

# Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Curriculum and Instruction

An interdisciplinary degree offered by The University of  
North Carolina at Charlotte with study in Curriculum and  
Educator Development (including Elementary Education),  
Learning, Design and Technology, Literacy Education,  
Mathematics Education, and Urban Education



Ph.D. in  
Curriculum  
and  
Instruction



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
**CHARLOTTE**

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**Doctoral Student Handbook**





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The policies identified in this document are to be construed in light of existing University policies and with deference to the requirements imposed on graduate education by the University, the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and the Governing Board of the State University of North Carolina System. The information outlined is subject to change and students must adhere to changes outlined in the current program handbook. The most current version will be updated on the UNC Charlotte Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction website.



## The Program



## Overview

The Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction is an interdisciplinary degree program involving faculty from across the University of North Carolina at Charlotte campus, and primarily the Departments of English; Mathematics and Statistics; Middle, Secondary, and K-12 Education; Reading and Elementary Education; and Educational Leadership. The Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction is designed to prepare teacher education faculty and other educational professionals for work in various agency, policy, non-profit, and educational settings.

The program offers the following five areas of concentration, all of which emphasize the context of urban education issues and perspectives related to curriculum and instruction:

1. Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) with research and theory applied to problems and applications of curriculum, instruction, learning, teaching, teacher education, professional development, and teacher leadership in K-12 and higher education. Emphases within the concentration include Elementary Education, Middle Grades and/or Secondary Education, K-12 Curriculum Specialization and Professional Development.
  - a. Elementary Education with research and theory applied to problems of learning and teaching in elementary education. [NOTE: This concentration was subsumed by the Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) Concentration in 2021- 2022.]
2. Learning, Design and Technology (LDT) with research and theory applied in the design of effective learning experiences and environments that incorporate technology to address educational needs and problems in elementary, middle/secondary, or post-secondary settings with an emphasis on urban contexts.
3. Literacy Education with research and theory applied to problems of literacy and language learning and instruction, oriented toward Reading, English Education, and Teaching English as a Second Language.
4. Mathematics Education with research and theory applied to problems of learning and teaching mathematics. Students focus on elementary, middle/secondary, or post-secondary.
5. Urban Education with research and theory applied to critical social issues affecting schools and society from a historical, contemporary, and theoretical perspective in a global context.

In order to address the complexities of urban schooling, this program is interdisciplinary and draws on education, public policy, sociology, anthropology, and ethnic studies.

Studies include a substantive core in urban education and educational research. Doctoral students may focus their study on education for learners at elementary, middle grades, secondary, K-12, or post-secondary/adult levels.

## Course of Study

The Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction requires a minimum of 60 hours of coursework and dissertation preparation, with additional study possible as an individual's needs arise. A distinctive characteristic of the program is a common urban education core and a professional seminar that are required of all students. The professional seminar (EDCI 8620) is

completed within the first year. The urban education core consists of 12 hours of coursework, including: Critical Issues and Perspectives in Urban Education; Power, Privilege, and Education; Social Theory and Education; and Globalization, Urbanization and Urban Schools. A fifth course is required for those in the urban education concentration and is recommended for students in the other concentrations. See additional information in concentration planning sheets.

In addition, the research component consists of at least 15 hours of research courses including: RSCH 8210: Applied Research Methods (a prerequisite for all other research courses) and RSCH 8110: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics. See individual concentration planning sheets for suggestions or specific requirements.

The 18 to 21-hour specialization component consists of courses relevant to urban education, literacy education, curriculum and educator development, elementary education, learning, design and technology, or mathematics education, depending on the selected concentration of study. Finally, the nine-hour dissertation component consists of a dissertation proposal seminar and a minimum of six hours of dissertation research.

In broad summary, doctoral students in this program are admitted in the summer or fall of each year. With special consideration, a student can be admitted in a spring semester. Both part-time and full-time study are possible, with part-time students taking three to six hours per semester, including summer term, and full-time students taking nine hours each semester. All requirements, including the dissertation, must be completed within nine years.

### **Advance Standing Option**

The Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction offers Charlotte graduate students and alumni of UNC Charlotte the opportunity to apply for Advanced Standing. Advanced Standing recognizes relevant coursework from approved Charlotte master's degrees. Doctoral students accepted with Advanced Standing into the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction complete a minimum of 48 credit hours of coursework, including the dissertation. No transfer credits are allowed for Advanced Standing students.

Recommendations for admission to advanced standing are made by the Concentration Coordinator with approval of the Program Director within the first semester enrolled in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction degree. Candidates eligible for Advanced Standing must meet at a minimum, established criteria in the Charlotte Graduate Catalog. An academic petition should be submitted by the Concentration Coordinator on behalf of the doctoral student seeking recognition as Advanced Standing. If an academic petition is initiated by a doctoral student, a formal letter of support from the Concentration Coordinator must be included within the academic petition as documentation.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program is to prepare excellent and ethical professionals who are knowledgeable, effective, reflective, collaborative and responsive leaders who advance educational equity through excellence and engagement; and who can contribute uniquely and significantly to a selected concentration of study through the lens of urban education. The Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program seeks to expand the frontiers

of knowledge and leverage discovery for the public benefit through innovation and research that span the disciplines; and develop the capacities of culturally competent, equity minded leaders who have a positive influence on children, youth, families, communities, and schools in urban and other diverse settings. This mission nurtures student and faculty partnerships with schools, communities, and university colleagues, in response to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's commitment to children, youth, families, communities, and schools.

## **Urban Education**

Urban Education, as a focus, provides students with the opportunity to more closely examine factors affecting schools and communities in urban settings. These factors include but are not limited to: race, class, gender, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, school finance, tracking, segregation, immigration and marginalization, housing, wealth, and transportation. In addition, urban education explores issues of cultural diversity, equity and inclusion, gentrification, social stratification both local and global, and structural inequities that impact the lives of many families living in urban settings. Urban education connotes dynamic and complex settings with communities that continue to be shaped by the vestiges of a discriminatory and oppressive past. Urban education can be defined as a continuum of conditions dependent upon the characteristics, challenges, and context with the presence and persistence of educational inequity. Urban education rejects deficit perspectives and contends that considerable assets exist within urban communities. The definition of urban education is in a perpetual state of becoming to match an ever-changing social, economic, and educational landscape.

## **UNC Charlotte Mission Statement**

UNC Charlotte is North Carolina's urban research university. It leverages its location in the state's largest city to offer internationally competitive programs of research and creative activity, exemplary undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, and a focused set of community engagement initiatives. UNC Charlotte maintains a particular commitment to addressing the cultural, economic, educational, environmental, health, and social needs of the greater Charlotte region. Read more: [Mission Statement | University Leadership | UNC Charlotte](#).

## **Disability Services**

UNC Charlotte is committed to access to education. If you have a disability and need academic accommodations, please provide a letter of accommodation from Disability Services early in the semester. For more information on accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 704-687-0040 or visit their office in Fretwell 230. All information shared concerning a disability will remain strictly confidential unless otherwise specified. The Office of Disability Services website is <http://ds.uncc.edu>.

## **Diversity Statement**

The Cato College of Education at UNC Charlotte is committed to social justice and respect for all individuals, and it seeks to create a culture of inclusion that actively supports all who live, work, and serve in a diverse nation and world. Attaining justice and respect involves all members of our community in recognizing that multi-dimensional diversity contributes to the College's learning environments, thereby enriching the community, and improving opportunities for



human understanding. While the term “diversity” is often used to refer to differences, the College’s intention is for inclusiveness, an inclusiveness of individuals who are diverse in ability/disability, age, economic status, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, national origin, race, religion, and sexual identity. Therefore, the College aspires to become a more diverse community in order to extend its enriching benefits to all participants. An essential feature of our community is an environment that supports exploration, learning, and work free from bias and harassment, thereby improving the growth and development of each member of the community.



## **Admissions Information**



## Admission to the Program

Applications for admission to the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (60-hour degree) are accepted on an annual cycle of review. Applications should be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office by **February 1st** for admission consideration in the following summer or fall semesters. **All required admission materials, including the application, recommendations, transcripts, and application fee, must be received by this date.** If an applicant cannot meet the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, they should contact the Curriculum and Instruction program director to discuss options. In unique circumstances, applications may be submitted for spring semester admission with the approval of the Curriculum and Instruction program director. All other applications should be submitted in the annual cycle of review by February 1<sup>st</sup> for a summer or fall semester program start. Doctoral students should select their preferred (summer or fall) semester for beginning their program of study. This should be determined in consultation with the Curriculum and Instruction program director and the concentration advisor which is assigned upon admission. Students should not take courses prior to full admission to the degree program unless the Curriculum and Instruction program director and concentration coordinator agree, and then only under exceptional circumstances.

Admission to the program is highly competitive and seating is limited. Application materials will be carefully reviewed by Curriculum and Instruction program director and faculty, particularly those who teach within the requested concentration of study. The faculty review committee will conduct an initial review of application materials and may recommend selected applicants for interviews. The selection committee will then make recommendations to the program director who will make final recommendations to the Graduate School relative to acceptance into the program based on the merits of the application materials and the interview process. The following criteria will be fundamental to the admission decision.

- Master's degree appropriate to the program of study
- GPA of 3.5 (on a scale of 4.0) in a graduate degree program\*
  - Applicants must also be in good academic standing at the last institution of higher education attended\*
- High level of professionalism and potential for leadership (shown through letters of reference and faculty interview)
- Strong writing skills (demonstrated in purpose statement; professional writing sample such as published article, manuscript submitted for publication, research paper submitted in prior coursework with abstract of thesis; on site writing sample) \*
- Clear career objectives related to obtaining Ph.D. as evidenced in purpose statement, faculty interview, writing samples, and references from persons who know applicant's current work or academic achievement in previous degree\*
- International students must submit official test scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), if English is not the applicant's native language and the applicant has not earned a post-secondary degree from a U.S. institution. Required is either a minimum score of 83 on the Internet-based TOEFL, a minimum score of 557 on the paper-based TOEFL, or a minimum overall band score of 6.5 on the IELTS. All tests must have been taken within the past two years.

Applicants may submit scores from either the Graduate Record Examination or Millers Analogies Test within the last five years; however, this is not a program admission requirement.

Each concentration may cite additional admission criteria to determine an applicant's preparation for doctoral studies.

**NOTE:** \* items are required of applicants to any of UNC Charlotte's doctoral programs

### **Specific Documents Necessary for Admission**

Applicants apply for admission online; instructions and the application are available at [mygradschool.uncc.edu](http://mygradschool.uncc.edu). Documents necessary for admission follow:

- Application form
- Official transcripts of all academic work attempted (two copies)
- At least three reference forms and letters
- Statement of Purpose
- Current resume or vita
- Professional writing sample
- TOEFL scores if the applicant is an international student
- Program information is available at: <http://education.uncc.edu/mdsk/programs/Ph.D>

### **Prerequisite Requirements**

The intended audience for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction includes education professionals who hold the master's degree. It is anticipated that most applicants will be experienced teachers or school leaders with the North Carolina "G" or "M" license or equivalent licenses from other states. However, the program will welcome and accommodate non-licensed candidates with appropriate professional experiences who have been involved in teaching or educational program development and evaluation. Each concentration may have different prerequisite requirements. Please refer to the Appendix for concentration specific information.

### **Advanced Standing Admission Requirements**

To be admitted to Advanced Standing for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program, students must meet the admission requirements of the Ph.D. and must have earned a master's degree from UNC Charlotte in a field related to one of the degree concentrations: (1) Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) (including Elementary Education), (2) Learning, Design, and Technology (LDT), (3) Literacy Education (oriented toward Reading Education, English Education, or Teaching English as a Second Language), (4) Mathematics Education, or (5) Urban Education. Only students who have earned a master's degree within the last ten years in one of the approved UNC Charlotte graduate programs will be considered. All other students should apply to the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program (without the Advanced Standing option).

Advanced standing students must have a minimum grade of B in master's degree coursework

pertinent to the Ph.D. in Curriculum of Instruction. Additionally, students with a cumulative GPA less than 3.5 in their master's degree or 2 or more grades of C are not eligible for Advanced Standing. In this case, students have the option of requesting a transfer of credit hours for individual courses with grades of B or above after acceptance into the 60-credit hour Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction degree program.

Students who have successfully completed an approved master's degree at Charlotte and meet GPA and grade requirements are eligible to apply for Advanced Standing in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction. To apply, students must meet with the Concentration Coordinator in the first semester of enrollment in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program.

Recommendations for admission to advanced standing are made by the Concentration Coordinator with approval of the Program Director within the first semester enrolled in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction degree. Candidates eligible for Advanced Standing must meet at a minimum, established criteria in the Charlotte Graduate Catalog. An academic petition should be submitted by the Concentration Coordinator on behalf of the doctoral student seeking recognition as Advanced Standing. A formal letter of support must be included in the academic petition process. If an academic petition is initiated by a doctoral student, a formal letter of support from the Concentration Coordinator must be included within the academic petition as documentation.

### **Additional Admission Requirements for all International Applicants and/or Applicants Whose Native Language is Not English**

The following items must be submitted as part of the application process and are required before an admission decision can be rendered.

