



**EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
& POLICY STUDIES**
ANNE'S COLLEGE

Educational Leadership and Policy Online Ed.D.

Student Handbook

A Guide to Doctoral Degree Requirements

Approved Summer 2026

The policies identified in this document are to be construed in the light of existing University policies and with deference to the requirements imposed on graduate education by the Anne Spencer Daves College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences, University, the Board of Trustees of Florida State University, and the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida. The information outlined is subject to change and students should be alert to announced revisions required by the faculty of the program, the department, College, and University.

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Program Overview & Major

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership and Policy resides in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department (ELPS) in the Anne Spencer Daves College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences (Anne's College). It is designed for educational practitioners seeking preparation for positions such as senior-level educational leaders, policymakers, and policy researchers, both domestically and internationally. The degree program includes a broad curriculum, encompassing the departmental core of courses, an interdisciplinary component, a research component, and a major area related to Educational Leadership/Administration. Additionally, All coursework in the program is offered online.

The online Ed.D. major in Educational Leadership/Administration does NOT lead to professional certification. Applicants interested in our state-approved program for certification in Educational Leadership should consider the Educational Leadership Specialist Degree Program:
<https://annescollege.fsu.edu/EDA>

Major: The Degree Program of Educational Leadership and Policy offers one major for the online EdD:

Educational Leadership/Administration (EDA)
Plan Code: EHLEADADED

Admissions Requirements

Bachelor's Degree: An earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution or a comparable degree from an international institution, with a **minimum 3.0** (on a 4.0 scale) grade point average (GPA) in Upper-Division coursework attempted (Last 60 hours).

Graduate Degree: An earned **graduate** degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution or a comparable degree from an international institution, with a recommended **minimum 3.5** (on a 4.0 scale) grade point average (GPA).

Application Documents

Applications for the EdD are only accepted for the Summer Term. In-depth information for each item below can be found on our website under the "Admissions Requirements" tab:

<https://annescollege.fsu.edu/ed-lead-edd>

- GRE Test Scores OR GRE Waiver
- Statement of Purpose
- Resume/CV
- Three letters of recommendation
- Undergraduate and Graduate transcripts.
- English Language Proficiency Test Scores ([International Students](#))

Admission to the the Online EdD is highly selective. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission. Other factors that are considered in admissions decisions include but are not limited to the following: leadership, policy and/or international experience in education or related areas, relevant work experience, high motivation to achieve personal and professional goals consistent with the program's mission, and outstanding written and oral communication skills. The admissions process is intended to establish a culturally diverse learning community that will promote a culture of critical inquiry and encourage educational transformation and change.

Financial Assistance

Office of Student Finance OSF: (payment plans, financial help, etc.) <https://studentfinance.fsu.edu/>

Tuition Costs: Traditional Academic Programs → Distance Learning <https://distance.fsu.edu/admissions-tuition/tuition>

FAFSA: (Financial Aid) <https://financialaid.fsu.edu/>

Scholarships: <https://annescollge.fsu.edu/resources/scholarships-and-aid>

Fellowships: <https://gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards/graduate-school-fellowships-and-grants>

FSU Employee Tuition Scholarship: <https://studentfinance.fsu.edu/waivers/fsu-employee-tuition-scholarship>

State Employee Waiver: <https://studentfinance.fsu.edu/current-students/tuition-waivers/state-employee-waiver>

Transfer of Courses

Transfer of graduate courses not counted toward a previous degree from another regionally accredited graduate school (or comparable international institution) is limited to six semester hours and transfer of graduate courses not counted toward a previous degree within Florida State University is limited to twelve semester hours, except when the departmental course requirement exceeds the thirty hour University-wide minimum requirement. In the latter case, additional transfer credit may be allowed to the extent of the additional required hours. In all cases, the majority of credit must be earned through Florida State University or its official consortial institutions. All transfer credit must: 1) be recommended by the major department; 2) be evaluated as graduate work by the Records Audit and Analysis in the Office of the University Registrar at Florida State University; and 3) have been completed with grades of 3.0 ("B") or better.

Grades earned at another institution cannot be used to improve a grade point average or eliminate a quality point deficiency at Florida State University. The University does not accept experiential learning or award credit for experiential learning. Transfer credit based on experiential learning from another institution will not be accepted.

Technology Requirements

As an online program, students must ensure that they have regular access to a computer, video camera,

microphone, and a reliable high-speed internet connection. Students are expected to check their email and course websites frequently and have access to video conferencing software, such as Zoom. Zoom is embedded in all our courses on Canvas as well. As an added layer of support, the College's IT office is more than happy to assist you. You can submit a [support ticket using this link](#).

Summer Institute

Students are expected to attend a two-day long professional learning seminar in Tallahassee during the summer semester for each year they are enrolled. The Summer Institute is held around the seventh instructional week of the summer term, typically the middle of June each year.

