

EPE Graduate Student Handbook

First Year Students- P. 3

General Issues- P. 11

Master's Students- P. 14

Doctoral Students- P. 18

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

Welcome to the department of Educational Policy Studies & Evaluation. Our department values the diverse experiences and interests of our students and these values are represented in the highly individualized nature of our programs of study. All students are required to follow the policies and procedures of the University of Kentucky Graduate School as found in the most recent edition of the *Graduate Student Bulletin*. This Handbook is intended to serve as a supplement to that policy document to help you navigate the customs and norms of our department. When in doubt, consult the Bulletin!

ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT

How did you get here? Our department accepts applications twice a year for Summer/Fall and Spring admission. A sub-committee of faculty reviews all applications and makes recommendations to the full faculty. The full faculty then reviews the recommendations and application folders and arrives at an admissions decision for each case. Occasionally, a student may be admitted with conditions. In these cases, the faculty have concerns regarding either academic ability or goodness of “fit” with the department. Regardless of the circumstances, the conditionally admitted student will know the conditions of her/his regular admission to the department. Successfully meeting the conditions is required for regular admission to the department.

Recently, a rising number of applications for admission have led to an increasingly competitive selection process. In our admissions decisions, we try to honor our land grant mission of serving the Commonwealth of Kentucky as well as recruiting applicants with a variety of educational and life experiences to increase the diversity of our student body. Because of our department’s comparative education interests we also strive to admit students with a variety of international backgrounds.

FAQ: Do you have to study higher education to be competitive for admission?

No. We strive for a diversity of interests among our students. Most of our students do study higher education issues, but this is not a priority in admissions.

FAQ: Do you have to study full time to be competitive for admission?

No. We try to accommodate the schedules of students who work full time and attend classes part time.

GRE SCORES

EPE requires its applicants to submit GRE scores as part of our application. These scores are only one measure in our admissions process and we do not have minimum scores. We will consider an application without GRE scores, but students must submit scores before the end of their first semester if admitted. Another reason we require GRE

scores is because our students compete for internal and external fellowships that typically require GRE scores.

POST BACCALAUREATE STATUS

Students who miss our admissions deadlines or who have not yet decided to apply may take EPE courses as post-baccalaureate, “Post Bac” or “POBA” students. This requires admission to the UK Graduate School. Post Bac students are welcome in all EPE courses except EPE 601. Post Bac students wishing to apply to the department are strongly encouraged to solicit a letter of reference from their EPE faculty instructor as part of their application.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

The Graduate School allows up to nine hours of transfer credit. This currently includes credit earned at UK in post-baccalaureate status as well as graduate credit earned at other accredited post-secondary institutions. The DGS must approve all credit transfers. If you’re interested in transferring credit, please contact the DGS. Additional information can be found at the Graduate School’s website.

REGISTRATION

UK uses an online registration system called MyUK with fixed registration windows. Most registration issues must be solved via your online account; we recommend registering as soon as possible after your window opens. Some courses require departmental registration, in which case you should contact Amberly Warnke. If a course is closed or if you’d like to request that a faculty member consider holding you a place, YOU MUST CONTACT THE FACULTY MEMBER DIRECTLY. If you are having trouble with the system, contact Amberly. The DGS or your advisor is the go-to person for help in determining which course(s) to take; Amberly is the go-to person for help in getting registered for those courses. Remember, doctoral students must remain enrolled through the dissertation defense. Master’s students can conclude their registration when they finish their program of study.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Please note that graduate students in all programs are required to remain continuously enrolled throughout the duration of their programs unless they specifically ask for a leave of absence. Master’s students must stay enrolled until the completion of coursework. Doctoral students must stay enrolled through the completion of the dissertation.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

If you’d like to take a semester or two off from taking courses, you must send a request to the Graduate School admissions officer and cc: the DGS and Amberly. This can be

done by email, and is required unless you wish to reapply to the program. Once a doctoral student has taken their qualifying exams, he/she cannot take a leave of absence. A maximum of two leaves of absence (up to one year, total) are allowed per student.

READMISSION

If for some reason you decide to stop out from your program for longer than a few semesters (in which case you would request a leave of absence, see above), you must reapply to both the Graduate School and the department to be readmitted and pay the Graduate School application fee. An application for readmission to the department consists of a letter explaining how you intend to complete your degree in a timely manner and a letter of support from a current member of the department faculty. Applications for readmission will be reviewed by the full faculty at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. (Note: the department faculty does not meet during the summer.) Readmission should not be assumed, especially if some time has passed. Obligations by the student's major professor or advisory committee assembled prior to leaving the program must be reestablished if readmitted. Students taking extended time off from graduate study are strongly encouraged to stay connected to department faculty. Graduate School policies regarding time to degree will also have to be negotiated.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

The Graduate School requires that each department conduct an annual review of the academic progress of its students. We do this through a process of faculty review and by monitoring grades, performance on qualifying and master's exams, as well as doctoral defenses. Students are provided information and support to meet deadlines required to making timely progress toward degree. EPE students are strongly encouraged, however, to develop self-directed learning behaviors that are the mark of high quality independent scholars and practitioners.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Each May at the department retreat the faculty review the progress of each student and provide feedback to those identified as having some difficulty. The department's minimum GPA to be considered in good standing is a 3.0, however a "C" grade in any course is considered a warning that your performance is below that necessary to successfully pass your master's exam or qualifying exam. "B" grades typically accompany faculty recommendations for specific improvements, but are not necessarily "bad" grades. "B" grades in subjects you consider your core may be a warning sign that you are not reaching an appropriate level of expertise in that area. If the faculty determine that you are not making successful progress to degree, you will be contacted by your advisor (or the DGS) to develop a plan for improvement.

