

# Texas A&M University-Texarkana



## **Education Leadership Doctoral Program Handbook**

Revised January 2020

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Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the Scholars of Practice doctoral program in Education Leadership at Texas A&M University-Texarkana, a degree designed with a *public school and higher education* emphasis to meet the demands of education today. Graduates of the doctoral program often pursue leadership positions in public school districts, higher education, state or federal agencies, or the private sector. The Scholars of Practice degree is a web-enhanced doctoral program in which courses are approximately 50% online and 50% face-to-face delivered in a seminar format, providing flexibility for working students as well as the personal interaction for which A&M-Texarkana is known.

Applicants for the A&M-Texarkana's Scholars of Practice doctoral program may have completed a master's degree in Education Leadership or other related degree. However, we encourage those with master's degrees from other disciplines that support public school or higher education settings to consider applying. Prerequisites for success include a demonstration of strong academic attainment (including outstanding writing skills), potential scholarship ability, leadership abilities, and commitment to education.

If you have any questions about this program, you can contact the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at 903-223-3129 or you can contact the Doctoral Program Coordinator, Dr. Sara Lawrence, at [sara.lawrence@tamut.edu](mailto:sara.lawrence@tamut.edu).

Once again, thank you for your interest in the Scholars of Practice doctoral program at Texas A&M University-Texarkana.

Note: This handbook is subject to change. Updates will be available on the Education Leadership Department website. This is not a catalog and does **not** have catalog privileges.

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## **OUR MISSION**

The mission for Education Leadership at A&M-Texarkana is to be an advocate for all master and doctoral candidates both inside and outside the classroom. We propose to do this by effectively preparing candidates for leadership roles in fields of education.

### **College of Arts, Science, and Education (CASE)**

The online Education Leadership Master's Degree and Principal Certification Program is led by experienced faculty dedicated to the mission and vision of the Texas A&M University-Texarkana and the College of Arts, Science, and Education.

#### **College of Arts, Science and Education Mission**

We are a community of scholars who challenge each other to lives of inquiry.

#### **Education Department Mission**

Teach others to teach well.

#### **Education Department Vision**

Teach well.

#### **Education Department Beliefs and Core Values**

Good teaching is complex.  
Good teaching is deeply reflective.  
Good teaching can be replicated.  
Good teachers continuously improve.

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA  
COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCES, AND EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Education Leadership  
Scholars of Practice Doctoral Program**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Students admitted into the Scholars of Practice doctoral program are held to the academic policies and procedures contained in the university catalog, doctoral handbook and dissertation manual for their year of admission (cohort). Updates, corrections, or clarification may be made after publication of these documents and will be communicated to students via ACE email. Students are responsible for reading ACE email regularly.

Students admitted to the doctoral program will begin classes as a cohort group and are required to progress as a cohort group through a sequence of doctoral-only core courses and research tools courses. The cohort program provides students with an opportunity to progress through the program in a logical and sequential manner with a group of colleagues pursuing similar professional goals. The degree plan is 60 semester credit hours.

**PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Requirements for program completion include the following:

1. Completion of 60 hours of course work with minimum 3.0 GPA and no grade below a "C"
2. Successful completion of Comprehensive Exams
3. Successful Completion of Dissertation

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

**Course Work:**

The doctoral program is a 60 semester credit hours (SCH) Scholars of Practice program with four areas for completion. Students complete coursework in a cohort experience enrolling in 6 SCH (2 courses) each semester. Courses are delivered via a Web-Enhanced/Hybrid format. Approximately 50% is online and 50% face-to-face. Face-to-face class meetings (seminars) are held three weekends in the fall and spring semesters and up to two weekends in the summer semester.

***Course Components***

1. *Education Leadership (Core) Content* - 8 courses/ 24 SCH. Core courses delivered as part of the cohort model. Students must take all core courses within this model unless they apply for a leave of absence from the program. Core courses are not eligible for transfer or competency credit. Core courses prepare students to complete comprehensive

exams successfully. Topics include strategic management & change; education marketing & public relations; critical conversations & team building; applied instructional strategies; and contemporary issues in educational leadership.