If a student is unable to attend the Summer Institute, they must submit a formal written request to the Director by the end of Week 10 of the Spring term. Exceptions will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis by the Director and Student Advising Coordinator. For students who are unable to attend and have been granted a waiver, the program will host virtual sessions throughout the summer similar to those offered at the Summer Institute.

Academic Advisor

After admission, the student will be assigned a temporary academic advisor to assist them in developing an initial program of study and counsel them on degree requirements. This role will ultimately be assumed by the major professor during Year 2. A checklist of key program milestones as well as professional development activities is provided in *Appendix A*. The program of study form is available on the College's Office of Academic Services & Intern Support (OASIS) – Graduate Support website: <https://annescollege.fsu.edu/academics/office-academic-services-and-intern-support-oasis/graduate-students>

Major Professor

Students are primarily advised by the EdD Director and Student Advising Coordinator until the beginning of Fall II. For additional support, students are placed into advising teams based on their interests during Fall I. Each advising team consists of a core group of ELPS faculty with shared research expertise. The advising team is the main body that will evaluate students' diagnostic exams during the Fall I semester. During Spring I, students will be assigned a major professor who will ultimately advise students through the completion of their Dissertation in Practice (DiP).

At the beginning of Spring II, students will also be assigned two other ELPS faculty and a university representative as the remaining members of their full DiP Committee (see Supervisory Committee below). Together with the major professor, this group forms the committee that will evaluate the student's preliminary exam and full DiP.

Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee will be in charge of the student's work until the completion of all degree requirements. The membership of the supervisory committee will be reported to the Dean of the Graduate School.

The supervisory committee will consist of a minimum of four members of the FSU graduate faculty, all of whom must have Graduate Faculty Status, one of whom is a representative-at-large of the graduate faculty drawn from outside the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and who is tenured. Additional members may be appointed if deemed desirable.

The representative-at-large is responsible for ensuring that university policies are followed, and decisions made by the supervisory committee reflect the collective judgment of the committee. Therefore, the graduate faculty representative must be someone who is free of conflicts of interest with other members of the committee. If questions arise, they should be referred to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for resolution.

Program of Study

A signed program of study must be submitted to the Office of Academic Services and Intern Support (OASIS) by the end of the first academic year. The program of study must be signed by each current member of the committee and the department chair. The program of study will provide a chronological outline of all required courses and degree requirements required for degree conferral. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they have met all degree requirements.

Upon receipt of a departmentally approved program of study, OASIS will review the proposed program to ensure compliance with College and University requirements, as well as posted program coursework requirements.

Course Requirements

The EdD Educational Leadership and Policy Program of Study (POS) consists of sixty-nine (69) credit hours, in which twenty-four (24) are required dissertation hours. With a strong emphasis on policy, the coursework is clustered into three areas: (1) Foundations/ Policy, (2) Methodological Approaches, and (3) Intensive Embedded Experiences that encourage students to think critically about their DiP. Students will also take at least two major electives; a list of possible courses will be provided. The required courses follow:

Year 1: Foundations

Summer (6 credits)

EDF 6485: Professional Learning for Educational Practitioners (PLEP)1

EDF 6486: Applied Research Methods

Fall (9 credits)

EDF 5464: Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods
EDF 6474: Foundations of Practice Models
EDA 6105: Laboratory of Practice I
EDA 6968: Diagnostic Exam (0 Hours)
Spring (6 credits)
EDA 6425: Literature Review for Educational Research
EDF 6480: Applied Quantitative Methods

Year 2: Policy Context

Summer (6 credits)
EDF 6455: Data Use in Educational Settings
EDF 6493: Professional Learning for Educational Practitioners (PLEP) 2
***Fall** (9 credits)
EDA 6061 OR EDH 6936: Ed. Admin. and Org. Practice OR Student Dev. Theories
EDA 6068 OR EDH 6401: Education Policy to Practice OR Higher Ed Policy
EDA 6108: Laboratory of Practice II
Spring (6 credits)
EDA 6110: Laboratory of Practice III
EDF 6479: Qualitative Data Analysis or Major Elective
EDA 8964: Preliminary Exam (0 Hours)

Year 3: Original Research in Practice

Summer (9 credits)
EDF 5461: Intro to Program Evaluation or Major Elective
EDF 6981: Dissertation (6 hours)
Fall (9 credits)
EDF 6981: Dissertation (9 hours)
Spring (9 credits)
EDF 6981: Dissertation (9 hours)
EDA 8985: Dissertation Defense (0 hours)

*During Fall 2, K12-focused practitioners will take EDA 6061 (Educational Administration & Organizational Practice) and EDA 6068 (Education Policy to Practice). Higher education-focused practitioners will take EDH 6401 (Public Policy in Higher Education) and EDH 6936 (Student Development Theories). Higher education students may choose to replace EDH 6936 with another higher education course with the approval of the Program Director.

