
Social Contexts I (15:255:615)	OR Concentration Elective		OR Leading Educational Organizations (15:230:604)
Summer 2	Fall 2	Winter 2	Spring 2
Leadership 2 (15:255:612)	Learners & Learning 2 (15:255:607)	Qualifying Process	Leading for Social Justice (15:230:609)
Social Contexts 2 (15:255:617)	Qualitative Research Methods I (16:300:509)		OR Leading Educational Organizations (15:230:604)
Concentration Elective			Leading for Social Justice (15:230:609)
			OR Organizational Theory in Education (15:230:604)
			Concentration Elective
Summer 3	Fall 3		Spring 3

Concentration Elective	Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Data Collection		Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis
Concentration Elective			
Dissertation credits(3) (15:255:700): Proposal			
Summer 4			
Dissertation credits(9) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis			

Required EL Courses:

- Leading for Instructional Equity (15:230:624)
- Leading for Social Justice: Navigating Through Policy, Politics, and the Law (15:230:609)
- Leading Educational Organizations (15:230:604)
- Qualitative Research Methods in Education: Introduction (16:300:509) (There is an option to take alternative methods courses by advisement only.)

Recommended EL Electives (students must take 4) to be chosen in consultation with your concentration coordinator:

- Equity Focus:
 - Race, Empire, and Education (15:310:512)
 - Urban Education (15:310:542)
 - History of African-American Education (15:310:561)
 - Gender and Education (15:310:540)
 - Queer Issues in Schools (15:310:569)
 - Comparative Education (15:310:503)
- Learning Focus:
 - Teacher Leadership: Theory and Practice (15:267:622)
 - Models of Professional Development and Change (15:267:604)
 - Educating Teachers (15:267:610)
 - Design of Learning Environments (15:262:603)
 - Problem-based Learning (15:295:620)
 - Cooperative and Collaborative Learning (15:295:510)
- Policy Focus:
 - Education Policy Development to Advance Equity and Effectiveness (15:230:618)
 - Economics of Education: Equity and Efficiency (16:300:541)
 - Education Policy Implementation: US and International (15:230:508)
 - Fiscal Policy and Management in Education (15:230:622)
 - Assessment, Data, and Problem Solving (15:230:615)

Education, Culture and Society (24 Credits)

Education, Culture and Society (ECS) Concentration Learning Goals

Students will learn to:

- Develop theoretical frameworks and perspectives critical to understanding education as a social process situated in political, historical, social, economic and cultural contexts.
- Understand issues of social justice and equity in educational settings, informed by theory and research.
- Employ robust methods of inquiry to investigate their particular area of research interest.

There are 5 required concentration courses for the ECS concentration. ECS content courses and electives must be chosen in consultation with your concentration coordinator.

- Education and Society
- Qualitative Research Methods in Education: Introduction (16:300:509)
- Qualitative Research Methods in Education: Design and Analysis (16:300:513)
- 2 additional ECS content courses to be selected with the guidance and permission of the ECS concentration coordinator.

Students have the option of choosing a focus (Race, Empire and Ethnicity; Global; Higher Education; or Gender and Sexuality).

Summer 1	Fall 1		Spring 1
Leadership I (15:255:611)	Inquiry I (15:255:603)		Inquiry 2 (15:255:602)
Learners & Learning I (15:255:606)	Education and Society (15:310:551)		Concentration Elective
Social Contexts I (15:255:615)			
Summer 2	Fall 2	Winter 2	Spring 2
Leadership 2 (15:255:612)	Qualitative Research Methods I (16:300:509)	Qualifying Process	Qualitative Research Methods II (16:300:513)
Social Contexts 2 (15:255:617)	Learners & Learning 2 (15:255:607)		Concentration Elective
Concentration Elective			
Summer 3	Fall 3		Spring 3
Concentration Elective	Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Data Collection		Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis
Concentration Elective			

Dissertation credits(3) (15:255:700): Proposal			
Summer 4			
Dissertation credits(9) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis			

Required ECS Concentration Courses:

- Education and Society (15:310:551)
- Qualitative Research Methods in Education: Introduction (16:300:509)
- Qualitative Research Methods in Education: Design and Analysis (16:300:513)

*There is an option to take alternative methods courses by advisement only.

