

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

EDCI

DISSERTATION

GUIDE

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DISSERTATION GUIDE

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PREFACE

This dissertation guide provides information on policies and procedures related to the dissertation process as well as material on the formatting and structure of the dissertation itself. While intended to be comprehensive, certainly omissions may occur and questions will arise. Candidates working through the dissertation process should stay in close contact and clarify any questions with the dissertation chair. Rather than having to go back and correct problems that could have been prevented, ask questions early and often in the process. Candidates should refer to the academic calendar for submission dates that may apply.

The time-frame for completion of the doctoral program is seven years from the start of the program. At the end of the seventh year, a candidate may petition the associate dean for a one-year extension if the candidate's dissertation proposal has been approved. If necessary, to successfully complete the dissertation, the candidate can petition the associate dean of the College of Education (COE) for a second and final one-year extension to complete the dissertation.

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION

A doctoral examination is required as the student nears completion of coursework in the doctoral program. The examination is designed to ensure that the student has a firm foundation of the knowledge required for successful completion of the program. Successful completion of the doctoral examination attests to the student's ability to undertake independent research and marks the student's Advancement to Candidacy. Advancement to Candidacy is required before the student may begin the dissertation process. Candidates should consider possible dissertation topics and conduct preliminary literature reviews as early in the program as possible. Having a dissertation topic in mind by the time the student is Advanced to Candidacy is advantageous.

APPOINTMENT OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE CHAIR

Following the successful completion of the doctoral examination, the candidate advances to candidacy and may select a dissertation chair and a dissertation committee. The chair of the doctoral program provides the candidate with a list of graduate faculty who are eligible to serve as dissertation chairs. Eligibility to serve as a dissertation committee chair requires that the faculty member has successfully served on a minimum of two doctoral dissertations, i.e., the faculty member must have served on two dissertation committees that completed their obligations in the dissertation process whether or not the candidate completed the doctoral process and the candidate's dissertation was approved. In the case of dissertation committee co-chairs, at least one of the co-chairs must be eligible to serve as chair. A full-time UHCL faculty member, outside the College of Education, may serve as chair or co-chair in exceptional cases, with the approval of the associate dean. A Dissertation Chair Appointment Form (Attachment 1) must be completed to appoint a dissertation chair/co-chair. Unless someone else is approved by the associate dean, the dissertation chair or co-chair must serve as the candidate's faculty advisor.

APPOINTMENT OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The dissertation committee requires a minimum of four members, but may have more, who can support the candidate in the completion of the dissertation. All but one member of the committee must be faculty from the College of Education. One of the members must be a faculty member who has a strong background in statistics or qualitative research methodology and can support the candidate with the research design. One member of the committee may be a professional from the workplace/field setting (e.g., superintendent) or can be a faculty member from another UHCL college or another accredited university. Each member of the dissertation committee must hold a research-based doctoral degree from an accredited university.

When selecting a committee, the candidate should include members who bring strengths to the process (e.g., knowledge of the dissertation topic). The dissertation committee is responsible for: (1) advising the candidate on the research, (2) advising/reviewing the

dissertation proposal and dissertation in its entirety, (3) approving the dissertation proposal, (4) approving/disapproving the dissertation defense, (5) approving the final dissertation, and (6) certifying that all degree requirements have been fulfilled, to be awarded the doctoral degree. A Dissertation Committee Appointment Form (Attachment 2) contains the names of the candidate, dissertation committee chair(s), and members of the committee. The form must be signed by the candidate and the dissertation chair(s) and approved by the chair of the doctoral program and the associate dean.