Program Enrollment

All students must be enrolled and register for the courses that the Online Ed.D curriculum outlines each semester. This is a cohort program; students must follow the curriculum as it is outlined in the Program Handbook. If a student is not enrolled for more than two consecutive semesters without an approved Leave of Absence (LOA), they will be considered inactive and must apply for readmission to the University and the Program. The readmission application materials must include a letter of reference

from their temporary advisor or major professor who is familiar with the student's circumstances and an updated letter of intent that includes a proposed timeline for completion of their graduate studies.

Students must demonstrate mastery of the content of each course in order to move forward with their cohort. If a student falls behind, a meeting with the program director and department chair should be arranged to organize an appropriate plan of action to help the student remain on track.

2-hour Continuous Enrollment Policy

After completing the required coursework, passing the Preliminary Examination, submitting an Admission to Candidacy Form to the Office of the Registrar, and continuing to use campus facilities and/or receiving faculty supervision but not yet having been cleared by the Manuscript Clearance Office, a full-time student shall register for a **minimum of two credit hours of dissertation per semester**, including Summer term. A student also must be enrolled in a minimum of two hours of dissertation in the semester of degree conferral as part of any full-time load or underload.

Annual Doctoral Student Evaluations

Each year, the student's temporary advisor or major professor will assess the progress of the student in writing, and the department will provide their assessment to the student, the department chair, and the academic dean. A component of the annual review is the scholarly engagement requirement; more details on this process can be found on the EdD Student Portal in Canvas and in the appendix of the Handbook.

Satisfactory Progress

All students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 to remain in good academic standing. Students whose overall GPA drops below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Failure to raise the overall GPA to 3.0 by the end of the next term of enrollment after being placed on academic probation will result in dismissal from the University. Further instances of insufficient progress may also lead to a student being academically dismissed from the program. If a student is placed on academic probation or is not making sufficient progress towards their degree, the Director and student's major professor will document this in the student's annual evaluation and work on an individualized student improvement plan.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate a student's progress and may be used as grounds for academic dismissal:

- Maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher;
- Successfully passing key program milestones (Diagnostic Exam, Preliminary Exam, Dissertation Defense) or failure to successfully pass program milestones in a reasonable period of time. See below for more on timelines for individual program milestones.

- Timely progress towards the completion of the dissertation, as evidenced by receiving an “S” on dissertation hours; multiple subsequent semesters of a “U” on dissertation hours may lead to academic dismissal;
- Multiple infractions of FSU’s Academic Honor Policy

Students are expected to defend their Preliminary Exam in the spring of their second year. Students who do not pass their preliminary exam on their first attempt may request a second attempt. If granted, the second attempt must occur within two semesters after their original defense date. Students who do not pass their preliminary exam on their second attempt or who do not submit their preliminary exam by the end of the second semester after their original defense will be dismissed from the program.

Candidates who have not submitted a defensible DiP to their committee by the Manuscript Clearance Office’s pre-formatting review deadline of Spring IV, unless otherwise cleared by their Major Professor, will be marked as making “Unsatisfactory Progress [Official Concern]” on their annual evaluation. Students who have not successfully defended their DiP by the end of the 7th week of Summer IV must submit a timeline to their major professor that backwards maps their dissertation completion by the manuscript clearance deadline of their fifth spring semester. Candidates who have not successfully defended their DiP by Spring V as stipulated in the agreed upon timeline will receive “Unsatisfactory Progress [Official Concern]” on their annual evaluation. Students with two consecutive “Unsatisfactory” annual evaluations will be dismissed from the program.

For more information on academic standing, [please see the University Bulletin](#).

Diagnostic Examination

Students must complete a departmentally administered diagnostic examination by the 7th week of the second semester after enrollment. The purpose of the **Diagnostic Exam** is to assess a doctoral student’s ability to clearly articulate a problem or possibility of practice, describe its manifestation in their local context, and receive feedback from the ELPS faculty on their work. A problem or possibility of practice should be just that: a problem or possibility that affects, shapes, or influences a student’s practice in an educational setting. Crafting a problem statement and explaining its significance is one of the first steps in developing the Dissertation in Practice (DiP), the culminating project of the Online EdD.

The Diagnostic Exam is the first major milestone and will be completed in the first fall of the first year during the Foundations of Practice Models course. The Diagnostic Exam will consist of the following:

1. **A written manuscript** (~1,000-1,500 words, or 5-7 pages, not including references) that describes a problem or possibility of practice (the problem statement), explains the existence of that problem within a local context (the description of the student’s local context), and outlines a potential path forward for conducting original research related to that problem of practice and explains the possible significance of that research.
2. **A summary of challenges** (~1 page), in which the student discusses potential concerns, unanswered questions, uncertainties or unknowns, or feasibility issues related to the problem of practice and potential research. The summary might include a discussion of problems with data access, ethical concerns, job-related uncertainties, or a reflection on the student’s own knowledge and areas where they might need additional guidance and support.