2. *Cognate Courses* - 4 courses/12 SCH. A cognate is a block of courses connecting to Education Leadership and doctoral student's professional goals that may be completed prior to admission or after cohort courses are complete. Candidate must complete cognate courses prior to enrolling in dissertation courses (EDLD 693 – 3 SCH). Competency-based and/or transfer credit available. Eligible candidates may earn superintendent certification at A&M-Texarkana as a cognate area. Cognate courses must be approved by program coordinator.
3. *Research Tools* - 4 courses/12 SCH. Research tools courses prepare candidates for completing a dissertation.
4. *Dissertation hours* – 4 courses/12 SCH required minimum. Doctoral candidates complete a dissertation upon successful completion of course work (maintain 3.0 GPA with no grade below a "C") and the written comprehensive examination.

### ***Course Related Travel***

A&M-Texarkana is committed to experiential learning including study abroad opportunities that broaden student perspectives necessary to lead in a global and well-connected world. Education leadership faculty are committed to providing these opportunities in a manner that best meets the missions of the Scholars of Practice Program, College of Arts, Sciences, and Education and A&M-Texarkana. The program works to provide the best travel experience at a cost that is reasonable. Students should expect to commit funding for these opportunities, up to \$2,500. The University commits to working with students to determine eligibility for financial aid or payment plans to fund travel experience.

### **Comprehensive Examination**

The Doctor of Education Leadership Comprehensive Examination is a milestone event in the academic program of study leading to candidacy. Specifically, the comprehensive examination provides the doctoral student an opportunity to 1) demonstrate comprehensive understanding of the knowledge base, 2) provide an opportunity to chronicle the student's foundations as an academic as well as an educational leader, 3) demonstrate and characterize a grounded vision of leadership in the Education Leadership context for the future, and 4) provide academic insights and thought that reflect the work completed with their major advisor through the residency and other professional activities during doctoral study. Each student will first take a written Comprehensive Examination scheduled and administered simultaneously to a cohort of students.

The comprehensive examination is not intended to be an exercise in regurgitating all that a student has gained and learned throughout the program. Rather, this exam grounds the student in the academic discipline, so the student may ***construct new knowledge*** that will demonstrate thoughtful yet inquisitive thinking and scholarship.

## Dissertation

After doctoral candidates are admitted to candidacy, they are required to enroll in **three semester hours** of dissertation writing each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed and recommended by the dissertation committee for approval from the Dean of College of Arts, Sciences, and Education and Dean of Graduate Studies. Students who fail to enroll for dissertation during any fall or spring semester after admission to candidacy will be prohibited from enrolling until the tuition has been collected for each semester.

NOTE: Doctoral candidates will not be required to enroll during the summer term, unless recommended by the dissertation chair. A candidate cannot defend dissertation during the summer. Also note: students may be required to pay out-of-state tuition after they have completed 130 hours of work.

Students should refer to the Dissertation Manual for further information regarding dissertation processes.

## Department of Education Leadership Faculty

The faculty of the Education Leadership Master's Degree and Principal Certification Program are professional educators who bring their Texas public school leadership experiences to the program. Our faculty have served as assistant principals, principals, coordinators, directors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents in various school districts. Their field-based understandings combined with active research agendas make for the best possible learning opportunities as students seek to become educational leaders who will make a difference in schools, school districts, and local communities.

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## Doctoral Student Contact Information

Questions beyond the scope of this handbook should be directed to the following departments and/or individuals.

Jana Boatright, Registrar

[registrar@tamut.edu](mailto:registrar@tamut.edu)

Course enrollment issues

Stacey Epps, Coordinator of Financial Aid

[Stacey.Epps@tamut.edu](mailto:Stacey.Epps@tamut.edu)

Katheryn Hartshorn

[Katheryn.Hartshorn@tamut.edu](mailto:Katheryn.Hartshorn@tamut.edu)

Certification Coordinator

Dr. Sara Lawrence, Associate Dean of CASE, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology:  
Doctoral Program Coordinator & Student Advisor

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## PROGRAM ADMISSION

*Admission to the doctoral program in Education Leadership is a competitive process. With each cohort, the department receives more applications from qualified students than can be accepted. Consequently, application materials should be carefully prepared to present the student in the most positive light.*

A new doctoral cohort begins course work in the **spring semester of even years**. Doctoral students must apply to and be accepted by the A&M-Texarkana Scholars of Practice doctoral program.

Applications for a new cohort open in January of odd years. Application materials are accepted between January – August of odd years: application materials are due to the Office of Graduate Studies by August 31<sup>st</sup>. A list of current admission requirements and packet materials are located on the [doctoral program website](#). Please be advised, completion of application packet can take time. Applicants are encouraged to begin the application process early.