DISSERTATION HOURS

Below are the rules for the dissertation hours, which must be a part of the doctoral program:

1. Two dissertation courses are offered: EDCI 8939 (3 credits) and EDCI 8969 (6 credits).
These courses allow a candidate to fulfill the minimum number of dissertation hours (6 credits). The decision of how many credits to be taken in a given semester will be determined by the candidate in consultation with the dissertation chair. Candidates do not meet as a class for these courses, but rather work independently with their dissertation chair and dissertation committee members in the writing of their dissertation.
2. The EdD program requires that a candidate take at least 6 hours of dissertation during the program. These hours may be completed in one or more semesters, as recommended by the dissertation chair. Based on a candidate's dissertation study, more than 6 hours of dissertation may be required, but only 6 hours will count toward the completion of the program.
3. Candidates cannot register for dissertation hours until they have been admitted to doctoral candidacy. To be admitted to doctoral candidacy, candidates must have passed the doctoral examination.
4. In order to register for dissertation hours, candidates or their dissertation chair must email the associate dean their candidate identification number and the name of their dissertation chair. Once initially registered for dissertation hours (regardless of which course), candidates will be automatically registered for EDCI 8939 in all subsequent long semesters until graduation. If

the dissertation chair decides that a candidate should register for the other dissertation course (EDCI 8969), then the candidate should drop EDCI 8939 and email the associate dean requesting that EDCI 8969 be added.

5. Candidates wishing to enroll in dissertation hours during the summer semester must email the associate dean with the course number (EDCI 8939 or EDCI 8969), their candidate identification number, and the name of their dissertation chair. Registration may be waived during the summer semester if the candidate will not be using any university resources (e.g., faculty, library, computers, etc.) during the summer semester. This waiver is for the summer semester only.
6. If, for any reason, the graduation semester is delayed until after the semester in which the dissertation is completed (e. g. the dissertation defense falls outside of specified deadlines to meet graduation for that semester), then registration in dissertation during the semester of graduation may be waived. The dissertation chair(s) must send the request for the waiver to the associate dean by the Friday of the week before the start of classes in the semester of graduation. The request must include an explanation of why graduation has been delayed beyond the semester in which the dissertation was approved and a statement that the candidate will not be using any university resources in the semester of graduation.

DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

In the development and approval of the dissertation proposal, the following steps are followed:

Step 1: The candidate and dissertation chair work to focus the candidate's area of research toward developing a dissertation proposal. In advancing the process of identifying a dissertation topic, the candidate will submit to the dissertation chair a four-to-five-page outline which describes: (1) the background or context of the proposed research study; (2) a problem statement, along with research questions or hypotheses; (3) a statement noting the significance or importance of the research topic; and (4) an outline of the methodology to be utilized.

Step 2: The dissertation chair reviews the proposal, determining whether to move forward on the research topic or to have the candidate develop a new topic. Once the topic is sufficiently developed, committee members are selected who can support the candidate in the completion of the research topic. These members provide feedback on the development of the dissertation proposal.

The proposal typically consists of the first three chapters of the dissertation, with the understanding that the literature review may not be fully developed. Typically, the proposal is approximately 35 to 40 pages in length. Candidates should consult their dissertation chairs regarding the actual format to be followed. An example of the approval page for dissertation proposals is included in Attachment 4.

When the committee has agreed that the candidate's proposal is sufficiently well developed, an oral defense of the dissertation proposal is scheduled. No deadline is set for when the dissertation proposal defense is scheduled. While all members of the committee should be present at the defense, extenuating circumstances may exist that cause the defense to be held with one member absent. Approval of the proposal must be unanimous, although final approval may be contingent on required changes to the proposal. Any member not attending the defense must also approve the proposal before the candidate can proceed with the study. Once the committee approves the dissertation proposal, the candidate may move forward on the dissertation's development. Following the defense, a copy of Attachment 4 (Approval of the Dissertation Proposal), signed by all members of the committee is to be forwarded to the associate dean along with the copy of the approved proposal.

If a candidate needs to change the dissertation chair or other committee members, this change, along with a rationale for the change and a recommendation for a suitable replacement, should be discussed by the candidate with the current chair(s), chair of the doctoral program, or associate dean. Request for approval of the new dissertation chair or committee member is directed to the chair of the doctoral program and associate dean. A new Dissertation Committee Appointment Form (Attachment 2) will need to be completed and approved.

COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL

Candidates are required to receive approval for their proposed research from the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS). Information related to the CPHS application and related forms can be obtained from the College the Education's website at <http://prtl.uhcl.edu/education/forms-information/candidates>. The steps outlined below must be followed carefully, as deviation from these steps is a violation of federal regulations and can nullify the use of data collected prior to CPHS approval.

1. The candidate should submit their CPHS application form, along with any supporting documentation listed in the application (e.g., instruments, interview questions, consents, assents, site approval letters), to their dissertation chair for review.
2. Once the dissertation chair has approved the candidate's CPHS packet, the chair will submit it via email to the chair of the College of Education's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. The CPHS will not accept any applications directly from the candidate.
3. Candidates and faculty members conducting joint research prior to the approval of the dissertation proposal must also submit a CPHS application. This research may lead to the candidate's dissertation and the data collected would be considered archival. However, once the dissertation proposal is formally approved, any necessary CPHS modifications to the original CPHS application and/or CPHS extensions must be submitted to the CPHS committee by the candidate.
4. For candidates not involved in joint research with a faculty member, the CPHS application may not be submitted to the CPHS committee until the dissertation proposal has been formally approved. Candidates may not proceed with their research until CPHS approval is received. Any work with human subjects prior to such approval will be nullified. The candidate should note that a minimum of two weeks should be allowed for the CPHS review. CPHS approval is for one year and if the research extends beyond one

year, the candidate must let the CPHS committee know by applying for an extension to continue the research.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE AND APPROVAL

To officially schedule the defense, committee members should agree that the candidate is ready to defend the dissertation. An Application for the Dissertation Defense form (Attachment 3) must be completed and signed by the candidate and committee members, and approved by the chair of the doctoral program and the associate dean. The scheduled date of the defense must be at least 21 days after the committee's decision. The signing of the Application for the Dissertation Defense Form does not constitute final approval of the dissertation.

The candidate and the candidate's dissertation chair are responsible for completing the Application for the Dissertation Defense form, setting the date for the defense, scheduling the room for the defense, handling equipment needs, and so forth. The candidate must provide copies of the completed dissertation to the dissertation committee at least 14 days prior to the scheduled date of the defense. Preferably, all members of the committee be present at the defense. However, if extenuating circumstances exist, the defense may be held with one member absent. Any member not attending the defense must be afforded the opportunity to review and approve or not approve the dissertation. Dissertation chairs must be present at the dissertation defense.

The dissertation defense includes a presentation of the study (not to exceed 30 minutes) and an oral examination where each committee member has the opportunity to ask questions. At an appropriate time, typically after one to two hours, the dissertation chair invites the candidate to leave while the dissertation committee deliberates on the performance of the candidate. The committee, as a whole, judges the quality of the candidate's work and recommends approval/disapproval of the dissertation. Later, the candidate returns to receive the results.

The committee shall decide one of the following:

1. Pass, with minor or no editorial revisions to the written document. Revisions are to be approved by the dissertation chair.
2. Pass, with substantive revisions of the written document. Revisions are to be approved by the dissertation committee unless the dissertation committee delegates approval to the dissertation chair, or the dissertation chair and specified members of the committee. When substantive revisions are required, the dissertation chair requests each dissertation committee member to present desired revisions, with the dissertation chair informing the candidate of the expected changes. Once the revisions have been completed, unless a different approach is recommended by the dissertation committee, the dissertation chair will either (1) contact each dissertation committee member to determine acceptance of the revisions, or (2) hold a meeting of the dissertation committee with the candidate to discuss the written revisions. If a meeting is scheduled, then the candidate must provide the dissertation committee a copy of the revised document at least 14 days prior to the scheduled meeting.
3. Fail, with major revisions necessary prior to second and final defense option, unless a second defense is not agreed upon by the dissertation committee.

The dissertation committee as a whole shall handle differences of opinion, with the dissertation chair guiding the candidate on agreed upon required changes. The dissertation chair may choose to consult with the chair of the doctoral program or associate dean in resolving dissertation committee conflicts. When consensus among dissertation committee members is not possible, a candidate may pass the examination with one dissenting vote. A dissenting member has the option of not signing the dissertation approval form. This option will happen rarely, since dissertation committee members will seriously attempt to resolve differences.