ECS Content Courses (students must take at least 2) to be chosen in consultation with your concentration coordinator:

- Race, Empire and Education Focus:
 - History of African American Education (15:310:561)
 - Race, Empire, and Education (15:310:512)
 - Urban Education (15:310:542)
- Global Focus:
 - Comparative Education (15:310:503)
 - Migration, Globalization, and US Education (15:310:568)
- Higher Education Focus:
 - History of Higher Education in the US (16:507:535)
 - Any additional higher education (507) course in the GSE
- Gender and Sexuality Focus:
 - Gender and Education (15:310:540)
 - Leading for Social Justice: Navigating Through Policy, Politics, and the Law (15:230:609)
 - Queer Issues in Schools (15:310:569)

ECS Electives (students must take 3)

ECS electives can be taken from across the GSE or the university and must be chosen in consultation with your concentration coordinator.

Special Education (24 Credits)

Special Education (SE) Concentration Learning Goals

Students in the Special Education concentration will

- Develop the capacity to identify, critique, design, implement and test evidence-based practices in special education.
- Study a problem of practice related to their professional identity focused on a challenge in real world educational settings, using their choice of research methodology (quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods or single case design).
- Become empowered advocates and activists who partner with individuals with disabilities and their families to promote independence and well-being across the life span.

This concentration consists of 4 required courses, 1 methodological elective, 1 teacher leadership elective, and 2 specialization electives. Methodological, Teacher Leadership, and Specialization Electives must be chosen in consultation with your concentration coordinator.

Summer 1	Fall 1		Spring 1
Leadership I (15:255:611)	Inquiry I (15:255:603)		Inquiry 2 (15:255:602)
Learners & Learning I (15:255:606)	Seminar in Special Education (15:293:605)		Designing Interventions and Measuring Outcomes (15:293:615)
Social Contexts I (15:255:615)			
Summer 2	Fall 2	Winter 2	Spring 2
Leadership 2 (15:255:612)	Learners & Learning 2 (15:255:607)	Qualifying Process	Concentration Elective
Social Contexts 2 (15:255:617)	Internship in Special Education (15:293:633 OR Concentration Elective		Internship in Special Education (15:293:633 OR Concentration Elective
Quantitative Educational Research Design (15:291:518)			
Summer 3	Fall 3		Spring 3
Concentration Elective	Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Data Collection		Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis
Concentration Elective			
Dissertation credits(3) (15:255:700): Proposal			

Summer 4			
Dissertation credits(9) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis			

Required SE Concentration Courses:

- Seminar in Special Education (15:293:605)
- Current Topics in Special Education (15:293:630)
- Designing Interventions and Measuring Outcomes in Special Education (15:293:615)
- Internship in Special Education (15:293:633)

SE Teacher Leadership Electives:

Please refer to the Teacher Leadership concentration courses list.

SE Methodological Electives:

- Qualitative Research Methods In Education: Introduction (16:300:511)

SE Specialization Electives:

- Learning Disabilities (15:293:522)
- Inclusive Teaching in Education (15:293:523)
- School Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents (15:293:514)
- New Jersey Special Education Law (15:293:610)

Teacher Leadership (24 Credits)

Teacher Leadership (TL) Concentration Learning Goals

Students will learn to:

- Utilize research on teaching, learning, and leadership to support effective instructional practices
- Identify problems of practice to facilitate instructional change efforts guided by appropriate theoretical lenses
- Know how to advocate for, design, implement, and evaluate sustainable learning environments for pre- and in-service teachers
- Understand and be able to navigate the complexity of acting as a teacher leader, in order to effectively fulfill roles such as mentor, co-teacher, coach, be a team leader, chair committees, facilitate PLCs

This concentration consists of 3 required courses and 5 electives. Electives must be chosen in consultation with your concentration coordinator.

Summer 1	Fall 1		Spring 1
Leadership I (15:255:611)	Inquiry I (15:255:603)		Inquiry 2 (15:255:602)
Learners & Learning I (15:255:606)	Teacher Leadership: Theory and Practice (15:267:622)		Models of Professional Development (15:267:604)
Social Contexts I (15:255:615)			
Summer 2	Fall 2	Winter 2	Spring 2
Leadership 2 (15:255:612)	Learners & Learning 2 (15:255:607)	Qualifying Process	Teacher Leadership Inquiry(1.5) (15:267:618)
Social Contexts 2 (15:255:617)	Concentration Elective		Educating Teachers (15:267:610)
Teacher Leadership Inquiry(1.5) (15:267:618)			OR Concentration Elective
Summer 3	Fall 3		Spring 3
Concentration Elective	Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Data Collection		Dissertation credits(6) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis
Concentration Elective			

Dissertation credits(3) (15:255:700): Proposal			
Summer 4			
Dissertation credits(9) (15:255:700): Writing and Analysis			
*This schedule does not show a required 3 credit elective. Students may apply a transfer credit to the final elective or take an additional course in any semester or during the Winter term.			

