

DSU

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

HANDBOOK

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI 38733

NONDISCRIMINATION

Delta State University is committed to a policy of equal employment and educational opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, physical or mental handicap, status as to disabled veteran or Vietnam era veteran, or age as specified by applicable laws and regulations. This policy extends to all programs and activities supported by the University.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

The graduate student must accept full responsibility for knowing the policies and regulations relevant to the DSU doctoral degree program. These policies are contained in the Delta State University Graduate Catalog, the Doctoral Program Handbook, and the Dissertation Preparation Manual.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Doctor of Education Degree in Professional Studies is offered within the Division of Teacher Education, Leadership, and Research at Delta State University (DSU). This handbook has been prepared for use by all candidates and prospective candidates seeking the Ed.D. degree at DSU. It is designed to present the information necessary to assist students in the successful completion of the doctoral degree program. The purposes of this Doctoral Program Handbook are:

1. To provide information on policies and procedures governing the doctoral program so that students will be aware of their responsibilities;
2. To assist faculty in their advisory functions with students in the doctoral program;
3. To clarify those procedures that must be followed in order to satisfy the College of Education and Human Sciences (COEHS) requirements (Please refer to the *DSU Graduate Bulletin*, Doctor of Education Degree).

The policies and programs of the COEHS and the University are intended to serve student needs within a framework designed to help develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for a student and developing educator. The student has the responsibility to read and become familiar with the contents of this handbook and the graduate catalog. The faculty strives to serve its students, and can best help when students are aware of their own responsibilities.

Students should work closely with the major advisor throughout their program to ensure that all program requirements, as well as COEHS and University requirements are met.

II. DOCTORAL PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The doctoral program is housed in the College of Education which is located in the Ewing building on the DSU campus. All questions regarding entrance requirements, timelines and due dates, university and program policies, and completion of program requirements should be directed to the Doctoral Program Coordinator. Additionally, the Doctoral Coordinator advises for three of the doctoral program tracks, which are: Educational Leadership, Higher Education, and Curriculum & Instruction. All questions regarding programs of study, track requirements, coursework and scheduling, and internal (track-specific) timelines and due dates, should be directed to the Doctoral Coordinator.

The Doctoral Program is governed by the Doctoral Admission and Curriculum Council (DACC) which is overseen by the Dean of the College of Education and chaired by the Doctoral Program Coordinator. DACC is also comprised of other graduate track coordinators, the Graduate Dean, and a DSU faculty member at-large. The Council develops policy and procedures that are aligned with University guidelines to maintain the organization and continuity of the doctoral program. DACC also considers and vote on matters relevant to the doctoral program such as student appeals.

III. DOCTORAL PROGRAM TRACKS

The doctoral program tracks are: Educational Leadership, Higher Education, and Curriculum & Instruction. The **Educational Leadership** track is designed to develop doctoral level administrators to work in a variety of educational settings. The **Higher Education** track is designed to prepare educators who wish to teach or lead at the college level. The **Curriculum & Instruction** track prepares educators to assume curriculum leadership responsibilities within advanced educational settings.

IV. ADMISSION TO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

For additional details on admission, the student should refer to the current Graduate Catalog.

The minimum verbal skills score required for admission to the DSU Ed. D. in Professional Studies graduate degree program are listed below. Students desiring to enter the doctoral program will be admitted on criteria that will be reviewed by members and constituents of the DACC. Admission point ratings are awarded in each of the following areas: 1) Graduate Record Exam (GRE); 2) Grade Point Average (GPA) on graduate coursework; and 3) Portfolio/Structure interview. Specific point rating on each of these criteria is as follows:

Criterion 1 Graduate Record Examination; Points earned in all three subtests will be added to give a GRE rating. The score on the CAAP may be substituted for the writing section of the

GRE. No points will be awarded for a writing rating of less than a 3. A minimum of 3 points is required for the student to move to criterion 3.

| Verbal Subtest | Quantitative Subtest | Writing Assessment | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------|
| | | Old Scale | New Scale | Points | Old Scale | New Scale | Points |
| 570 + | 158 + | 5 | 745 + | 160 + | 5 | 5.25 – 6.0 | 5 |
| 470 – 569 | 151 – 157 | 4 | 650 – 744 | 152 – 159 | 4 | 4.25 – 5.0 | 4 |
| 385 – 469 | 146 – 150 | 3 | 550 – 649 | 147 – 151 | 3 | 3.25 – 4.0 | 3 |
| 340 – 384 | 142 – 145 | 2 | 470 – 549 | 143 – 146 | 2 | 3.0 – 3.25 | 2 |
| 290 – 339 | 136 – 141 | 1 | 360 – 469 | 139 – 142 | 1 | - | - |
| 0 – 289 | 130 – 135 | 0 | 0 – 359 | 131 – 138 | 0 | - | - |