If the candidate fails the oral examination at the defense, the dissertation committee may approve the scheduling of a second defense no sooner than six (6) weeks from the time of the first oral examination, and the candidate will work with the dissertation chair and other members of the dissertation committee to make required changes to the dissertation. The candidate must

provide copies of the complete dissertation to the dissertation committee at least 14 days prior to the scheduled defense.

If the dissertation committee determines that a second defense will not be allowed or the candidate fails the dissertation defense a second time, the candidate may petition the dean for the opportunity to initiate dissertation work on a different topic and with a different committee. At the conclusion of the dissertation defense, a copy of Attachment 5, Final Defense of the Dissertation, is to be signed by all members of the committee and forwarded to the associate dean.

FINAL EDITING AND SUBMISSION

Candidates must make any changes prescribed by the dissertation committee, typically under the supervision of the dissertation chair and other members of the dissertation committee. The candidate is responsible for ensuring the submission of their completed work and all necessary forms with sufficient time to meet a graduation deadline. Sample copies of all front matter pages are provided in the Sample Pages document.

DISSERTATION TIMELINE FOR GRADUATION

The structured sequence of deadlines must be met in order to graduate in a given semester. These deadlines relate to the defense of the dissertation, making required revisions, library review, and final approval by the dean and associate dean. In general, the dissertation must be completed early in the semester in which graduation is anticipated. Candidates are advised to check the academic calendar for specific deadlines in a given semester, including the deadline date to apply for graduation, and candidates should consult with their dissertation chair if there are any questions.

GUIDE FOR THE PREPARATION OF A DISSERTATION

A. Library.

Candidates are encouraged to take full advantage of support from the Neumann Library throughout the proposal and dissertation process. Librarians can help candidates identify information resources such as databases, books, and relevant secondary datasets. Librarians can also help candidates construct searches in article databases, use EndNote to manage references, and other tasks. To schedule an appointment with a librarian, complete the form at:

<http://libguides.uhcl.edu/dissertation/contact>

B. Writing Center.

The UHCL Writing Center offers regular appointments and tailored programming to help candidates with drafting, writing, revising, and editing major projects, such as dissertations and theses. Please contact the Assistant Director and Graduate Programming Coordinator for more information.

C. Deadlines

Candidates should consult the College of Education calendar distributed by the office of the associate dean or check the library website for deadline dates related to the completion of a dissertation <http://libguides.uhcl.edu/dissertation>. Candidate should also check with his/her advisor or dissertation chair prior to beginning the dissertation for any additional requirements or regarding any questions not answered by this *Dissertation Guide* or the *UHCL Graduate Catalog*. Once the dissertation chair and the committee have agreed that a dissertation defense maybe scheduled, copies of the final dissertation to be considered for approval by the dissertation committee must be submitted to the dissertation committee at least 14 calendar days in advance of the defense.

After successfully defending the dissertation and making all changes required by the committee, the candidate must upload the dissertation to the Vireo Thesis & Dissertation

Submission System at <https://uhcl-etd.tdl.org/> by 5:00 PM on the submission deadline date. The University of Houston-Clear Lake accepts electronic dissertations in PDF format only. You must upload your manuscript directly to the Vireo Thesis and Dissertation Submission System at <https://uhcl-etd.tdl.org/>. You are required to schedule a format check from the Neumann Library by a Research & Instruction Librarian before you upload your manuscript. Go to <http://libguides.uhcl.edu/dissertation> to schedule an appointment. Download the UHCL Dissertation Templates at <http://libguides.uhcl.edu/dissertation>. These templates are designed for Microsoft Word for Windows. Templates define the correct pagination, margins, font size and style, and other formatting settings according to the guidelines specified in the UHCL Format and Submission Guidelines for Dissertation handbook.