Required TL Concentration Courses:

- Teacher Leadership: Theory and Practice (15:267:622)
- Models of Professional Development and Change (15:267:604)
- Teacher Leadership Inquiry (15:267:618)

TL Concentration Electives (students must take 5):

Students should consult with their concentration coordinator to identify a coherent set of electives in a focus area. A focus area should help students deepen their content knowledge or their knowledge and skills in a relevant area of educational study. Students have the option of choosing one of the following focus areas: Literacy, Mathematics, or Equity. Other focus areas can also be developed with advisement from Teacher Leadership concentration faculty.

- Literacy Focus:
 - Literacy Development in the Early Years (15:299:514)
 - Literacy Development in the Elementary and Middle School (15:299:516)
 - Theoretical Foundations of Literacy: Research, Policy, and Practice (15:299:561)
 - Diagnosis and Correction of Reading Difficulties (15:299:564)
 - Independent Study in Reading (15:299:601)
 - Students can take an Independent Study in Reading OR serve as a Teaching Assistant or Part Time Lecturer for a literacy course
- Mathematics Focus:
 - Understanding School-Aged Students' Mathematical Learning (15:254:540)
 - Mathematics Education Practicum (15:254:644)
 - Seminar in Mathematics Education Research (16:300:661)
 - Topics in Math Education: Critical Thinking and Reasoning in Mathematics (15:254:551)
- Equity Focus:
 - History of African American Education (15:310:561)
 - Race, Empire and Education (15:310: 512)
 - Gender & Education (15:310:540)
 - Queer Issues in Schools (15:310:569)

- Comparative Education (15:310:503)
- Other Content Knowledge Foci (in consultation with concentration coordinator):
 - Subject areas: Science, Early childhood/Elementary, Social Studies, Language, or Gifted Education

Part III: Qualifying Exam Process

Purpose

The qualifying exam process is designed to enable students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have learned through course work as well as their capacity to design a successful dissertation study. The qualifying exams take place over winter break, typically between the second fall and second spring semesters of the program. The qualifying process gives students a chance to engage in summative reflection, demonstrate what they have learned, and begin to finalize their thoughts on a dissertation topic prior to beginning the proposal writing process in the summer. The exam consists of two questions. Each response is approximately 15-20 pages long.

Question # 1 is developed by faculty from each respective concentration and provides students the opportunity to demonstrate learning related to concentration-specific learning goals.

Question #2 is the same for all students across all concentrations and is aimed at helping them look toward their dissertation work. In this paper, students begin to develop aspects of their dissertation proposal based on the problem that they are interested in investigating for their dissertation. Students will 1) introduce and frame the problem, 2) provide a literature review that synthesizes existing empirical and conceptual studies and creates an argument for the proposed study and, 3) outline a research design and methodology.

Eligibility

To sit for the Qualifying Exam students must have completed at least 21 credits of core courses (six of which must be Inquiry I and Inquiry II) as well as 12 credits of their concentration courses. A student may have no more than one outstanding "Incomplete" grade.

Procedures

The qualifying exam is offered once each year.

- Students receive qualifying questions on or before December 1st
- Students submit responses to qualifying questions on the first day of the Spring semester.
- Each response paper will have 2 reviewers; one will be assigned as “lead” reviewer.
- After independently reviewing each question response, reviewers will work together to:
 - come to a consensus on common final scores across each rubric component
 - provide clear and comprehensive feedback/comments on each paper response,
 - submit a combined rubric to the Ed.D. Administrator
- Qualifying papers are graded as “Pass” or “Revise and Resubmit.”

- Students receive a combined rubric with common scores from the 2 reviewers AND tracked changes/comments and feedback on each of the exam papers.
- Students are notified of their results within 6 weeks of submission. Students must pass *both* papers to complete the qualifying process. In the case of disagreement between reviewers about a paper, the Ed.D. Director will assign a third independent reviewer. The decision of the third reviewer will be accepted as the final decision.
- For papers that have been graded as “Revise and Resubmit”, the “lead” reviewer of each paper should meet with the student within 2 weeks of receiving paper response results to provide written and verbal feedback (using the combined rubric to guide the conversation with the student) and answer any questions the student may have about the initial scores and written feedback the reviewers provided. Feedback sessions should include the following discussion points:
 - Strengths of the paper(s)
 - Areas where the student needs to improve
 - Conceptual and/or nuts-and-bolts feedback (including any writing concerns)
 - Suggestions for moving forward with revisions, and where appropriate, for preparing the future dissertation proposal
- If a student does not pass one or both qualifying papers (i.e., has been graded Revise & Resubmit), the student has exactly **one month** from the date of the face-to-face meeting with the lead reviewer to revise the paper(s). *After the feedback meeting with the reviewer, students may **not** solicit their reviewers during this interim 1 month revision period, and reviewers must not offer or provide feedback during this time.* The two original reviewers will review the revised paper(s). Results should be provided within 2 weeks of receipt of the revisions.
- If there is a disagreement between reviewers about the revised paper(s) OR the paper is graded as “Fail”, the Ed.D. Director will assign an independent third reviewer whose decision will be final. If either paper is graded as “Fail” by the third reviewer, the student will fail the qualifying process and will be dismissed from the program.

