



College of Education

*Department of Communication
Sciences and Special Education*

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Doctoral Handbook

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The College of Education at the University of Georgia

As the first chartered state university in the country in 1785, the University of Georgia has a long and distinguished history in the development and dissemination of the nation's intellectual, cultural and environmental heritage.

The College of Education, founded in 1908, is an integral part of today's University. Perennially ranked among the nation's top research-extensive institutes, the College continues to be a center for innovative research, teaching and service projects of local, national and international interest.

One of the largest and most diverse institutions of its kind in the nation, the College offers more than a dozen undergraduate majors and approximately 90 graduate programs leading to careers as educators, counselors, psychologists, administrators, researchers, educational and health-related specialists.

Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders

The Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders prepares doctoral students for leadership positions in colleges, universities, research settings, or clinical agencies. An individually crafted program of study consists of core requirements and a series of courses and activities representing the highest level of academic achievement in the discipline. A Ph.D. program generally consists of at least two years of coursework plus a third year or more of research, teaching, or clinical activities, culminating in the dissertation.

Although each student's course of study is individualized to reflect previous experiences and individualized interests, all doctoral students are expected to complete a minimum of 12 semester hours of advanced statistics courses, 6 semester hours of computer science courses, and 30 semester hours of coursework in the student's content area. Because of the variety of interests in the human communication sciences and disorders fields, the content courses are determined individually by the agreement of the student and the student's faculty advisory committee. Students complete an internship in college teaching as part of the program of study; additional internship programs can be configured for students with other interests, such as anatomy, specialized medical center practice, or administration.

The graduate faculty in the communication sciences and disorders program are known internationally, nationally, and regionally as researchers, educators, and clinicians. All are active researchers and instructors, and all maintain active collaborations with multiple professional colleagues within and beyond the University of Georgia. All are committed to the importance of evidence-based, client-centered, and outcomes-focused Ph.D. education and to the future of research and teaching in the field.

Ph.D. in Special Education

The Ph.D. in Special Education prepares doctoral students for special education leadership positions in schools, colleges, universities, research settings, or human service agencies. The program is competency-based, with specific emphasis on research and teaching. An individually crafted program of study consists of core requirements and an individually designed series of courses and competencies.

The planning of a student's doctoral program in special education is the cooperative responsibility of the student and his/her advisory committee. The guiding philosophy for this policy rests in the fact that a single, common program of study does not meet the needs of all students. Students often bring different patterns of preparation, experience, interests, and needs. Because the advisory committee is not restricted by traditional course credit limitation, the committee may decide that one candidate may need certain coursework and experience not required of another candidate. Faculty members strongly believe that placing this flexibility and responsibility in the hands of the advisory committee results in a stronger doctoral program than otherwise would be the case. Such a policy is commensurate with the objectives of the program and enables the advisory committee to work closely with the candidate in building an effective program which meets his/her professional goals and objectives.

The special education faculty manage over \$5 million in external grant awards that support research, teacher education, and professional development. Collaboration with inter- and intra-university units, area schools, and other educational agencies helps maintain the quality of the program.

Financial Aid

Students in need of financial assistance during their graduate studies at the University of Georgia have three possible avenues for funding from the academic institution.

Assistantships

The majority of financial aid is provided in the form of graduate assistantships, which carry a stipend. Such assistantships are awarded annually on a competitive basis to qualified graduate students requiring part-time teaching, research, or other academic duties defined by the department, and are awarded on a one-third basis or higher. Assistantships also require the individual to be enrolled as a full-time student with a course load of at least 12 credit hours in the fall and spring and 9 graduate credit hours in the summer. Assistantships can be awarded either as a [Graduate School Assistantship](#) or a [COE/Departmental Assistantship](#).