3. **A virtual defense** (~15-20 minutes) to be conducted with the advising team via Zoom. The purpose of the virtual defense is **formative**, for students to receive constructive feedback from their advising team on next steps and considerations on the purpose, relevance, and potential design of their future Dissertation in Practice (DiP).

Additional details on each of these components can be found in the Dissertation in Practice (DiP) Guide.

Upon completion of the Diagnostic Exam defense, students will receive written feedback from their advising team based on the criteria outlined in the Diagnostic Exam Instructions document. Advising Teams will issue a **Pass, Conditional Continuance, or Fail** determination on the student's Diagnostic Exam submission.

A **Fail** on the first attempt is awarded in the case of plagiarism or academic honor violations, or a submission that is unresponsive to the Exam prompts and does not adhere to the Exam guidelines.

If a student receives a **Conditional Continuance** on their first attempt, they will have 4 weeks to resubmit their revised Diagnostic Exam to their Advising Team. Upon resubmission, the advising team will review their manuscript and issue a determination of **Pass** or **Fail**. If a student receives a fail on their resubmission, they may attempt the Diagnostic Exam a second time in the Spring semester of Year 1. Completed manuscripts for a second attempt will be due to the Director and the student's Advising Team by the end of the 2nd week of the Spring semester.

A note on diagnostic exam materials submission: Unless a student has received an extension on their diagnostic exam materials from the Program Director and their Major Professor, all materials must be submitted by the exam deadline (typically the 7th week of the fall semester). Students who submit their materials more than 48 hours after the exam deadline without an approved extension will have their first exam attempt marked as a conditional continuance. Subsequent attempts at the diagnostic exam will follow the process listed above.

The Director of the Online EdD program will coordinate a second attempt. **If a student does not receive a Pass on their second Diagnostic Exam attempt, they will not be allowed to continue in the program.**

Preliminary Exam

Students must pass the preliminary exam to advance to doctoral candidacy. Per Florida State University policy: *the preliminary examination is designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge and to afford the examiners the basis for constructive recommendations concerning the student's subsequent formal or informal study.* Specific to the Online EdD program, the preliminary examination evaluates whether a student has mastered the relevant subject area knowledge and is ready to pursue independent research on the DiP.

The full Graduate School preliminary exam policy is available in *Appendix B*. Please note that the most up-to-date policy is [found in the University Bulletin](#).

A. Evaluation

Faculty members on the full DiP committee will evaluate the degree to which students adequately address the required elements of the Dissertation in Practice and present a clear and feasible path forward for completing the research. The DiP committee will review components (1) – (4) prior to meeting synchronously with the student to conduct component (5).

Students will either receive a *pass* or *fail* on their first attempt of their Preliminary Exam. The full DiP committee, led by the major professor, has final discretion on the status of a student's Preliminary Exam. With the support of their major professor, students may submit a formal appeal to delay their preliminary exam by one semester. All delay appeals must be submitted by the end of the 10th Week of the spring semester and will be reviewed by the Program Director and the Associate Chair of ELPS.

Students are expected to defend their Preliminary Exam in the spring of their second year. Students who do not pass their preliminary exam on their first attempt may request a second attempt. If granted, the second attempt must occur within two semesters after their original defense date. Students who do not pass their preliminary exam on their second attempt or who do not submit their preliminary exam by the end of the second semester after their original defense will be dismissed from the program.

For students who are eligible to retake their Preliminary Exam during the summer semester, all revised materials must be submitted to their full DiP Committee **by the end of the 5th week of the summer semester and any virtual redefense must be completed by the end of the 7th week**. Students will then receive a pass or fail on their second attempt.

Students receiving a *pass* may still be required to revise DiP Chapters 1-3 based on committee feedback. Students will not be able to begin conducting their DiP research until a passing grade is received on the Preliminary Exam defense and IRB approval has been obtained.

B. Preliminary Exam Content & Format

There are five components to the Preliminary Exam:

1. A full draft of Chapters 1-3 of the DiP
2. A pre-recorded presentation (10-15 minutes) summarizing Chapters 1-2 and highlighting the major components of DiP Chapter 3
3. Any associated materials to be submitted for IRB approval (e.g., interview/focus group protocol, survey instrument, etc.)
4. A projected timeline, organized by month, for completing the full DiP.
5. A synchronous oral defense of components 1-4.

C. Process

The Preliminary Exam is scheduled to take place during the spring semester of Year 2 of the Online EdD program. Students will submit and defend their Preliminary Exam during the spring semester; all Preliminary Exam materials must be submitted to the full DiP Committee through the EdD Student Portal by the end of the 10th week of the spring semester. The full DiP committee will review these components in advance of a synchronous defense that will take place after the 11th week of the spring semester.

A note on preliminary exam materials submission: Unless a student has received an extension on their preliminary exam materials from the Program Director and their Major Professor, all materials must be submitted by the exam deadline (typically the end of the 10th week of the spring semester). Students who submit their materials more than 48 hours after the exam deadline without an approved extension will have their first preliminary exam attempt marked as a fail. A subsequent attempt at the preliminary exam will follow the process listed above under Preliminary Exam, Section A: Evaluation.

