



# **DOCTORAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES <sup>1</sup>**

**(Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education)**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND CLINICAL STUDIES**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS**

Updated 12-3-2014

<sup>1</sup> The information contained in the following pages is intended to be supplemental to other UNLV publications. It represents the collective actions of the faculty of the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies. Nothing contained herein is to be construed as contradictory to information presented in the UNLV Graduate Catalog or other information contained in any official university publication.

## **Doctoral Student Affidavit of Commitment**

*Please read the Doctoral Policies and Procedures Handbook and review the handbook with your advisor. This affidavit of commitment must be signed in the presence of your advisor and filed by your advisor in your department file when you enter the doctoral program.*

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the information in the Doctoral Policies and Procedures Handbook and I agree to be bound to its stipulations, policies, and procedures. I certify that I have discussed the handbook with my advisor and had my questions answered. I understand my rights and responsibilities as a doctoral student in the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies.

Furthermore, I commit to enroll in courses each consecutive fall and spring semester during my program of study, unless I obtain permission in writing from the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies and the UNLV Graduate College to do otherwise for a legitimate reason and for a specific period of time.

Printed Student Name

Student Signature  
Faculty Advisor Signature

Date  
Date

*Please request a copy of this affidavit for your file.*

## **Welcome**

The Department of Educational and Clinical Studies welcomes you to the [Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education](#) Handbook. The goals of the program are as follows:

1. To prepare persons of diverse ethnic and experiential backgrounds to become ethical scholars who assume roles as leaders of thought in universities, schools, clinics, and agencies addressing the needs of persons with exceptionalities.
2. To guide doctoral students in advancing their knowledge, critical thinking, and performance skills in solving professional problems, resolving major issues, executing trend impact analyses, and developing plans with implementation procedures for creating the future in their areas of specialization.
3. To assist doctoral students in their acquisition of knowledge and performance competencies necessary for rigorous scientific inquiry, research design, statistical analysis, and the conduct of research, as well as program evaluation.

## **Mission Statement**

The Doctor of Philosophy Degree (Ph.D.) emphasizes the development of skills in scientific inquiry and educational leadership in Special Education. Students gain an understanding of philosophy and theory relating to various research paradigms. Graduates typically pursue careers in higher education, research centers, or local education agencies that require competencies developed through a Ph.D. course of study.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College ([valarie.burke@unlv.edu](mailto:valarie.burke@unlv.edu) or [GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu](mailto:GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu)).

For further information, see the [Graduate College Catalog](#).

## **Department Graduate Faculty**

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies, visit the [Graduate Faculty status](#) web page.

## Contact Information

*Department Chair*

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*Doctoral Coordinator*

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*Department Main Office*

Carlson Education Building

CEB 118

(702) 895-3205

## Application Requirements

Applicants to the Ph.D. program in special education must complete the Graduate College Application for Admission and arrange to have official transcripts sent to the Graduate College. Graduate level transcripts should indicate grade point averages (and receipt of a post baccalaureate degree in special education or a related field). The following materials also must be submitted through the online application network.

1. A letter of application that clearly **articulates professional and research goals** related to the focus of the Ph.D. degree program in Special Education. The foci of the letter should include: (a) reasons for pursuing the Ph.D., (b) specific areas of research interest, and (c) professional goals upon completion of the program.
2. **Three** letters of recommendation – at least one from an individual familiar with the applicant's academic performance and potential for doctoral degree completion and at least one from an individual knowledgeable of the applicant's quality of work experience.
3. Representative samples of scholarly writing, preferably in APA style, and/or other media samples related to professional study.
4. A resumé of professional preparation and experience (a minimum of **two to three** years of professional experience in special education, general education or other relevant field as a teacher, administrator or related service provider for children and adults with disabilities and/or giftedness is preferred).
5. Scores from the verbal, quantitative and analytical sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) (taken within five years from the date of application for admission). Applicants should arrange to have official notification of GRE scores sent to the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies. The department does not impose minimum GRE scores.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that his/her applicant file is complete. Incomplete files will not be considered.

In general, applicants are expected to have a 3.50 grade point average on all graduate-level work and show an indication of potential to complete all requirements of doctoral study successfully (provided through submitted writings or creative products, letters of recommendation, and GRE results) to be admitted as doctoral students in special education.

*Note:* The department admissions committee may request additional materials.