Criterion 2 Grade Point Average on all graduate work completed

| GPA | Points |
|-------------|--------|
| 3.66 – 4.00 | 5 |
| 3.56 – 3.65 | 4 |
| 3.46 – 3.55 | 3 |
| 3.36 – 3.45 | 2 |
| 3.25 – 3.35 | 1 |

No points will be awarded for a graduate GPA less than 3.25

NOTE: A student must accumulate a total score of at least 10 points on Criterion 1 and 2 before advancing to Criterion 3.

Criterion 3 Portfolio/Structured Interview – Each student will be required to develop an entrance portfolio and submit the original copy to the coordinator of the Doctoral Program. An interview may be scheduled which would be track specific and further clarify portions of the portfolio requiring follow-up. The applicant will be notified by the Track Coordinator regarding the data of the interview and how to prepare. Portfolio guidelines and the rubric used to evaluate submitted portfolios are located on the COEHS website.

| Portfolio Rating | Points |
|-------------------|--------|
| Exceptional – 3.0 | 5 |
| Superior – 2.5 | 4 |
| Competent – 2.0 | 3 |

Due dates for submission of the portfolio are as follows:

For Spring semester admission the portfolio is due on or before **September 1**

For Fall or Summer semester admission the portfolio is due on or before **February 1**

For admission to the doctoral program, a student must accumulate a minimum of at least 13 points on the above three criteria with a minimum score of 2.0 (3 points) on Criterion 3.

Steps for gaining admission:

- The student must complete an application for admission to the doctoral program with the DSU Graduate School located in Wyatt 239. *It is the student's responsibility to become informed regarding important due dates.*
- The student must forward official transcripts of all graduate work completed to the DSU Graduate School.
- The student must complete the requirements set forth in Criteria 1 and 2 and have these scores forwarded to the Graduate Office located in Wyatt 239.
- The Coordinator of the Doctoral Program will contact the student to confirm that all application materials have been received for processing.
- The student will work with the Coordinator of the Doctoral Program for a decision regarding advancement to the entrance portfolio/structured interview. Confirmation will indicate whether the applicant has earned enough points to proceed to Criterion 3.
- Although the student has multiple opportunities to improve test and GPA ratings, there will be no more than **two** opportunities to achieve a score of 3 on the entrance portfolio/structured interview. If an applicant chooses to submit the portfolio a second time, the scores of the two submissions will be averaged.
- The Coordinator of the Doctoral Program and the DACC will make a final recommendation to the Assistant Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education regarding a student's admission to the doctoral program.

Notification

The Coordinator of the Doctoral Program will acknowledge the receipt of application materials and will inform the applicant regarding status. An applicant who is denied admission to the doctoral program may appeal the decision to the DACC. The appeal must be filed within one year of the date of denial.

Provisional Admission

Provisional admission is granted in special circumstances when an applicant is in the process of gathering application materials and in the judgment of the Coordinator of the Doctoral Program, the Track Coordinator, and DACC, the applicant has potential for being accepted into the doctoral program. During provisional status, no more than 6 hours of doctoral coursework can be taken prior to being fully admitted to the doctoral program. Full-time students taking a course load of 6-9 hours should gain admission to the doctoral program during the first semester of enrollment. For students who work full-time, 6 hours is considered full-time status. No more than 6 hours may be taken during a semester without prior written approval from the Track Coordinator.

Course Load Limitations

The maximum load for students devoting full-time to doctoral coursework is nine semester hours during the fall or spring and six semester hours during each summer term. Graduate students who are employed full-time will be allowed to register for no more than six contact hours per semester during the regular term.

Candidacy Levels of Performance

The Track Coordinator will periodically evaluate the student's progress in the program and will assume primary evaluation responsibilities when the candidate takes the comprehensive and final examinations. Students who earn three grades of C or one grade of D or F will be dismissed from the degree program. Graduate students must maintain a 3.25 average throughout their program. If a student's GPA drops below a 3.25, the student will be placed on academic probation (see the Graduate Bulletin). A course can be repeated only one time; the grades from both times the course was taken will be used in the calculation of the GPA. A minimum 3.25 GPA on all graduate work taken at Delta State University is a requirement for completion of the doctoral program.