Upon successful completion of the Preliminary Exam, students officially enter doctoral candidacy. After completion, students should apply for and receive IRB approval through the FSU Office of Human Subjects within 60 days of passing their Preliminary Exam.

Dissertation Credits

A student must earn a minimum of twenty-four (24) dissertation credits and adhere to the continuous enrollment policy in order to complete the doctorate. To earn an “S” on dissertation hours credits, students must show evidence of progress towards completion of the Dissertation in Practice. Evaluation of dissertation hours credits will be at the discretion of the Major Professor. Additional information is included under the dissertation hours grading section.

Dissertation in Practice

A doctoral Dissertation in Practice (DiP) must be completed on a problem or possibility of practice relevant to the area of major. To be acceptable, it must be an achievement in original research constituting a significant contribution to knowledge and represent a substantial scholarly effort on the part of the student.

The Dissertation in Practice (DiP) represents a public statement of doctoral quality research. Its designation as a Dissertation in Practice emphasizes its practitioner-based research focus. Unlike a traditional Ph.D. dissertation that is often written for a restricted community of scholars, the DiP is directed at a wider audience, one that is focused on practitioners, policymakers, and educational leaders. In other words, student findings will have real world applicability for practitioners working in varied educational settings. As a scholar practitioner, students will produce a report that demonstrates both scholarly rigor and practitioner relevance. Therefore, the DiP adheres to specific research standards and protocols that ensure the integrity of student work and the reputation of Florida State University.

The manuscript must be prepared according to the style and form prescribed by the department and must be submitted to the EdD Student Portal for a TurnItIn review. Formatting and clearance guidelines for the final electronic submission copy may be accessed from the Graduate School website: <https://gradschool.fsu.edu/academics-research/thesis-treatise-and-dissertation> or by contacting the manuscript clearance advisor.

The minimum number of dissertation hours for completion of an Ed.D. degree is 24 semester hours.

Final approval of the dissertation by the entire supervisory committee is prerequisite to the awarding of the degree. This is true no matter how many hours a student has completed in dissertation or what grades have been recorded for the dissertation hours.

Please refer to the EdD Student Portal and the DiP Guide for more details on the formatting and structure of the Dissertation in Practice.

The final milestone of the EdD program is the submission of the DiP and the DiP Defense.

A. Content & Format

There are four components to the DiP defense:

1. A full draft of Chapters 1-4 of the DiP
2. A pre-recorded presentation (10-15 minutes) highlighting the major components of DiP Chapter 4 and summarizing Chapters 1-3. The purpose of the presentation is to summarize the foundations of your work (i.e., the problem, the context, the research design), to explain your findings/results, and then to connect that back to the problem and potential solutions in your local context.
3. A 4-6 page (1,000-1,500 words) Executive Summary of the DiP, suitable for sharing with key stakeholders.
4. A synchronous oral defense of components 1-3. The virtual defense consists primarily of a question/answer or open conversation between the candidate and their committee.

B. Evaluation

The full DiP committee will receive components 1 – 3 **at least two weeks** before the synchronous DiP defense. During the defense, the full DiP committee will determine the extent to which students have adequately met the requirements as specified in this document.

Students will either receive a *pass*, *pass with major revisions*, or *redefense* on their first attempt of the DiP defense. The full DiP committee, led by the major professor, has final discretion on this matter and the associated timeline for any re-defense. Students receiving a *pass* may still be required to make minor revisions to the DiP based on the committee's feedback.

Students who defend successfully with a "Pass with Major revisions" but miss the defense semester's Manuscript Clearance submission deadlines will need to register for an additional semester and meet the Manuscript Clearance deadlines of the semester following the original defense semester.

Students who fail to graduate in their original defense semester and the semester after their original defense semester are required to re-defend their thesis, treatise, or dissertation and meet Manuscript Clearance deadlines during the second semester since their original defense semester (e.g., original defense F24, required re-defense Su25). Students who re-defend and do not earn a "Pass," should be given a "Fail." The transcript will reflect a "Pass" once the student submits their successfully defended document.

Students must meet semester deadlines for Manuscript Clearance in order to graduate. In addition, students must meet criteria described in the Examination in Defense of Thesis and Examination in Defense of Dissertation sections by or before Manuscript Clearance deadlines in order to graduate.

A more detailed description of defense outcomes [as outlined in the University Bulletin](#) is available in *Appendix C*.

C. Process

The timeline for the DiP defense is determined by the student and the major professor. Students are advised to adhere to any deadlines specified by the Graduate School, including deadlines to submit the pre-defense DiP draft for initial formatting review, and the post-defense, fully revised DiP for final review.

Dissertation Hours Grading

Students complete a dissertation completion timeline as part of their DiP Preliminary Exam defense. If a student has not adhered to this timeline over the course of a semester, they may be assigned a grade of “Unsatisfactory” for their dissertation hours for that semester. Adjustments to the timeline may be made in consultation with the student’s major professor. Appeals for special circumstances should follow the FSU grade appeal policy.