D. Dissertation Format Check

All dissertations, abstracts and proposals developed within the College of Education are to follow the format of the American Psychological Association's (APA) (2010) *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). If differences in format and layout between the specifications of the *Dissertation Guide* and the APA Publication Manual are present, the *Dissertation Guide* overrules the style guide. Additional information on the APA *Publication Manual*, including tutorials, can be found on the APA website at <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/>. Candidates are urged not to refer to recent dissertations or journal articles to develop a format, but rather to purchase and follow the *APA Publication Manual*. Subsequent to the format check and recommended corrections, the dissertation must be submitted for approval to the Office of the Associate Dean. Upon approval by the associate dean, the dissertation will be forwarded to the dean.

**ATTACHMENT 1:
DISSERTATION CHAIR APPOINTMENT FORM**

Tentative Dissertation Title

Candidate (Print/Type)	Candidate Signature	Student ID
------------------------	---------------------	------------

Candidate Email	Date
-----------------	------

Chair: _____

(Print/Type)

Co-Chair (if any): _____

Approved:

Committee Chair Signature	Date
---------------------------	------

Committee Co-Chair Signature	Date
------------------------------	------

DENIED APPROVED

Doctoral Program Chair Signature	Date
----------------------------------	------

DENIED APPROVED

Associate Dean Signature	Date
--------------------------	------

ATTACHMENT 2

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT FORM

Tentative Dissertation Title

Candidate (Print/Type)	Candidate Signature	Student ID
------------------------	---------------------	------------

Candidate Email	Date
-----------------	------

Dissertation

Committee Chair:	Name	Signature
------------------	------	-----------

Co-Chair (if any):	Name	Signature
--------------------	------	-----------

Methodologist:	Name	Signature
----------------	------	-----------

Methodologist:	Name	Signature
----------------	------	-----------

Dissertation

Committee Members:	Name	Signature
--------------------	------	-----------

	Name	Signature
--	------	-----------

	Name	Signature
--	------	-----------

Attach current vita for any non-College of Education committee member.

Approved: _____

Committee Chair Signature	Date
---------------------------	------

Committee Co-Chair Signature	Date
------------------------------	------

The Dissertation Committee Chair's signature on the form signifies that the chair has confirmed that each member of the committee has agreed to serve on the committee.

DENIED APPROVED _____

Doctoral Program Chair Signature	Date
----------------------------------	------

DENIED APPROVED _____

Associate Dean Signature	Date
--------------------------	------

ATTACHMENT 3

APPLICATION FOR THE DISSERTATION DEFENSE

**University of Houston-Clear Lake College of Education
Doctor of Education Degree (EdD) in Curriculum and Instruction Program**

This application must be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean after it has been signed by the EdD Candidate and Dissertation Committee Members. This form must be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean at least 21 days prior to the schedule dissertation defense.

Candidate (Please Print): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

ID#: _____ Dissertation Defense Date: _____

Candidate Signature: _____ Date: _____

Committee Signatures: The Chair signs last, but on the first line.

Chair: _____

Date: _____

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Date Received in the Associate Dean's Office: _____

DENIED APPROVED

Associate Dean Signature

_____ Date

**ATTACHMENT 4:
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL SIGNATURE PAGE**

- 1.25" margin -

Proposal Title

by

Candidate

APPROVED BY

Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

RECEIVED BY THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION:

Associate Dean

Date Received

Dean

ATTACHMENT 5
FINAL DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION FORM

Dissertation Title

Candidate

Student ID

Date of Final Defense: _____

Committee Decision

- Pass, with minor or no editorial revisions (revisions are approved by the dissertation chair)
- Pass, with revisions (approved by the committee)
- Fail, with major revisions prior to a second and final defense option
- Fail, with no second defense option.

The Committee Decision is Approved By:

Dissertation Chair: _____ Date _____

Signature

Committee Member: _____

Signature

Committee Member: _____

Signature

Committee Member: _____

Signature

Committee Member: _____

Signature

Dissenting Vote, if any:

Committee Member: _____

Signature