1. **Official scores** on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), if English is not the applicant's native language and he or she has not earned a post-secondary degree from a U.S. institution. Required is either a minimum score of 83 on the Internet-based TOEFL, a minimum score of 557 on the paper-based TOEFL, or a minimum overall band score of 6.5 on the IELTS.

### **Additional Enrollment Requirements for International Applicants on, or Intending to be on, F-1 or J-1 Visa Status**

Upon admission, students will be asked to confirm their enrollment. Additionally, the International Student Scholar Office will request students to complete an online Financial Certificate Form and upload financial documents. [The International Student and Scholar Office](#) is responsible for issuing I-20s and DS-2019s.

### **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)**

The TOEFL is offered at Educational Testing Service (ETS) Centers. To obtain additional information about the TOEFL or to register for the TOEFL online, please visit the TOEFL website

at [toefl.org](http://toefl.org).

## **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)**

The IELTS assesses the complete range of English language skills which students studying in English commonly encounter. For further information, visit [ielts.org](http://ielts.org).

## **Overview of Doctoral Program Admissions Process**

Admission to the program is by recommendation of the Curriculum and Instruction program director, faculty in the requested concentration, and the final approval of the Graduate School. Each applicant is considered individually, and the applicant is responsible for ensuring that all application materials are on file by the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for summer/fall admission. Folders will be reviewed once all materials have been received, and a limited number of applicants will be invited for interviews. Following this meeting, the interviewing faculty will forward admissions decisions to the Graduate School for final review and processing. All interested applicants should apply for a summer or fall admission. Special consideration for a spring admission must have the permission of the Curriculum and Instruction program director. These applications will be reviewed by the program director and faculty in the requested concentration with the final approval determined by the Graduate School.

### **Interview Process**

Applicants selected as potential students may be invited to an interview. Interviews will occur either on campus or in a synchronous virtual meeting. This meeting will allow applicants the opportunity to become more familiar with the program and faculty in order to determine whether the program will help them achieve their individual goals. It will also give the faculty an opportunity to observe the interpersonal skills of each applicant and to evaluate an applicant's suitability for the UNC Charlotte doctoral program in Curriculum and Instruction and its emphasis in Urban Education. The individual concentration coordinators will schedule these interviews, which will include members of the Curriculum and Instruction faculty within the applicant's chosen concentration of study (designated here as the Selection Committee).

Applicants will be asked a series of questions by the Selection Committee, which will provide information for the admissions decision. The interview questions will focus primarily on information about the applicant's educational background, commitment to urban education, and potential to contribute positively as a student in the program. Following the interview, applicants may be asked to read a short passage and prepare a written response to a prompt that will be reviewed and rated by the Selection Committee.

When the process has been completed, the Selection Committee will meet and consider all information from the admissions process before making final recommendations to the Curriculum and Instruction program director. The program director will again review all application materials in light of the recommendation of Selection Committee and make a final recommendation to the Graduate School regarding admission to the program. At any point

during the application review process, applicants may be asked to supply additional information to guide the program director's and/or committee's decisions.

### **Notification of Admission Decision**

The Graduate School will notify applicants in writing and via email of its final decision. This notification usually occurs within four to six weeks of the candidate's application review.

### **Program and University Orientation**

The program director will host a program orientation for all newly accepted doctoral students in late spring. All doctoral students beginning the program in summer or fall are expected to attend. The program director will assign a concentration advisor and work with newly admitted students in identifying the summer or fall start date as well as course options in the first semester.

The UNC Charlotte Graduate School hosts a new graduate student orientation at the start of each fall and spring semester. Attendance is strongly recommended for all newly admitted Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction doctoral students. Information about the dates and times of these programs can be found [online](#). Information is also sent directly to newly enrolled students at the time of matriculation.

### **Appeal Procedure for Applicants Denied Admission**

Applicants denied admission may appeal the decision but only on the grounds that the denial was based on a violation of Section II of the University's Admissions Policy. Essentially, the policy maintains that if an applicant is denied admission to the Graduate School, they may appeal the decision based solely on the grounds that the denial violates University admissions policy not to discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The appeal must be in writing, must set forth with specificity the grounds for the appeal, and must be directed and delivered to the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Dean will review the applicant-appellant's file and appeal letter and will communicate their decision to the applicant-appellant in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the appeal. Appeals must be received prior to the term for which the applicant is seeking admission. If there is insufficient time to complete the appeal process before the beginning of the term for which the applicant seeks admission, the Dean of the Graduate School may decline to review the appeal. For more information, see Appendix A to University Policy 207 online at [legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-207/appendix-a](http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-207/appendix-a).

## **University and Graduate School Health Requirements**

### **Health Insurance**

Health insurance is required of all degree-seeking graduate students with three or more on-campus credit hours; and all international students with an F-1 or J-1 visa, regardless of credit hours. Students who are currently uninsured may enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan by completing the enrollment form found on the [Student Health Center website](#). Pricing is available on the site as well.

Students with existing health insurance coverage must supply this information online to the Student Health Center every Fall and Spring semester by the posted due date. See the [Student Health Center website](#) for details. Failure to comply will result in automatic enrollment in the Student Health Insurance Plan for the semester.

### **Immunization Requirements**

To protect all students at UNC Charlotte, North Carolina state law requires proof of immunizations upon entering the University or within thirty calendar days of the start of a student's first semester. Under North Carolina regulations, students not in compliance will be dropped from all courses. **Upon learning of admission to the University, students should submit their immunization records immediately.** Immunization Records must be uploaded via the Online Student Health Portal. Further details regarding the immunization requirements and the records submission process are available online from the Student Health Center at [studenthealth.uncc.edu](http://studenthealth.uncc.edu). Questions regarding these mandatory requirements may be directed to the Student Health Center Immunizations Department at 704-687-7424 or [immuinfo@uncc.edu](mailto:immuinfo@uncc.edu).





## General Information



## **Degree Requirements**

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction is awarded for completion of scholarly inquiry, study, and research that advances the knowledge base in the chosen field of study within the larger context of urban education. The Ph.D. in Curriculum and instruction is intended to develop independent, specialized expertise in communication (oral and written), leadership, knowledge development and application, diversity and cultural engagement, and ethics and scholarly inquiry. In addition to expertise in an academic discipline, graduate students completing this doctoral degree in this field should be able to claim competency in a range of skills.

All students will demonstrate their competence in the field by writing and successfully defending a Ph.D. dissertation. In addition, recipients of the degree must demonstrate a mastery of relevant subject matter and a potential for success in future research and teaching. Competence is demonstrated by successfully completing coursework and the comprehensive exam which includes three parts: urban core, research and specialization examinations. The program requires a minimum of 60 hours of approved coursework and a residency requirement of at least 18 credit hours over three successive terms of enrollment. Those students entering the program with Advanced Standing must complete a minimum of 45 hours of approved coursework. The degree, including the dissertation, must be completed within nine years.

Study is available in one of the following areas, each of which is examined through the lens of an urban educator: Curriculum and Educator Development (including Elementary Education); Learning, Design and Technology; Literacy Education (including English, Reading, and English as a Second Language); Mathematics Education; or Urban Education. The [Ph.D. website](#) contains additional information, including updated planning sheets for each concentration.

### **Grades Required**

A student must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 in all coursework taken. An accumulation of more than two C grades will result in termination of the student's enrollment in the graduate program. If a student makes a grade of U in any course, enrollment in the program will be terminated. Policies and procedures for student appeals of final course grades can be found at [Policy and Procedure for Student Appeals of Final Course Grades | Office of Legal Affairs | UNC Charlotte](#).

### **Transfer Credit Accepted**

The program will accept a limited number of transfer hours from a college or university accredited by an accepted accrediting body (typically no more than six credit hours), providing the appropriate Curriculum and Instruction faculty and the program director determine that the course or courses to be transferred are appropriate for the program of study and are graduate-level courses beyond the master's degree. (See the concentration coordinator about this course-by-course review). Courses accepted for transfer are subject to the same time limitation as courses taken in residence. Finally, the grades in these transfer courses must be an A or B.

Courses that are graded as pass/fail will not be accepted for transfer. The remaining degreehours, including all dissertation work, must be completed at UNC Charlotte.

In unique situations involving prior doctoral coursework and doctoral program enrollment at an accredited institution, the program may choose to accept additional credit hours that align with the approved concentration program of study. This decision requires the Curriculum and Instruction program director approval in consultation with the concentration coordinator.

After acceptance into the program, doctoral students will submit an academic petition to transfer approved coursework. Academic petition information can be found on the Graduate School website: <https://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/academic-petitions>.

**No transfer credits are allowed for Advanced Standing students.**

### **Advanced Standing Degree Requirements**

The degree requirements for the Advanced Standing are similar to the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction except students complete a minimum of 48 credit hours. No transfer credits are allowed. All Advanced Standing students select a concentration which determines the Advanced Standing program requirements and specialization. All Advanced Standing students must complete the foundations course (EDCI 8620) in the first year of their program.

Advanced Standing students must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 in all coursework taken. If this GPA requirement is not met, students will lose Advanced Standing and will be expected to complete the full 60-hour doctoral program. An accumulation of more than two C grades will result in termination of enrollment in the graduate program. If students make a grade of U in any course, enrollment in the program will be terminated.

For Advanced Standing, courses taken at the master's 5000- or 6000-level cannot be repeated at the doctoral 8000-level. In this case, Advanced Standing students should work with concentration advisors to determine appropriate program electives or course substitutions if necessary. All course substitutions require submission of an academic petition and Graduate Program Director approval.

Advanced Standing students must successfully complete the requirements for the Qualifying Comprehensive Examination and dissertation. All Advanced Standing students must complete a residency requirement of at least 18 credit hours over three successive terms of enrollment. Advanced Standing students must complete their degree, including dissertation, within nine years. The Graduate Catalog and the Ph.D. website contain additional information, including updated planning sheets for each Advanced Standing concentration.

### **Residency Requirement**

The University requires all doctoral students to complete a substantial residency requirement during which they have sustained contact with the graduate faculty. To meet this expectation, all students must complete a residency requirement of at least 18 credit hours over three successive

terms of enrollment. See the Graduate Catalog for more information [University of North Carolina at Charlotte - Acalog ACMS™ \(uncc.edu\)](http://uncc.edu).

### **Time Limitation**

The timeline toward degree begins with the first course students enroll in the doctoral program. Based on the annual cycle of application reviews, students will be admitted each summer or fall with the understanding that most students will be part time and will usually take six hours per term. Students will take some courses together as a cohort, including those taken the first fall semester. For students with special permission to begin coursework in spring semester, they will be required to join the incoming cohort in fall classes.

The program requires a minimum of 60 semester hours. Students will have a total of nine years to complete the program, including the dissertation, beginning from the date of the first course, including transfer credits. With the approval of the student's concentration coordinator and the doctoral program director, six hours of transfer credit for post-Master's coursework earned at an accredited university within the previous five years will be accepted. However, the timeline for any transfer credits calculates into the degree time limits.

For students admitted to Advanced Standing, the program requires a minimum of 45 semester hours. Students will have a total of nine years to complete the program, including the dissertation, beginning from the date of the first course. Transfer credits are not applicable with the Advanced Standing track for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction.

All requirements for the Ph.D. must be completed within nine (9) calendar years, beginning with the student's first term in the program. The time limit cannot be paused, even if the student takes an approved leave of absence. No course older than nine years may be applied towards a research doctoral degree (including transfer credit). Any course that exceeds this limit must be retaken. Failure to adhere to the time limit may result in the termination of a student's enrollment. Doctoral students will be notified by the Graduate School in their sixth year which courses are approaching time limits.

The Graduate School may consider requests for a single extension of one (1) year in cases with rare, extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the student, concentration advisor, and graduate program director must provide a signed timeline for program completion that does not exceed one year. Failure to adhere to the approved timeline for completion will result in automatic termination of the student's enrollment for a lack of satisfactory academic progress. Multiple extensions will not be approved.

After acceptance into the program, students will begin work in both the urban core and the area of specialization; for example, it is recommended that a student take one specialization course in the first summer and a second course either in the fall or spring semesters. All newly admitted doctoral students are expected to enroll in a pro-seminar, EDCI 8620 Pro-Seminar in Curriculum, Instruction, and Urban Education. Guidance concerning course selections will be provided by the program director and concentration coordinators upon the student's acceptance to the program.

Note, as well, that summer courses will be available based on demand and funding. Though the university will target three or more summer courses each year, variations may not always be available. (For example, the same courses might be taught every summer, with minimal rotation.) Concentration coordinators will talk with students during fall semester to determine summer course needs and will work to accommodate those needs whenever possible. Concentration coordinators will inform the program director of student course needs. The program director will schedule summer classes in collaboration with the department chair in which the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction resides.

### **Graduate School Requirements for Academic Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Research**

In addition to program requirements, first year doctoral students in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program are required to enroll in GRAD 8990 Academic Integrity and GRAD 8302 Responsible Conduct of Research. These are Graduate School requirement of all doctoral students enrolled in UNC Charlotte.