*Packet Review:* The Office of Graduate Studies forwards completed application packets to the Program Admissions Committee Chair for review in September by the Program Admissions Committee. The Program Admissions Committee is composed of faculty members teaching courses in Education Leadership. The committee reviews packets using a committee-approved rubric focusing on quality of packet material presenting evidence that an applicant will be successful in the program. If the sum of rubric points falls within the accepted entrance requirement range, then the committee will invite the student for an online interview.

*Interviews:* End of September/beginning of October, Office of Graduate Studies contacts applicants via email to participate in an online interview using an online platform. The interview is 15-20 minutes in length. The committee members score applicant interview using a committee-approved rubric.

*Admission:* At the conclusion of the process, the committee will recommend a cohort of students for approval by the Office of Graduate Studies. The committee will also produce a list of “alternate” applicants depending on the number of qualified applicants.

*Notification:* The Office of Graduate Studies will notify applicants in writing of their admission status the first week of November. Admission status will include the following: accepted, placed on list of alternates, or denied.

*Orientation:* Notifications of acceptance will invite those admitted to an orientation held on a Saturday in November. It is highly encouraged all admitted attend the orientation.

## DEGREE PLAN

### General Guidelines

All doctoral degree plans must include the coursework equivalent of a master's degree program. This requirement, in addition to the 60 semester credit hours (SCH) of doctoral coursework, equals a minimum 90 semester credit hours of post-baccalaureate coursework.

### Time Limitation for Degree

All degree requirements beyond the master's must be completed **within ten calendar** years from **the date of admission** to the doctoral program. **No coursework beyond the master's degree that is over ten years old at the time the doctoral degree is conferred can be used toward the doctoral degree.**

### Transfer Credit

With advisor recommendation and program coordinator approval, a student may transfer a maximum of 12 SCH from another regionally accredited institution of higher education toward the doctoral degree. However, only courses for which the student received a grade of "B" or better may be transferred, and all courses transferred must have been completed within 10 years of completion of the doctoral degree. Substitutes for core courses may not be transferred into the degree plan. All transferred courses within the 12 SCH cognate must fit within the student's cognate choice. Approved courses will be posted on the degree plan. **Under no circumstances may a student transfer more than 12 hours toward the doctoral degree.**

### Competency-Based Credits

Students may apply for competency-based credits based on work experience, outside trainings, and other approved life experiences. Credit is granted based on documentation (e.g. portfolio completed by the student) and reviewed by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, program coordinator, and the student's advisor.

### Research Tools

All research tool courses must be taken in sequence and completed **prior** to enrolling in dissertation study (EDLD 693).

## COURSE SEQUENCE

The required courses for completion are provided below. **Students are expected to take courses (with the exception of the 12 SCH cognate and dissertation work) with their assigned cohort.**

Information contained in this document is subject to additional provisions found in the A&M - Texarkana *University Catalog*.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Hours</u>
EDLD 611	Doctoral Seminar	3
EDLD 612	Strategic Management	3
EDLD 622	Executive Communication	3
EDLD 623	Public Administration, Marketing and PR	3
EDLD 624	Applied Instructional Technologies	3
EDLD 625	Field Study in National and International Cultural Perspectives	3
	<b>Or</b>	
	HUMA 693. Field Study in US Cross-Cultural Diversity	3
EDLD 632	Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership	3
EDLD 650	Investigating Phenomena Using Quantifiable Data#	3
EDLD 662	Methods of Inquiry (Qualitative Research) #	3
EDLD 663	Statistical Methods in Education Leadership#	3
EDLD 661	Dissertation Prospectus Development#	3
EDLD 670	Critical Conversations and Team Building	3
EDLD 690	Executive Instructional Leadership of the Education Community *	3
EDLD 691	Leadership Internship *	3
EDLD 694	Executive Instructional Leadership*	3
EDLD 698	Administrative Leadership (Finance) *	3
EDLD 693	Dissertation Research** (12 SCH total required)	3

\* A&M-Texarkana superintendent certification courses. These courses accepted as cognate courses or may be replaced by courses in another cognate area as approved by major advisor.

\*\* May be repeated as needed until dissertation is successfully completed. Only 12 hours of completion of this course may count toward the degree plan. Beyond 12 SCH, credit will not count toward degree.

#Research tool courses

There is a residency requirement for student's completing doctoral studies at A&M-Texarkana. Due to the hybrid course format used within this program, students meet the residency requirement of at least 48 credit hours to be completed at Texas A&M University-Texarkana.