EPE Tip: Don't take grades for granted. Read margin notes and faculty comments on papers carefully even if you are satisfied with the grade awarded to improve your critical thinking and writing abilities. Well reasoned arguments well presented are critical to good scholarship and success in our graduate program.

TIME TO DEGREE

Our department supports both part-time and full-time students and tries to make sure part-time students are able to find research and experiential learning opportunities that work with their schedules. Full-time graduate students typically take 9-12 hours per semester. Part-time students take 3-6 hours.

Our master's degree programs require 31 hours of coursework in addition to either taking an exam (HIED) or writing a scholarly paper (SPSE). Students interested in gaining practical experience may choose to pursue an internship; others may choose to produce independent research.

Our Doctoral degree programs require 43 hours of course credit. On rare occasions, if a student holds a master's degree in a strongly related field, her or his Advisory Committee may agree to allow less coursework. For example a student with a master's degree in US history might take fewer hours to prepare for a doctoral program focusing on the history of education in the US than a student with an MBA preparing for a doctoral program focusing on equity issues in higher education admissions.

RESIDENCY

Read the Graduate School recommendations carefully regarding residency requirements. The student's Advisory Committee makes the final decision regarding length and content of program, but all doctoral students must complete 36 hours of credit.

INCOMPLETES

Sometimes life gets in the way of scholarship. If for some reason you feel you cannot complete the requirements of a course during the semester period, you may ask your instructor for an incomplete. Read the Graduate Bulletin regulations about incompletes carefully. Note: an incomplete may only be assigned if *"...a part of the work of a course remains undone and if there is a reasonable possibility that a passing grade will result from completion of the work."* It is important that you negotiate a new completion date and any changes in requirements at the time you request the incomplete grade.

S&U GRADES

When pursuing independent research (dissertation research in particular), a grade of S

for satisfactory progress or U for unsatisfactory progress will be awarded. Again, read the Graduate Bulletin carefully for policies regarding I, S, & U grades.

TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM

Following the guidelines stated in the Graduate Bulletin, the department faculty may terminate a student's enrollment in an EPE degree program if:

- Scholastic probation (less than 3.0) for more than three enrolled semesters.
- Having failed twice the examination for the master's degree or qualifying exam.
- More than two semesters of unsatisfactory progress following the qualifying exam. In the case where a student has not made satisfactory progress for more than two semesters, the student's Advisory Committee may recommend to the faculty that the student's enrollment in the program be terminated. Each case is decided on its own merits. Students will be given ample warning of expectations and deadlines; however, receipt of a U grade should be considered official warning that progress to degree is not being made. From the Bulletin: *"In cases where the student's Advisory Committee recommends termination after the qualifying examination has been passed, the Graduate Faculty in that program will meet to vote on the recommendation. When the Graduate Faculty of that program concurs and the student dissents, the student will have an opportunity to meet with the Graduate Faculty of the program, after which a second vote will be taken and a final recommendation will be made to the Dean of the Graduate School."*

CHANGING PROGRAMS & CONCURRENT DEGREE PROGRAMS

EPE is lucky to have a number of students who choose to study educational policy in conjunction with another degree program or in some cases to change programs to focus more directly on education as their topic of study. Please consult the Graduate Bulletin on how to successfully make these changes. All parties must be informed and must agree to the changes through formal communications with the Graduate School.

YOUR FIRST SEMESTER

The one required course for all students is the EPE 601 "Proseminar." This course is offered each fall, typically on a Thursday evening. This is a one-credit course that includes guest presentations, workshops, opportunities to meet faculty and continuing students, and generally orient the new student to the department.

EPE Tip: Attend as many campus lectures, seminars, brownbag discussions, and academic activities as you can while in Graduate School. The experience will enrich your studies.

First semester students are also strongly encouraged to attend department events and activities. Department participation is considered when the faculty review competitive fellowships and student employment opportunities. We try to schedule events to suit students who work full-time, but participation will require a commitment on your part. An engaged graduate student is a successful graduate student!

ADVISING

Each student has been assigned a Temporary Advisor for his or her first few semesters. It is strongly recommended that you make an appointment to meet with your temporary advisor sometime during your first semester to plan your immediate program. Do not worry if you do not have the opportunity to meet in person...a phone call or email exchange will do at first. You may also contact the Director of Graduate Studies if you have further questions. Feel free to ask questions during Prosem!

FACULTY STATUS

The department website has a complete listing of our department faculty and adjunct faculty. It is important to get to know the faculty, especially as you look forward to finding a major professor and advisory committee. In order to serve as your advisor or on your Advisory Committee, a faculty member must be a member of the UK Graduate Faculty. For advising purposes, there are two types of faculty members: those who are full members of the UK Graduate Faculty and those who are associate members. Full members of the Graduate Faculty are able to serve as advisors independently. Associate members may serve as a co-chair; the other co-chair of the committee must be a full member of the graduate faculty. (NOTE: Adjunct faculty may serve as members of a program committee and they may serve as co-chairs of a committee.)

DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

In our department, the DGS is the representative of the Graduate School responsible for facilitating the admissions process, assigning temporary advisors, helping with registration issues, and approving requests for exams and defenses. As the chief representative of the students in the department, the DGS also consults with the Department Chair about course schedules, serves as a resource for information about funding, and manages department communications to students. The department administrative assistant responsible for student services assists the DGS. This assistant handles most of the registration and exam scheduling processes. Many of these processes now occur electronically; students should pay careful attention to the University's Academic Calendar to meet deadlines for submission of key forms.

Unlike an undergraduate degree or some professional degrees, almost all of our academic

policies are subject to the authority of the student’s Advisory Committee. See the following chart for the levels of authority:

Area of Decision-Making	Process of Approval	Authority to Decide
Admissions	Application Review in the Department AND in the Graduate School	Department decides on who they want to admit; Graduate School decides if the candidate is eligible for admission to UK.
Program of Study	Advisory Committee Meeting to approve Program of Study (using worksheet)	Advisory Committee (number of credit hours must meet Graduate School requirements).
Internships & Independent Studies	Complete Learning Contract	Individual faculty member supervising work
Transfer of Credit	Transfer Request Form	Advisory Committee (request form must be submitted to Graduate School prior to final exam or qualifying exam).
Qualifying Exams	Advisory Committee Meeting to design exam. Request to schedule qualifying exam.	Advisory Committee. Graduate School must approve sitting of exam based on completion of all courses and good academic standing.
Dissertation Proposal	Dissertation Proposal Hearing with Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee
Preparation for Dissertation Defense	Approval to schedule final exam by $\frac{3}{4}$ of Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee Chair
Scheduling Dissertation Defense	Request to Schedule a Dissertation Defense with GS	Graduate School identifies and recruits an outside examiner

Dissertation Defense/Masters Exam	Request to Schedule Final Exam	Graduate School approves the actual exam. Advisory Committee determines Pass.
---	-----------------------------------	---

OTHER EPE STUDENTS

Your peers are often great sources of information (and, unfortunately, also great sources of mis-information). When in doubt, check the Graduate Bulletin. If the information is not there, check the Student Handbook. If the information is not there, send the DGS your question. DO NOT ASSUME YOUR FRIENDS KNOW WHAT YOUR INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM REQUIRES EVEN IF YOU SHARE THE SAME DEGREE!!!

GENERAL ISSUES RELATING TO GRADUATE WORK IN EPE

To the extent possible, we encourage our students to design a program of study best suited to their individual interests. To accomplish this, students should familiarize themselves with faculty interests including both courses offered (syllabi are available on the department website) and with current research projects (faculty research briefs are also found on the department website). Look for areas in which your interests and those of the faculty intersect. Don't see what you want? There may be faculty in other departments with whom you can study to supplement your program. (Courses outside our department are actually required of some programs.) Over all, you should be able to find a core of courses that represent your interests in our department if you have a good "fit" with EPE.

What level of coursework should you take? Students may take any level graduate course (500 and up). Some of our 700 level courses are seminars and may or may not be appropriate for a new student; others are part of increasingly complex sequences. When in doubt contact your advisor or the faculty member teaching the course to find out more. Also, check the website for course descriptions.

RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

All of our degree programs have a research requirement. Master's students are required to take at least one research course. PhD students take 12 hours of research coursework; EdD students take nine. What counts as a research course? Any course in which you acquire inquiry skills and/or conceptual understanding of research design may fulfill the research requirement in EPE. A history course, for example, in which you learn to design and implement an archival study, could serve as a research course as could a course on multivariate statistical analysis. Not all students in the same class will categorize a course in their program of study in the same way. It depends on what they want to get out of the class.

EPE Myth: EPE557 is a required course. Not True! To be an effective consumer of educational policy information in our society, statistical literacy is necessary. We do not, however, require our students to take EPE557 (informally known as the intro stats class). This is a good foundational course for many students and your advisor and committee may require it of you, but 557 is not a department requirement.

What is the purpose of the research requirement? We expect our students to be able to read, critique, and produce research in the field of education at a level appropriate to their degree. Master's students may wish to choose courses that provide practical inquiry skills such as evaluation or improve their research literacy with introductory statistics. Doctoral students will want to pursue a program that prepares them to complete independent research in their area of interest. Historical, qualitative, quantitative, and evaluation research are equally prized in the department. The methods of inquiry you choose to learn should allow you to answer the

questions you find interesting, not the other way around. Doctoral students should take care to strive for an appropriate depth of skill and knowledge to produce a quality dissertation.

CORE SUBJECT OR AREA OF CONCENTRATION

Each student's program of study includes a primary area of concentration. Think of this as the answer you might give when someone asks you "What are you studying in Graduate School?" For some of you it might be broad, "I'm studying higher education"; for others more specific, "I'm studying the history of early childhood education". Your concentration might include courses from outside the department and outside the College of Education. A higher education focus, for example, might include a Sociology class on social inequality; a student interested in youth culture might take a class in Family Studies. Any course that fits under YOUR DEFINITION of your concentration could be considered one of your concentration courses, assuming advisory committee approval.