#### **Academic Integrity**

As published in the Graduate Catalog, all new doctoral students are required to enroll in the non-credit bearing course, Academic Integrity, GRAD 8990. This online course consists of an informative reading and a brief quiz. Students should allow a minimum of two hours to complete the module. Once a student passes the quiz, and at the end of the term, a grade of "N" (non-graded) will be recorded on their official UNC Charlotte transcript. Download the course presentation from the [Center for Graduate Life](#) website.

#### **Responsible Conduct of Research**

UNC Charlotte is committed to ensuring that doctoral students understand their obligations as researchers. All first-year doctoral students are required to enroll in GRAD 8002 - *Responsible Conduct of Research*. This two-credit course prepares students for a range of research related issues. Learn more from the [Center for Graduate Life](#) website.

### **Student Dispositions and Faculty Expectations**

Doctoral students are expected to actively and enthusiastically engage in a variety of opportunities that will both contribute to their program and prepare them for their desired careers after graduation. For example, students should be able to:

- Read and reflect on complicated texts
- Prepare for class thoroughly in order to participate in intellectual discussions with deep analysis and synthesis
- Submit reflective and purposeful assignments with appropriate formatting by the established due date
- Develop an organized compilation of foundational readings throughout all courses using a systematic process of tracking and note taking

- Plan for and embrace the depth of knowledge and skills required to produce a research study that has the potential for making a significant contribution to the field
- Present at local, state, and/or national conferences
- Write for publication
- Show the potential for service to the field
- Exhibit professional ethics and outstanding conduct in all situations
- Model a commitment to equity, inclusion, social justice and respect for all individuals
- Demonstrate a commitment to urban education, which includes:
  - examining factors affecting schools and communities in our major cities
  - studying urban education factors such as race, class, gender, ethnicity, language, school finance, tracking, segregation, immigration and marginalization.
  - exploring issues of cultural diversity, social stratification both local and global, and structural inequalities that impact the lives of many families living in our cities.

## Advising

When doctoral students are accepted into the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction the program, the program director assigns an advisor within the concentration, which is usually the concentration coordinator for the area of specialization [Curriculum and Educator Development (including Elementary Education), Learning, Design and Technology (LDT) Literacy, Mathematics or Urban Education]. The concentration coordinator retains advising responsibilities for all students enrolled in the concentration and may assign a graduate faculty within the concentration to serve as the student advisor. An assigned adviser will have expertise in one of the following areas: Curriculum and Educator Development (including Elementary Education), Learning, Design and Technology; Literacy Education (including English Education, Reading, Teaching English as a Second Language), Mathematics Education, or Urban Education. Concentration coordinators must communicate with faculty advisors to assure program information is shared with all students in the concentration.

Program requirements will be based on the Graduate Catalog of the year of enrollment. These requirements are outlined in a comprehensive planning sheet that lists the courses required by the concentration. Planning sheets are available on the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction [website](#).

As students proceed with coursework, advisers, concentration coordinators, and the program director will work with students to identify faculty whose research interests and expertise are congruent with the students' probable area of dissertation inquiry. The student should reach an agreement with a faculty member to serve as dissertation chair no later than the semester in which the student takes the comprehensive examination. The selection of a dissertation chair should occur prior to the student's enrollment in the dissertation proposal course (EDCI 8699). This chair must be a member of the Curriculum and Instruction Graduate Faculty as well as serving as an affiliate with the Curriculum and Instruction program, and should be invited in consultation with the adviser, the concentration coordinator, and the doctoral program director. The chair must also hold rank of Associate or Full Professor. An Assistant Professor cannot serve as the dissertation chair.

Please note that the assistance of the adviser does not relieve the student of responsibility for

completing required work and for following program, department, and university procedures. It is recommended that students bookmark the [Current Students link](#) on the Graduate School website and stay informed on semester deadlines in the University calendar. **Forms**, required by the Graduate School at various stages of the program, can be accessed from the **Graduate School homepage**, by clicking on “[forms](#).” Graduate School Forms are linked [here](#).

### **DegreeWorks**

DegreeWorks is a web-based tool that provides real-time advice for degree progression and planning. The tool gives UNC Charlotte doctoral students access to their plan of study as well as an overall glance of their academic progress. The Graduate School has provided a [Student Guide](#) with additional information on accessing the tool (via [my.uncc.edu](#)) and how to track academic progression. Advisors, concentration coordinators, and the program director will use DegreeWorks to track student matriculation and monitor completion of degree milestones as well as time to degree.

### **Tools for Mentors**

Being an effective graduate mentor or advisor is a crucial role in supporting UNC Charlotte doctoral students. The resources provided by the Graduate School are useful to both faculty and doctoral students and will improve the effectiveness of the mentor/advisor-doctoral student relationship. Faculty mentoring doctoral students should participate in University [mentor training](#) and utilize [resources available](#), such as mentoring compacts and/or individual development plans (IDPs).

Dissertation advisors and committee members are encouraged to consult regularly with doctoral students during the planning, conducting, and writing of the dissertation. Graduate faculty should not accept dissertation committee appointments or agree to serve as graduate advisor if they are not willing to provide consistent and frequent mentoring. Graduate faculty who agree to teach courses or develop courses for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program are expected to serve on dissertation committees and to mentor doctoral students. If a faculty member is not willing to do so, the faculty member will not be selected as a course instructor for the program. All new courses proposed or designed for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction must be reviewed by the program and submitted in Curriculog by the program director.

## **University Resources for Doctoral Students**

### **Center for Graduate Life**

The Graduate School is committed to providing graduate students at UNC Charlotte with the highest caliber of graduate education. While academic instruction and scholarly research are the ultimate foundation of any graduate education, the Graduate School also recognizes the importance of providing students with the resources and services needed to develop themselves professionally. The Graduate School’s [Center for Graduate Life \(CGL\)](#) supports the success of all graduate students. Located in the Cone University Center, the CGL offers space for community building and interdisciplinary exchange. The center offers professional development in the form of credit-bearing courses and workshops to

build core competencies among students in communication, leadership, teaching, cultural engagement, and ethics and scholarly inquiry. Follow the [CGL](#) on social media or visit the [CGL calendar](#) to stay up to date on CGL events that will enhance and support your doctoral experience at UNC Charlotte.

### **Doctoral Writing Support**

The Center for Graduate Life supports the writing efforts of doctoral students who are actively writing their dissertations. The CGL's Faculty for Graduate Writing offer one-on-one coaching sessions to help dissertation students improve their academic writing skills, understand the dissertation process, work more effectively with their chairs and committee members, manage their time, set realistic writing goals, and deal with barriers to writing. Graduate students are encouraged to participate in Graduate Writing Retreats offered several times each academic year. In addition, the [Writing Resource Center](#) (WRC) offers writing support to doctoral students and is an excellent resource for all doctoral students in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program.

### **Graduate Life Fellows**

Each year, the Center for Graduate Life appoints a group of doctoral-level students from across degree disciplines to serve as Graduate Life Fellows (GLFs). GLFs enjoy the opportunity to gain important leadership and communication skills while having a meaningful impact on the graduate student experience. For more information on the GLF program, visit [gradlife.uncc.edu/about-us/graduate-advocates](http://gradlife.uncc.edu/about-us/graduate-advocates).

## **The Curriculum and Instruction Comprehensive Examination**

UNC Charlotte requires all doctoral students to complete a qualifying examination. To sit for this examination, the student must have at least a 3.0 GPA and must have removed any conditions upon admission. The Curriculum and Instruction comprehensive examination is taken after a student has completed all the core courses, a minimum of 12 hours of required research courses, and at least 12-18 hours of concentration courses. Concentration hour requirements vary (see Concentration Coordinator for clarification). It is recommended that the comprehensive exam is taken in the second or third year of a student's program of study. Students may be enrolled in their final urban core course in the spring semester in which they complete the comprehensive examination. It is advised that doctoral students do not enroll in EDCI 8699 dissertation proposal until after successful completion of the comprehensive examination.

The comprehensive examination will be offered in the spring of each year near the middle to end of the spring semester. The exact date for comprehensive exams will be announced in the opening weeks of each spring semester. Students will be expected to arrange their schedules so that they have suitable time to complete the comprehensive exam. Students must notify their adviser and concentration coordinator of their readiness by mid-term of the fall semester prior to taking the examination. Then the concentration coordinator will inform the program director of student eligibility no later than one month prior to the end of the fall semester. The program director will facilitate the Urban Core comprehensive exam.



The Curriculum and Instruction comprehensive examination will be divided into three parts: Core, Research, and Specialization.

- The first part of the examination, the Urban Core, will cover substantive course content and additional readings, research, and research methodologies from the required urban core courses.
- The second part (Research and Specialization) will vary in design by concentration. For example, one concentration might require additional examination questions on campus in a monitored setting, while other concentrations may ask students to complete a project with a final presentation to a committee of evaluators.

Details for all three parts follow:

1. Core: The questions will be prepared and graded by faculty members affiliated with the urban concentration and who have provided relevant instruction to the students in the urban core coursework. This exam is a take-home exam. Students choose one of five questions and craft responses up to fifteen pages, double-spaced. It is expected that the students complete the exam within one full week (seven days), cite relevant research and references in APA format. Submissions are uploaded to and submitted for evaluation using the current academic platform used at UNC Charlotte.

The current academic platform used in the Cato College of Education is Taskstream. Comprehensive exam responses are submitted and timestamped in Taskstream to confirm work is completed within allocated time. Doctoral students release exam responses to the urban education core lead evaluator. Urban core faculty submit their consensus score of comprehensive exams using a rubric in Taskstream.

Students must sign a Take Home Exam Agreement to ensure academic integrity prior to receiving exam questions. Violations of the agreement will result in a grade of Fail and students will be required to retake the exam in the subsequent year.

For exams to be scored, students must complete the exam and submit it for evaluation within the timeframe provided (one full week). Extensions will not be granted. Failure to complete the exam will result in a required retake of the full exam during the following spring semester. The comprehensive examination is given once per year in the spring semester. For those students who receive a Revise and Resubmit or a failing grade, retakes are held in the late summer to early fall semester. The urban concentration faculty members review and rate the examination responses independently and then meet to review their scores. Using the consensus scoring method typical of federal grant panels, committee members can change their scores subsequent to this discussion. Consensus is then reached on the final scores by the committee members. All portions of the examination are evaluated by professors using the following scale:

- A grade denoting Pass indicates that a student has sufficiently answered the questions for that section of the examination, demonstrating mastery of the content and covering relevant content.

- A grade denoting Revise and Resubmit indicates that a student has answered most of the questions correctly from a particular section of the examination, but the evaluations were not sufficient for a grade of Pass. Therefore, the evaluators recommend that the student Revise and Resubmit his or her responses based on the evaluators' comments.
- A grade denoting Fail indicates that a student has not answered the questions sufficiently on the examination.

If a Fail is issued on any section(s) of the examination, students will only be required to retake section(s) that were failed. Students will be allowed to retake the failed portion only one time during the semester immediately following the spring examination (which will allow the student time to study or perhaps take a summer or fall course as needed). If this second attempt fails, then the student will be denied Admission to Candidacy. The student will then be expected to develop a plan for strengthening his or her knowledge base prior to retaking the examination. This plan must receive approval from concentration faculty and the doctoral program director. **No student is permitted to defend a dissertation proposal or do official dissertation work until all sections of the comprehensive examination are passed.**

Doctoral student scores on the urban core exam will be reported to the program director as soon as evaluations are completed by the urban core faculty in the spring semester. If students receive a revise and submit, faculty will indicate a timeline for the retest to the program director. Once the student's resubmission has been scored, the updated score will be reported to the program director. If a grade of fail is awarded, the student will meet with the program director and concentration coordinator to present a plan for retaking the examination. In such cases, the program must document the circumstances under which the student is allowed to retake portions of the exam and demonstrate that the student's committee unanimously supports the decision. Documentation must be submitted to the Graduate School for review prior to the exam date. In no instance will the student be allowed to take the exam (or portion of the exam) a fourth time.

2. Research and Specialization: Because the second portion of the comprehensive examination will be determined by the concentration faculty, this portion of the examination will vary. However, for all concentrations, the comprehensive examination will include an evaluation of research skills and demonstrated expertise within the student's concentration.

For the research and specialization section, students should consult with their adviser and concentration coordinator for specific specialty requirements for their concentration of study. This assignment may be an additional examination, or it may require the submission of an assignment like a project, a major research paper, an article, the design of a course, or a pilot study that synthesizes the content of the courses that make up the student's specialty. This will be graded by the faculty members who are a part of the student's concentration. If a dissertation chair has been identified, research and specialization exam design and evaluation may include the involvement of this faculty advisor. For the research and specialization examination, students will receive a grade of Pass, Revise and Resubmit, or Fail.

After Passing, or after successfully revising and resubmitting, students might be required to complete an oral presentation of their work, which will be reviewed by faculty members who are a part of the student's concentration. Students are expected to incorporate technology into their

presentations.