*Note:* To apply for a Graduate Assistantship, applicants must complete the Graduate Assistant Application located at [UNLV GA](#) and send it to the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies. **Please note the deadline for applications on the Graduate College website.**

### **Admission Procedures**

Once an applicant's file is complete, the department Doctoral Secretary notifies the Doctoral Coordinator who then reviews the file to ensure that all required materials are, in fact, available. The Doctoral Coordinator notifies each member of the Doctoral Admissions Committee (DAC) that the file is complete and available for review. After initial review of the file, the DAC meets to determine whether the applicant meets the basic criteria to move forward to an interview. If the applicant is selected for an interview, a faculty team (comprised of members of the DAC committee) conducts the interview and provides feedback to the whole DAC committee. The DAC then formulates a final recommendation. The DAC may recommend to the department faculty that the applicant be: (1) fully admitted to the Ph.D. Doctoral Program in Special Education, (2) admitted provisionally to the Ph.D. Program, (3) admitted contingent upon satisfaction of a prerequisite requirement, or (4) denied admission to the Ph.D. Program in Special Education. Provisional admission requires the satisfactory completion (e.g., with a 3.5 grade-point average) of 9 or more hours in regularly scheduled graduate courses assigned by the DAC. After completion of the provisional program, the Doctoral Coordinator will, in consultation with the Advisor, and Department Chair, recommend to the Graduate College that the student (1) be transferred to regular status, or (2) be dropped from the program.

After the DAC has formed a recommendation regarding admission of an applicant, the Doctoral Coordinator notifies the Department Chair and faculty via email of the applicant and the recommendation of the DAC. The Doctoral Coordinator requests that faculty review the applicant's file and vote on the recommendation within 48 hours. It is the responsibility of the Doctoral Coordinator to forward, in writing, the final recommendation of the faculty, as a whole, to both the Graduate College and to the applicant.

### **Residency**

Students admitted to the Ph.D. Program are required to spend a minimum of two consecutive semesters (Fall-Spring, Spring-Summer or Summer-Fall) in full-time resident study in the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies. Full-time resident study is defined as being enrolled in at least nine credits of graduate level course work approved by the faculty advisor. When the residency includes a semester of coursework prior to submission of the Program of Study, the Advisor must approve the courses taken for residency. Employment during residency is allowed. However, if the student is employed as a Graduate Assistant, any additional employment must conform to the rules of the university and Graduate College.

### **Courses of Study**

The Department of Educational and Clinical Studies generally tailors its special education doctoral program to meet students' needs and career goals. A content core of courses **is required of all doctoral students**. This content may **not** be waived. Students not admitted to the Ph.D. program in Special Education (or to another doctoral program in the College of Education) may enroll **only** in ESP 782R and two other core classes prior to formal admission. In addition, students select concentrations in Leadership Studies and Exceptionality Specialties as

appropriate to meet the requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

**Doctoral students must earn a grade of B or higher in all coursework.**

**Core Curriculum Requirement for the Ph.D. Degree **24 units****

- |   |  |           |
|---|--|-----------|
| 1.  | ESP 782R Professional Seminar in Special Education       | (3 units) |
| 2.  | ESP 783R Leadership Seminar in Special Education         | (3 units) |
| 3.  | ESP 784 Seminar in Advanced Special Education Technology | (3 units) |
| 4.  | ESP 785 Issues, Trends and Futures in Special Education  | (3 units) |
| 5.  | ESP 787 Philosophical Perspectives in Special Education  | (3 units) |
| 6.  | ESP 788 Single Subject Methods in Special Education      | (3 units) |
| 7.  | ESP 789 Grant Writing for Human Services                 | (3 units) |
| 8.  | ESP 796 Dissertation Prospectus                          | (3 units) |
| (To be taken as an independent study supervised by the advisor) |  |           |

**Core Research Requirement for the Ph.D. Degree **6 units****

- |   |  |           |
|---|--|-----------|
| 9.  | EPY 721 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics         | (3 units) |
| 10.   | EPY 722 Inferential Statistics and Experimental Design | (3 units) |
| Or KIN 751 Selected Application of Statistical Techniques I |  |           |

**Core Leadership Research Requirement for the Ph.D. Degree **9 units****

- |  |   |           |
|--|---|-----------|
|  | ESP 791 Proposal Design and Analysis in Special Education | (3 units) |
|--|---|-----------|

To meet the core leadership requirement an additional 6 semester hours in research must be selected from courses such as:

- EPY 716 Evaluation Research Methods (3 units)
- EPY 718 Qualitative Research Methodologies (3 units)
- EPY 733 Multivariate Statistics (3 units)
- EPY 790 Research Design (3 units)
- KIN 752 Selected Application of Statistical Techniques II (3 units)