CONTEXTUAL STUDIES

Courses in this area will vary a great deal from program to program. This category is not a catchall for courses you happened to take unrelated to your core interests. Conceptual studies are courses that provide context to your topic of interest. Context can be conceptual by providing a different theoretical perspective. Context can be geographic by providing information about a region or place. Context can be topical by providing further background to a subject tangential but important to your concentration. Some examples of areas of contextual studies include courses in gender and women studies, courses in Appalachian studies, or courses in leadership.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

EPE currently plays an active role in three Graduate Certificate programs: the Graduate Certificate in College Teaching and Learning; the Certificate in Gender and Women Studies; and the Graduate Certificate in International Education. Certificate programs demonstrate in depth study in a particular area and are intended to complement your degree program. EPE is also in the process of designing a Graduate Certificate in Community & Technical College Leadership and a Certificate in Student Services. To complete a certificate, apply for and follow the requirements of the certificate program as part of your regular degree program.

INTERNSHIP

Many of our Master's students complete an internship as part of their program of study. Internships are also an option for doctoral students. Arranging an internship is the responsibility of the student. A faculty member will be the instructor of record but the work of the internship will be assessed by the person directly supervising the

student. To sign up for an internship, design a learning contract with the person in charge of your internship site and submit to the DGS. See the website for a learning contract template, this is an agreement between you and your supervisor of your learning goals and any deliverable products. For example, one of our students produced a handbook for new residence life advisors for working with LGBT students. Another student completed an institutional research experience at KCTCS. An internship should provide opportunities for you to learn new skills, to gain an understanding of an area of practice previously unfamiliar to you, or to design and implement an applied research or evaluation project under the supervision of a knowledgeable practitioner. Internships should not consist of doing everyday work that would typically be done by a paid employee. Grades are submitted by email by the supervisor to the instructor of record (faculty member) at least two weeks prior to the end of exam week.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students may arrange to study a topic not offered in regularly scheduled graduate courses with a faculty member. Independent studies are typically very self-directed, often simply the independent reading of a bibliography developed by the supervising instructor. To sign up for an independent study, design a learning contract with the faculty member and submit to the DGS. This is an agreement between you and the faculty member of what is expected of you and a timeline for completion. Grades are submitted by email to the DGS at least two weeks prior to the end of exam week.

MASTERS DEGREE STUDENTS

Our department offers two master's degrees: An MS in Higher Education (HIED) and an MS in Social and Philosophical Studies in Education (SPSE). The programs are rather different and each will be discussed in turn below.

MS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Beginning with Fall Semester, 2013, students admitted to the MS in Higher Education program (HIED) will pursue their degrees under a newly revised curriculum. This curriculum has a set of common required courses, specific required courses for an area of specialization, a research course, and electives. Specifically the curriculum is as follows:

All students will be required to take EPE 601 Proseminar. In addition all students in HIED will be required to take the following three courses:

- **History of Higher Education**
- **Introduction to Higher Education**
- **Organization and Administration of Higher Education**

Those students who wish to pursue a policy emphasis in the context of higher education are required to take the following three courses:

- **Policy Issues in Higher Education**
- **Economics of Higher Education**
- **Higher Education and the Law**

Those students interested in pursuing topics and career options in the student services arena in higher education are required to take the following three courses:

- **Student Services**
- **Diversity in Higher Education**
- **Legal Issues in Student Affairs**

Please note that the respective required courses do not need to be taken in a particular sequence or order. You can take the courses as they are offered and as your schedule allows. All of the required courses will be offered at least once every two years; several of them will be offered every year.

Beyond the required courses students will need to take a research course in the department. This can be any research course in the department and should align with the student's interests and career plans.

Finally, three elective courses round out the program of study. These electives can be any course in the department (and with the advisor's consent, outside of the department). With this in mind, here is a list of recommended elective courses:

- **Sociology of Higher Education**
- **Comparative Education**
- **Education & Gender**
- **History of Education in the US**
- **Politics of Higher Education**
- **Theories of Student Development**

Also keep in mind that an internship (EPE 790) may be a very good and useful elective.

Beyond the coursework, the examination at the end of the program of study has also been re-envisioned. Rather than writing a scholarly paper, students will participate in a two-part examination: an “in-house” or “sit down” exam and a take-home exam. The in-house exam will take place on campus at a specified time and all students will write on the same set of questions/prompts. At the conclusion of the in-house component, students will receive their take-home assignment and will have approximately 48 hours to produce a short (4-6pp) document. **There will be no oral component to the examination process assuming satisfactory performance on the written work.** An oral exam will occur only for those students whose written work is considered marginal.

In rare cases, a student may be allowed to write a scholarly paper in lieu of taking the exam. Such paper will have to be approved and supervised by an advisor (other than the DGS) and will have to represent a significant departure from a previously submitted course paper. If you’re interested in pursuing this option, please discuss the possibility with your advisor at least one semester in advance of your anticipated graduation date.

The restructured MS in Higher Education program students will all have the same Major Professor (currently the department Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Jeff Bieber) and the examination committee will be established by the department. Consequently, questions regarding the program or course selection should be directed to Dr. Bieber.