Evaluation for all portions of the Research and Specialization examination:

- A grade denoting Pass indicates that a student has sufficiently answered the questions for that section of the examination, receiving a majority of the votes from the evaluators.
- A grade denoting Revise and Resubmit indicates that a student has answered most of the questions correctly from a particular section of the examination, but the evaluations were not sufficient for a grade of Pass. Therefore, the evaluators recommend that the student Revise and Resubmit his or her responses based on the evaluators' comments. Students who receive a Revise and Resubmit on any part of the examination will be responsible for rewriting their responses and addressing the concerns from the initial reviews. The section(s) are to be rewritten and submitted to the evaluators within the time designated by the examiners.
- A grade denoting Fail indicates that a student has not answered the questions sufficiently on the examination. If a Fail is issued on any section(s) of the examination, students will only be required to retake the section(s) that were failed. Students will be allowed to retake the failed portion of the Research and Specialization examination only one time during the fall semester immediately following the spring examination (which will allow the student time to study or perhaps take a summer or fall course as needed). If this second attempt fails, then the student will be terminated from the program.
- Scores for the Research and Specialization examination will be reported to the program director by the concentration coordinator and/or the student's advisor in the semester in which the exam is completed.
- Finally, while the full test will be offered only in the spring of each academic year, a fall scheduling of the comprehensive examination will be provided as needed for students who are retaking a section(s) failed during the previous spring. During the interim period between the spring test and the fall retest, the student may continue taking courses; however, students may not enroll in EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research. **No one will be allowed to defend a dissertation proposal or do official dissertation work until all sections of the comprehensive examination are passed.**
- Advisers and students must complete the [Exam Report of Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination for Doctoral Students](#).

The Research and Specialization comprehensive examination will be submitted by the doctoral student in Taskstream and released to the concentration coordinator for evaluation.

Concentration faculty submit their score of comprehensive exams using a rubric in Taskstream. Taskstream information can be found at [Taskstream Information | Cato College of Education | UNC Charlotte](#).

### **The Comprehensive Examination Report Form**

The Graduate School requires a single form submission for documenting the completion of the comprehensive examination requirement for all doctoral students. For reporting completion of comprehensive examination, advisors and students will submit the [Exam Report of Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination for Doctoral Students](#) to the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program director and the Graduate School faculty signatures using DocuSign for

all faculty evaluators. Faculty evaluators include all graduate faculty who scored the urban core, research and specialization sections of the Curriculum and Instruction comprehensive examination. The advisor verifies on the form if the student passed the comprehensive exam. This form should be submitted in the semester in which all parts of the comprehensive examination are completed. The Graduate School will document this degree milestone in [DegreeWorks](#). For doctoral students to receive program permission to enroll in EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research, [DegreeWorks](#) must show completion of the comprehensive examination, successful defense of the dissertation proposal, and the student must be admitted to candidacy. Students are encouraged to frequently review their individual [DegreeWorks](#) audit to ensure they have met program requirements and degree milestones. All Graduate School forms can be found at [Forms | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

### **Continuous Registration Requirement**

The Graduate School requires all doctoral candidates to be continuously enrolled in dissertation credit hours beginning with the semester after the dissertation proposal is approved until the semester of graduation. When Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction doctoral students have successfully passed all portions of the Comprehensive Exam (including Urban Core, Research and Specialization), completed their coursework including the proposal defense, and been admitted to candidacy (see the next section for details on requirements for candidacy), they must remain continuously registered during both the fall and spring semesters while they are working on their dissertation. Students are required to register for at least three-credit hour EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research each semester in order to fulfill the continuous registration requirement. Students may register for up to nine credit hours of dissertation research each fall/springsemester until the dissertation is completed.

If a doctoral candidate cannot meet the continuous enrollment requirement, the student must submit an academic petition to request a leave of absence. During a leave of absence doctoral candidates are not allowed to work with dissertation advisors or committee members. When candidates are able to continue with their dissertation writing, they will need to indicate this through the academic petition process. When the petition is approved, students will then be allowed to register for EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research and must maintain continuous enrollment until graduation. Doctoral candidates must be enrolled in dissertation research to work with dissertation chairs and committee members. If students are not enrolled in the University, they cannot work with their dissertation chairs or committee members. Course authorizations for EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research will only be granted by the doctoral program director. The doctoral program director will be the instructor of record for all sections of EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research.

Doctoral students who have: (1) completed all required degree coursework and (2) submitted required milestone paperwork to the Graduate School (Exam Report of Comprehensive Examination, Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee or DNP Scholarly Project form, and the Proposal Defense form) may register for this non-graded course and be considered “full-time enrolled” students. An [academic petition](#) must be submitted for prior approval to register for GRAD 9800. Permission of the Graduate School is required. For doctoral students in the Curriculum and Instruction Ph.D., this course is usually taken in the final or graduation semester.

In the semester that they are waiting to graduate, students may register for the one-credit hour GRAD 9999 if students have completed all program requirements including the dissertation. Students may register only once for GRAD 9999. An [academic petition](#) must be submitted for prior approval to register for GRAD 9999. Permission of the Graduate School is required.

To maintain continuous enrollment students are not required to register for classes in summer sessions. However, if students choose to work with a dissertation advisor during summer sessions, they should enroll in EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research. Agreement with the dissertation chair and program director should be made prior to enrolling in dissertation research during the summer. Course authorizations for EDCI 8999 Dissertation Research will only be granted by the Graduate Program Director.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

Students are considered candidates for the doctoral degree upon:

1. Successful completion of all three parts of the Comprehensive Examination
2. The signed exam report of the comprehensive examination for doctoral students has been submitted to the Graduate School
3. Appointment of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee by the Graduate School
4. Approval of the Dissertation Proposal by the Doctoral Dissertation Committee
5. Submission of the Proposal Defense Report for Dissertation form to the Graduate School
6. A minimum of 48 hours of coursework successfully completed

A pre-proposal dissertation meeting should be held with the dissertation committee prior to enrollment in EDCI 8699 Dissertation Proposal. The pre-proposal meeting is intended to help the doctoral student refine the dissertation topic, research questions, theoretical or conceptual frameworks, and identify an appropriate methodology.

The dissertation topic may be proposed after the student has passed the qualifying examination and appointment of the doctoral dissertation committee by the Graduate School. The dissertation topic proposal must be defended at an official meeting of the student's dissertation committee. This is referred to as the Dissertation Proposal Defense.

Doctoral committees must have a minimum of four members including a graduate faculty representative and the committee must be approved by the program director and Graduate School prior to the proposal defense. One of the committee members may be from outside the university but must be approved as graduate faculty by University [procedures](#). A written dissertation proposal must be submitted to the dissertation committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense.

A doctoral student advances to candidacy after the dissertation proposal has been approved by the student's dissertation committee, program director, and the Graduate School. Results of the dissertation proposal defense should be submitted to the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate School via the [Proposal Defense Report for Dissertation](#) form directly after the defense and within one business day of the scheduled proposal defense. Candidacy must be achieved at

least one term prior to the term of graduation. Doctoral students may not defend the dissertation proposal and the dissertation in the same semester.

Continuous enrollment is required after students are admitted to candidacy. Candidates must maintain continuous enrollment until the dissertation is successfully defended and the doctoral degree is conferred.

## Graduation

A doctoral candidate is entitled to graduate upon fulfillment of all requirements in effect at the time of admission into the doctoral program. Students must file an **Application for Degree Form**. Candidates should submit the Online Graduation Application at the beginning of the term in which they anticipate defending their dissertation. Adherence to Graduate School [deadlines](#) is expected. Degree requirements are completed when students successfully defend their dissertation and file the final copy of the dissertation in the Graduate School. Students should review their individual [DegreeWorks](#) audit to ensure they have met all graduation requirements. They are required to meet with the Program Director at the beginning of the semester they intend to graduate.

Candidates are responsible for knowing the relevant published deadlines and for meeting them independently. The degree is conferred at the commencement following the fulfillment of all requirements, which may be December or May (with summer graduates included in the December ceremony). Candidates are expected to be present at the ceremony and will be accompanied to the stage by their dissertation chairs or a committee member they designate. Candidates are responsible for obtaining the details and requirements of the commencement from the Graduate School. During the graduation semester, there are several forms required by the Graduate School. Candidates are expected to review the [doctoral checklist](#), [dissertation formatting](#), [doctoral forms](#), [graduation clearance](#), and the [University calendar](#) to ensure they have met all University and Graduate School requirements.

*UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA*  
**CHARLOTTE**

**Dissertation Proposal and Defense**



## Preparing to Begin the Study

Although the dissertation study is culminating evidence of a candidate's knowledge base and skill set, students should actually begin preparations much earlier in the program. Consider the following recommendations:

- In all courses, students should read research studies through the lens of a researcher. What makes a study credible? Valuable? Important for the field? Intriguing?
- Students should seek out faculty and meet them as researchers. Initiate conversations about research interests and on-going projects. Join these projects whenever possible. The program pro-seminar is designed to facilitate connections with faculty early in the doctoral program. Students should also read through the list of Curriculum and Instruction Faculty found elsewhere in this handbook and peruse the faculty research interest database found on the Cato College of Education [website](#).
- Students should also note that the degree's requirements are not simply a list of courses; rather, this is a comprehensive program of study. Each course will add to the last and thus contribute to the development of a strong foundation of knowledge and skills. Opportunities for research will be woven throughout these courses, so students should begin to consider and prepare for the dissertation study fairly early.
- Students must read this document carefully and then merge the information here with deadlines and specifics required by the Graduate School. These deadlines and plans must then be added to the student's overall program of study. This program of study should then become the student's roadmap through the degree, and should guide advising sessions, course selection, research opportunities, publications and presentations, and the like. (See the concentration program of study forms on the website along with the 3-year plan of course roll-out.)

## Selecting the Committee

The Graduate School requires that doctoral committees consist of no less than four members. These four members must be regular members of the Graduate Faculty or must be granted an exception by Dr. Tom Reynolds, Dean of the Graduate School. All committees must include a chair and a Graduate Faculty Representative. Dissertation chairs should hold the rank of Associate or Full Professor. The Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) must be from a department different from the student and/or chair and must hold the rank of Associate or Full Professor.

### The Dissertation Committee Chair

Only Associate or Full Professors are approved to serve as chair. Special permission from the Graduate School must be granted for Assistant Professors to serve in this role as a co-chair. Assistant professors cannot serve as the dissertation chair. Emeritus faculty can serve in this role as long as they are willing. If they are newly retired, they must get approval to serve through the campus Benefits Office because some retirement plans require a 6-month separation from all university activities (even volunteering) or possibly jeopardize their state benefits in some capacity.



## Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR)

The Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) is a member of the doctoral student's dissertation committee who is recommended by the advisor and appointed by the Graduate School. The GFR is responsible for assuring the student is treated fairly and impartially by the dissertation committee, and that University standards and policies are upheld. To qualify as a GFR, a faculty member should:

- Hold tenure and a regular graduate faculty membership
- Have served on a dissertation committee prior to this appointment
- Come from a department different than the student and chair

This faculty member's role is primarily but not totally procedural. This representative is appointed prior to the student's dissertation proposal defense and must participate in the formation of the student's topic and in the final dissertation examination. The Graduate Faculty Representative is a full voting member of the committee. Additional information about the GFR can be found at [Graduate Faculty Representative | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

Curriculum and Instruction advisors and/or dissertation chairs may recommend to the Graduate School a faculty member who meets the relevant criteria to serve as GFR. Recommendations should accompany the initial Committee form: [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation or Scholarly Project Committee](#).

## Committee Members

Committee members are often chosen to provide topic or methodological expertise. Even without contributing their expertise, committee members may be chosen based on faculty with whom the student has a good professional relationship or who could offer a helpful outside perspective. Committee members are generally not as involved as the committee chair in the everyday progression of the dissertation. Typically, they read the dissertation only in its final form before the defense, although they should be available for consultation throughout the process and may be more closely involved in sections or chapters in which they have particular expertise.

The committee members and Graduate Faculty Representative will:

- Approve of the subject matter and methodology of the dissertation research
- Review and comment on drafts of the dissertation prior to submission to The Graduate School
- Verify, to the best of their ability, the quality of the data collection and evidence, data analysis, and logical reasoning or interpretation in light of the proposal aims
- Evaluate whether the student's dissertation fulfills the requirements of the degree

## Forming the Dissertation Committee

The Curriculum and Instruction doctoral student must seek input from the adviser and the concentration coordinator prior to forming a dissertation committee. Further, this committee

should be invited and finalized during the semester in which the student completes the comprehensive examination and prior to registering for EDCI 8699 Dissertation Proposal. The adviser will assist the student in this task. If it would benefit the student, then the chair may be selected prior to this time. The dissertation chair must be a member of the Graduate Faculty and hold the rank of Associate or Full Professor. The student should present the chair selection to the program director and concentration coordinator, but not before the student has completed a minimum of 39 hours.

The committee must consist of at least three faculty members and an additional member who serves as the Graduate Faculty Representative and is appointed by the Graduate School. The chair of the committee must be a member of the Curriculum and Instruction faculty in the student's area of study and must hold the rank of Associate or Full Professor. The second committee member should have expertise relevant to the doctoral student's dissertation focus and must be a member of the Curriculum and Instruction approved graduate faculty. The third committee member will usually be a methodologist who might be a Curriculum and Instruction faculty member, though this person may be from another concentration of study within the program. In addition, the Graduate School will appoint a Graduate Faculty Representative whose purview is to ensure that the student is treated fairly and that standards for dissertation requirements are upheld. One of the committee members may be from outside the university but must be approved as graduate faculty by University [procedures](#).