**Core Leadership Cognate Requirement for the Ph.D. Degree **9 units****

Each Ph.D. doctoral student is *required* to complete 9 units in one of the following leadership studies areas:

<b>Parenting</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>Research</b>
<b>Higher Education</b>	Technology	<b>Early Childhood Education</b>
<b>Diagnosis/Assessment</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>

English Language Learners  
Early Childhood Special Education

Applied Behavior Analysis

**Core Exceptionality Specialties Requirement for the Ph.D. Degree 18 units**

Each Ph.D. doctoral student is *required* to complete 9 units each in *two* disability areas from the following list:

Learning Disabilities  
Emotional Disturbance  
Intellectual Disabilities  
Gifted and Talented Education  
Developmental Disabilities/Risks  
Autism

**Core Internship Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree 6 units**

Research Internship

• ESP 794a Internship in Special Education (Research) (3 units)

Teaching Internship

• ESP 794b Internship in Special Education (Teaching) (3 units)

After completion of the Teaching Internship course, the Ph.D. student may apply to teach an internship course within the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies under the mentorship of his or her advisor. The mentored internship must be completed satisfactorily prior to the Ph.D. student being allowed to teach a course as a part time instructor (for pay).

**Dissertation Requirement for the Ph.D. Degree 12 units**

Upon completion of coursework, the Ph.D. doctoral student will enroll in a minimum of 12 units of dissertation credit (ESP 799 *Dissertation*).

**Writing Proficiency Requirement for the Ph.D. Degree**

Students are required to demonstrate doctoral level writing proficiency beginning with the first doctoral seminar, ESP 782R.

**The Proposed Program Plan**

At the completion of 12 hours, students must prepare a *Program of Study Plan* in conjunction with their advisor. All faculty members of the student's doctoral committee, including the Graduate College Representative, must agree upon and sign the *Program of Study Plan*.

The *Program of Study* consists of three parts. *Parts I and II* comprise the *Formal Program of Study* and must be submitted (on standard Graduate College forms) to the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies, College of Education, and Graduate College for approval. *Part I* requires signatures of approval for the planned *Program of Study*. *Part II* requires a list of courses that will be taken during doctoral study. No course may be included on the *Formal Program of Study* that:

1. Has previously been used to fulfill requirements for another degree.
2. Is not from an accredited graduate degree granting institution.
3. Was taken as a "non-degree seeking student" when the effect of including the course means that more than 15 units of work taken as a non-degree student would appear on the Formal *Program of Study*.
4. Resulted in a grade of B- or lower.
5. Was completed more than 6 years prior to the anticipated date of completion of all degree requirements.
6. Has not been approved for inclusion by the student's Advisor and Doctoral Studies Committee.

Finally, after all of the above have been carefully considered, 66 percent of the total number of units on the Formal *Program of Study* (not including dissertation units) *must* have been taken at UNLV (*Note*: as required by the Graduate College, see UNLV Graduate Catalog).

**The "typical" Formal Program of Study includes:**

<b>Core Curriculum Requirement</b>	24 units
<b>Core Research Requirement</b>	6 units
<b><u>Core Leadership Research</u></b>	9 units
<b><u>Core Leadership Cognate</u></b>	9 units
<b>Core Exceptionality Specialties</b>	18 units (9 in each of two areas)
<b><u>Core Internship</u></b>	6 units
<b><u>Dissertation</u></b>	<u>12 units</u>
	Total 84-90 units

*(Please note: Because courses from Part III (see below) may be applied to the above area requirements, the Formal Program of Studies may have fewer courses and units than those listed above. However, under no circumstance should the Formal Program of Studies include fewer than 72 units).*

Part III of the *Program of Study* is filed with the department and consists of an enumeration of all coursework not included on the Formal *Program of Studies*. The total number of units when Part II and Part III are added together must equal or exceed 90 credits. Whereas Part I and II must be approved by the student, advisor, the student's Doctoral Studies Committee, the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies, the College of Education, and the Graduate College, Part III needs to be approved only at the department level.

**Doctoral Competencies**

In addition to successfully completing all course work included on the *Program of Studies*, students enrolled in the Ph.D. Program must meet the following competencies.



All items must be completed to move into candidacy and begin dissertation research. The Chairperson of the student’s Doctoral Studies Committee is responsible for monitoring the quality and completion of the listed competencies.