****Federal Projects**—Students may be eligible for financial support on grants or contracts awarded to faculty to carry out specific projects in their area of expertise. These awards typically are in the form of a Graduate Assistantship awarded through the department.*

Scholarships and Fellowships

The second avenue for potential funding includes scholarships and fellowships. Such awards are available to students majoring in specific areas of study. These awards may be based on academic achievement, teaching, and/or financial need. [Scholarships and fellowships](#) originate as sources both internal to the University and external from private and government sponsorships.

Awards

The third avenue of potential funding is that of awards which emphasize specific areas of study, recognize outstanding research, and acknowledge quality students already in a program.

The following [awards](#) are managed through the Graduate School.

- Excellence in Research by Graduate Students
- Excellence in Teaching by Graduate Students
- Diversity Awards
- Outstanding Mentoring Award

Student Loans

The student may individually apply for Government and Private Student Loans to fund their graduate studies. More information regarding this option may be found at the University of Georgia's [Office of Student Financial Aid](#).

Program of Study

A preliminary program of study, developed by the major professor and the doctoral student and approved by a majority of the advisory committee, will be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by the end of the student's first year of residence. The program of study should consist of 16 or more hours of 8000- and 9000-level courses in addition to research, dissertation writing, and directed study hours.

A final program of study will be submitted to the Graduate School by the time the notification of the preliminary oral comprehensive examination is given. This program of study must be submitted on the proper form for approval by the advisory committee, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Dean of the Graduate School. The final program of study must show all graduate courses relevant to the doctoral program and not just courses satisfying the minimum degree requirement. Courses from the master's degree and courses taken at other universities should be listed in the "Relevant Master's or Other Graduate Degree Courses" section of the program of study form.

Graduate School Policies

The University of Georgia Graduate School has a number of policies and regulations to which all students must subscribe. Students are responsible for acquainting themselves with and following these policies throughout their tenure in the doctoral program.

Enrollment Policy

Graduate students must register for a minimum of 3 hours of credit during any semester in which they use University facilities and/or staff time. A student who holds an assistantship must register for a minimum of 12 hours of graduate credit fall and spring semesters and 9 hours of graduate credit during the summer semester.

I. Minimum Enrollment. All enrolled students pursuing graduate degrees at the University of Georgia must maintain continuous enrollment from matriculation until completion of all degree requirements. Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for a minimum of three (3) credits in at least two semesters per academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) until the degree is attained or status as a degree-seeking graduate student is terminated. Doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy will be allowed to register at a rate equivalent to the prevailing in-

state tuition rate. Doctoral students who are admitted to candidacy will automatically be granted the out-of-state tuition waiver by Graduate School staff, if they do not have an assistantship waiver. The waiver will be effective the semester following the semester in which the student is admitted to candidacy (must be admitted prior to the last day of classes).

II. Leave of Absence. A leave of absence provides a mechanism for students experiencing unusual circumstance to be exempt temporarily from the graduate enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the program's Graduate Coordinator and the dean of Graduate School. A leave of absence will be granted only for good cause such as serious medical and health-related issues, major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, child care, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study.

An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of three credits for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted. During a leave of absence, students may not use UGA facilities, resources, or services designed or intended only for enrolled students; receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, or financial aid from the university; or take any UGA courses related to their program of study. An approved leave of absence for any reason other than pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, or military duty does not stop the clock: time on leave counts toward any UGA, Graduate School, or program time limits pertaining to the degree being sought.

An approved leave of absence for pregnancy, childbirth, adoption of a child under the age of six, or military duty will not count toward time limits related to expiration of courses or candidacy governing a student's graduate degree. Both the duration of leave and extension(s) of time are subject to the overall limits of the prevailing Leave of Absence policy.

III. Change in Grades. A grade in a course recorded by the Registrar cannot be changed except in the following circumstances:

1. A symbol of I not removed after three semesters becomes an F. Once a grade of Incomplete (I) converts to an F, it remains an F.
2. A symbol of ER not removed after one semester becomes a grade of WF.
3. Any grade will be changed upon a written statement by the instructor that the grade was a factual error. All grade changes are subject to approval by the instructor's department head and the dean of the Graduate School.
4. No grade change can take place in any course after three semesters from the original issuance of the grade.