Readmission

Graduate students who have withdrawn in good standing from the University or who have been suspended for academic deficiencies or for other reasons should submit their application for readmission to the Graduate and Continuing Studies Office. The College Dean must approve applications for readmission by students who have been suspended for academic deficiencies (see Graduate Bulletin).

Cheating and Plagiarism Policy

According to the third edition of the American Heritage Dictionary (1994), to plagiarize is "to use and pass off as one's own the ideas or writings of another" (p. 633). In other words, plagiarism is literary theft. The fifth edition of the APA manual warns that professionals "do not claim the words or ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotation marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another" (p. 349). Plagiarism is applicable to words, ideas, and/or writings. Using someone else's ideas or words, without giving credit to the author/source, makes a student guilty of intellectual theft and is not tolerated in the doctoral program.

Specific examples of cheating and plagiarism include but are not limited to:

- Using statements in a paper taken directly from another source (e.g., article, book, internet, etc) without use of quotation marks and appropriate citations
- Using statements from another source with minimal modifications to the wording resulting while the integrity of the content still remains the original author's
- Cheating on an examination (i.e., copying answers from someone else's test)
- Turning in a paper written by someone else (voluntarily, without his/her knowledge, or for money) with the intent to represent oneself as the author
- Submitting a paper for more than one course (even though the student originally wrote it) without express approval from both professors

According to the Delta State University Graduate Bulletin, "Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated." Program faculty have determined that violations of the plagiarism policy are as follows:

1. The first offense will result in *at least* an "F" for the assignment, an individual meeting between the faculty member and the student for discussion of the offense, and a letter of reprimand will be placed in the student's official file in the department. Documentation of the incident will also be sent to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
2. A second offense will result in the student's expulsion from the Delta State University's degree program and he/she will not be allowed to enroll in any other degree programs at DSU.

DSU faculty strongly encourage students to understand program expectations regarding plagiarism, closely monitor their own writing, and seek assistance where needed.

Student Academic and Performance Evaluation Grievance Policy

As stated in the *Delta State University Graduate Bulletin*, students who feel they have been treated unfairly may appeal as follows:

1. Discuss the problem with the instructor and seek a solution. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved in conference with instructor, the student is entitled to submit an appeal in writing (with documentation) to the department/division chair. Upon receiving a student appeal, the department/division chair submits a written request for a response in writing (with documentation) from the instructor. The department/division chair notifies the student and faculty member in writing of his/her decision, within fifteen working days from the date the appeal is received.
2. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved, the student is entitled to resubmit the appeal in writing to the college/school dean with administrative responsibility for the department where the alleged infraction occurred. The college/school dean reviews the student appeal and the corresponding response from the faculty member. The college/school dean notifies the student and faculty member in writing of his/her decision with a copy to the division/department chair, within ten working days from the date the appeal is received.
3. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved, the student is entitled to submit a request for a hearing with the Academic Appeals Committee. The Academic Appeals Committee chair schedules a hearing date, within fifteen working days from the date the appeal is received, and notifies the student and faculty member in writing of its decision with a copy to the appropriate dean, within five working days from the date of the hearing.
4. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved, the student is entitled to resubmit the appeal in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Vice President for Academic Affairs reviews the student appeal and the corresponding response from the faculty member. The Vice President for Academic Affairs notifies the student and faculty member in writing of his/her decision, which is final, with a copy to the appropriate dean, within ten working days from the date the appeal is received.

Academic appeals by students must be filed no later than the end of the next regular term after the grievance occurred.

Acceptance of Transfer Credit

Graduate courses may be transferred from another accredited college or university. *Transfer credit will be granted only for those courses in which the student received a B or better* and which are listed on a program of study approved by the graduate advisor and the college or school dean. Transfer courses may be substituted for non-required courses if the catalog description reflects similar course content and each course is recommended by the Track Coordinator to the Coordinator of the Doctoral Program. A maximum of 6 semester hours of the credit required for a doctoral degree may be accepted as transfer credit from another accredited graduate school. When circumstances merit it, a request for an exception to the policy allowing a maximum transfer of 6 semester hours may be submitted by the Track Coordinator. The request must be approved by the college or school dean. No graduate credit is accepted for courses completed by correspondence (see Graduate Bulletin).

Time Limitation

For the doctoral degree, the dissertation must be completed within a five-year limit after the successful completion of Dissertation Seminar (ELR 888) (see Graduate Bulletin).

V. PROGRAMS OF STUDY

Students expressing an interest in doctoral study are encouraged to communicate with the Coordinator of the specific track of interest to review their academic transcripts and develop a *tentative program of study*. Review of transcripts will be for the purpose of assessing equivalent courses taken and to inform students regarding the program.