### DOCTORAL COMPETENCY CHECKLIST FOR

Competency	Suggested Timeline	Appropriate Evidence	Completion Date
<b>Participate on educational Committee (e.g., UNLV, CCSD, School, Community, Professional Organization, Conferences)</b>	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting Minutes / Agenda OR</li> <li>Committee Work Products AND</li> <li>Summary Paragraph Describing Work</li> </ul>	
<b>Provide a guest lecture</b>	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank You Letter from Professor AND / OR</li> <li>Presentation Slides</li> </ul>	
<b>Document membership in a Professional Organization</b>	Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership Card</li> </ul>	
<b>Participate in data collection activity or teach a course (other than internship)</b>	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Product(s) OR</li> <li>Course Syllabus</li> </ul>	
<b>Submit two articles for publication in a refereed journal</b>	Years 2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copy of Articles AND</li> <li>Letters from Journal Editor</li> </ul>	
<b>Present at a refereed conference</b>	Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference Booklet with Abstract AND</li> <li>Presentation Slides</li> </ul>	

### Policies Related to Teaching within the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies

- Ph.D. students must take ESP 794b Internship in Special Education (Teaching) and successfully teach a course under the mentorship of their advisor for one semester PRIOR to teaching a course for pay as a part time instructor.
- If a part time instructor for the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies is NOT in the Ph.D. Doctoral Program and subsequently gets admitted to the Ph.D. Doctoral Program, he/she must take ESP 794b Internship in Special Education (Teaching) and complete a mentored internship PRIOR to additional teaching for pay as a part time instructor.
- Graduate Assistants must complete ESP 794b Internship in Special Education (Teaching) and successfully teach a course under the mentorship of their advisor for one semester PRIOR to teaching a course for pay during the summer.

### Colloquium

Twice each semester a Special Education Doctoral Colloquium will be held on a Friday at 4:15 pm. The Doctoral Coordinator coordinates these meetings with the assistance of the members of the faculty and doctoral students. **Attendance is mandatory for all admitted doctoral**

**students.** Unless non-attendance is approved by the doctoral coordinator in advance, doctoral students who do not attend the colloquia will not be eligible for departmental travel monies, Faculty members of the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies are invited to attend. At least two weeks in advance, the Doctoral Coordinator announces the colloquium topic.

### **Doctoral Studies Committee**

Each student is required to select faculty members to serve on his or her Doctoral Studies Committee (referred to as the Doctoral Examination Committee in the UNLV *Graduate Catalog*, also sometimes referred to as the Advisory Committee). This committee consists of a Committee Chair (the student's Advisor), who must be selected by the time 9 to 12 units of coursework have been completed, two other faculty from the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies, and a Graduate College Representative. Please refer to the UNLV *Graduate Catalog* for additional policies and forms to assist with the appointment of an appropriate committee. This committee oversees the student's progress, including the Comprehensive Examination.

### **Grades and Progress**

Doctoral students must earn a grade of B or higher in all coursework. Students who earn less than a B will be allowed to repeat a course. In the event that they do not achieve a grade of B or higher during the second enrollment, they may petition their Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC). The DSC may, after consultation with the instructor of the class, recommend that the student be terminated from the doctoral program or recommend an alternative means of demonstrating mastery of the content taught in the course in question. In addition, in order to be advanced to candidacy the student must have an overall grade point average of 3.00 or better on all courses in both Part II and Part III of the *Program of Study*.

Doctoral students in the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies enrolled in Master level classes accept responsibility for initiation of an interaction with the professor(s) teaching the class regarding the appropriateness of both the content and performance requirements for them as doctoral students. This interaction may include the doctoral student being assigned extra assignments to complete commensurate to the doctorate level.

Consistent with the requirements of the UNLV Graduate College, as detailed in the UNLV *Graduate Catalog*, department faculty will review the academic performance of each doctoral student at the end of each semester and/or academic year. See form below. If the faculty determines that a student is not making satisfactory progress toward meeting degree requirements, they may request that the UNLV Graduate College Dean place the student on probation. Failure to make satisfactory progress may be determined in several ways, such as unsatisfactory grades (including Incompletes, grades below B, or withdrawals); failure to consult with the Advisor when requested; failure to develop a *Program of Study*; or failure of comprehensive examinations. The burden of demonstrating that satisfactory progress is being made rests with the student. Probationary students who do not meet the terms of their probation may be separated from their graduate program.