Benchmarks for “Satisfactory” dissertation hours grade Summer 3:

- Completion of checkpoints in Dissertation Hours Workshop
- IRB submission
- IRB approval
- Data collection begun or preparing to begin data collection

Benchmarks for “Satisfactory” dissertation hours grade Fall 3:

- Data collection completed
- Data analysis begun
- Draft of results submitted

Benchmarks for “Satisfactory” dissertation hours grade Spring 3:

- Full draft of DiP submitted to Major Professor and committee

Time Limit for Completion of Degree

It is University policy that all requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within five calendar years from the time the student passes the preliminary examination. If the student is unable to obtain an approved Extension of Time (EOT) or approval to take the preliminary exam and/or

coursework again for readmission to candidacy, then the student may no longer be enrolled in that program at Florida State University. Per University policy, it is not guaranteed that students will be allowed to retake the Preliminary Exam if their candidacy expires. They must first be approved to retake the exam by the committee, department chair, and academic dean, via the Anne's College Preliminary Exam Retake Request Form.

It is the policy of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies that any doctoral student who exceeds the five-year time limit for completion of the doctoral degree and who has exhausted any extension of time approved by the Dean of the Graduate School may seek readmission to the degree program.

Within ten years following initial admission to candidacy, a former student seeking readmission must provide substantial evidence that he or she has maintained currency in the field of study through regular employment or scholarship and resubmit their preliminary exam and proposed timeline for completion that the major professor considers defensible and reasonable, respectively.

Upon readmission, the student's supervisory committee shall require that the student re-register for the preliminary examination and set a date for the defense of the preliminary exam. Once the supervisory committee approves the preliminary examination, the student will be awarded a "pass". The student must then remain continuously enrolled (see section on *Continuous Enrollment*) by completing a minimum of two dissertation hours every semester while completing all requirements for the doctoral degree within five years from the new date of admission to candidacy.

If the former student is either (a) ten years beyond the date of initial admission to candidacy or (b) is within the ten years, but cannot present substantial evidence that he or she has maintained currency in the field since leaving the University, then readmission will be contingent on the student returning to the University to complete core courses essential to preparation for the regularly administered preliminary examination. These core courses will be identified by the supervisory committee and approved by the department chair. Once the courses are completed, the student will be required to pass the standard preliminary examination administered to all current students seeking admission to candidacy in the particular degree program.

Graduation

The student must apply for graduation at <https://registrar.fsu.edu/training/graduation-apply> during the first two weeks of the semester in which graduation is planned. If the student decides not to graduate during the semester after submitting an application, the student must notify the Office of Academic Services and Intern Support (OASIS).

Students must be registered for a minimum of two hours of dissertation credit in the semester in which they apply for graduation.

Academic Honor Policy

A major concern of any educational institution, ranking with its concern for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge, is the maintenance of high standards of integrity and responsibility in the academic community. The program, Department and University recognize the responsibility of both faculty and students in developing and maintaining these standards.

The legal foundation for the coordinated efforts of faculty and students to uphold academic integrity and combat academic dishonesty is provided in the Student Conduct Code (FAC C22-3.04), which can be found in the *Florida State University Student Handbook*.

You can find the [most recent version of the FSU Academic Honor policy here](#).

Each student shall be responsible for abiding by the Academic Honor Policy at all times. The instructor may further define in writing in the syllabus or other documents, the instructor's specification of the acts which shall constitute a violation of the Academic Honor Policy. Of required by the instructor, at the conclusion of each examination or submission of an assignment, each student shall sign a pledge that the student has neither given nor received aid from any unauthorized source during the examination or the assignment. Any student who observes cheating or violates the Academic Honor Policy is expected to report the violation to the instructor and/or the University judicial officer.

For additional information, please see the [University's Academic Honor Policy](#).

Grade Appeals

The purpose of the grade appeals system is to afford an opportunity for a student to appeal a grade if the student feels that the grade was inequitably awarded in that it involved a gross violation of the institution's own specified grading standards.

Step 1. Within 15 class days (defined throughout the Grade Appeals System as Mondays through Fridays during regular fall, spring, and summer semesters, as noted in the FSU Academic Calendar maintained by the University Registrar. Class days are not dependent on whether an individual student has class on a particular day) following the date that final grades are made available to students, the student must contact the instructor in question to discuss the grade and attempt to resolve any differences. The student should document any attempts to contact the instructor in order to establish that the appeal was begun within this 15-class-day period. In the event that the instructor is not available, the student should provide that documentation to the instructor's program or department chair. It is expected that the student will first attempt to resolve the grade dispute with the instructor; however, either the student or the instructor may consult with the appropriate department chair, school director, or designee during this process.