IV. Name and Address Changes. The name carried on the permanent academic record is the name given on the application for admission and should be the complete legal name. The name will be changed by the Registrar upon request to reflect legal name changes. Changes in a current or permanent address can be made in the Athena system until the student's graduation semester. If the Athena system will not accept an address change, the student must notify the Office of the Registrar to make the change.

V. Time Limit. All requirements for the degree, except the dissertation and final oral examination, must be completed within a period of six years. This time requirement dates from the first registration for graduate courses on a student's program of study. A candidate

for a doctoral degree who fails to complete all degree requirements within five years after passing the comprehensive examination, and being admitted to candidacy, will be required to take the comprehensive examinations again and be admitted to candidacy a second time.

Departmental Requirements

Residence

The CSSE Graduate faculty encourage students to enroll full-time (9 hours) for two consecutive semesters within their first two years in the program. However, doctoral students must maintain minimum enrollment (3 hours) during fall and spring semesters (breaking only for summer semester, if desired) until the 30-hour residency requirement has been met. Undergraduate courses taken either to fulfill research skill requirements or to remove deficiencies may not be calculated in the 30 consecutive hours of resident credit. Once residency is completed, all graduate students must remain in compliance with the graduate enrollment policy (see above). Any time a student feels that there are extenuating circumstances that may prevent the student from staying in compliance with the graduate enrollment policy, a leave of absence form is available on the graduate school website.

Advisory Committee

Within 3 semesters of study, a student pursuing a doctoral degree shall form an advisory committee consisting of four members and meet the following criteria: (1) three members must be graduate faculty; (2) three members must be from the CSSE department; and (3) the fourth member may or may not be from the CSSE department. Final approval of the committee composition rests with the Dean of the Graduate School. The advisory committee, in consultation with the student, is charged with planning the student's program of study, arranging the preliminary written and oral examinations, approving a topic for the dissertation, and evaluating the dissertation presentation and oral defense. The committee will advise the student of the human subjects review process and other program, departmental, and University requirements.

Doctoral Advisor

Applicants to the doctoral program are encouraged to identify a potential faculty advisor (also known as the major professor) during the admission process. Upon admission, an initial temporary advisor will be assigned to work with a student for the first year in the program if no other advisor has been identified. The student and the temporary advisor will work together during the first year to identify an appropriate major professor. When students complete their first Annual Progress Report, they are to identify a major professor who has agreed to serve in this capacity. If no appropriate major professor has been identified by that time, students will be encouraged to reconsider the choice of this department for doctoral study. Doctoral students may change advisors at any point prior to the start of their dissertation research with the knowledge and consent of the old and the new advisor. No faculty member is required to serve as the major professor for any student.

Annual Evaluation by Student

Students are required to submit an Annual Degree Progress Report to graduate faculty *each* spring semester. The purpose of the report is to provide a detailed description with which to

monitor annual degree progress. It is also designed to allow the student to self-monitor degree progress and to assist in planning for degree completion.

1. The *Annual Degree Progress Report* form will be sent to students to complete (see Appendix A) prior to the annual review by graduate faculty.
2. The student's major professor must sign the report before it is submitted to graduate faculty.

Annual Evaluation by Faculty

The graduate faculty will evaluate each doctoral student every spring semester. Based on a student's progress in the program, the graduate faculty will then make one of three recommendations: (a) student may continue in the program; (b) remedial assignments must be successfully completed by the student before the student may continue in the program; or (c) student should withdraw from the program. The evaluation and recommendation will be transmitted in writing to the student by the student's major professor and the Graduate Coordinator. The Annual Evaluation by faculty is also an opportunity for faculty to acknowledge excellence in student performance and reinforce a student's progress toward degree completion.