NOTE: The student will have **one** opportunity to revise and resubmit paper(s). If **either** paper does not pass after this second attempt (i.e., the 30-day revision & resubmission), **the student will fail the qualifying process and will be dismissed from the program.**

Next Steps

Following successful completion of the Qualifying Exam, each student will be assigned to a dissertation group and registered for 3 credits with the corresponding dissertation group chair in the summer semester following the Qualifying Exam process.

Part IV: Dissertation Process

The Ed.D. culminates with an approximately 15-18 month dissertation experience. The dissertation requires students to identify and investigate a problem of practice using current literature and inquiry methodology. Students are encouraged from the beginning of the program to identify a problem of practice that will be the focus of their dissertations.

Problem of Practice Dissertation

A problem of practice dissertation describes a challenge in educational practice, seeks empirically to investigate the challenge and/or test solution(s) to address the challenge, generates actionable implications, and appropriately communicates these implications to relevant stakeholders.

Dissertation Design

Design principles. The Ed.D. dissertation should:

- Focus on a problem of practice that is relevant to the student and his/her professional context (when possible)
- Have direct implications for policy and practice
- Uphold common standards of high quality research (well written, rigorous and coherent approach to methodology, thorough grounding and bounding, etc.)
- Have a final chapter that outlines how this study helps/informs everyday work of practitioners and a section that makes specific suggestions for improved practices based on the findings of the study

Dissertation Types. The purpose/goal of the dissertation will drive the type of dissertation that students conduct. Regardless of the type, all dissertations involve the systematic collection and analysis of data or primary source material. Some examples include:

- Problem identification and implications for intervention dissertation: asks “What’s going on here?” and “What should we do about it?”
- Design of instructional, organizational, or systemic change initiative or intervention dissertation: Proposes specific and detailed solution to problem of practice. The emphasis is on design, based on problem identification and review of relevant research, but would include an evaluation design and some evaluation data and implications
- Evaluation of intervention or initiative dissertation: comparison study of two or more interventions or control compared to intervention(s) that asks “What happens when we...?”
- History/Phenomenology of an educational problem or issue dissertation: Uses historical or phenomenological data to inform thinking about problems of practice

Dissertation Audience. Dissertations may be written for a variety of practitioner audiences (single or multiple) from those most directly involved at a local level to a more public group of readers. The audience can be described as:

- Proximal: self, teachers of same grade level or department, school leaders, other colleagues, and GSE faculty)
- Semi Proximal/Semi Distal: School district, school board, practitioners in outside of building but in same district, colleagues working in other close by or similar sites, parents, community members, and GSE faculty
- Distal: public, academic field, client, policy makers, GSE faculty

Dissertation Formats. Students have the choice to prepare a dissertation using any of the formats described below. The choice of format should be discussed with and approved by the Dissertation Chair.

- Traditional
 - The traditional dissertation format should consist of 5 or more chapters describing
 - the purpose of the study
 - relevant literature and how it informs the study
 - research design and methods
 - findings
 - a discussion that explains how the study helps/informs everyday work of practitioners and makes specific suggestions for improved practices based on the findings of the study.
- Semi-traditional
 - This dissertation consists of 4 chapters (Purpose, Literature Review, Design/Methods, Findings), plus a product that is the outcome of your work. This could include, but is not limited to:
 - Presentation to faculty, school board, conference attendees, community, etc. Evaluation Plan
 - Curriculum Design/Curriculum Materials Professional Development Design
 - Policy Brief
 - Journal article (practitioner or academic) Funding Proposal
 - Video documentary
- Portfolio (Alternative Format)
 - The portfolio dissertation contains at least 3 distinct products from the list above (or similar products), including at least one that reviews relevant literature,

describes the research design and verifiable methods, and demonstrates an explicit link between data collected, analysis, and interpretation of the data (i.e., a more traditionally scholarly product) plus an introduction explaining the contents of the portfolio, a design description (if appropriate) and a conclusion that describes what actions have or will be taken as a result of the study and what the overall learnings have been from completing the project.