### **Appointment of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee**

The [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation or Scholarly Project Committee](#) is submitted to the program director and the Graduate School using DocuSign. The Graduate School will communicate to the doctoral student and the committee members approval of the dissertation committee and appointment of the GFR.

**Appointment of the doctoral dissertation committee by the Graduate School must occur prior to the dissertation proposal defense.** Doctoral students should not schedule the proposal defense prior to their committee being finalized and their appointment form being approved by the Graduate School. It is necessary to have the form approved in advance of the proposal defense, as there are instances in which committee members are not approved (for example, if someone is listed as the Graduate Faculty Representative who the Graduate School does not deem qualified to serve in this capacity).

### **Changing the Dissertation Committee**

Finally, once Dissertation Committee is formed, the committee should not be changed except in very rare cases such as the following:

- The faculty member finds that his or her interests or opportunities have changed and that it is in the best interest of the student for the faculty member to relinquish his or her position on the committee.
- The student finds that his or her interests have changed and the faculty member no longer holds an expertise in the new direction
- The student and faculty member find they have a conflict, professional or personal, that

keeps them from being able to work together successfully.

In such situations, the student should immediately consult with the concentration adviser and doctoral program director. Any changes to the Dissertation Committee require submission of a new [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation or Scholarly Project Committee](#) form.

## Dissertation Proposal

### General Information

The dissertation is the final example of the candidate's readiness for the degree. In close consultation with the student's dissertation committee, the student will finalize a topic for study and will then develop an original research study that contributes to the body of knowledge in the field. This proposal must be fully approved by the dissertation committee. (Note that each concentration area may require different components; for example, students in mathematics education are expected to include the results of a pilot study that informs and provides a rationale for the dissertation research. Each committee chair and concentration adviser will guide the student through these requirements.) **Appointment of the doctoral dissertation committee by the Graduate School must occur prior to the dissertation proposal defense.**

Doctoral students in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program should plan to present their dissertation proposal to their committee following the completion of EDCI 8699 Dissertation Proposal. However, not all students are ready for the proposal defense after a single semester and may repeat this course for credit to prepare for the proposal defense degree milestone. It is expected that prior to enrolling in EDCI 8699, doctoral students have a pre-proposal meeting with either the full committee or at least their dissertation chair. To enroll in EDCI 8699, doctoral students should have formed their dissertation committees and submitted the committee approval form to the Graduate School. This should be documented in DegreeWorks.

In the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program, dissertations may follow three formatting options: [monograph](#) (or traditional dissertation), [three article dissertation](#), or three-data chapter dissertation (or 7 chapter dissertation). A monograph has five chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results, and Discussion/Conclusion. A three-data chapter dissertation (or seven-chapter dissertation) includes: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Data Chapter One, Data Chapter Two, Data Chapter Three, and Discussion/Conclusion. For those composing an article-style dissertation, the [Three Article Dissertation Guidelines](#) should be consulted in conjunction with the traditional Manual. This format includes five to six chapters: Introduction, Literature Review (a separate literature review chapter may—or may not—be required, depending on the dissertation committee's preference), Article 1, Article 2, Article 3, and Discussion/Conclusion.

The monograph dissertation proposal should include a draft of the first three chapters of the dissertation, as determined by the committee chair. This will likely include the Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology. Both the proposal and the final dissertation should be in compliance with the guidelines in the Graduate School's [Dissertation Manual](#) as well as the

current APA publication manual. The three data chapter (or 7 chapter) dissertation has the same expectations for the dissertation proposal as the monograph or traditional dissertation. Doctoral students should prepare an Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology to share with their dissertation committees at least two weeks prior to the dissertation proposal defense. At the proposal defense, doctoral students will present a fifteen-to-twenty-minute overview of their dissertation study to the committee.

If a [Three Article Dissertation](#) is proposed, it must follow the [guidelines](#) set by the Graduate School. This includes approval by the dissertation committee. A minimum of three articles must be proposed. The journals to which the articles are being submitted must be approved by the advisory committee. The committee should assist in identifying and choosing refereed journals that will both challenge the student as well as offer a reasonable chance of publication success. A maximum of one article published or accepted for publication prior to the proposal defense may be included. This article must represent work undertaken while the student is enrolled in the Ph.D. program and be approved by the committee at the time of the student's proposal defense. This article must be connected to the theme or themes of the dissertation. If a previously published article is approved by the committee, the student will be responsible for securing necessary permissions from the copyright holder and other authors. The articles submitted for the defense must be of publishable quality. The student's dissertation committee decides whether the articles meet this standard. The doctoral student proposing a Three Article Dissertation must be first author on all articles. As first authors, doctoral students are responsible for the development and articulation of a concept or idea for research, development of a proposal to pursue this idea, development of a research design, conducting research and analysis, writing major portions of a manuscript, designing an intervention or assessment (if relevant), and interpreting results. Co-authors must be identified and approved at the student's proposal defense. The article and the role of the co-authors must be presented to and approved by all members of the dissertation committee. Any changes in co-authorship must be approved by the student's dissertation committee. The dissertation must follow APA formatting requirements, and the same style guide must be used throughout the entirety of the dissertation, even if the journals to which the articles are submitted or plan to submit utilize different style guides. In the event of a discrepancy between style guides, the Graduate School's formatting standards will take precedence over others, as these standards comply with the requirements provided by ProQuest. Deadlines are the same for both three-article and traditional (monograph) dissertations. Submission and graduation deadlines can be found on the Registrar's webpage.

Students must familiarize themselves with the policies, guidelines, and deadlines of the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research with Human Subjects in order to be in compliance. Approval to conduct research from the IRB must be obtained immediately after the proposal's defense and prior to data collection of any kind, which will ensure that all committee recommendations are accounted for this in the final approval documents. See this website for information: <http://www.research.uncc.edu/Comp/human.cfm>.

Following the approval of the dissertation topic, students are required to maintain continuous enrollment in both the fall and spring semesters for dissertation study until the work is completed. Continuous enrollment begins the semester after the dissertation topic is approved. Dissertation hours appear in the catalog for course credit, which will ensure the required

continuous enrollment. Students should take a minimum of six dissertation hours, but may repeat them as often as needed beyond the requisite six hours.

#### Preparation of the Proposal:

1. Although students should begin preparations for their dissertation study early in their program, they are not ready to begin their dissertation proposals until they have selected their dissertation committee. With permission from the doctoral program director, the concentration adviser, and the dissertation chair, a student may enroll in EDCI 8699 with the goal of establishing a framework for their dissertation proposal depending on the amount of preparation that has preceded this course and depending on the direction provided to the course instructor by the dissertation chair. Throughout their Program of Study, students should explore possible topics for the dissertation based on specific research questions, eventually selecting and narrowing their study's topic. Once this has been determined, students should integrate course assignments and readings into a review of the relevant literature in the field. It may be necessary for a student to retake EDCI 8699 to sufficiently develop the dissertation proposal. EDCI 8699 is repeatable for credit. Course authorizations for EDCI 8699 Dissertation Proposal are to be administered only by the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Program Director.
2. Throughout the development of the dissertation proposal, the student should schedule systematic, structured meetings with the chair and selected committee members to report progress and to ask for guidance. Though strong committee structure is emphasized during this study's progress, it is important that the research idea come from the student, as the purpose of this project is for the student to lead a research endeavor. In addition, it is the student's responsibility to undertake a study of sufficient quality to make an important contribution to curriculum, instruction, and urban education in the selected concentration. It is expected that prior to enrolling in EDCI 8699, doctoral students have a pre-proposal meeting with either the full committee or at least their dissertation chair.
3. It is the expectation that the dissertation chair and committee members will mentor the doctoral student throughout the dissertation proposal development. While the course instructor for EDCI 8699 supports the doctoral students in the processes for dissertation writing, the primary guidance and direction of the dissertation proposal is led by the dissertation chair and committee. Appropriate and frequent mentoring is expected of dissertation advisors.
4. In consultation with all dissertation committee members, the student (or chair) will reserve a time for the proposal defense. Once the time has been determined, the chair of the committee will reserve a space and will arrange for the necessary equipment, if applicable. The student will provide the necessary copies of all materials as determined by the committee chair. It is expected that all dissertation committee members be present for the dissertation proposal defense.
5. In consultation with the dissertation chair, the student may need to schedule individual meetings with each committee member prior to the defense. This will allow each member time to discuss any concerns and to give suggestions and prompts for the defense meeting. At least two weeks prior to the dissertation proposal defense date, the student should distribute electronic copies of the proposal to the committee members, including the Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR), the doctoral program director, and the chair of the department in which the concentration is located. Questions or

concerns should be relayed by the committee members to the dissertation chair at least five full days prior to the scheduled proposal meeting. (NOTE: The chair may ask the committee members to send feedback directly to the student and simply copy the chair on this communication. Consult the chair for this decision.)

#### Proposal Defense Meeting:

1. The dissertation committee members and Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR), all Curriculum and Instruction program faculty, and department chairs are invited to the presentation of the proposal. The student and the committee chair may give permission for other doctoral students to attend.
2. The proposal presentation will likely last one to one and one-half hours. Standard format should include introductions, introductory remarks by the student regarding the student's interest areas, and an explanation of the proposed study. This explanation includes a formal presentation of the proposed study. After this portion of the presentation is complete, the student will field questions from committee members and then may call for questions from outside audience members.
3. After the student has concluded the presentation, the student and any other observers should leave the room and the committee chair should then allow committee members time for additional comments. Once all discussion is complete, the committee will determine whether the student can move forward with the study or whether revisions are necessary. If revisions are required, then it is the committee's obligation to provide very specific feedback and guidance about these. Information follows in the next section.
4. The student is then invited to return to the session and is informed of the committee's recommendation(s) regarding the proposed study.

### **Dissertation Proposal Outcome**

Subject to review by the Dean of the Cato College of Education and the Dean of the Graduate School, the student's doctoral committee has final recommending authority. The outcome of the proposal will be to:

1. Approve,
2. Modify and Approve, or
3. Disapprove

If the proposal is approved or modified and approved, the student submits the **Proposal Defense Report for Dissertation** with all committee members' signatures to the doctoral program director and then to the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon full dissertation committee approval, if human subjects are involved, doctoral students will submit their study for review by University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research with Human Subjects. If, however, the proposal is not approved, then the student must correct the concern(s) immediately and to the committee's satisfaction. Those proposals that earn a rating of Disapprove must be defended a second time in front of the dissertation committee. No proposal can be presented for committee examination more than two times.

Upon full dissertation committee approval and with either University required Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research with Human Subjects approval or documentation of

exemption, doctoral students may begin the data collection phase of the study. This also qualifies students for admission to Candidacy.

### **Research Projects Involving Human Subjects (IRB)**

Once dissertation committee approval is granted, doctoral students should submit their dissertation proposal for University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research with Human Subjects approval or documentation of exemption. If a dissertation proposal meets an [Exempt category](#) this does not mean that IRB review is not needed. A protocol application must still be submitted for approval of exemption determination. When in doubt, contact the Office of Research Protections and Integrity (ORPI) to discuss the dissertation proposal. Guidelines and forms to assist graduate students and faculty in IRB review/approval process for research projects involving human subjects are available on the [Human Subjects in Research](#) website. IRB approval or exemption should be submitted with the signed Final Defense Report required by the Graduate School. [The Final Defense Report for Dissertation or Scholarly Project](#) is submitted to the Graduate School within ONE business day of your final dissertation defense. Scanned copies of the signed Dissertation Title Page and the IRB/IACUC/IBC approval memo if applicable, should be forwarded to [gradschoolforms@unc.edu](mailto:gradschoolforms@unc.edu) within one business day of the final defense. Please specify Doctoral Documents in the subject line.

### **Dissertation Work**

Once the proposal process has been successfully completed and IRB approval/exemption is documented, the doctoral candidate is ready to move into data collection and the final stages of the written research study, as guided closely by the dissertation chair and committee. Recognition of this work for the doctoral candidate is granted through enrollment in Dissertation Research (EDCI 8999). Dissertation research is under the direction of the program director. To enroll in EDCI 8999, doctoral students must gain approval and a course authorization from the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Program Director. The program director will serve as instructor for EDCI 8999 and will ensure all doctoral candidates are informed of university dissertation requirements, dissertation resources and have appropriate support. The doctoral program director will monitor doctoral candidates progress toward dissertation and degree completion. Sufficient progress must be made each semester for all students to receive a grade of passing and to enroll in dissertation research in subsequent semesters. The first three hours of dissertation research includes additional programmatic dissertation writing support and will be staffed by either the program director. The program director may designate another instructor in collaboration with the program department chair if necessary. The dissertation chair serves as the writing and research mentor for individualized study during dissertation research. A dissertation writing contract is co-created by the doctoral student and dissertation chair with approval of the program director or the instructor of EDCI 8999. It is the expectation of the program that doctoral students work with all committee members throughout the dissertation process. However, the dissertation chair is responsible for reporting any concerns regarding sufficient dissertation progress to the program director. Doctoral candidates are expected to enroll in a minimum of two three-hour sections of Dissertation Research to meet degree requirements.

Candidates must maintain continuous enrollment until the dissertation is successfully defended

and the doctoral degree is conferred. To meet the Graduate School's requirement of continuous enrollment, candidates must enroll each fall and spring semester for at least three credit hours of dissertation research until graduation. To meet the continuous enrollment requirement in fall and spring semesters, enrollment in EDCI 8999 may exceed the minimum of six hours of dissertation research. If doctoral candidates are working with the dissertation chair, they must be enrolled in EDCI 8999 or an equivalent course (GRAD 9800 or GRAD 9999). This expectation applies to summer dissertation writing.

To graduate, students must [submit](#) their dissertation to [ProQuest](#), a digital repository of scholarly works. Dissertations will also appear in [Niner Commons](#), UNC Charlotte's new institutional repository. It is expected that doctoral candidates will attend an individual formatting review (either in person or virtually) or a formatting workshop in the [Center for Graduate Life](#) to complete the submission process and understand the steps toward graduation. Information on formatting requirements are available at [Thesis and Dissertation | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#) with additional guidance provided in [Manuals and Templates | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

## Dissertation Defense

A doctoral dissertation must demonstrate the candidate's ability to conceive, design, conduct, and interpret independent, original, and creative research using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodologies. Further, it should make a unique contribution to knowledge in the field of curriculum and instruction within a selected concentration of study. Under the supervision of their doctoral committee chairs, students are encouraged to consult regularly with their doctoral committee members during the planning, conducting, and writing of the dissertation.

Once the study has been completed and the document is written, it should be submitted to the committee following the same general procedures as the proposal's distribution.

Each candidate must then pass a final oral examination regarding the completed dissertation. Sometimes called the "dissertation defense, the "dissertation oral," or the "final examination," this meeting is open to members of the University community and must be announced to the UNC Charlotte campus.

Dissertation and Scholarly Project defenses must be [announced online](#) at least two weeks prior to the defense date. The announcement of the dissertation defense should include identification of the student's full name, the date of the defense, the location of the defense, the time of the defense, the title of the dissertation, the name of the Chair of the dissertation committee, and a brief Abstract of the dissertation. In addition, this announcement must be shared with the Cato College of Education and the doctoral program director.

The Graduate School must be informed of the date and place of the defense at least two weeks in advance. The Graduate School posts firm deadlines on its website, which impact several of the steps in this process. Each student is responsible for knowing and meeting these



**deadlines.** Dissertation defense announcements should be submitted at [Submit Dissertation Defense Announcement | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#). Dissertation announcements can be viewed at [Dissertation Defense Announcements | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

With the approval of the dissertation committee, the student will schedule the dissertation defense. The student, with the committee chair's assistance, will arrange for a public announcement of the date, time, and place of the examination so that any interested member of the University may attend. The dissertation should be submitted to the committee for final review at least three (3) weeks prior to the date of the final defense. Along with the dissertation, doctoral candidates must share their iThenticate similarity report with the committee. It is highly recommended that candidates upload their work to iThenticate well in advance. More information on how to access and use iThenticate can be found on the [Graduate School's website](#) at [iThenticate | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

In addition to submitting the dissertation to the committee, the doctoral candidates must submit the dissertation in Taskstream and release the dissertation for evaluation to the dissertation chair. The dissertation chair will score the dissertation on behalf of the committee using the dissertation defense rubric in Taskstream. Scores are shared with the program director for annual SACs reporting. Taskstream is a Cato College of Education requirement and includes a program exit survey that doctoral candidates complete in their graduation semester. Taskstream information can be found at [Taskstream Information | Cato College of Education | UNC Charlotte](#).

The defense will be conducted by the full doctoral committee. Following the candidate's formal presentation and responses to questions posed by committee members, the committee will render a decision, with this decision requiring a majority vote. The following options are available to the committee:

1. Approve
2. Approve contingent upon specific changes being made
3. Defer pending an additional defense
4. Disapprove

If a doctoral candidate's work earns a rating of Disapprove, then that candidate must revise the final draft as directed by the committee and must defend the final report a second time. Further, the student may not sit in defense of the study more than two times.

**The defense constitutes the final exam for a doctoral student. The decision of the faculty advisory committee is final.** In the rare event of a split decision, typically the faculty come to an agreement as to whether the student defense is acceptable. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to work within their ability to resolve any impasse among committee members. If no resolution is feasible, then the chair should consult with the Graduate School.

Once successfully completed, the chair will file the [Final Defense Report for Dissertation or Scholarly Project](#) in the Graduate School. [The Final Defense Report for Dissertation or Scholarly Project](#) must be signed by the dissertation committee on the day of the final defense. The Final Defense Report is submitted to the program director and the Graduate School within ONE business day of the final defense. Scanned copies of the signed Dissertation Title Page and

the IRB approval memo if applicable, should be forwarded within one business day of the final defense to [gradschoolforms@uncc.edu](mailto:gradschoolforms@uncc.edu). Please specify Doctoral Documents in the subject line.

Following the successful completion of the defense, the doctoral candidate must meet with the Graduate School to check the final format of the dissertation. An initial meeting prior to this one is advised. Once the final format has been approved by the Graduate School, the candidate should submit the final approved, error-free manuscript to the Graduate School no later than the filing date indicated in the University calendar. See the **Graduate School's [Doctoral Checklist and Forms](#)** for details regarding such things as the final dissertation, number of copies, deadlines, and fees (see below). The candidate is responsible for paying for archiving and optional copywriting fees. In addition, the candidate is responsible for presenting each committee member with an electronic copy of the final manuscript, as requested by the committee.

### Doctoral Dissertation Submission & ETD Form

- Signed Dissertation Title Page and the IRB/IACUC/IBC approval memo, if applicable. Remit the [\\$45 submission fee](#) and the optional and additional copyright registration fee (\$75).
- [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#): required for Ph.D. students. The Certificate of Completion will be forwarded automatically to [Aura Young](#). Complete this by the final submission deadline.
- Create a ProQuest account and submit your dissertation through the [ProQuest ETD Administrator](#) pages by the final submission deadline.

All doctoral candidates in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction must follow the UNC Charlotte's Graduate School guidelines for final submission of the dissertation; see [Submit Your Thesis or Dissertation | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#). It is incumbent upon the doctoral candidate to review all University requirements and follow posted deadlines within the University calendar. Key links are provided to assist doctoral candidates in this process:

- [Printable Calendar | Office of the Registrar | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [Doctoral Checklist | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [iThenticate | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [Submit Dissertation Defense Announcement | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [ProQuest Guides and Publishing Guidelines | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [ETD Preparation | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [Graduation Clearance | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [Commencement | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)
- [\*\*Final Defense Report for Dissertation or Scholarly Project\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Doctoral Dissertation Submission and ETD Form\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Doctoral Dissertation Embargo Request Form\*\*](#)

## Cato College of Education Requirements

The Cato College of Education requires doctoral students in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction to complete the following program portfolio in Taskstream:

- Dispositions
  - Dispositions Self-Assessment 1
    - Completed in EDCI 8620 Pro-Seminar in Curriculum, Instruction, and Urban Education
  - Dispositions Self-assessment 2 and Instructor Evaluation
    - Completed in EDCI 8699 Dissertation Proposal
    - Scored by the course instructor
- Experience the Other (ETO) Field Assignment
  - Completed in EDCI 8182
  - Scored by the course instructor
- Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Evaluation for the Urban Education Core
  - Scored by the Urban Education Concentration Coordinator
- Concentration Comprehensive Exam for the Research and Specialization section of the Comprehensive Examination.
  - Scored by the Concentration Coordinator
- Dissertation Final Defense
  - Submission of the dissertation presented to the committee
  - Scored by the dissertation chair
- Program Exit Survey and Program Exit Disposition
  - Completed in graduation semester during Dissertation Research (EDCI 8999)

### ADVANCED PROGRAM + DISPOSITION PORTFOLIOS

Content Program Area	Portfolio Title (Advanced Program)	Enrollment Code
Middle, Secondary Education-Curriculum & Instruction Ph.D. Only	MDSK Curriculum & Instruction PhD	MDSK_PHD

Taskstream information can be found at [Taskstream Information | Cato College of Education | UNC Charlotte](#).



# Graduate Faculty Curriculum and Instruction



## Curriculum and Instruction Faculty

### Department of Middle, Secondary & K-12 Education

324 College of Education 704-687-8875

Program website:

[education.uncc.edu/mdsk/academic-programs/Ph.D.-ci](http://education.uncc.edu/mdsk/academic-programs/Ph.D.-ci)

### **Director**

Dr. Tina L. Heafner

Doctoral Program Director

Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) Co-Coordinator

Learning, Design and Technology (LDT) Co-Coordinator

### **Concentration Coordinators**

Dr. Vic Cifarelli and Dr. Allison McCulloch, Mathematics Education Concentration Co-  
Coordinators

Dr. Chance Lewis, Urban Education Concentration Coordinator

Dr. Drew Polly, Curriculum and Educator Development Co-Coordinator; Elementary Education  
Concentration Coordinator

Dr. Ayesha Sadaf, Learning, Design and Technology Concentration Co-Coordinator

The Literacy Education Concentration has three Co-Coordinators with each representing  
specialized expertise within literacy education:

- Dr. Erin Miller, Literacy Education Concentration Co-coordinator (Reading)
- Dr. Spencer Salas, Literacy Education Concentration Co-coordinator (Teaching English as  
Second Language)
- Dr. Megan Barnes, Literacy Education Concentration Co-coordinators (English  
Education)

### **Graduate Faculty Appointment**

Members of the graduate faculty are appointed by departmental leadership and usually serve a  
five-year term. Graduate faculty are selected based on their demonstrated ability to teach  
graduate students effectively, complete high quality creative work and to conduct scholarly  
research and direct the research of graduate students. College Deans and department chairs  
nominate candidates for graduate faculty. For more information, visit [Graduate Faculty  
Nomination](#).

### **Graduate Faculty Nomination**

Graduate faculty are selected based on their demonstrated ability to teach graduate students effectively, complete high quality creative work and to conduct scholarly research and direct the research of graduate students. College Deans and department chairs nominate candidates for graduate faculty using the electronic Graduate Faculty Appointment ([eGFA](#)) system. Graduate Faculty at UNC Charlotte may be Regular Graduate Faculty or Associate Graduate Faculty. The academic department develops criteria for selection to either post, in accordance with the general criteria of the Graduate School. Nominations go to the [Graduate Council](#) for review and approval.

### **Program Faculty Affiliates**

The following are required to formally affiliate a regular member of the Graduate Faculty with a graduate program outside of their home department for the purpose of chairing dissertations:

- Faculty member receives written permission from their Department Chair to serve as affiliate faculty with a program outside of their department
- Program area faculty or a program committee in a specific area (e.g., higher education, LDT, urban education) vote to endorse the affiliation
- Graduate Program Director approves
- Department Chair(s) approve
- Affiliate faculty are listed on the specific program website [Affiliate Faculty Process | Cato College of Education | UNC Charlotte](#)

### **Program Faculty Research Interests**

Faculty research interests which include contact information can be found on the Cato College of Education [website](#). See: [Faculty Research Interests | Cato College of Education | UNC Charlotte, Directory | Department of English | UNC Charlotte](#) and [Directory | Department of Mathematics and Statistics | UNC Charlotte](#).

### **Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Graduate Faculty**

The follow faculty have received appointment to the UNC Charlotte Graduate Faculty and are eligible to serve on dissertation committees for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program.

Dr. Daniel Alston	Dr. Evan Houston	Dr. Hae-Soo Oh
Dr. Brittany Anderson	Dr. Kathleen Hogan	Dr. Malin Pereira
Dr. Kelly Anderson	Dr. Charles Hutchison	Dr. Teresa Petty
Dr. Juli Anna Avila	Dr. Tony Jackson	Dr. Jack Piel
Dr. Joel Avrin	Dr. Jiancheng Jiang	Dr. Paola Piloneta
Dr. Meghan Barnes	Dr. Jeanneine Jones	Dr. David Pugalee
Dr. Kristen Beach	Dr. LuAnn Jordan	Dr. Mike Putman
Dr. Tracey Benson	Dr. Mohammad Kazemi	Dr. Alan Rauch
Dr. Ian Binns	Dr. Taufiqar Khan	Dr. Luke Reinke
Dr. Erik Byker	Dr. Stella Kim	Dr. Tracy Rock
Dr. Bettie Ray Butler	Dr. Scott Kissau	Dr. Brenda Romanoff
Dr. Anne Cash	Dr. Brian Kissel	Dr. Matthew Rowney
Dr. Jeong-Lim Chae	Dr. Michael Klibanov	Dr. Rebecca Roeder
Dr. Heather Coffey	Dr. Cy Knoblauch	Dr. Ayesha Sadaf
Dr. Madelyn Colonnese	Dr. Lan Kolano	Dr. Adalira Saenz-Ludlow
Dr. Paula Connolly	Dr. Jamie Kudlats	Dr. Oleg Safronov
Dr. Kyle Cox	Dr. Jillian La Serna	Dr. Daniel Shealy
Dr. Mark D'Amico	Dr. Joan Lachance	Dr. Rebecca Shore
Dr. Xingde Dai	Dr. Richard Lambert	Dr. Maya Socolovsky
Dr. Kristin Davin	Dr. Jeffrey Leak	Dr. Isaac Sonin
Dr. D. Christopher Davis	Dr. Janaka Lewis	Dr. Tehia Starker-Glass
Dr. Warren DiBiase	Dr. Jae Hoon Lim	Dr. Michelle Stephan
Dr. Sandra Dika	Dr. Christy Luce	Dr. Yanqing Sun
Dr. Paula Eckard	Dr. Ronald Lunsford	Dr. Bruce Taylor
Dr. Anthony Fernandes	Dr. Allison McCulloch	Dr. Ralf Thiede
Dr. Paul Fitchett	Dr. Adriana Medina	Dr. Aaron Toscano
Dr. Miranda Fitzgerald	Dr. Kirk Melnikoff	Dr. Bois Vainberg
Dr. Claudia Flowers	Dr. Lisa Merriweather	Dr. Heather Vorhies
Dr. Elizabeth Gargano	Dr. Roslyn A. Mickelson	Dr. Chuang Wang
Dr. Yuri Godin	Dr. Elizabeth Miller	Dr. Erin Washburn
Dr. Amy Good	Dr. Ryan Miller	Dr. Mark West
Dr. Michael Grabchak	Dr. Greg Mixon	Dr. Carl Westine
Dr. Aaron Gwyn	Dr. Stanislav Molchanov	Dr. Colleen Whittingham
Dr. Dawson Hancock	Dr. Maryann Mraz	Dr. Gregory Wickliff
Dr. Stephen Hancock	Dr. Jennifer Munroe	Dr. Karen Wood
Dr. Susan Harden	Dr. Xiaoxia Newton	Dr. Greg Wiggan
Dr. Laura Hart	Dr. Chris O'Brien	Dr. Zhiyi Zhang
Dr. Gabor Heteyi		Dr. Weihua Zhou

# **Academic Regulations and Policies**





## Academic Integrity

All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or online at:

<http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>

All doctoral students are expected to complete two Graduate School courses: [Academic Integrity/RCR | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#). These are in addition to the 60-hour doctoral degree requirements for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction.

### Academic Integrity

As published in the Graduate Catalog, all new doctoral students are required to enroll in the non-credit bearing course, Academic Integrity, GRAD 8990. This online course consists of an informative reading and a brief quiz. Students should allow a minimum of two hours to complete the module. Once a student passes the quiz, and at the end of the term, a grade of "N" (non-graded) will be recorded on their official UNC Charlotte transcript. Download the course presentation from the [Center for Graduate Life](#) website.

### Responsible Conduct of Research

UNC Charlotte is committed to ensuring that doctoral students understand their obligations as researchers. All first-year doctoral students are required to enroll in GRAD 8002 - *Responsible Conduct of Research*. This two-credit course prepares students for a range of research related issues. Learn more from the [Center for Graduate Life](#) website.

## Acceptance and Enrollment Policies

Applicants for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction program, once notified by the Graduate School and program director, are expected to enroll in the semester for which their application was accepted. If applicants fail to enroll, they will lose their program acceptance and will be expected to re-apply to the program. Application fees will not be waived.

Applicants must enroll in at least one course in the semester of acceptance. After this first semester, doctoral students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment. However, prior to Candidacy, students may take time off if a situation arises that prohibits enrollment. Students are allowed to not enroll in coursework for two semesters prior to Candidacy. If doctoral students do not enroll in the semester following a two-semester gap in enrollment, they will be considered inactive. Notifications from the Graduate School will be sent directly to students. Students will need to follow Graduate School procedures for reinstatement. After students are admitted to Candidacy, they are required to maintain continuous enrollment in both fall and spring semesters until graduation. If circumstances inhibit enrollment, students should complete an academic petition to take a leave of absence or risk being terminated from the program. At which point, Graduate School procedures must be followed for appeals.

## **Lack of Progress Policy**

Students are expected to complete their degrees within the nine-year timeframe mandated by the Graduate School, and they should hold **continuous enrollment** throughout those years unless excused circumstances intervene. (Should this be the case, then the adviser, concentration coordinator, and program director must be notified immediately, with the Graduate School granting final approval for a leave of absence. This requires the submission of an academic petition.) To confirm that students are moving systematically through the program, faculty will assess their progress toward program completion each spring, with advisers and concentration coordinators chiefly responsible for this work. To accomplish this, students will be required to follow program planning sheets with advisement from the concentration coordinator or the program director. Student progress will also be monitored by the program director and the Graduate School. The Graduate School will notify the doctoral student if students become inactive in the program or fail to maintain continuous enrollment. Continuous enrollment during candidacy requires enrollment in dissertation research hours which can be satisfied by one of the following EDCI 8999, GRAD 9800 or GRAD 9999.

## **University Policy for Student Grievance Procedure**

When a student complains about a certain action or inaction by a member of the University community, the student should follow the procedure as set forth in the Student Grievance Procedure which may be found at [Student Appeals and Grievances | Office of Legal Affairs | UNC Charlotte](#).

If doctoral students encounter a challenge or experience conflict in their graduate education at UNC Charlotte, the Graduate School provides a graduate student Ombudsman as a resource. The Ombudsman for the Graduate School is a faculty member who helps graduate students and members of the Graduate School community navigate and manage conflict in a constructive way. The Ombuds is an advocate for fairness who listens to graduate students' concerns and helps students achieve a greater understanding of the problem and possible solutions, and looks for information and resources applicable to the situation. The Ombuds service is an informal, neutral, and, in most cases, confidential resource\* for new and continuing graduate students to raise questions or concerns about any aspect of their graduate experiences. The Ombuds does not advocate for any individual point of view, and does not participate in any formal grievance process, but works to promote a fair process for all. For more information, see [Ombudsman | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

NOTE: \*Confidentiality cannot be promised in matters relating to concerns of harm or threats to self or others or potential illegal activity.

## **Appeal Procedures**

### **Cato College of Education Policy for Decisions Affecting Status as Graduate Student**

1. When a student wishes to appeal a decision affecting his/her status as a graduate student, the student should first raise the issue with the person who made the decision or the

person who represented the department of the college which made the decision at issue. If the person hearing the student complaint is not the department representative, as described above, he/she shall advise the student that the student should see the appropriate representative.

2. If the student decides that the complaint has not been responded to satisfactorily by the department representative, then the student should be directed to the department chair by the representative as described above.
3. If the student pursues the complaint with the department chair, the department chair will meet with the student at a time mutually convenient to both parties but not more than ten (10) work days after receiving a request from the student.
4. If the student decides that the chair has not responded to the complaint satisfactorily, the chair will advise the student that he/she may proceed with an appeal, as set forth below, or, if appropriate, a grievance as set forth above, and will provide him/her with the procedures for either or both of these actions.
5. It should be noted that grievances must be received by the appropriate individual as set forth in the Student Grievance Procedure not later than forty- five calendar days after the student first became aware of the facts which gave rise to the grievance.

### **University Policy**

The [Graduate Catalog](#) is the University's resource for suspension and/or termination information. These processes are outlined on the Graduate School's website. Doctoral students may appeal a suspension or termination using the procedures described [Suspension and Termination Appeals | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#). Other grievances relating to academic status are to be addressed to the Graduate School: [Homepage | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

#### **Appeal of academic suspension for the purpose of reinstatement**

A student who has been suspended from the Graduate School and/or a program of study may appeal his/her suspension and must be reinstated in order to continue his/her studies. After notification of suspension is received, the student initiates the appeal procedure by submitting a "Suspension Appeal Form" to the graduate coordinator/director of his/her academic program explaining any extenuating circumstances. The "Suspension Appeal Form" is available on the ["Forms"](#) page of the Graduate School website. The graduate coordinator/director will forward this form to the Graduate School with a recommendation regarding reinstatement. The Dean of the Graduate School makes the decision on the suspension appeal and notifies the student of the decision in writing.

A student readmitted to a graduate program through reinstatement will be expected to complete the degree program with satisfactory or commendable performance ("A" or "B" grades). Should a student receive a grade of C, U or N in a graduate course after being reinstated to the program, enrollment in the graduate program will be terminated.

#### **Termination appeal procedures for degree seeking students**

The procedure for appealing a termination is different than that for a suspension. If a student is terminated, he or she has the option of filing an appeal. Please see the catalog for the description of the termination process identified in the section entitled “[Appeal of Academic Termination for the Purpose of Reinstatement.](#)”

**Graduate students may have grounds to appeal their termination from the Graduate School. There are several different types of termination appeals available to doctoral students:**

### **Academic termination of degree seeking students**

Academic termination of a graduate student's program of studies may occur in four ways.

1. Students may be required to terminate their graduate studies if they fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress. One example of failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress is non-adherence to the schedule of “Time Limits for Degrees.” See the Graduate Catalog for details.
2. A student's graduate studies may be terminated if he/she fails to maintain the specific standards of the student's academic program as described in the program specific sections of the Graduate Catalog. For example, a doctoral program may indicate that the accumulation of two C grades or one U grade is grounds for termination from the program.
3. A student's graduate studies will be terminated if, after receiving an initial suspension and subsequent reinstatement the student receives a grade of C, U or N in a graduate level course.
4. Students who are suspended from a graduate program and are denied re-admittance through the suspension appeal process are considered terminated from their graduate program. In all cases of termination from a graduate program, the student's transcript will bear the notation “Candidacy Terminated.”

Appeal of academic termination for the purpose of reinstatement (degree seeking students) While an action of termination is considered final, a student who is terminated from a graduate program may appeal that termination to the Graduate School if there are unusual or extenuating circumstances. The type of academic termination will determine the permissible grounds for the petition and the specific procedure utilized to initiate the appeal. Please note, the Appeals Committee is not obligated to hear appeals for reinstatement to the current semester.

### **Category 1: Academic Termination Based on Failure to Maintain Commendable or Satisfactory Performance in Course Work**

Category 1 appeals are available to students who have been terminated for receiving a U, N or C grade after an initial suspension and students who fail to maintain the specific grading standards of an academic program. In these cases, an Appeal of Academic Termination submitted to the Graduate School must be supported by the student's graduate program. Without support from the student's graduate program, academic termination of this type is always considered a final action.

To initiate a Category 1 Appeal of Academic Termination, the student must send a written letter to the Graduate School requesting consideration of his/her case by the UNC Charlotte Graduate School Appeals Committee. In the written request, the student must make his/her case for reinstatement. Included with the student's letter must be at least two letters of support from the academic department.

1. For master's degree students, the termination appeal should include a letter from the program coordinator/director and a letter from the department chair, major advisor and/or the thesis/project advisor.
2. For a doctoral student, a termination appeal should include a letter from the program coordinator/director and the advisory committee or dissertation committee chair.

All documents must be received by the Graduate School within 30 days of the date on the letter of termination. Once the Graduate School receives a Category 1 Appeal of Termination, it will be forwarded to the Chair of the Graduate School Appeals Committee. This Committee will review all relevant materials and make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School makes the decision on the Appeal of Termination case and his/her decision is final. This process may take several weeks, depending on when materials are submitted.

### **Category 2: Academic Termination Based on Programmatic Action**

Category 2 appeals are for students who have been terminated for failure to maintain satisfactory progress in an academic program and for students who have been denied re-admittance through the suspension appeal process. Academic decisions based on the disciplinary expertise and judgment of graduate faculty members and program coordinators/directors in a particular field are not subject to appeal. The fact that a programmatic decision goes against a student's desire for continuation in an academic degree program is not grounds for a termination appeal. However, a Category 2 appeal may be brought on the grounds that there was "procedural error" or "discrimination" in the termination decision. To initiate a Category 2 Appeal of Academic Termination, the student must send a written letter to the Graduate School requesting consideration of his/her case by the UNC Charlotte Graduate School Appeals Committee. In the written request, the student must make his/her case for reinstatement. If the student is alleging "procedural error," the student must specify what procedures were utilized and how the program deviated from the specified procedures. If the basis of the appeal is "discrimination," the student must show how his/her case was handled substantially different from those of other students in similar circumstances. A termination appeal request and the supporting documentation must be received by the Graduate School within 30 days of the date on the letter of termination. Once the Graduate School receives a Category 2 Appeal of Termination, it will be forwarded to the Chair of the Graduate School Appeals Committee. The Chair of the Appeals Committee will contact the program in question and request a response to allegations of "procedural error" and/or "discrimination." The program will have two weeks to respond to the request of the Appeals Committee Chair. Once all relevant information had been received, the Committee will review the materials and make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School makes the decision on the Appeal of Termination case and his/her decision is final. The process will take a minimum of two weeks and up to 30 days.

## Readmission of a terminated graduate student

Students who have been academically terminated from the Graduate School and/or a UNC Charlotte graduate program are not eligible for readmission as either a degree seeking or non-degree seeking graduate student. However, if after two years the student can demonstrate the potential for academic success and/or personal and professional development since leaving the University, the student may initiate a request for readmission to the Graduate School. (See the Graduate Catalog for instructions and [Appeals | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#)).

## Course Grades

Course grades are appealed through the concentration offering the course and then, if necessary, through the college in which the grade was assigned. Course grades may not be appealed to the Graduate Council. Guidance on appeals can be found [Policy and Procedure for Student Appeals of Final Course Grades | Office of Legal Affairs | UNC Charlotte](#).

## Comprehensive Exams

Students may only appeal a termination to the Graduate School if their appeal to retake the exam is based on a procedural error or discrimination (please see the [Category 2](#) appeal description under *Appeal for Academic Termination*) and their initial appeal to the program was denied.

## Withdrawals

Once a student has registered for classes and it becomes necessary to terminate the registration, there are two possible courses of action: (1) withdrawal from classes and/or from the University, or (2) Cancellation of Enrollment.

Students are expected to complete all courses for which they are registered at the close of the Add/Drop Period. These courses will appear on the transcript, count as attempted hours, and except for withdrawals allowed under this policy, receive grades used in the GPA calculation. All types of termination, including withdrawal, withdrawal for extenuating circumstances, and Cancellation of Enrollment are subject to all financial aid and satisfactory academic progress rules. See [Withdrawals | The Graduate School | UNC Charlotte](#).

## Graduate Academic Petition

There are two ways to access the Graduate Academic Petition system:

- Link directly to [Graduate Academic Petition](#)
- Through Banner Self Service
  - Log into [my.uncc.edu](http://my.uncc.edu)
  - Select Banner Self Service
  - Select Students Services/Student Accounts -> Student Records -> AcademicPetition-Graduate Students

The Graduate Academic Petition system is only available to **active** graduate students at UNC Charlotte. Inactive students are required to file a paper-based Special Request Form. This form may be downloaded from the [Forms](#) web page.

Request types available in the Graduate Academic Petition are:

<b>Type of Request</b>	<b>What the Request Can Be Used For</b>
<b>Catalog Term Update</b>	Students are expected to follow the graduation requirements published in the Graduate Catalog based on the term they were admitted. They may, however, update their requirements to the current edition if they choose. Use this petition type if you wish to follow the current edition of the Graduate Catalog instead.
<b>Concentration Add/Change</b>	Some graduate programs permit or require students to select a concentration within their plan of study. Use this petition type to add, change, or drop a concentration for your program.
<b>Course Overload</b>	Graduate Students are restricted to 12 credit hours per semester (Fall/Spring), and up to 9 hours in the Summer term. In certain circumstances, the Graduate School will allow students to increase their maximum hours for a specific term. Use this petition type to request authorization to enroll in additional hours.
<b>Early Entry</b>	Early entry students are held to a maximum of 15 credit hours at the graduate level before completing their undergraduate degree. The number of graduate credits that you may double count is determined by your graduate program, in no case may more than 12 hours be double counted. See the <a href="#">Graduate Admissions Early Entry</a> web page for details. Use this petition type to declare the graduate courses you will take while in early entry status and identify which of those will double count toward your undergraduate degree.
<b>Grade Type Change</b>	With the permission of the instructor and the Graduate School, a graduate student may request a change in the grade type for a given course. Options include Audit and Pass/Unsatisfactory (standard grade courses are not eligible for Pass/Unsatisfactory). The deadline to submit this request is by midnight on the last day of the add/drop period for the term. See the published academic calendar for details.
<b>Late Add</b>	The Add/Drop period closes on the 8th calendar day of the term. Use this petition type to request a Late Add into a course for which you were unable to register while Add/Drop was open.
<b>Late Withdrawal</b>	Students may self-withdraw from any course in a given term up until the withdrawal deadline published on the Academic Calendar. Use this petition type to request a "W" grade from a class after the deadline.

<b>Type of Request</b>	<b>What the Request Can Be Used For</b>
<b>Leave of Absence</b>	Students taking a leave of absence may not use university resources during that time period. A leave of absence may not extend beyond one year. After one year, your matriculation is closed and you must reapply for admission. If you are experiencing a personal crisis, please contact the Dean of Students office.
<b>Other Course-Related</b>	Use this petition type to submit requests that are course related and not covered by any other petition option.
<b>Other Non-Course Related</b>	Use this petition type to make requests unrelated to a course that are not covered by any of the other petition options.
<b>Permit Grad 7999 (Graduate Residency)</b>	GRAD 7999 "Graduate Residency" is a 1 credit hour course available to masters and certificate students who: Have completed all the degree requirements Have applied to graduate Must be enrolled in order to graduate.
<b>Permit for GRAD 9800 (Full-Time Enrollment)</b>	Doctoral students may request a permit for this course if they need to be full-time enrolled provided, they meet the following requirements: Completed all required coursework Submitted all the required milestone forms except the final defense to the Graduate School.
<b>Permit for GRAD 9999 (Graduate Residency)</b>	GRAD 9999 "Graduate Residency" is a 1 credit hour course available to doctoral students who: Have completed all the degree requirements Have applied to graduate Must be enrolled in order to graduate.
<b>Substitution-Course Requirement</b>	Students are expected to take the courses reflected in their DegreeWorks audit and the Graduate Catalog. Use this petition type if you wish to substitute a course you took for one required by your program.
<b>Substitution-Program Requirement</b>	Students are expected to take the courses reflected in their DegreeWorks audit and the Graduate Catalog. Use this petition type if you wish to substitute a course you took for a general program requirement, such as electives, directed studies or an undesignated course requirement.



Type of Request	What the Request Can Be Used For
<b>Suspension Appeal</b>	If you have been suspended, you may appeal your suspension within 30 days of notification. Use this petition type to appeal your suspension in order to be reinstated.
<b>Transfer of Credit - External</b>	Use this petition type to request courses taken at another university be transferred to your UNC Charlotte graduate program.
<b>Transfer of Credit - Internal</b>	Use this petition type to request courses taken at UNC Charlotte be transferred from one program to another.

### Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Handbook

All students are required to read and abide by the program guidelines set forth in the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Handbook. The handbook is maintained by the doctoral program director and is updated as needed to reflect university or program policy changes. The current handbook is available on the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction [Website](#).







*UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA*  
**CHARLOTTE**

**Appendix Concentration Specific  
Information**



## **Appendix Concentration Specific Information**

### **Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) Concentration**

The goals of the concentration are:

1. To prepare doctoral students to engage in curriculum and educator development which encompasses:
  - a. Teaching or Research Faculty
  - b. Educator Preparation
  - c. Community College Teaching
  - d. District Leadership
  - e. Professional Development
  - f. Curriculum and Instruction Specialists
  - g. Curriculum Developers
  - h. Instructional Specialization (e.g., Elementary, Middle Grades Education, or K-12)
  - i. General Education in Higher Education (e.g., Center for Graduate Life)
  
2. To prepare doctoral students for research and leadership in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development, e.g., curriculum writers (nonprofit and for-profit), grants specialists, designers of professional development, curriculum/instructional specialists in schools/districts/states, content specialists at the state level, curriculum specialists with the State Department of Education.

#### **Concentration Mission Statement**

The Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction with the Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) concentration embodies a commitment to addressing the cultural, racial, economic, educational, environmental, health, social, and civic needs of P-12 students, educators, and the broader educational community. The Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) concentration views urban education as a focus that provides educational leaders with the opportunity to more closely examine factors affecting schools and communities. These factors include but are not limited to: educational equity and inclusion, race, class, gender, ethnicity, language, educational policy, civic empowerment, school finance, tracking, segregation, immigration and marginalization. In addition, the Curriculum and Instruction doctorate explores issues of cultural diversity, social stratification both local and global, and structural inequalities that impact the educational opportunities and the lives of many families. The Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) concentration empowers educational leaders as scholars and thought leaders through research and creative activity, personal connection, professional collaboration, school and community engagement. The Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) concentration views curriculum and educator development as a shared mission to educate and inspire all students for lifelong inquiry, cultural awareness, and to act with empathy, compassion, intentionality, and forethought as engaged leaders in our culturally-rich, pluralistic global society. Scholars who focus on the Curriculum and Educator Development (CED)

concentration seeks to create educational curriculum, instruction, and learning environments that are racially conscious and responsive, promote empathy and inclusion, and center equity.

*NOTE: The Elementary Education Concentration became the Curriculum and Educator Development Concentration (CED) as of May 17, 2021. All students currently enrolled in the Elementary Education Concentration may change their concentration to the Curriculum and Educator Development (CED) Concentration or remain in the Elementary Education Concentration through their doctoral studies.*

### **Learning, Design and Technology (LDT) Concentration**

The Learning, Design and Technology concentration will focus on research and theory in the design of effective learning experiences and environments that incorporate technology to address educational needs and problems in elementary, middle/secondary, or post-secondary settings with an emphasis on urban contexts. The program will prepare graduates who wish to work as researchers and university faculty in higher education or other professional organizations addressing important societal problems in Learning, Design and Technology.

### **Literacy Concentration**

The Literacy Concentration of the Curriculum and Instruction Ph.D. is an interdisciplinary collaboration between Reading Education, English Education, Teaching English as a Second Language, and FLED Education encompassing dimensions of language, culture, and literacies broadly defined as they relate to urban education. The Literacy Concentration uses an apprenticeship model of teaching and learning, meaning that students are encouraged to work closely with faculty whose research interests, methodological approaches, and theoretical frameworks align with their own.

#### **Faculty Mentorship**

At the time of application to the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, potential candidates indicate their intention to pursue the Literacy Concentration. We encourage potential applicants to visit faculty websites and to contact faculty directly to discuss potential research connections and mentorship possibilities. Upon acceptance and enrollment in the program, students develop research apprenticeships with faculty, often resulting in the publication of co-authored, peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. Representative Literacy Concentration faculty employ a range of research methodologies to inquire into interests including, Critical Whiteness Theory and Discourse, Black and Brown teachers' lives in New Latino South spaces, Black Linguistic Justice, The Seal of Biliteracy, Dual-Language pre-service teacher preparation, and community-engaged pedagogies.

#### **Strand Coursework Overview**

The Ph.D. in Curriculum & Instruction, regardless of strand concentration, is a research-focused doctoral degree with a special emphasis on urban contexts. Along with their colleagues across degree strands, Literacy Concentration students follow a sequence of a minimum of four (12 hours) foundational courses critically examining aspects of Urban Education. Additionally, all degree students follow a sequence of five (15 hours) quantitative and qualitative research methods courses and a minimum of three (9 hours) courses related to dissertation work. Literacy Concentration students additionally complete a minimum of 8 courses (24 hours) of interdisciplinary electives as they are available pending enrollment. Additional degree landmarks include spring comprehensive exams, a dissertation proposal defense, and the dissertation itself. Finally, students have the option of completing online graduate certificates as part of their elective coursework in Anti-Racism in Urban Education, Quantitative Analyses, and Online Teaching and Learning.

### Student Progression and Future Goals

Our students bring with them a range of experiences, arriving into the program with teaching licensure in a related content-area and three years of K-12 classroom experience and/or higher education (e.g., College Composition), and/or district-level leadership. As the majority of our Ph.D. C & I students work full time as they pursue the degree, the time frame for degree completion has ranged from four to eight years—with students taking courses in Fall, Spring, and Summer. Although the academic job market is competitive, strand alumni have gone on to adjunct and tenure track faculty positions at institutions including Furman University, Greensboro College, and UNC Charlotte; district and school leadership in Hickory Public Schools, Union County Public Schools, and Cabarrus County Schools; as well as K-12 teaching across the state of North Carolina.

Coursework will prepare students for a wide range of new or enhanced career paths, from practitioner roles to academic positions. Regardless of students' potential paths, they will be apprenticed in research methodologies.

### Ready to Apply?

We encourage potential applicants to first review carefully the webpages and CV's of individual faculty and to reach out directly to those faculty whose research interests and publication records coincide with the applicant's research vision, interests, and goals. The application package includes a statement of interest and here we ask candidates to be as specific as possible in identifying one or more potential research interests, how these interact with specific faculty expertise, as well as short- and long-term career goals. A significant dynamic of the application process is matching applicants' goals and interests with faculty capacity. While we might receive a strong application, if we are unable to make a clear "applicant/faculty match" we are unable to offer admission. This is mainly because, as previously mentioned, the Ph.D. takes an apprenticeship model of teaching and learning.

### **Mathematics Concentration**

Mathematics Education with research and theory applied to problems of learning and teaching

mathematics. Students focus on elementary, middle/secondary, or post-secondary.

### **Urban Education Concentration**

*Urban education* with research and theory applied to critical social issues affecting schools and society from a historical, contemporary, and theoretical perspective in a global context. In order to address the complexities of urban schooling, this program is interdisciplinary and draws on education, public policy, sociology, anthropology, and ethnic studies. This program views urban education as a focus that provides students with the opportunity to more closely examine factors affecting schools and communities in our major cities. These factors include but are not limited to: race, class, gender, ethnicity, language, school finance, tracking, segregation, immigration and marginalization. In addition, urban education explores issues of cultural diversity, social stratification both local and global, and structural inequalities that impact the lives of many families living in our cities.