**YEARLY DOCTORAL PROGRESS REPORT**

**DOCTORAL SCHOLAR:**

**DATE:**

**ADVISOR:**

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<b>Milestone Status</b> (Enter semester & year of completion for the following milestones)	<b>Semester, Year</b>
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**Graduate College Program of Study  
Filed**

**Departmental Comprehensive  
Written Examination**

**Departmental Dissertation  
Proposal Hearing**

**University IRB Submitted & Approved  
for Dissertation Research**

**Department Dissertation Defense**

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<b>Coursework Report</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Semester, Year</b>
<b>Disability Courses Completed</b>		
<b>Core Courses Completed</b>		

<b>Research Courses Completed</b>		
<b>Leadership Courses Completed</b>		
<b>Internships Completed</b>		
<b>Dissertation Prospectus Completed (ESP 796)</b>		
<b>Dissertation Credits Taken (ESP 799)</b>		

**Doctoral Competency Completed &  
Filed in Student's Doctoral Folder**

**Semester, Year**

**Participate on Educational Committee**

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**(Year 1)**

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**Provide a Guest Lecture (Year 1)**

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**Documented Membership in a Professional Organization (Year 1)**

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**Participate in a data collection activity or teach a course (other than internship) (Year 2)**

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**Submit two articles for publication in a refereed journal (Years 2 & 3)**

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**Present at a refereed conference (Year 2)**

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**Professional Experiences and Projects**  
**Briefly describe projects or activities completed and the area(s) of scholarship addressed.**

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**Reflections and Plans for Next Year**

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**Signatures & Date**

Advisor

Student

**UNLV Office of Student Conduct Student Academic Misconduct Policy**

The UNLV Office of Student Conduct is clear that integrity is a concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students

accept the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are expected to always engage in ethical decision-making. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution.

Information concerning the *Expectations of Conduct*; definitions of *Academic Misconduct Violations*; *Procedures for Handling Student Academic Misconduct*; *Hearing and Appeal Procedures for Academic Misconduct*; *Confidentiality of Records*; *Sanctions for Academic Misconduct*; *Academic Integrity Appeal Board*, and *Transcript Notation for Academic Misconduct Information* can be found at the UNLV Office of Student Conduct website at <http://studentconduct.unlv.edu/misconduct/policy.html>

All Ph.D. students in the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies are expected to abide by this code of conduct. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with these policies and procedures.

### **Comprehensive Examination**

The Ph.D. student takes the Comprehensive Examination during the semester immediately preceding enrollment in ESP 799 *Doctoral Dissertation*. **It is the student's responsibility to file the required "Notification of Comprehensive Examination" form with the department Doctoral Secretary.**

The Comprehensive Examination consists of 16 hours of written examinations with eight hours structured by the student's Advisor and eight hours structured by the other members of the student's Doctoral Studies Committee. Comprehensive Examinations occur for eight hours on each of two successive Fridays, typically either the first two Fridays in the month of October or the first two Fridays in the month of March of each academic year. Students may petition their Doctoral Studies Committee for permission to take Comprehensive Examinations in the summer and/or on dates other than those indicated in this paragraph. Approval for the variance must also be obtained from the Doctoral Coordinator. Only under the most exceptional of circumstances will permission be given to take Comprehensive Examinations on other than two days one week apart.

The questions on the Comprehensive Examination address elements of the Core, Exceptionality Specialties, and Leadership Studies areas. The student's Doctoral Studies Committee will give only **general parameters** from which questions will be designed. "Take-home" examinations, in whole or in part, are not allowed. Students **must** use department technology for word-processing. Grading will consist of three categories: Pass, Fail, and Pass with Distinction. The following procedures shall be followed related to the Comprehensive Examination process:

- a) Students planning to take their Comprehensive Examinations meet with their advisor and members of their committee to discuss the general parameters for their questions no later than **4 months** before the scheduled date of the examinations.
- b) All members of the comprehensive exam committee (advisor, committee members, Graduate College representative) will read the entire exam. The advisor and department committee members will meet to formally vote regarding "pass" "fail" or "pass with

distinction.” Should the Ph.D. student “fail” the exam, input will be solicited from the Graduate College representative concerning the decision.

c) Students who fail the Comprehensive Examination (faculty need to be reminded that the grade of “Pass” must be unanimous for the student to “pass” the exam) must **wait at least 4 months** from the date of the failed examination to re-write their examinations.

However, under no circumstances may the re-examination be later than the semester following the failed examination.

d) Students not passing the comprehensive exam on the second re-write will be separated from the program.

*Determination of “Pass,” “Pass with Distinction,” or “Fail” is to be made by unanimous vote of the entire Graduate Advisory committee, in a formal meeting, attended by all members including the Graduate College representative.*

### **Dissertation Proposal**

Upon completion and passing of the comprehensive exam, the *Program of Study Committee* (comprehensive exam committee) is dissolved. The student must do one of two things: (1) keep the same committee members for the dissertation committee or (2) select a new committee to work with through the dissertation proposal and dissertation defense.

This Dissertation Committee will have a minimum of three faculty members from the department, as well as a graduate college representative. Students are required to submit a dissertation proposal to their Dissertation Committee and to **submit the accompanying "Dissertation Prospectus Approval" form to the UNLV Graduate College**. The proposal includes an introduction (Chapter 1), review of the literature (Chapter 2) [optional depending on committee], and a discussion of study methods (Chapter 3). It is important that the candidate develop the proposal with sufficient detail to ensure that the Dissertation Committee can determine that the study is a logical extension of current research; not merely a replication of already published work or a premature effort to test an under-developed hypothesis. Further, it is important that the Dissertation Committee has a sense that the student holds a comprehensive understanding of the scope and complexity of the proposed area of study. The proposal should include sufficient detail in discussion of methods to ensure that the student and each member of the committee agree to the research questions and/or hypotheses, the exact procedures for the study, and how the data are to be collected and analyzed.

**Three weeks** prior to the proposal defense, the student will submit the completed written proposal to all committee members and the UNLV Graduate College representative. **One week** prior to the proposal defense, all committee members will submit, in writing, their questions or concerns to the dissertation advisor. It is the responsibility of the advisor and Ph.D. student to meet and review the feedback provided prior to the schedule proposal meeting.

At the proposal meeting, the committee will meet with the student to accept or reject the proposal as well as to provide a critique of its relative strengths and weaknesses. If approved, an abbreviated form of the proposal is submitted to the UNLV Social Sciences Institutional Review

Board (IRB). Before any research with human subjects is undertaken, the UNLV Social Sciences Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects must give approval. In order to gain Board approval, the student and Advisor must jointly submit a protocol that describes the research questions, methods and procedures for the protection of human subjects. The Advisor's and student's *Certificates of Completion, CITI Course in the Protection of Human Research Subjects* must accompany the protocol (see [CITI Program](#)).

### **Candidacy**

After submission of the dissertation prospectus form to the graduate college, students are advanced to candidacy. *It is the student's responsibility to file the "Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy" form with the graduate college.*

### **Dissertation Defense**

**Three weeks** prior to the dissertation defense, the student will submit the completed dissertation to all committee members and the UNLV Graduate College representative. **One week** prior to the dissertation defense, all committee members will submit, in writing, their questions or concerns to the dissertation advisor. It is the responsibility of the advisor and Ph.D. student to meet and review the feedback provided prior to the scheduled dissertation defense.

Upon completion of the full dissertation, an oral defense will be scheduled and carried out in accordance with Graduate College policies for thesis and dissertation completion. The student prepares a presentation related to his or her study and defends the dissertation through responses to committee members' questions.

Graduates **must** provide bound copies of their dissertations to the Department of Educational and Clinical Studies and each member of their dissertation committee. These copies may be ordered through the UNLV library.

### **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND/OR CLARIFICATION CONTACT:**

Joseph Morgan, Ph.D.  
[morgan57@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:morgan57@unlv.nevada.edu) or 702 895-3229

### **Program Resources**

All materials, papers, research papers prepared in the Ph.D. are prepared using the APA Manual in its most recent edition.

Professional associations associated with the Ph.D. program are:

[The Council for Exceptional Children](#) (all divisions)

[The Council for Learning Disabilities](#)

[The National Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

[TASH](#)

[American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)

[American Educational Research Association](#)



## **University Resources**

### [Academic Success Center](#)

The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

### [Alumni Association](#)

With an alumni base 90,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

### [Commencement Office](#)

Located in the UNLV Registrar's Office, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College.

### [Office of Diversity Initiatives](#)

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

### [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#)

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

#### [Office of International Student and Scholars](#)

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

#### [Jean Nidetch Women's Center](#)

The Jean Nidetch Women's Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

#### [UNLV Libraries](#)

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

#### [Graduate & Professional Student Association \(GPSA\)](#)

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

#### [Office of Student Conduct](#)

The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;

- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

### [Office of Veteran Services](#)

The UNLV Office of Veteran Services is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

### [The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office](#)

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

### [Writing Center](#)

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

### **University Policies and Procedures**

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jeanne Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

*Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.*

**Last Revised 12-3-14 by Kyle Higgins, PhD**