Step 2. If no resolution is reached within this 15-class-day period, after the student's documented attempt, the student has an additional 10 class days to submit a written statement to the department chair, school director, or designee. This statement must include an account of attempts to resolve the issue, as well as the evidence that forms the basis for the appeal.

Within 20 class days thereafter, the department chair, school director, or designee will set a date for a meeting of a grade appeals screening committee composed of three students enrolled in the academic unit

offering the course to review the appeal. These students should be either undergraduate or graduate students, depending on the enrollment status of the student challenging the grade. The meeting should occur within that 20-class-day period, if practicable. Appropriate students who have no conflict of interest will be chosen to serve on this screening committee by a student organization associated with the program or department, if such an organization exists. If none exists or if members of such an organization are not available, the department chair, school director, or designee will select appropriate students who have no conflict of interest. Both the student and the instructor may attend the meeting, as may the department chair, school director, or designee.

The role of the screening committee is solely to determine whether the student has presented sufficient evidence to warrant further review. Within five class days after this meeting, the screening committee will render its decision in writing (indicating that they recommend/do not recommend further review) to the department chair, school director, or designee, the student, and the instructor. A negative decision will end the appeal. A positive decision will trigger the next step in the process.

Step 3. Within 15 class days of a positive decision from the grade appeals screening committee, the department chair, school director, or designee will appoint and arrange for a meeting of a grade appeals board. The meeting should occur within that 15-class-day period, if practicable. The board is composed of three faculty members and two students other than those who served on the screening committee. These students should be either undergraduate or graduate students, depending on the enrollment status of the student challenging the grade.

The purpose of this board is to determine whether or not to uphold the final grade assigned by the instructor. The board will consider only the evidence provided by the student and the instructor in making the determination. The student, the instructor, and the department chair, school director, or designee may attend the meeting.

The grade will be upheld unless the evidence shows that the grade was awarded in an arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory manner, as a result of a gross violation of the instructor's own evaluation (grading) statement. If the original grade is not upheld, the board will recommend that an alternative grade be assigned by the department chair, school director, or designee.

If the student has evidence that this grade appeals process has deviated substantially from these established procedures, resulting in a biased decision, the student may consult with the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement regarding referral to the Faculty Senate Student Academic Relations Committee.

Graduate Forms & Authenticated Signatures

OASIS maintains accurate records for graduate students of the Anne Spencer Daves College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences. This includes all administrative forms related to graduate study. The OASIS forms website includes links to current graduate forms and the current deadlines for forms to be submitted to OASIS. Forms and deadlines can be found here: [Oasis Forms Website](#)

Authenticated electronic signatures are required on forms. Authenticated electronic signatures are obtained by using Adobe Sign or DocuSign. The PDF-specific forms listed on the OASIS websites are

formatted for PDF fill-in and electronic signatures. Most University-level forms are also formatted for PDF fill-in and signature.

Appendix A

Scholarly Engagement Policy

The goal of the Scholarly Engagement requirement is to prepare doctoral graduates who can acquire, evaluate, communicate, extend, and apply knowledge through active participation in the scholarly practitioner community.

Annual Confirmation of Scholarly Engagement. Each year, as part of the annual review process, doctoral students must demonstrate to their major professor's satisfaction either 1) completion of any benchmark activity or 2) concrete progress toward the completion of any benchmark activity. Students will submit a Scholarly Engagement Narrative in the EdD Student Portal at the end of the spring term each year.

Prerequisites to be completed before key milestones in doctoral progression: Certain benchmarks must be completed before the end of Years 1 and 2 and prior to graduation.

BENCHMARKS FOR SCHOLARLY ENGAGEMENT

During Year 1

- Develop a resumé or CV
- Complete the CITI human subjects training (to be completed in EDF6486)

And at least one of the following:

- Attend a professional development conference/meeting or
- Attend/watch at least 2 Relevant Research Roundtable (R3) presentations

During Year 2

- Updated resumé or CV

And at least one of the following:

- Attend at least 1 state, regional, or national conference (professional or research association)
- Attend/watch an FSU professional development seminar/workshop

Before Graduation

- Updated resumé or CV

And at least one of the following:

- Present the results of your DiP to key decision-makers and stakeholders in your local context
- Present at a national, state, regional, or local conference/professional development seminar or
- Submit an article to a professional organization newsletter and/or journal

Appendix B

Graduate School Preliminary Exam Policy

Please note that the most up-to-date policy is [available in the University Bulletin](#).

FSU Preliminary Exam Policy

Satisfactory completion of a preliminary examination shall be required for admission to candidacy for the PhD or EdD degree. No student may register for dissertation hours prior to the point in the semester in which the preliminary examination was passed. An admission to candidacy form must be completed and filed in the Office of the University Registrar prior to registration for dissertation hours. After completion of the admission to candidacy process, the student may retroactively add dissertation hours for that semester in which the preliminary examination was completed. Retroactive changes are only permitted if the preliminary examination is passed by the end of the seventh week of the semester. For term specific deadline dates, please refer to the “Academic Calendar” in the Registration Guide.