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

### Prerequisites

**Courses.** The student must complete core courses, and completed approximately 24 credit hours, as approved by the student's doctoral advisor.

**Education Leadership doctoral committee chooses the time.** All students are required to sit for the written examination based on the schedule provided by the program. Oral examinations will be scheduled based on student performance on the written examination and the recommendation of the student's advisor.

### Registration for the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

**When?** Specific dates for the doctoral comprehensive examination are announced by the department approximately two months in advance. Eligible students in each cohort are notified by email of their eligibility. Students no longer aligned with their original cohort must contact their advisor to inquire or register for comps.

### Schedule of Examinations and Content Areas Tested

The Comprehensive Examination for the Doctorate of Education in Education Leadership will be administered during the time assigned by the departmental EDLD doctoral committee. The expectations of each content area examination will extend the course material expectations by requiring students to synthesize, connect, and construct knowledge across other content areas and to their own professional practice as a result of the entire program of study. Faculty from each content area, in consultation with the major advisor, will determine pass/fail performance. Students must pass ALL content areas in order to be eligible to advance to candidacy.

#### **Content areas addressed on the exam:**

Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership  
Diverse Perspectives in Education Leadership  
Executive Leadership  
Strategic Leadership and Change  
Public Relations and Marketing  
Program Evaluation and Educational Change  
Applied Instructional Technologies

### Evaluation of Examination

Each written response is rated as either a pass or fail. Students must pass all content areas of the Comprehensive Examination. Individual faculty, in consultation with the committee chair, will determine the rating for each content area. The major advisor will report the results of the examination to the student. If a student is unsuccessful on the comprehensive examination, the student will not be allowed to take any dissertation courses and will be exited from the program.

An applicant who does not pass the qualifying examinations may be suspended from the doctoral program, or upon the recommendation of the advisory committee, may be permitted to repeat the written examination a maximum of one time. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to take the written examination, or any part thereof, more than two times.

## **Oral Comprehension Exam**

If a student is not successful on the written comprehensive examination, the student will be required to take Oral Comprehensive Exams.

**Content of the oral examination.** The student should defend or expand on what the student has written on the comprehensive examination and is expected to provide appropriate bibliographical information to support references to research. **However, questions are not limited to what the student has written.**

**Evaluation.** At the end of the oral examination, the major advisor and any member of the faculty participating in the oral examination deliberate on the outcome of the examination. If the outcome is unfavorable, faculty participants decide what options, if any, the student may pursue. If a student is unsuccessful completing the comprehensive examination process, the student will not be allowed to take any dissertation courses and will be exited from the program.

## **Final Report of Doctoral Comprehensive Examination**

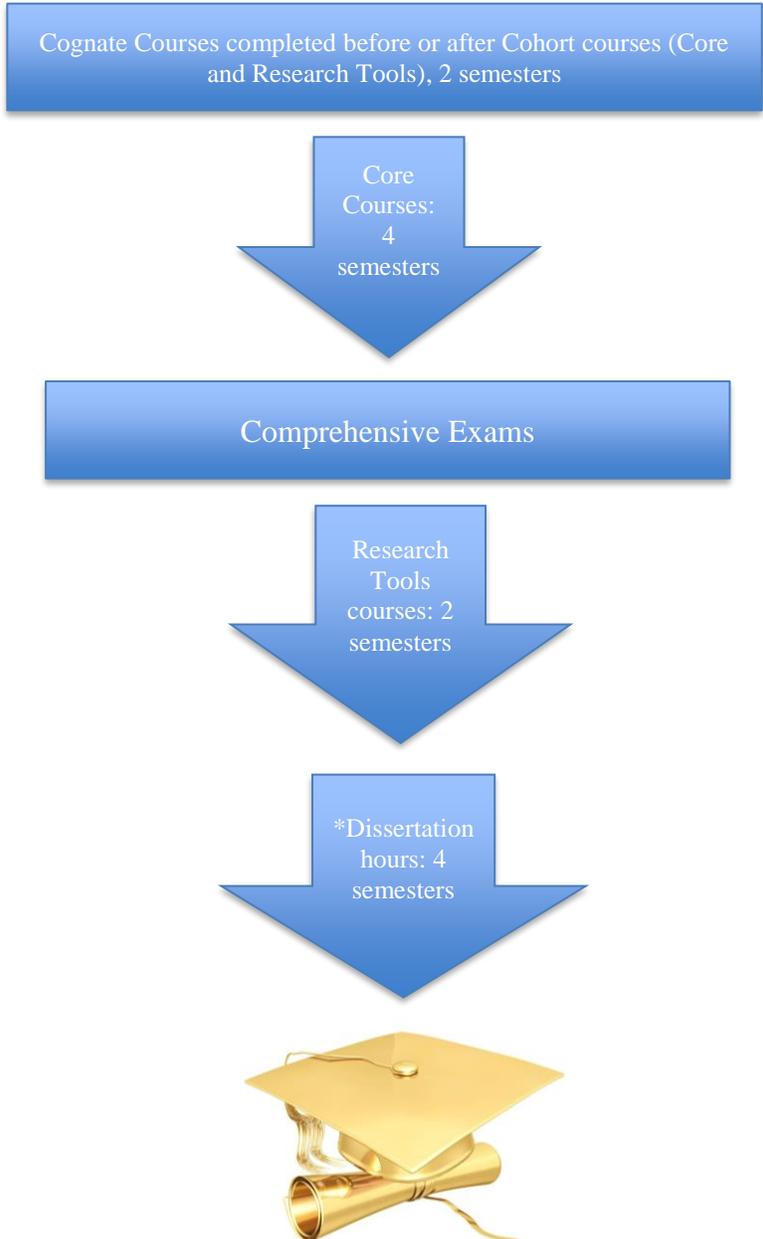
The major advisor will notify the Office of Graduate Studies and Research upon the student's completion of written examinations and will notify the doctoral coordinator of the student's readiness to receive a dissertation chair.

## RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME

### Timetable

Figure 1 shows the general progression of doctoral work. The Scholars of Practice program allows students complete rigorous doctoral study while maintaining full-time employment as a professional. Candidates may complete the entire program in as few as 3 ½ years with transfer or competency credit. The average time for completion is four years. Candidates have up to ten years to complete program requirements.

Figure 1: Progression of Doctoral Work



\*Please see the dissertation manual for details regarding the overall dissertation process.

## **Minimal Progress**

The academic progress requirements for all doctoral students include a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 plus timely completion of department and program requirements (e.g., courses, comprehensive exams, dissertation requirements). In addition, students earn “S” (satisfactory) indicating satisfactory progress for 12 semester credit hours (SCH) of dissertation work (EDLD 693). Receipt of two consecutive “U’s” (unsatisfactory progress) is considered a failure to meet minimum academic progress.

Doctoral students are required to register for 6 SCH for four consecutive semesters to complete core courses. The second summer students are not required to enroll in courses so students may prepare for comprehensive exams. Following comprehensive exams, students are required to enroll in a minimum of 3 SCH during fall and spring semesters until program completion. Summer enrollment for dissertation is not required but decision to register should be in consultation with dissertation chair.

Failure to meet the minimum academic progress milestones will result in a review of the student’s progress to date by a committee to include program coordinator, program faculty, college dean and, if appropriate, dissertation committee. A letter will be sent to the student outlining the specific requirements to be met and the timeline within which to satisfy them. Actions may occur, including the placement of an enrollment hold on the student’s account until specific conditions outlined in the letter are satisfied. The committee could also recommend termination of the student from doctoral degree program.

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

### **Major Advisor's Role**

Upon admission to the department's EDLD doctoral program, the doctoral coordinator assigns a faculty member to serve as the student's major advisor. The major advisor:

- Provides general information regarding the department and the doctoral program to the student as needed, and
- Assists with the student's degree plan.

The major advisor and the student's doctoral committee chair do not serve the same purpose and may not be the same faculty member. Once the student identifies a dissertation chair, the chair of this committee assumes the major advisory responsibility of the student's major advisor, and the initial advisor is no longer responsible for advising duties. Students will be guided in establishing a dissertation chair and committee.

### **Dissertation Committee Chair**

Upon completion of residency and passing comprehensive exams, the department will support students in identifying a dissertation chair from faculty. This process includes identifying faculty with similar research interests. The chair will guide the student in securing a committee that will guide him/her through the dissertation process.

Upon rare occasions, it is in the best interest of students and faculty members to reassign dissertation chairs to better match research needs. If necessary, a student may appeal to the doctoral program coordinator to request reassignment to a new dissertation chair. If deemed appropriate, then the student will be reassigned.

### **Dissertation Committee**

The committee is composed of three to five faculty members, one of whom is an Education Leadership faculty member. The remaining member(s) will be from the education department and a member from outside the department. Upon approval of the Dissertation Chair, Program Coordinator and Office of Graduate Studies, one of the members of the committee may be a practicing superintendent, school leader, or other educational executive that holds a terminal degree in Education Leadership, or a related field.