After a student has been fully admitted into the doctoral program, the student will be informed of a final program of study that will guide the sequence of coursework throughout the student's program. Students are responsible for contacting the Track Coordinator to obtain a Personal Identification Number (PIN) in order to register for classes each semester. PINs obtained in any other way may result in a delay in the student's program and/or other disciplinary action from the university. Changes in the program of study must be approved through the Track Coordinator.

Course of Study

CURRICULA OVERVIEW - Professional Studies Degree **Semester Hours**

| | |
|--|-------|
| Doctoral Core (required for all tracks) | 27 |
| Research and Statistics..... | 12 |
| ELR 702, ELR 804, ELR 805, and ELR 888 | |
| Curricular Decision Making | 6 |
| CUR 812, and CUR 820/833 | |
| Leadership | 6 |
| SUP 831 or CED 890 (for Counselor Education Track), and AED 830 | |
| CUR 834 Doctoral Seminar | 3 |
| Track specific requirements/elective | 63-72 |
| Tracks: Curriculum & Instruction, Higher Education, Educational Leadership | |
| Dissertation (required for all tracks) | 12 |
| Total Hours for Degree 102-111 | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Educational Leadership Track | Semester Hours |
| Core..... | 27 |
| Dissertation | 12 |

Educational Leadership coursework approved by the advisor from Master's and Specialist degrees and electives to total 63

Total Hours 102

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Higher Education Track | Semester Hours |
| Masters Degree | 30 |
| Core..... | 27 |
| Dissertation | 12 |
| Higher Education Core..... | 9 |
| CAD 770, CUR 853 | |
| Electives in Curriculum or Leadership | 6 |
| Cognate Area | 18 |
| Total Hours 102 | |

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Curriculum & Instruction Track | Semester Hours |
| Core..... | 27 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Dissertation | 12 |
| Major Emphasis | 33 |
| CEL 610, 611, 618, 705, 706, 810, 811, 812, and CRD 624 | |
| Major Field and Related Courses | 30 |
| Total Hours 102 | |

Courses must be from an approved planned program at the M.Ed. and/or Ed.S. level and must be approved by the Track Coordinator.

VI. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Purpose

The comprehensive examination serves as an important indicator of the culmination of student learning for candidates working toward the Ed.D. degree. When a candidate for the degree has completed all required courses or is enrolled in the last course in the final program of study (not including ELR 890), the candidate is eligible to take the comprehensive examination. The Coordinator of the Doctoral Program must approve a student wishing to take this examination as having met all prerequisites. Applications for Comprehensive Examinations are available online and should be submitted to the Coordinator of the Doctoral Program two (2) semesters prior to taking comps.

Composition

The examination will be in a written format. The Coordinator of the Doctoral Program will coordinate the written portion with a Comprehensive Exam Committee comprised of Track and other related COE faculty. The Comprehensive Exam Committee will develop exam questions used for the Comprehensive Exam and will review and evaluate student responses. The written portion of the examination will be comprehensive, consisting of questions from each of the areas of Supervision and Leadership, Research and Statistics, and Curriculum. The Coordinator of the Doctoral Program will forward individualized results of the comprehensive examination to each doctoral student.

Evaluation

The Comprehensive Exam Committee will determine if the student has passed the comprehensive examination. In cases where student performance on the examination is unsatisfactory, the committee will determine how and when the deficiencies will be eliminated and make a recommendation as to the continued status of the candidate in the program. Removal of deficiencies may require repeating courses, taking additional coursework, retaking the comprehensive examination, or any other prescriptive elements that the committee deems appropriate.

Comprehensive Exam Failure Process

If all sections are not passed on the first sitting of the comprehensive exam, the following process will be followed:

1. Failed first time: Remediation is offered for each section failed; this usually consists of faculty suggested self-study or tutorials.
2. The student retakes the sections failed the next semester during the regularly scheduled administration (in April).
3. Failed a second time: The student retakes a course related to the area of failure and must make at least a B in the course. The student is required to engage in additional self-study in the area while completing the course.
4. The student retakes the section the next semester during the regularly scheduled administration.
5. Failed third time: The student is dismissed from the program

VII. DISSERTATION

Prior to writing the dissertation, students must be familiar with the **Dissertation Preparation Manual** and follow the procedures precisely. An acceptable dissertation is a requirement for the completion of the doctoral program. The dissertation must embody the results of an extended research effort which is an original contribution to the field of education. It should reflect the candidate's ability to conduct independent research and interpret in a logical manner the facts and phenomena revealed by the research. Each candidate must defend the dissertation before an examining committee appointed by the Doctoral Program Coordinator and approved by the Dean of the College of Education.