Grades and Progress in the Program

Doctoral students must earn a grade of B- or higher in all special education or communication sciences and disorders Doctoral Core courses and three core research courses. Students who earn less than a B- will be allowed to repeat the course one time. In the event they do not achieve a grade of B- or higher during the second enrollment, they may petition the graduate faculty. Graduate faculty may, after consultation with the instructor of the class, recommend that the student be terminated from the doctoral program or recommend an alternative means of demonstrating mastery of the content taught in the course in question.

Products

Students are required to successfully complete the following products prior to admission to candidacy: (1) literature review, (2) grant proposal, (3) pre-dissertation study, (4) conference presentation, and (5) article submitted for publication. Products will be completed in consultation with the student's major professor and advisory committee (see Appendix A).

Pre-Dissertation Study. As one of the five products outlined above, doctoral students must conduct and complete a pre-dissertation study prior to admission to candidacy. The study is based upon the student's area of interest and may be a preliminary (pilot) research investigation for the dissertation. The student and his/her major professor and advisory committee will work together to determine the research design to be used. The pre-dissertation study is often conducted in the third or fourth semester of the doctoral program. Students should design the study with publication in mind.

Preliminary Comprehensive Examinations

The preliminary evaluation serves as an early checkpoint for doctoral students and their potential committee. It helps the student and committee determine if the student is making adequate progress toward the general professional skills and abilities that are required for satisfactory completion of a doctoral degree and for later success in higher education or

research settings. In particular, the preliminary evaluation allows doctoral students to demonstrate their ability to (a) locate literature related to a topic other than their primary area of focus; (b) apply basic principles of science, the scientific method, or critical appraisal to analyze that literature; (c) compose a professional technical paper evaluating and synthesizing that literature; and (d) orally present that synthesis to a professional community and respond to questions related to that topic.

Students will complete the preliminary evaluation during the semester in which they will complete the 30th credit hour of their doctoral degree program. The student's doctoral committee chair/advisor will chair the preliminary evaluation committee, which will also include two other randomly selected graduate faculty members from the CSSE department.

I. Objectives. Students will:

- (a) Prepare a written professional synthesis on a contemporary issue in their broad field of study. The paper should be of a quality that would be suitable as an introduction to a manuscript, book chapter, or grant application.
- (b) Orally summarize the synthesis and respond appropriately to questions on the topic asked by their committee.

II. Task. The task has two primary products, a written paper and a professional presentation. The paper must be completed within 72 hours of the student receiving his/her question. The presentation must be completed within 7 days of submission of the written paper. The student has the responsibility of scheduling the paper and defense and coordinating this with the committee. Once scheduled for preliminary evaluations, the student's committee will confer and create a question for the student to address. The question will be (a) relevant to the general course of the student's study, but (b) not directly in the student's area of primary interest. For example, a student studying autism and behavior analysis might be asked by his/her committee to "Summarize the research on reading comprehension. In the paper, identify common misconceptions and specific evidence-based practices for supporting students' comprehension." Or a student studying aphasia might be asked to "Summarize the evidence-based practices for dysphagia treatment, including the role of electrical stimulation." The question should be such that a student with doctoral-level skills in searching the literature could gather relevant source documentation and synthesize that documentation within 72 hours.

- (a) **Paper.** The paper will be no more than 10 pages excluding references, tables, and figures. The paper should be written based on current APA formatting and style guidelines. The paper should be submitted to the committee within 72 hours of the topic being assigned.
- (b) **Presentation.** The professional presentation is a very brief summary (less than 10 minutes) of the paper that the student delivers without other presentation supports (i.e., no power point), although notes are permitted. The student presents this summary orally to his or her committee and then responds to questions about the paper and topic area. The entire presentation and defense should last no more than 30 minutes including committee questions. The presentation should occur within 7 days of the paper submission.

III. Evaluation. The preliminary evaluation is designed to help students and faculty decide if

continued investment in doctoral training is warranted. The two components of the evaluation (the paper, and the presentation/discussion) are voted on independently by each member of the committee as passed or not passed. Both the paper and the presentation/discussion must be scored as passed by a minimum of 2 committee members for the student to continue in the program without additional consequences.