### **Office of Graduate Studies and Research**

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research works closely with program faculty and the dean in providing a student-focused program. You may contact this office with any questions specific to the dissertation process. For information and forms, please go to the following web address:

<http://www.tamut.edu/Academics/Colleges-and-Departments/Graduate-Studies/index.html>.

## **GRADUATION**

### **Filing for Graduation**

As specified in the University Catalog, the student must file for graduation in the Registrar's Office by the deadline indicated in the schedule of classes for that particular semester. A student is entitled to graduate under the degree provisions of the catalog in effect at the time of admission into the doctoral program or a subsequent year, provided that in all cases the student fulfills the requirements of a catalog within ten years of currency.

### **Commencement**

The degree is conferred at the commencement following the fulfillment of all requirements. The candidate is expected to be present at the ceremony, and permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research must be obtained if circumstances prevent a candidate from attending commencement.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Other information can be found in the A&M-Texarkana University Catalog or the Dissertation Manual.

Note: This handbook is subject to change. This is not a catalog and does not have catalog privileges.

## PROGRAM CHECKLIST

Many of the events a doctoral student encounters are listed below. The order of events is reflective of the doctoral process. The time frame is simply a helpful guide, and it is the *student's responsibility* to know and follow university policy regarding the completion of doctoral studies. This checklist is designed for you to maintain a record of completion of each step.

\_\_\_\_\_ **File Initial Degree Plan** with department (immediately after degree plan is completed with major advisor) and in your first semester. Make sure necessary signatures are on the degree plan. File completed degree plan with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Major Advisor.** A major advisor will be assigned to you soon after entering the program. This advisor can assist you with your degree plan, completing requirements, and taking your comprehensive exams (comps). Depending on research interests, another Education Leadership faculty member may be assigned as chair of the dissertation committee. The department will provide a process for matching students with an appropriate dissertation chair at the appropriate time.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Meet Research Tools Requirements.** Four tools classes are scheduled in the cohort sequence and are required after student is eligible for the comprehensive examinations (EDLD 661, EDLD 662, EDLD 663, and EDLD 650).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prepare for Comprehensive Written Examinations** after gaining approval from your major advisor. Plan for comps after core coursework. The comps coordinator will contact each cohort at the proper time with information about the comprehensive examination.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Take Comprehensive Examinations** (after completing core coursework). Pass written comprehensive examinations in major areas.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Obtain Admission to Candidacy Status.** After core course and comprehensive exams are passed, *and* all research tools courses are completed, the student's advisor will file a Notification of Admission to Candidacy form. It is at this time the **FINAL Degree Plan is filed.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Appointment of Dissertation Chair.** The department facilitates a matching process, based upon research topic and methodology, to support you in identifying your dissertation chair.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Enroll in EDLD 693** with your dissertation chair.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Download and use checklist from Dissertation Manual to complete doctoral program requirements.**

## CONGRATULATIONS!

When you reach this page and have completed all the processes successfully, you have reached a milestone and you are deserving of many accolades from your family and friends. They, too, have been watching and supporting your progress and wishing you well.

There are two postscripts which must be added to this academic process, both of which you may be aware. The first is that the doctoral degree is a distinction that you carry with you for the rest of your life and indicates your scholarly achievement. It has been a long, hard road of knowledge and scholarship and was achieved at a particular point in time. This should not preclude the notion that currency in matters concerning education must still be maintained through continued study and research. Just like a computer program and hardware that are three years old and have limited use, the knowledge and skill level achieved in earning a doctorate must be renewed or else they become archaic and obsolete.

To avoid this, it is important that you attend professional conferences, seminars, and staff renewal sessions; interact with professional colleagues; and conduct and report on research. The degree that you now hold must be maintained to continue to be useful and productive. Your clients, your employer, and your university are depending on you to do this.

The second postscript is that the use of the title *doctor* is one that is accorded by your colleagues, students, and friends because of their respect for you and your scholarly achievement. This is a professional title and should be used in a professional manner and not as a barrier in building relationships with others.

With those words from experience, we, all the faculty members of the Education Leadership Department, wish you the best in all future endeavors. We rely heavily upon you to carry forward this knowledge and experience, and practice the skills we have so happily and readily conveyed to you.

Best of luck,

The Education Leadership Faculty