Portfolio Dissertation Format Approval Process

Because the alternative format dissertation is a less standardized product, a proposal to do portfolio dissertation format must be approved by the student's dissertation committee and then by the Ed.D. Curriculum Committee. It should be submitted to the dissertation committee during the proposal defense or at least 4 months before defending the dissertation. In the proposal, be sure to make clear:

- What products are being chosen and a rationale for each;
- Intended audience(s) and the specific contribution of each product;
- How the 3 products are distinct from each other;
- How the products connect to the goals of the Ed.D. program.

After the dissertation committee approves the proposal, it must be submitted to the Ed.D. Executive Committee for review. The purpose of the review is to assure quality and coherence of alternative formats across the program. Unsuccessful proposals will receive feedback and can be resubmitted for another review.

Dissertation Committee

The Ed.D. Dissertation Committee consists of a minimum of three individuals, at least two of whom must be Rutgers full-time faculty members and/or staff members. Any full-time faculty or staff member at Rutgers with an earned doctorate and appropriate expertise is eligible to serve as a committee member if recommended by the Chair of a dissertation committee. A person with appropriate expertise outside Rutgers may become a member of a specific dissertation committee if recommended in writing by a committee Chair and approved by the Ed.D. Director. A vita for an outside (i.e., non GSE) committee member must be provided. The Chair should be a current full-time member of the Graduate School of Education faculty. The Ed.D. Director must review and approve the full Committee. All students are required to submit a Dissertation Committee Form prior to scheduling your proposal.

To ensure that all students have Chairs who can assist them during the entire dissertation process and a committee that can provide subject area and methodological expertise, chairs and committees will be recruited and approved by the Ed.D. Director who will have final authority to approve them. The Ed.D. Director will consult with GSE faculty members and with candidates in selecting chairs and in forming dissertation committees. Every attempt will be

made to make subject-related matches between groups and chairs. However, given that the majority of candidates want to graduate in the 3.5-year timeframe and intensive summer work is required to do so, sometimes a perfect match between expert and topic will not be possible, as many faculty are not available to supervise when it is most needed.

Therefore, the Chair's function is to facilitate the dissertation process. The term facilitate denotes that the dissertation chair will guide the group members by supporting design and writing, keeping candidates on track, acting as a resource, helping with group processes, and being a critical reader. If the chair is not a content area specialist for a candidate, the Chair will work with the candidate to identify and recruit a second reader who can serve as content area expert. Other members of the committee will be expected to actively engage in the process during the academic year, and when possible during the summer. For example, if the chair is not the "subject matter expert," the committee member who is may be asked to read and provide feedback on sections of the proposal or dissertation as they are drafted. Committee members will be consulted by the candidate and the dissertation Chair to ensure that the proposal is grounded in relevant literature and has an appropriate research problem and design. The candidate will be encouraged to seek as much subject area assistance as possible during the academic year through course work, independent study, and individual meetings with committee members.

Where it is possible and advisable to do so, it is suggested that one committee member be a colleague or professional with the proper credential (a doctorate) from the candidate's workplace, field of study or study context.

Dissertation Groups and Timeline

Candidates will work in dissertation groups of approximately 4-6; all members of the same group will have the same chair, unless circumstances preclude placement in a group. Candidates are placed in a dissertation group based on similar research topics and/or methodologies as well as student input. Although each candidate will write a separate dissertation, in keeping with the guiding principles of the Ed.D., grouping should promote a synergy with regard to problem framing, literature review, research design and analysis, and peer feedback and support. The groups will not necessarily be concentration specific.

Timeline and Responsibilities:

A recommended timeline for students wishing to complete the degree in 3.5 years is provided below. However, it should be noted that the timeline is contingent upon the student's development of quality work. Progress is contingent upon meeting the guidelines established by the Chair and dissertation committee.

Spring 2: The Ed.D. Director solicits student input into dissertation group composition. Groups are finalized and chairs are recruited. Chairs work with candidates to establish a schedule for meeting over the summer.

Summer 3: Candidates complete the dissertation proposal. They will have begun this task through their coursework and completing question #2 of the qualifying process. This past work may be expanded over the summer into a full proposal. The expectation is that Chairs will meet with their respective groups every two weeks and also provide written feedback on proposal drafts between meetings. Meetings may be face-to-face or virtual. The Chair will encourage peer feedback within the group, and the committee members will be asked to help if they are willing and available.

Fall 3: Proposal defenses will take place as early in the semester as possible. IRB materials should be submitted as early as possible to avoid delays. Whenever possible candidates are urged to request an exempt IRB review. If the project needs an expedited or full review, IRB materials should be submitted no later than mid-September. Some candidates may be able to submit the IRB materials earlier based on previous coursework. NOTE: THE IRB COMMITTEE DOES NOT MEET IN AUGUST.

Spring 3: Chairs will meet on a regular basis (every 2 to 3 weeks) with their groups throughout the academic year to provide support and feedback during data collection, early data analysis and drafting. Candidates and Chairs may call on second and third readers for assistance as needed.

Written and oral feedback will occur as needed.

Summer 4: Candidates complete dissertation. Until that time, Chairs will meet every two weeks with groups and provide oral and written feedback on candidate work between meetings. Meetings and general feedback may be face-to-face or virtual; candidate-specific feedback must be written and may also include one-on-one meetings. The Chair will encourage peer feedback (oral and written) within the group; and committee members will be asked to help if they are willing and available. Candidates may defend their dissertations as early as the start of the Fall semester, and subsequently complete any necessary revisions.

Dissertation Procedures

The Dissertation process involves two distinct stages: Proposal Defense and Dissertation Defense. Each phase entails a series of steps requiring the submission and processing of forms and documents. It is the responsibility of the student/candidate and Chair to ensure that all necessary forms are signed and submitted in a timely manner.

Dissertation Committee

Following successful completion of your Qualifying Examination, students must form a dissertation committee and submit the online **Ed. D. Dissertation Committee** form. This online form will be automatically routed for signature collection and submitted to the Program Coordinator for Doctoral Programs.

- The Ed.D. dissertation committee must consist of a minimum of three members who are approved by the Graduate Director in consultation with the student's advisor.
- The dissertation committee chair must be a member of the Rutgers Graduate School of Education
- Two members (including the dissertation chair) must be members of the Rutgers faculty or staff.
- A third member may be from outside of the university and should be an authority on the topic of the dissertation.
- You must attach the CV/resume of any Non-GSE or outside committee members.

All students are required to submit an **Ed. D. Dissertation Committee** form prior to scheduling your proposal.

Proposal Defense

Your dissertation proposal defense must be formally announced to the Graduate School of Education (GSE) community two weeks prior to the proposal date. Please fill out the online **Ed.D. Dissertation Proposal Announcement** form. This online form will be automatically routed to the Program Coordinator for Doctoral Programs, for processing.

If you will be presenting your dissertation proposal in person please secure a room with the Administrative Services Center, asc@gse.rutgers.edu, prior to submitting your Dissertation Proposal Announcement form.

Upon completion of your dissertation proposal defense, please fill out the online **Ed.D. Oral Examination Results (Proposal)** form. This online form will be automatically routed for signature collection and submitted to the Program Coordinator for Doctoral Programs, for processing. This form, if applicable, may require the dissertation committee chair's summary of revisions.

NOTE: Students may not defend their dissertation proposals if they have any incomplete (IN) grades.

NOTE: PROPOSAL DEFENSES MAY NOT BE SCHEDULED IN MARCH.

Dissertation Defense

Your dissertation defense must be formally announced to the Graduate School of Education (GSE) community two weeks prior to the defense date. Please fill out the online **Ed.D. Dissertation Defense Announcement** form. This online form will be automatically routed to the Program Coordinator for Doctoral Programs, for processing.

If you will be presenting your dissertation proposal in person please secure a room with the Administrative Services Center, asc@gse.rutgers.edu, prior to submitting your Dissertation Defense Announcement form.

Upon completion of your dissertation defense, please fill out the online **Ed.D. Oral Examination Results (Defense)** form. This online form will be automatically routed for signature collection and submitted to the Program Coordinator for Doctoral Programs, for processing. This form, if applicable, may require the dissertation committee chair's summary of revisions. Upon completion of any applicable revisions, please submit your signed dissertation cover page to Dean Winkler, matt.winkler@gse.edu.

After the successful completion of your final dissertation defense, including any applicable revisions, please begin the **Ed.D. Post-Dissertation Defense Checklist** in preparation for graduation and your conferred degree!

NOTE: Students may not defend their dissertation if they have any incomplete (IN) grades.

NOTE: Students may not defend during the same semester as the proposal defense.

Academic Progress And Program Completion:

The Ed.D. Program is designed to support students' progress to dissertation completion through a cohort model. As such, a satisfactory timeline to completion is approximately 4 - 5 years comprising:

- approximately 6 consecutive semesters of Core and Concentration courses (24 credits each)
- immediately followed by approximately 15-18 months of culminating dissertation work experience (24 credits).

Note: *Dissertation Credits are only allowed for active dissertation work (i.e., data collection, analysis, and document development).*

Progress Rule:

During their time in the Program, students are expected to make substantial and timely progress and remain in good academic standing throughout the two main stages/phases of the program i.e., coursework and dissertation work. While students may fall out of cycle with their

respective cohorts due to extenuating circumstances, all students are still be expected to make substantial and timely progress in order to complete the Program within the following timeline:

- Coursework & Qualifying Exam: within 7 years from date of admission to program
- Dissertation Proposal defense: within 1 year after passing the Qualifying Exams
- Dissertation defense: within 2 years after the Dissertation Proposal defense

After 10 years, students must submit a formal, written petition for an extension to the Ed.D. Executive and Chair/advisor. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis upon review of students' progress and in consultation with Dissertation Chairs/advisors. If an extension is granted, the student will be placed on an Academic Progress Plan.

Academic Progress Plan:

The Executive Committee and Dissertation Chairs/advisors will conduct an ongoing review of students' progress. Students who fail to meet these expectations of the Progress Rule, at any point in time during their course of study, will be placed on an Academic Progress Plan.

Extensions:

Within one year prior to the end of the Progress Rule, it is the student's responsibility to formally petition the Ed.D. Executive Committee for an *Academic Progress Plan* extension. The Ed.D. Executive and the candidate's Chair will review the petition. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Successful petitions will result in a 6-12-month extension (decided on a case-by-case basis) with an *Academic Progress Plan* outlining the expectations, timelines, and schedules. Failure to meet any of the stipulated timelines and/or benchmarks will result in termination from the Program.

NOTE: *Students are allowed one extension only.*

Termination from Program:

Failure to complete Program requirements and/or make timely progress toward dissertation completion will result in dismissal from the Program.

Dismissal from the Program may occur if the student:

- Has not satisfied any admission condition
- Receives a minimum of 6 credits graded C, F, or NC
- Fails to adhere to degree time limits imposed in Academic Progress Plan
- Has not petitioned for an Academic Progress Plan AND/OR has not made the required substantial progress within the timelines of the Progress Rule. In such cases, the student will receive a termination-warning letter from the Ed.D. Director and the student's respective academic advisor/Concentration Coordinator or Chair. If the student fails to respond to this warning letter by initiating a Program Completion Plan and/or fails to make substantial progress based on the said plan by a specific deadline, the final

termination process will be initiated by the Ed.D. Director and the student will then receive a notification of dismissal letter.

- Receives a “Fail” grade in at least one revised Qualifying Exam paper
- Violation of the university's academic integrity policy is another reason for being terminated from graduate studies, however, the disposition of such violations is covered by the Rutgers University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Dissertation Style Guide and Catalog

The finished product from the dissertation process will be cataloged electronically in RUCore, the Rutgers University Community Repository: <https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/etd/> Electronic dissertations will be accessible for worldwide retrieval. Prior to submission, all dissertations must be prepared in accordance with the formatting procedures outlined in the Rutgers University Style Guide: <https://gse.rutgers.edu/content/edd-dissertation-style-guide> Some students hire an editor to complete this final production stage.

Part V: Additional Policies and Procedures

General Degree Information

Full-time graduate status is a minimum of 9 credits for the fall and spring semesters. Full-time graduate status is a minimum of 4.5 credits for the Summer Session. All credit amounts are considered full-time for the Winter Session. Students seeking to take more than 12 credits require the approval of their advisor. The policy of the Graduate School of Education is that credit for a course may not be applied toward both of two degrees pursued simultaneously at Rutgers. The requirements for degrees, examinations, and related program requirements are formulated by the faculty in accordance with its best judgment and are intended to provide the strongest possible professional preparation for students.

Modifications to academic regulations may be necessary from time to time. New regulations supersede old regulations.

Transfer Credits

Up to 18 graduate/Master's credits may be considered for transfer toward Program credits. Course credits earned within the past 5 years (and in extenuating circumstances, up to 10 years maximum) will be considered for transfer.

Courses/credits not eligible for transfer:

- Students may not transfer any classes from a Master's degree for the 9 required credits of research methods courses: 6 in Core + 3 in Concentration
- For students with a Master's teaching degree, teaching methods courses will not be considered for transfer (For students holding a Rutgers GSE-awarded Master's teaching degree, up to 6 credits may be considered for transfer.)
- The Core (Inquiry; 6 credits): Students may not use transfer credits in place of the two Inquiry courses, Inquiry I and Inquiry II (6 credits).
- Summer 1 (9 credits): All Summer 1 courses are required: Leadership 1, Learners & Learning 1, and Social Contexts 1. Students are not permitted to transfer these 3 Core courses (9 credits).
- No transfer of Leadership I. (In cases where students have a Master's in Leadership, consideration may be given to waive Leadership II and instead are required to take an additional program elective course.)

Review Procedure/Guidelines:

Approval for all transfer credits is to be determined by the Ed.D. Executive Committee. Transfer credits will only be processed with official transcripts.

- No transfer credits will be applied until students have successfully completed Summer 1.
- Upon successful completion of Summer 1 courses, the Concentration Coordinator will initiate the transfer process.
- All approved transfer credits must be applied by the end of Year 1 (end of summer the year after entering the program). The Ed.D. Director must approve any post-Year 1 exceptions and/or conditional changes.
- Where necessary, students are required to provide a syllabus for review by the Executive Committee. (Syllabi will be reviewed for validity, content, course level, and program alignment.)
- If students wish to appeal transfer decisions made by the Ed.D. Leadership, students must contact the Director with attached transcripts within two weeks of the decision, and provide a rationale as to why a particular class/course might be eligible for transfer.

Registration

Continuous Registration, Restoration and Reinstatement

All students in degree programs must maintain status in the school by registering each fall and spring semester in coursework, dissertation study, or Matriculation Continued. Students who fail to maintain continuous registration in one of these areas must apply for reinstatement if they are to continue in good standing. Such students are charged an amount at least equal to the cost of registering for Matriculation Continued for each semester in which they failed to register.

Matriculation Continued

Matriculation Continued is only available to students in the Pre-Qualifying Examination stage and Post-Qualifying Examination students who have completed 24 credits of dissertation research. Post-Qualifying Examination students must register for a minimum of 1 credit of dissertation research each fall and spring semester until the completion of 24 credits and are not eligible for Matriculation Continued.

Grading Policies

Grades

The following is the basic grading system of the GSE:

<https://www.rutgers.edu/academics/catalogs>

A	4.0	Outstanding
B+	3.5	
B	3.0	Good

C+	2.5	
C	2.0	Satisfactory
F	0.0	Failing
PA/NC	Pass/No Credit	
IN	Incomplete	

- * Ed.D. students have one year to resolve an incomplete grade from the date the IN is posted.
- * Ed.D. students with two or more current IN grades may not move forward with additional coursework
- * ED.D. Dissertation Credits are graded Pass or No Credit (PA or NC)

Incomplete Grade Procedure

All Incomplete Grades will be tracked by the Doctoral Program Coordinator at the conclusion of each semester. After the allowed one year to resolve any outstanding incomplete grade, students will be required to fill out an *Ed.D. Incomplete Grade Action Plan* to be signed by their instructor and program director before being submitted to the Office of Student and Academic Services. The action plan will require a brief description of how the student intends to resolve their incomplete grade along with date for that resolution. Any outstanding incomplete grades that are not resolved within two years will be automatically changed to a No Credit (NC) grade as per the Graduate School of Education [policy](#).

Holds

The privileges of registration, receipt of a diploma, and receipt of transcripts of record are barred to students having outstanding obligations to the university. Obligations may take the form of unpaid monies, unreturned or damaged books and equipment, parking fines, other charges for which a student may become legally indebted to the university, and/or failure to comply with disciplinary sanctions or administrative actions. University departments and offices may place "holds" on registration, diplomas, and transcripts for any students having an outstanding obligation.

Student Academic Appeals

Whenever possible, student academic appeals are handled within the program. With regard to grade appeals, the student should first try to resolve the issue with the instructor directly. If the issue cannot be resolved satisfactorily between the student and instructor, the student may take the issue to the EdD program director for review and mediation. The director will consult with all parties and propose a resolution. If this is unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the appropriate Graduate School of Education Committee on Admissions and Scholastic

Standing as designated in Graduate School of Education bylaws. The Committee on Admissions and Scholastic Standing hears appeals that have not been resolved by the program director. The student must make his or her case to the director and the committee in writing. A written response to the student's statement will be solicited from the director. Should the committee deem it necessary, it may call upon the student and/or a faculty member (or members) for written or oral responses to questions raised by the committee.

A student may request an appearance before the committee. If they believe an appearance is warranted by unusual circumstances, the committee members may allow the student to appear before them. They may, however, limit the amount of time granted, which normally will not exceed 30 minutes. The committee reports its recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School of Education, whose decision is final.

Should the student decide to appeal to the Dean, such a request must be made in writing within 30 days of notification of the decision of the Committee on Admissions and Scholastic Standing. Each case will be reviewed by a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School of Education whose decision is final. Written notification of the action taken by the chair, the Ed.D. program director, or the Dean is sent to the student within six weeks of filing an appeal.