Requirements for Enrollment in ELR 890

Each degree candidate must enroll for a minimum of three hours of dissertation credit (ELR 890) for at least two semesters per academic year until the dissertation project is completed. A student may enroll in ELR 890 in increments of 3 hours (3, 6, or 9 hours) in any one semester. A student must be enrolled in ELR 890 during the semester in which he/she defends the dissertation and plans to graduate. It is not uncommon for students to enroll in more than the minimum 12 dissertation hours in order to complete the process.

Dissertation Committee Membership

The Dissertation Committee is composed of three members as follows:

- Member 1: Dissertation Committee Chair (typically within the student's track and discipline)
- Member 2: Doctoral Faculty member from the College of Education (COEHS)
- Member 3: Doctoral Faculty member at large (*at large* means any in #1-2 or outside of DSU as approved by the Doctoral Program Coordinator).

Committee members are charged with reviewing versions of the written dissertation, providing consultation and feedback around proposal development, research methodology, data gathering, the dissertation manuscript and process, and meeting for a dissertation defense which is a culmination of the finished dissertation project (See the *DSU Dissertation Preparation Manual* for more information).

VIII. FINAL SEMESTER AND GRADUATION

Important Dates

Having completed all coursework, passed the comprehensive examination, had a dissertation proposal approved, and while finishing work on the dissertation, the candidate must begin planning for graduation. Students are strongly encouraged to develop their own personal timeline for applying for graduation and completing the dissertation process in order to ensure that all requirements are met before the due dates.

Students planning to graduate must meet the following deadlines:

1. **Two semesters before graduation:** The student must establish intention to graduate by filing an "Application for Graduation" form. This form is available and should be submitted online.
2. **Eight weeks before graduation:** Dissertation defense. See the DSU Ed. D. website for important due dates regarding final defense.
3. **Six weeks before graduation:** The student must submit the final, revised manuscript to the Dissertation Chair; the manuscript must incorporate any changes suggested by the committee at the time of the defense. When the final manuscript is approved by the Dissertation Chair, the student will ensure that all copies of the signature sheets are signed (original signatures) by all committee members, including the Chair. Revised copies and signature sheets are then submitted to the Doctoral

Program Coordinator, the Dean of the College of Education, and the Dean of Graduate Studies for review.

4. **Four weeks before graduation:** The student must submit graduation fees for the diploma, cap and gown rental, and incidental expenses connected with the commencement exercises.

5. **Two weeks before graduation:** The student must submit a minimum of five copies of the final dissertation and original signature sheets to the Doctoral Program Coordinator. If this deadline is not met, the student's name will be removed from the graduation list.

IX. DOCTORAL STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR ADMISSIONS AND COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

Students who feel that they have been treated unfairly may appeal as follows:

1. Discuss the problem with the Doctoral Program Coordinator and seek a solution. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved in conference with the doctoral program coordinator, the student is entitled to submit an appeal in writing (with documentation) to the department/division chair. Upon receiving a student appeal, the department/division chair submits a written request for a response in writing (with documentation) from the Doctoral Program Coordinator. The department/division chair notifies the student and Doctoral Program Coordinator in writing of his/her decision, within fifteen working days from the date the appeal is received.

2. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved, the student is entitled to resubmit the appeal in writing to the Dean of the College of Education. The dean reviews the student appeal and the corresponding response from the Doctoral Program Coordinator. The dean notifies the student and Doctoral Program Coordinator in writing of his/her decision with a copy to the division/department chair, within ten working days from the date the appeal is received.

3. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved, the student is entitled to submit a request for a hearing with the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee. The Graduate Academic Appeals Committee chair schedules a hearing date, within fifteen working days from the date the appeal is received, and notifies the student and faculty member. Both parties may submit their cases in person or in writing to the committee. The Graduate Academic Appeals Committee notifies the student and Doctoral Program Coordinator in writing of its decision with a copy to the appropriate dean, within five working days from the date of the hearing.

4. If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved, the student is entitled to resubmit the appeal in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs reviews the student appeal and the corresponding response from the Doctoral Program Coordinator. The Vice President for Academic Affairs notifies the student and Doctoral Program Coordinator in writing of his/her decision, which is final, with a copy to the Dean of the College of Education and chair of the Graduate Academic Appeals Committee, within ten days from the date the appeal is received.

Appeals by students must be filed no later than the end of the next regular term after the grievance occurred. The grievance policy for coursework grades is in the *Delta State University Graduate Bulletin*.