MS IN SOCIAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES

For a variety of reasons, the MS in Social and Philosophical Studies (SPSE) curriculum is less structured than is the MS in Higher Education. As a result, students in SPSE need to be a bit more proactive and purposeful in constructing their academic programs and be sure that the freedom in course selection does not prove too intimidating. Unlike the HIED curriculum, SPSE students have complete freedom in designing their programs. But, we strongly suggest that you take advantage of your temporary advisor early in your program to answer questions and provide direction. We further suggest that you identify a Major Professor/Advisor before the end of your second semester to ensure that your coursework is coherent and not merely a collection of courses.

MAJOR PROFESSOR

For MS in Social and Philosophical Studies, the student will need to identify a faculty member to serve as her/his Major Professor. The Major Professor will serve as the key resource for course selection and will work with the student in the preparation of the scholarly paper. When the program of study is nearly completed (i.e., during the last semester of coursework) and the student electronically submits her/his request for the final exam, it is at that point that the student indicates the other two members of the Advisory Committee (the third person of the committee being the Major Professor).

For SPSE students, choosing a Major Professor by the end of your second semester is important. Your Major Professor should have an interest in the topic on which you wish to focus, but this does not have to be their research area. Your Major Professor does not have to be your best friend or your favorite professor. It is strongly recommended that you complete at least one course with a faculty member before asking them to serve as your Major Professor. You may also want to consider if the professor you have in mind is planning on sabbatical or retirement before you finish your program.

SCHOLARLY PAPER – SPSE STUDENTS

Your Scholarly Paper is intended to be a capstone to your master's program. For some students this takes the form of a research report. For others it may be a scholarly reflection of experiences during an internship. Your scholarly paper is expected to reflect the lessons learned from your experiences in the program against the backdrop of your coursework. You might think of this paper as an in-depth policy brief or conference paper written for an educational, governmental, or non-profit audience. Be aware, however, that our department upholds a tradition of intellectual discussion so be sure to reflect upon the more conceptual issues that your project engages as well as practical concerns and blend those reflections into your work.

Well in advance of preparing your scholarly paper, you should work with your Major Professor to clarify expectations. As well, check with your Major Professor regarding your timeline for drafting your paper. You should plan on submitting a draft or extensive outline of your paper to your Major Professor at least eight weeks prior to the last day to schedule an exam (see academic calendar). A complete draft of your paper must be finished two weeks prior to the last day to schedule an exam for the semester in which you'd like to complete your degree. Your Major Professor will help you recruit your exam committee and schedule your oral exam, but you must initiate the on-line paperwork (see forms). Keep in mind: this "exam" is more accurately a considered discussion of your scholarly paper and your experience in the program. It is not a quiz or didactic test. A well prepared student will be able to discuss key aspects of her/his scholarly paper and will have reflected upon material covered in the program of study.

HOW TO FINISH

Hurrah! You've reached the end of your program. To graduate from EPE you must do the following:

- Submit an application for degree to the Graduate School by the deadline stated in the Academic Calendar
- Work with your Major Professor to identify two additional faculty members to serve on your exam committee. These faculty do **not** have to be members of the Graduate Faculty, but they do need to have faculty status.
- Submit an electronic copy of your final program of study with descriptions of topical seminars and independent study hours to all of your committee members.
- Submit a Request for Final Exam at least two weeks prior to the date and time for your exam agreed upon by your committee members. **You should check Non-Thesis Option B!!!** Also, bear in mind your exam must be scheduled for when classes are in session.
- Submit a final copy (cleanly edited and complete) of your Scholarly paper to your committee at least two weeks prior to your exam date.
- Pass your exam.
- Complete the online master's exam online evaluation.

DOCTORAL STUDENTS

EPE offers a PhD and an EdD. One of our most frequent questions is, “What’s the difference”. Although the distinction varies from institution to institution, in our department both degrees have the same number of hours and general requirements. The EdD is focused on problems of practice and the PhD advances theoretical understandings in the field. Both can be interdisciplinary. And yes, it is possible, with permission of the department faculty, to switch between the two.

MAJOR PROFESSOR AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Doctoral students are guided by their Major Professor but answer to their entire Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is made up of four faculty including the Major Professor. All must be members of the Graduate Faculty. See the bulletin for specific details on the make-up of your Advisory Committee.

Do not try to go solo. Although we encourage our students to be as self-directed as possible, you should touch base with your Major Professor often to be sure you are on the same page. This helps you avoid mistakes that may cost you time and money. As you move through your program, significant events along the way mark your progress. You will need advice or approval from your Major Professor and Advisory Committee on each of these events, including:

- Approval of planned course work/Program of Study
- Setting Qualifying Exam Questions
- Qualifying Examination
- Development of a research proposal
- Approval of the research proposal by your Advisory Committee
- Research and writing of your dissertation.
- Final Examination
- Revisions and submission of the dissertation to the University of Kentucky Graduate School.

PROGRAM PLANNING

For the majority of your doctoral career, you follow a planned program of study. By the time you have completed about 18 credit hours of course work, your research interests have usually solidified to the extent that an academically sound plan can be devised. Your program plan is developed cooperatively by you, your Major Professor and your Advisory Committee. When approved, this document specifies course work selected to further your academic and professional goals and reflects specific program requirements of your doctoral program. As a doctoral student you’ll complete 43 semester credit hours unless your Advisory Committee decides otherwise.

PROGRAM PLAN APPROVAL

During the first meeting of your Advisory Committee (usually after 18 hours of coursework, but at least one year before you plan to attempt your qualifying exam), a

draft program plan should be presented including information about any prior graduate study and with full descriptions of seminar courses and independent study courses. In rare instances, your advisory committee may choose to recognize a master's degree or extensive graduate coursework in lieu of one year (18 hours) of residency credit. They may also choose to reduce the number of hours necessary to complete the program plan, but only if they determine that this reduced number will still provide the appropriate coursework support to properly prepare the student for his or her qualifying exams and successful completion of the dissertation.

Changing an Approved Program Plan: At times, an approved plan needs adjustment or alteration. You and your Major Professor determine what changes or alterations are needed and acceptable. You are responsible for informing the rest of your advisory committee of the changes.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete the equivalent of two years of residency prior to the qualifying examination and one year of post-qualifying residency. Specifics of this requirement are detailed in the Graduate Bulletin and this has changed in recent years so if in doubt, you should check.

For students with extensive prior graduate work, a waiver of one or even both years of pre-qualifying residency may be possible. Such requests should be submitted in writing by the Major Professor to the DGS and should include a detailed justification, as well as evidence that the student's Major Professor and Advisory Committee support the request. If approved by the DGS, he/she will then forward the request to the Dean of the Graduate School. For international students, a waiver of one year of pre-qualifying residency based on a master's degree earned at a foreign institution may be possible. Again, such requests should be initiated by the Major Professor to the DGS who, in turn, will decide whether to forward the request to the Dean of the Graduate School.

THE DOCTORAL QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The purpose of the Qualifying Examination is to verify that you have sufficient understanding of and competence in your field to become a candidate for the doctoral degree. The examination is conducted by your Advisory Committee and has both written and oral portions.

The written part of your examination may include a variety of activities, including but not limited to, research projects, controlled writing sessions, review essays, and/or methodological exercises. Any approach selected by a committee member serves as a mechanism for assessing your knowledge, critical thinking, and writing abilities. Assigned research projects allow sufficient time for you to develop a carefully crafted logical argument and therefore provide you the opportunity to demonstrate highly refined thinking and writing skills. However 3-hour controlled writing experiences do

not. Nevertheless, your products from such writing periods should demonstrate careful thought and organization even though your writing cannot be polished. Any research projects assigned must be completed at least two weeks prior to the projected date for the oral portion of your examination.

The oral portion of your examination occurs a minimum of two weeks after your Advisory Committee receives your complete written package. This portion of the examination uses your written work as a foundation for further exploration of your academic strengths and will take about two hours. The “oral” requires a formal Advisory Committee meeting that all members attend—no committee member may be excused. During this time, your committee members explore the depth of your understanding of the various academic areas prominent in your program plan and represented in your written products. However, they may probe other academic areas in order to determine your readiness to initiate a scholarly research project.

Getting Started: The decision to schedule the Qualifying Examination, usually made just before or early in the last semester of your course work, is a joint decision made by you and your Major Professor. Once this decision is made, you are responsible for organizing and scheduling both components of the examination. In addition, you must inform the DGS/Admin Asst. of the decision to begin your examination process. Before the oral component of the examination can be scheduled with The Graduate School, any “I” grades and certain “S” grades must be removed from your transcript.

Planning Meeting: You must arrange an Advisory Committee planning meeting at which you will discuss possible projects, etc. for your qualifying exam. It is possible that your Major Professor will ask you to prepare certain materials in preparation for this meeting (e.g., bibliographies pertinent to your areas of interest). This meeting should result in a topic and preferred format for each committee member’s written examination question and the discussion should include a description of each member’s expectations of your performance for the written examination.

Writing Your Exams: You may receive more than one assignment involving a written research project. Since such projects can require upwards of two or three months to prepare, you and your Major Professor need to take this preparation time into consideration when you project ahead to a date for the oral portion of your examination. The department’s expectation is that preparation of your written work will take approximately one semester. You need to start arranging the oral portion of your Qualifying Examination at least two months before the anticipated date. When the date for your oral examination must come close to the end of the semester, start the scheduling process even earlier!

Request for Exam: Faculty members are under no obligation to participate in a Qualifying Exam Oral when they are not under contract (contracts typically run August 15 through May 15). Remember that all committee members must be present for the oral portion. You must submit the formal on-line request to the Dean of the Graduate School to schedule your Qualifying Examination. The Graduate School must receive this request at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of your examination. This two-week lead-time allows the Graduate School time to check your transcript for incomplete or other unacceptable grades. The Graduate School will deny the formal request if residency has not been satisfactorily completed (i.e., if an insufficient number of credit hours have been earned) or if unacceptable grades are on your transcript.

Distribution of Exam Copies: Advisory Committee members should receive copies of all written responses at least two weeks prior to your scheduled oral. You are responsible for assuring that these copies are delivered to committee members in a timely fashion. Keep in mind that your committee members must have sufficient time to read and reflect on your written responses before attending the Qualifying Examination Oral.

Results of the Doctoral Qualifying Examination: At the end of the oral examination, your Advisory Committee makes a decision on whether you have passed the Qualifying Examination and are now a candidate for the degree, or have failed the Qualifying Examination and need to take additional steps toward the satisfactory completion of the examination.

When you *pass* the examination you are referred to as a doctoral candidate and you begin a concentrated effort to prepare an acceptable dissertation research proposal. You must now enroll in post-qualifying residency credit (EPE 767 in the section associated with your Major Professor). It is during these credit hours that you are expected to design an acceptable research proposal.

If you fail the qualifying exam, your advisory committee determines the conditions to be met before another examination may be given. The minimum time between examinations is four months. A second examination must be taken within one year after taking the first exam; a third examination is not permitted. If a student fails the qualifying exam on the first attempt, the Advisory Committee may not be changed prior to re-examination without approval of the Dean of the Graduate School.

POST-QUALIFYING RESIDENCY

Students who have passed their qualifying exam (or are in the process of sitting their exam) should register for 2 credit hours of EPE767 in their Major Professor's section. You will stay continuously enrolled in EPE767 until you graduate. You must be enrolled in the semester you defend your dissertation. You need not be physically present on campus while enrolled for credit after the qualifying examination. See the Graduate Bulletin for more information regarding residency.

THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Each candidate must present a dissertation that represents the culmination of a major research project. The dissertation must be a well-reasoned, original contribution to knowledge in the field of study and should evidence high scholarly achievement.

Your Research Proposal: A research proposal articulates the problem or focus of a study, the methodology selected for exploring that problem or focus, and the methods to be employed in such exploration. A proposal supports the need for the study through a discussion of the literature related to the problem or focus and to the methodology of choice.

Research proposals are unique to each study; accordingly, examples of accepted

proposals might be of limited value to you. There is no “required” length for a proposal—a proposal’s length is determined by what you need to communicate effectively the purpose and research approach. Some proposals are extremely detailed and others more global in explanation of purpose and procedure. Specific characteristics of your study, the opinions of your Major Professor, and your own conceptual thinking guide the selection of components needed to explicate your study.

Although EPE does not stipulate a proposal format, a few elements should be incorporated regardless of purpose or procedure. A proposal must have a title page that identifies you, provides your study’s working title, the date of the current draft, your Advisory Committee members and your Major Professor. Your proposal needs a consistent format for headers, in-text citations, and the reference section. Your proposal should clearly present your research problem; describe the importance of your study; articulate the relationship of your study to relevant research; state your hypotheses, questions or themes; and detail your methodology and methodological procedures.

Development and approval of your proposal: Given that you most likely have never produced such a document, your Major Professor is a vital source of guidance and support while you compose your proposal. Accordingly, the development of your proposal is the result of on-going discussions with your Major Professor. When your Major Professor declares that your proposal clearly articulates the intent and method of your study, you are ready to contact all Advisory Committee members and schedule a working session for the purpose of review and approval of your proposal. Once this meeting is scheduled, please contact Amberly Warnke for help in securing a room for the meeting. Be sure to provide each committee member a copy of your proposal at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.

The proposal meeting is generally a collaborative working session. Your committee members focus on helping you, as a novice researcher, design a quality exploration into an important topic or problem. During the meeting, you will receive valuable assistance in fine-tuning your proposal. A copy of the completed proposal should be filed in the DGS office.

The Institutional Review Board: After your proposal is approved and before you gather any data from human subjects, the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) forms must be submitted to and approved by the Office of Research Integrity. With the permission of your major professor, you may wish to prepare a draft IRB application in advance of your proposal hearing.

IRB forms, rules, and procedures can be located through a web link on The Graduate School home page. IRB staff can respond to your questions and, as needed, assist you in completing these forms. In addition, your Major Professor is familiar with the requirements of IRB and can guide you in preparing the appropriate form.

Remember that no data from human subjects can be collected without receiving IRB approval of the research study procedures for interacting with human subjects, acquiring data, using data, and storing data.

Implementing the procedures described in your proposal: As data are gathered, analyzed and interpreted, you need to stay in frequent communication with your Major Professor and other Advisory Committee members. This frequent contact facilitates the efficient completion of your research project. Your Major Professor is familiar with research assistance available on UK's campus and can direct you to such resources.

WRITING YOUR DISSERTATION

As with your research proposal, your dissertation is a unique product tailored to the character of your study; the formatting guidelines required by The Graduate School must be followed, but these are not content-organization or language-usage guidelines. The Graduate School guidelines help you comply with the publishing requirements of the University of Kentucky. These guidelines, *Instructions for the Preparation of Dissertations and Doctor of Musical Arts Projects* are located at www.rgs.uky.edu/gs/thedissprep.html. For direction in shaping the format and content of your dissertation, you must rely on the expertise of your Major Professor and Advisory Committee.

At some point, your Major Professor and you foresee your completion of the writing task. When this time arrives, and in order for you to sit for the Final Examination, you must submit a series of online forms to The Graduate School according to a definite schedule. The steps in the Final Examination process are complicated and require the unified effort of you, your Major Advisor, the DGS, and The Graduate School staff. In addition to meeting the due-dates established by The Graduate School, you must allow sufficient time for three of your Advisory Committee members to review and discuss your dissertation and, based on their recommendations, time to amend the dissertation before it is ready for the Final Examination. A dissertation cannot go to defense until three members of the Advisory Committee "sign off" that the dissertation is ready for defense. Accordingly, the later in a semester you plan to sit for the Final Examination, the tighter the entire timeline becomes.

The final copy of the dissertation must be presented to the Graduate School within 60 days of the Final Examination or on the last day to present a dissertation for a graduating candidate, if a specific graduation date is desired. Failure to present the dissertation within 60 days may result in the student having to be re-examined. Requests for exceptions to the 60-day policy should be in the form of an e-mail from the student's advisor to the Senior Associate Dean at brian.jackson@uky.edu. Detailed requirements for the preparation of the dissertation are contained in "Instructions for the Preparation of Dissertations and DMA Projects" available at www.gradschool.uky.edu/thedissprep.html.

DOCTORAL FINAL EXAMINATION PREPARATION (THE PROCESS)

- File the *Application for Degree* form with the Graduate School.
"To be eligible for a degree a student must file an application in The Graduate School within **30 days after the beginning of the semester** (15 days in the summer session)"
- Submit the *Notification of Intent to Schedule a Final Doctoral Examination*.

This form must be completed at least eight weeks before the anticipated date of the dissertation defense. Please consult the Registrar's Academic Calendar for the exact deadline for submitting this form for a given semester. Upon receipt of the *Notification of Intent to Schedule a Final Doctoral Examination*, the Dean of the Graduate School will assign an outside examiner to join your committee for the final examination.

- When your dissertation chair is satisfied that your manuscript is ready for defense, provide a copy of your manuscript to two other members of your committee. These two members will also read your manuscript to confirm that it is ready to go to defense. Please allow at least two weeks for this process.
 - When three members of your committee confirm your dissertation is ready for defense you may begin to set the date, time, and location for your examination. (Contact Amberly Warnke for help with identifying a location.)
 - The *Request for Final Doctoral Examination* specifies the date, time and place of your examination and must be presented to The Graduate School **at least two weeks before the Final Examination** is to be given. A complete copy of your dissertation in must accompany this form. When The Graduate School staff approves the format of your dissertation copy, deliver that copy to your outside examiner.
 - Final Examinations must be scheduled for a **date no later than eight days prior to the last day of classes** of the semester in which you expect to graduate; consult the Academic Calendar to find the last day to defend for a particular semester. They may not be scheduled during the periods between semesters or between the end of the second summer session and the beginning of the fall semester
- **Sit for the Final Examination**
 - Complete all amendments to your dissertation and allow sufficient time for your Major Professor to approve this final version of your dissertation.
 - **Within 60 days of the date of passing the Final Examination**, deliver to the Graduate School two copies of the dissertation, printed on cotton paper. After the Graduate School accepts these copies, pay any remaining fees owed to the University.
 - Doctoral Final Examinations may only be scheduled when classes are in session (fall and spring semesters, four- and eight-week summer sessions). Examination deadlines and their relation to degree conferral can be found in the University Calendar.

THE DOCTORAL FINAL EXAMINATION

The Final Examination is a doctoral program requirement of the Graduate Faculty. It requires an oral defense of the research presented in the dissertation and may be as all-encompassing as deemed appropriate by the Advisory Committee.

An expanded Advisory Committee chaired by your Major Professor or the Director of Graduate Studies conducts your Final Examination. In addition to your outside examiner the membership of your Advisory Committee may include the Dean of The Graduate School and the President of the University, or their designees, as *ex officio* members. This examination is a public event to which the entire university community is invited. Accordingly, the Final Examination date, time and site are published beforehand.

The examination usually takes two hours. In all decisions, the majority opinion of the Graduate Faculty members of the advisory committee prevails. If the advisory committee is evenly divided, the candidate fails. In the event of failure, the advisory committee recommends to the Dean of the Graduate School conditions under which the candidate may be re-examined, if re-examination is deemed appropriate. When conditions set by the Dean of the Graduate School have been met, the candidate may be re-examined. The minimum time between examinations is four months. A second examination must be taken within one year after the first examination. Should any vacancies on the Committee occur between the two examinations, the Dean of the Graduate School shall appoint replacements. A third examination is not permitted.

OUTSIDE EXAMINER ON A DOCTORAL FINAL EXAMINATION

The Graduate Dean will independently appoint the outside examiner to the Final Examination Committee. Care will be taken to appoint outside examiners who have some understanding of and interest in the topic of the dissertation. When the Notification of Intent is submitted, the DGS should identify two or more programs whose members are likely to satisfy these conditions. When feasible, the appointment will be made from one of these programs. The Graduate School will not appoint a particular outside examiner on the basis of a student's (or Committee's) desire to hold the Final Examination on a specific date, or at a specific time. Students should not contact a potential outside examiner personally. For selected dissertations, the Dean of the Graduate School may appoint a faculty member from another institution to serve as the outside examiner. Our department has been fortunate to participate in the Visiting Distinguished Faculty program which provides funds to invite a faculty member from another university to serve as the Outside Examiner.

ELECTRONIC THESIS AND DISSERTATION (ETD)

Beginning with Fall semester, 2013, The Graduate School requires that doctoral dissertation be submitted in wholly electronic format. Electronic Thesis or Dissertation (ETD) on the web allow for much faster and wider access to the student's work by the worldwide community of scholars and the possibility of enriched content provided by the inclusion of multimedia elements. Specific instructions are available at www.gradschool.uky.edu/thesdissprep.html.