If either component is failed (i.e., is scored as not passing by 2 or 3 committee members) or if both components are failed, the student will be allowed to continue as a doctoral student but only with the proviso that he or she will be required to register for 3 additional credit hours of coursework focused on the area of professional behavior that requires development. These needs may include writing, presenting, research design and appraisal, or other skills identified by the committee. The student may be recommended to take a course like GRSC 8200: Communicating Research and Scholarship, LLED/QUAL 8750: Qualitative Research Writing Workshop, or EADU 9602: Writing for Academic Publication. In the case where a course that is less than 3 credit hours is relevant to the student's needs, the student will complete other activities or coursework to total at least 3 credit hours of professional development. The advisement of the additional coursework is the responsibility of the student's committee chair. At the conclusion of that semester, the student has one more opportunity to pass the preliminary exam. Failing to do so again would result in a faculty recommendation that the student exit the program once completing requirements for an Ed.S. degree.

IV. The standard. To pass the written portion, the student's paper must (a) completely address the question provided by the committee; (b) provide relevant citations to support evidence and claims made in the paper; and (c) be professionally composed. Meeting this standard is determined by the professional judgment of the committee and can be viewed as parallel to peer review of a manuscript submitted to a journal. To pass the oral portion, the student's presentation must (a) succinctly summarize the paper; and (b) be as fluid and professional as one would expect at a conference presentation. Meeting this standard is determined by the professional judgment of the committee.

Written and Oral Comprehensive Examinations

Comprehensive examinations, including both written and oral examinations, are required by the Graduate School of the University of Georgia for all students in all doctoral programs. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Graduate School's policies, procedures, and deadlines](#) for comprehensive examinations. The department-level policies, procedures, deadlines, and timelines in this document are intended to amplify, but not replace, the Graduate School's requirements.

I. Definitions. "Comprehensive examinations" refers to the required combination of written and oral examinations. Both parts are required before a student may advance to candidacy for the Ph.D. "Major professor" refers to the faculty member who might also be known as the student's primary advisor, research mentor, or dissertation committee chair. "The committee" refers to the group of faculty members who might also be known as the student's advisory committee, faculty committee, or dissertation committee. This committee is charged by the Graduate School with administering and evaluating the student's comprehensive examinations.

II. General Information and Basic Format. The goal of the written comprehensive examinations is to allow the student to demonstrate doctoral-level mastery of the knowledge and procedures that constitute the student's specific areas of study and expertise, as well as to

demonstrate doctoral-level mastery of the necessary supporting knowledge and procedures from related fields. To address this goal, questions for the written examinations are developed for each student individually.

Written comprehensive examinations will include three questions, all of a “take home” format, administered according to the procedures and timelines described in the remainder of this document. All questions will be provided to the student at the beginning of one 3-week writing period scheduled by the student. All answers will be due at the end of the one 3-week writing period.

As required by the Graduate School, the oral comprehensive examination must be “an inclusive examination within the student’s field of study.” To address this goal, the departmental faculty have created a list of possible questions for oral comprehensive examinations that all students earning any Ph.D. in the CSSE department should be prepared to address. This list is provided in the Appendix, and students will have access to it throughout their doctoral programs.

A tentative date for the students’ oral comprehensive examinations may be selected when the student’s 3-week writing period is selected, but oral comprehensive examinations are not definitively scheduled until after written comprehensive examinations have been passed. The Department of Communication Sciences and Special Education requires that the written comprehensive examinations have been passed before the oral comprehensive examinations are conducted.

Portions of what students write as part of written comprehensive examinations, or discuss as part of the oral examination, will of necessity be related to the student’s dissertation research, but the comprehensive examinations are separate from the preparation, presentation, and defense of a dissertation prospectus or dissertation proposal.

III. Procedures, Timelines, and Responsibilities. The following activities will be completed in this sequence.

1. *Scheduling of Comprehensive Examinations.* Comprehensive examinations are organized and administered individually for each student by the student’s faculty committee. Comprehensive examinations are typically scheduled and administered as students near completion of their scheduled coursework, mentored teaching, and mentored research experiences. Thus, comprehensive examinations tend to occur after approximately 2-3 years of doctoral study, or as students approach the point in their doctoral programs when they have completed most of the required products except the dissertation.

It is the student’s responsibility to discuss the scheduling of comprehensive examinations with the major professor. The student and the major professor should agree on the start date and the end date of one 3-week writing period for the written comprehensive examinations. This agreement must occur not less than 6 working weeks before the intended start date. A preliminary date for the oral examinations, which must be not less than 2 weeks after the due date for the written answers, may also be selected at this time by agreement among the student and all committee members, but the intended date for oral examinations will be considered preliminary and subject to change until the written examinations have been passed. Students should consider the potential need for the Revisions phase (see Sections 5-7, below) if they are attempting the preliminary scheduling of potential oral examinations.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS. Students who have received accommodations during their doctoral program because of their needs in acquiring information or in demonstrating their knowledge should discuss their needs with respect to comprehensive examinations with their major professor at the same time as they discuss scheduling these exams. The major professor will assist the student in developing reasonable expectations or modifications of the procedures described below, with the assistance of a counselor from the UGA Disability Resource Center if needed.

ANNOUNCING THE ORAL EXAMINATIONS. Departments are required to inform the Graduate School of the intended time and place of oral comprehensive examinations at least 2 weeks before the examination. If a preliminary or intended date for the oral examinations has been agreed upon between the student and the major professor, the student is responsible for informing the department's Graduate Coordinator and the department's Graduate Coordinator's Assistant, by email, about those dates. If the preliminarily scheduled oral comprehensive date is later changed, the student is also responsible for communicating this change to the Graduate Coordinator and to the Graduate Coordinator's Assistant.

2. Development of the Written Comprehensive Examination Questions. After the student's 3-week writing period has been scheduled, the major professor will coordinate with the other members of the student's committee to develop a set of three questions that meet the following requirements.

- Comprehensive examinations include three "take home" questions.
- All questions are designed by the committee, working together as a group.
- As a set, the questions will be designed such that the student will be required to complete a range of different scholarly activities, including several of the following:
 - provide details from within the specific areas of scholarship, expertise, or practice that constitute the specialty areas at the core of the student's own Ph.D. program, with supporting evidence from the research literature;
 - to address historic or current themes, larger issues, or connections between and among relevant areas of scholarship, expertise, practice, theory, ethics, or methods; and/or
 - analyze, synthesize, evaluate, or apply data, research methodology, or other sources of information or means of developing information, in ways that require the student to demonstrate both depth and breadth of knowledge.
- Individually and as a set, the questions will be designed by the committee such that appropriate answers can be prepared within the allowed 3-week timeframe.
- The default length for each answer is assumed to be 15 typed, double-spaced pages of text, plus any necessary tables or other material, plus a reference list. The committee may choose to set shorter or longer expectations as to the length of any answer, as long as the total remains at approximately 40-50 pages of text.

3. Providing the Written Comprehensive Examination Questions. On the agreed start date for the student's 3-week writing period, the major professor will provide the student with all three of the questions developed by the committee, in writing, and will restate in writing precisely when the answers must be returned.

4. Preparing Answers for the Written Comprehensive Examination Questions. The student will prepare a written answer for each of the three questions, adhering to all of the following expectations.