The preliminary examination is designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge and to afford the examiners the basis for constructive recommendations concerning the student’s subsequent formal or informal study. The form and content of this examination will be determined by the department, college, school, or examining committee (typically, but not necessarily the same composition as the supervisory committee) administering the degree program. Prior to the examination, the student’s examining committee will determine whether the student 1) has a 3.0 average, and 2) has progressed sufficiently in the study of the discipline and its research tools to begin independent research in the area of the proposed dissertation.

The chair of the major department, the academic dean, and the Dean of The Graduate School may attend any session of the supervisory or examining committee as nonvoting members. A member may be appointed to the examining committee at the discretion of the academic dean or Dean of The Graduate School or on recommendation of the major professor. Normally, the examining committee will be identical with the supervisory committee.

The examining committee will report the outcome of the examination to the academic dean: passed, failed, additional work to be completed, or to be re-examined; the report following the reexamination must indicate the student either passed or failed. The results of the examination will be reported to the Office of the University Registrar for inclusion in the student’s permanent record.

If a student fails the preliminary examination before being admitted to candidacy, then the student is ineligible to continue in the degree program unless a re-examination of the preliminary examination is offered by the student’s supervisory committee or other relevant decision-making body within each department or unit, per that department or unit’s doctoral student handbook. The Academic Dean’s office should be notified of the outcome of any preliminary exam attempt.

Students can take the preliminary examination for admission to candidacy a maximum of only two times. A second failure on the preliminary exam makes the student ineligible to continue in the

degree program. The second attempt at the preliminary exam shall occur no sooner than six full class weeks after the results of the first attempt are shared with the student. For the purpose of this policy, a “full class week” is defined as a week with five days during which classes are held at FSU. Students must be registered separately for their first and second attempt, if necessary, within the same semester, and must receive either a “pass” or a “fail” grade for each attempt.

An exception request regarding the timing of the re-examination can be submitted for consideration to the Academic Dean’s Office by either the student or the supervisory committee. Students who allege that academic regulations and/or procedures were improperly applied for the re-examination of their preliminary exam may have their grievances addressed through the general academic appeals process. The full preliminary exam policy as listed here must be added to all doctoral student handbooks”

Appendix C

Dissertation Defense Decision Definitions

Please note that the most up-to-date policy is [available in the University Bulletin](#).

Each member must sign the online Defense Decision Form to substantiate the results of the defense. The oral examining committee will certify the results of the defense. The oral examining committee will certify the results of the examination as one of the following: Pass, Pass with Major Revisions, Re-Examine, or Fail.

Pass. To receive a Pass, the dissertation must be in its final form or require only minor revisions (e.g., grammar, typographical, clarifications, minor changes not requiring review by full committee) at the time of the defense, AND the student passed their oral defense. A decision of Pass for the defense of dissertation requires at least a majority approval of the committee. Individual departments may impose stricter requirements for what constitutes a Pass. Departments and other degree-granting programs must publicize their policy on this issue in their Graduate Student Handbook and in the relevant section of the Graduate Bulletin.

Pass with Major revisions. This decision indicates that the dissertation requires major revisions (e.g., additional chapters, major restructuring, significant changes needing approval by either the major professor/chair or the full committee), AND the student passed their oral defense. Students must submit edits to their manuscript no later than the manuscript clearance deadlines of the next term.

Re-Examine. The committee may determine a re-examination is necessary if the dissertation had significant flaws and major revisions are need (i.e., the current research will take a substantial amount of work/time to correct), AND/OR the student's oral defense was unsatisfactory. This decision can only be given once. If the student completes a re-examination and does not pass with only minor revision required to the dissertation, they should be given a Fail.

Fail. In the case of a Fail, the dissertation had significant flaws to the point at which the committee believes the student should discontinue the program, or that a new research direction is required; AND/ OR the student's oral defense was unsatisfactory, and another defense of the existing project will not be allowed. This decision should only be given when a committee/academic unit does not believe the student should continue in the program, or if the student will be required to move in an entirely new direction for their research. It is the committee's goal to prevent students from defending if their work is substantially flawed when they are reviewing it prior to defense. This decision is required if a student completes a re-examination and does not earn a Pass.

After approval by the oral examining committee (which includes or may be the same as the supervisory committee) and completion of the Final Content Approval Form in the Manuscript Clearance Portal, the student should electronically submit the post-defense, final content-approved version of the dissertation to the Manuscript Clearance Advisor. This submission must occur by the current semester deadline for graduation in the current term, and no later than the next semester deadline for graduation in the next semester. The degree cannot be awarded until the required forms have been completed on The Graduate School's Manuscript Clearance Portal and the final version of

the manuscript has been submitted to and approved by the Manuscript Clearance Advisor. If the appropriate deadline is missed, the student's semester of graduation may be delayed and/or they must be re-examined. Electronic manuscript/forms submission instructions and deadlines can be found on The Graduate School's website under Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertation.