

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, PH.D.

The Educational Research program focuses on the understanding of research and its varied methodologies. It prepares scholars to conduct sound research studies and to analyze research work from the perspectives of both the social sciences and health sciences. The strength of the program centers around a core of collaborative faculty and prominent scholars who are dedicated to the development and application of dynamic research methodologies situated within contemporary conceptual frameworks. Areas of specialization within the degree program include qualitative methods, quantitative methods, mixed methods, psychometrics, and evaluation.

Admissions

In addition to the minimum Graduate School admission requirements, to be considered for regular admission, an application must include:

- 1-3 letters of recommendation consistent with goals of the program
- GRE score of 300 (verbal + quantitative) or above
- Exceptions - Applicants who meet one or both of the following criteria are not required to submit a GRE score: The applicant has earned a MA in Educational Research or closely related field and/or the applicant has successfully completed 15+ hours of research coursework at the graduate level.

Prospective students will find resources on the program's website to support writing a statement of purpose and requesting letters of support that are focused on educational research, which students are encouraged to review ahead of submitting the additional application materials.

Prospective students are encouraged to complete their applications by the priority application deadline of December 15th. Applicants who submit their materials prior to December 15th will receive priority consideration for graduate assistantships and other forms of funding. Applications received after the December 15th date will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Curricular Requirements

The Educational Research program offers a PhD program with a selected focus on research methods within one of the following areas of study: Qualitative Methods, Quantitative Methods, Mixed Methods, Psychometrics, or Evaluation. The PhD program requires a minimum of 72 credit hours, with a required 18 hours of courses within an area of specialization. The student is required to earn a grade of A or B in each of the core courses in Educational Research. To fulfill the face-to-face university accreditation requirements for this PhD program, students will enroll in main campus sections of the following courses:

- BER 540
- BER 610
- BER 631
- BER 632
- 6 hours of Educational Research Area of Specialization Courses
- BER 687 or BER 689
- 18 hours of BER 699 Dissertation Research

Code and Title

Professional Seminar in Educational Research

BER 610	Prof Seminar in Ed Research	3
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Required Educational Research Core Courses

BER 540	Statistical Methods In Educ	3
BER 558 or BER 657	Psychometric Theory	3
BER 600	Survey of Educational Research	3
BER 631	Inqry As Interp: Qual I	3
BER 632	Reflect Resist: Qual II	3
BER 660	Eval I:Theory & Practice	3

Educational Research Area of Specialization Courses 18

At least one area of specialization must be selected. Students may select any set of courses related to their area of specialization. Many, but not all of the courses may come from the Educational Research course listing in the following areas: Program Evaluation, Measurement, Classroom Assessment, Qualitative Research, and Statistics. It is expected that students will take all available BER courses in their area of specialization. A minimum of six credit hours in the Area of Specialization must be earned through main campus sections of the courses.

Practica/Fieldwork in Educational Research

BER 687 or BER 689	Field Work Educ Research	3
	Practicum Educ Research	

College of Education Foundations 12

The foundations requirement must consist of any non-research methods course outside of the student's program.

Dissertation 18

BER 699	Dissertation Research	
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Total Hours 72

Transfer Credit

Graduate School information on Transfer Credit.

Doctoral Plan of Study Requirement

All doctoral students must have a completed Program of Study approved by the Graduate School no later than the semester during which the student will complete 30 semester hours of UA and/or transfer credit for the doctoral degree. Otherwise, a "hold" may be place on future registrations.

Graduate School information on the Doctoral Plan of Study.

Comprehensive Exams

After completing doctoral candidacy coursework, students must successfully complete the doctoral comprehensive examination. To be eligible to take the comprehensive examination for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, a student must have successfully completed the preliminary review and evaluation, all required Educational Research Core Courses, all area of specialization courses, and practicum and/or fieldwork.

The examination is conducted by the student's supervisory committee or other committee established in the program area. Typically, the comprehensive exam committee is comprised of two faculty members from the Educational Research program, and one external to the program. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to assess the development of the student's competencies and skills according to the following criteria: (1) Receive a passing mark on the written

comprehensive examinations; and (2) Receive a passing mark on the oral examination. The comprehensive examination will be evaluated by all Comprehensive Exam Committee members using the program's Educational Research Rubric for Comprehensive Exam Assessment.

Registering to take the Comprehensive Exam must be done in writing (e.g., via email) at the beginning of the semester the student plans to take the examination. The comprehensive examination should be completed at least nine months before the degree is to be awarded. There is no programmatic administration date of the comprehensive examination; instead, each exam will be based on each student's completion of coursework and program of study. Results are due by the end of the semester in which comps are initiated (i.e., December/May). A student may take the oral or written examination only twice. Failing the examination twice results in dismissal from the degree program and the Graduate School.

Because the comprehensive exam is typically administered in a take-home format, it is expected that students will use course and reference materials in a manner consistent with the UA Academic Code of Conduct. While students are encouraged to utilize resources, both internal and external to the university, resources to improve technical writing (e.g., copyediting by someone other than the student, using university-based writing services including the Writing Center and Research Assistance Services) are prohibited on this exam. Failure to adhere to this policy is a violation of the UA Academic Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action. Specifically, if a student is found to violate the Academic Code of Conduct during their comprehensive exam, they will fail the exam.

Graduate School information on Comprehensive Exams.

Fieldwork/Practicum/Internship Requirements

Students are required to complete 3 hours in BER 687's fieldwork or BER 689's practicum in educational research. The fieldwork course, BER 687, is a student-initiated research project done with faculty supervision. The practicum course, BER 689, is student participation in faculty-initiated research, with work related to the supervising faculty member's research interests. The student's performance on fieldwork and/or practicum will be evaluated by the supervising faculty member using the Educational Research Program's Rubric for Intermediate Scholarly Writing Assessment.

Admission to Candidacy Requirements

The requirements for advancing to candidacy are:

- a successful preliminary review;
- completion of all coursework as listed on the approved program of study;
- passing the comprehensive examination;
- receiving approval of the dissertation subject from the student's committee.

A department-approved Admission to Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree is submitted to the Graduate School as soon as possible after passing the comprehensive examination.

Graduate School information on Admission to Candidacy.

Continuous Enrollment Policy

Graduate School Policy on Continuous Enrollment.

Dissertation Requirements Prospectus

The dissertation prospectus aims to show the appropriateness, manageability, and significance of the projected research. The student formally presents the written prospectus to their dissertation committee through a prospectus meeting. The student, in communication with their chair and committee, is responsible for scheduling this meeting and managing related logistics. For the dissertation prospectus, students will typically present content related to a proposed research study, which may be an in-process research study, and should include elements such as: 1) an introduction to/significance of the study, 2) draft research question(s), 3) theoretical or conceptual framework(s), 4) a concise review of literature, 5) potential methodology/ies, and 6) potential methods. Students should submit their draft prospectus to their chair and receive approval before sending the document to their dissertation committee. Committees should then have at least two weeks to review the prospectus before the prospectus meeting. The goal of the prospectus meeting is for the student to receive formative feedback on their proposed study prior to developing their dissertation research proposal.

Proposal

The dissertation research proposal aims to show the appropriateness, manageability, and significance of the projected research. The student formally presents the written proposal to the dissertation committee and defends it in a meeting with the committee. The student, in communication with their chair and committee, is responsible for scheduling this meeting and managing related logistics. The dissertation proposal typically includes both an introduction giving an overview of the proposed research and the following: 1) the significance of the proposed research, 2) a review of the literature, 3) the theoretical framework(s), 4) research question(s), 5) the methodology/ies, 6) data generation methods, and 7) data analysis methods. The proposal will be evaluated by all committee members using the Educational Research Program Proposal/Thesis/Dissertation Document Rubric.

Successfully defending the dissertation proposal provides evidence that the student and the committee have arrived at a sound methodology that the student will use to address (a) worthwhile research question(s). The proposal forms a working plan that can be used by the student and the committee to guide the research, to evaluate progress, and to provide ongoing feedback.

Dissertation

Dissertation guidelines are provided on the Graduate School's website. Please note that these are guidelines only; alternative formats are permitted. The dissertation must follow an established scholarly form, but that form may vary at the discretion of the chair and committee with final approval from the Graduate School. These guidelines are designed to assist the student with the development of the dissertation. The dissertation is to be written in U.S. English, unless otherwise necessary to the dissertation topic and approved by the student's committee. It is not unusual for students to need the assistance of the UA Writing Center or a professional editor.

In addition, students are required to use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (current edition) because it is the dominant style for educational research journals. It is the student's responsibility to maintain regular contact with their dissertation chair. The dissertation document and oral defense will be evaluated by all committee members using the Educational Research Program Proposal/Thesis/Dissertation Document Rubric. Even with consistent

communication with the Chair and committee, it may take a month or more for the committee member(s) to be able to provide feedback. Please plan accordingly, relative to Graduate School deadlines for the dissertation and graduation.

Students are allowed a maximum of two dissertation oral defenses, in which they have an opportunity to successfully defend their dissertation. On the second attempt, a student must pass both the oral defense and have the dissertation voted acceptable by the committee. If the student fails both oral defenses, the student is automatically removed from the doctoral program, and must appeal to the Post-Master's Appeals Committee for reinstatement if interested in continuing.

The dissertation defense is the culminating experience in the doctoral program. The student and committee chair are responsible for setting a defense date that allows all committee members to participate and to have adequate time to read the dissertation, determine its suitability for a defense, and engage in scholarly dialogue about how to best improve the document.

To promote these priorities, the scheduling of the defense follows a series of steps. The first step is to schedule a tentative defense date. Guided by the dissertation chair, students may schedule a defense date before they submit their final document to their dissertation committee. The second step is for students to submit their dissertation to the dissertation committee so that the committee may read the document and determine its readiness for a defense. Students must submit their completed dissertation to the dissertation committee at least 30 days prior to their scheduled defense date. Students may proceed with this second step after they receive expressed written consent from their dissertation chair(s).

The third step is for dissertation committee members to read the completed document. Dissertation committee members have 10 working days from the date of receipt to determine the dissertation's readiness for a defense, with readiness defined as general consensus (i.e., at least 4 of 5 committee members) that the dissertation can be filed with the Graduate School with only minimal revisions (e.g., minor editorial changes, minor substantive enhancements, and formatting). When readiness is agreed upon by the committee (i.e., 4 out of 5 committee members consent to a defense), the fourth step is for the Dissertation Chair to notify the student of the committee's disposition that a defense may occur. Once notified by their Chair(s), student may proceed with filing a public announcement of the defense. At this point, the dissertation defense date is formally confirmed.

Committee members who believe that a dissertation is not suitable for a defense should inform the Dissertation Chair within 10 working days of receiving the dissertation. The detail of their concerns should be submitted to the committee chair within the next 5 working days (if not sooner) so that the student is aware of those concerns and can address them before or during the defense. In cases where disagreements persist about student readiness to defend the dissertation, students and their dissertation chairs should consult with the Department Head as soon as possible. The Department Head will then work with the COE Dean's office and the Graduate School to determine an appropriate course of action.

All faculty members in the College of Education are to receive the announcement of the pending dissertation defense and may observe the dissertation defense. Following the student's presentation and committee examination, persons other than the committee members will be asked to leave the room before the committee conducts any discussion and subsequent voting. Positive votes by Committee members indicate that the dissertation can be filed with the Graduate School with minimal or no revisions.

Graduate School information on Dissertation Requirements.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

Graduate School information on Time Limits.

Student Progress Requirements

Preliminary Review

The first programmatic checkpoint, the preliminary review and evaluation, applies after a student has taken 15 hours of coursework in Educational Research. Students must make arrangements with their advisor to initiate the process. Students who remain in good standing with the Graduate School are required to submit a portfolio consisting of an unofficial transcript, a completed draft of the Program of Study, an original sole-authored writing sample focused on educational research, and a declaration of intent (i.e., a statement of professional aspirations). Materials should be submitted to the student's advisor, at which point the advisor will share the materials with all program faculty for review. The faculty will review the student's materials using the program's Rubric for Intermediate Scholarly Writing Assessment and make written recommendations regarding the continuation of the student's Program of Study. Students will either "pass" or "fail" the examination. A recommendation of "fail" will result in an action plan created by the program faculty and will be supervised by the student's advisor. Adherence to the action plan is required for successful growth and development in the program.

Students who transfer into the PhD in Educational Research program and have already successfully completed 15 hours of coursework in Educational Research prior to admittance may ask their advisor to initiate a review by program faculty to waive their participation in the preliminary examination. Using the writing sample submitted at time of application, the student's advisor will submit a completed rubric to the Program Chair as documentation for request of the waiver.

The student may not advance to the program's practicum and/or fieldwork courses or doctoral comprehensive exam without a passing score on either the preliminary review and evaluation or development plan materials.

Academic Misconduct Information

Graduate School information on Academic Misconduct.

Withdrawals and Leave of Absence Information

Graduate School Information on Withdrawals and Leave of Absence information.

Academic Grievances Information

Graduate School information on Academic Grievances.

Grades and Academic Standing

Graduate School information on Grades and Academic Standing.

Graduate School Deadlines

Information on Graduate School Deadlines.

Application for Graduation

Information on the Application for Graduation.