- Comprehensive examinations are individual examinations. Students are to work alone on their questions. Students may refer to any written materials but may not communicate with any other person, orally or in writing, about the questions or about their answers.
- Answers should be prepared as written papers following current APA manuscript style.
- Unless otherwise specified within an individual question, each answer should be approximately 15 pages of typed, double-spaced text, plus (i.e., not including) tables, figures, and references.
- The due date for this exam is fixed and will not be extended. If at any point while a student is working on the questions it becomes apparent for any reason, either personal or professional, that the student will not be able to prepare complete written answers to all three questions by the assigned due date, the student should inform the major professor of that fact and stop working on the exam. In this circumstance, the written comprehensive examinations will be rescheduled for not less than 2 months later, and new questions will be developed. Partial answers or answers to fewer than three questions will not be accepted.

5. Evaluating the Written Comprehensive Examinations. Within 2 weeks after the answers are received, all committee members will read and evaluate all three answers independently. Each committee member will rate each answer separately either as “Acceptable” or as “Revisions Suggested.” Committee members will communicate their ratings of each answer to the major professor. After all committee members’ ratings have been received, the major professor will communicate all ratings to the entire committee. Each answer is then scored using all committee members’ ratings and according to the following system.

- If all committee members rated the answer as “Acceptable,” that answer is considered passed. The student is done with that question.
- If the major professor rated the answer as “Revisions Suggested,” that answer is considered in need of revision, regardless of the other committee members’ ratings.
- If any two or more committee members rated the answer as “Revisions Suggested,” that answer is considered in need of revision, regardless of the major professor’s rating.

If all questions are passed, then all committee members have rated all answers as “Acceptable,” and the assumption is made that all committee members are prepared to vote that the written examinations have been passed, as required by the Graduate School. In this case, the student has passed the written comprehensive examinations and will move to the oral examinations phase (Sections 8-10, below). If any one or more questions are scored according to the above system as needing revisions, the student will move to the Revisions phase (Sections 6-7, below).

6. Revisions Phase. During the revisions phase, the student will have one opportunity to revise each answer that was not passed. If the student requires a revisions phase, any

preliminarily scheduled date for the oral examinations may need to be changed. The student is responsible for making this change, coordinating a new date with all committee members, and communicating the change to the Graduate Coordinator and to the Graduate Coordinator's Assistant.

- Students will have one week per answer for the revisions phase, up to a total of 3 weeks to rewrite responses if all three questions require revisions.
- The revisions phase will require the student to prepare revised answers to the original questions, not address new or different questions. The student will be provided with written comments, suggestions, or requirements for revision from at least two members of the committee for each answer that is subject to revision. These comments need not be detailed or extensive; that is, the committee should provide the student with some feedback about the first answer, but the responsibility for structuring and producing an improved answer lies with the student. All committee members will have access to all comments, suggestions, or requirements provided to the student.
- All questions requiring revision will be provided to the student in writing at the same time, with one due date for all required revisions.
- All relevant expectations from the first 3-week writing period will continue to be in effect, including that written comprehensive examinations are to be completed independently by the student.

7. Evaluating the Revised Written Comprehensive Examinations. Within 2 weeks after the revised answers are received, each committee member will read all of the revised answers and will communicate to the major professor one judgment for the written comprehensive examinations, either "pass" or "fail." The Graduate School requires that not more than one committee member vote "fail" for the written comprehensive examinations to be considered passed, and the department requires that the written comprehensive examinations must be passed before the student can proceed to the oral comprehensive examinations.

- If no more than one committee member votes "fail" for the written comprehensive examinations after the revised answers have been reviewed, the student has passed the written examinations and will proceed to the oral comprehensive examinations.
- If more than one committee member votes "fail" after the revised answers have been reviewed, the student has not passed the written comprehensive examinations. The student will not proceed to the oral examinations, will be considered to have failed comprehensive examinations as a whole, and will be advised to discontinue the Ph.D. program. The major professor will report the negative outcome of the examinations to the student in writing. The major professor will also inform the Graduate Coordinator that the written examinations were not passed, that comprehensive examinations as a whole were therefore not passed, and that any preliminarily scheduled oral examinations are therefore canceled.

8. Scheduling the Oral Comprehensive Examinations. After the written comprehensive examinations have been passed, if a preliminarily scheduled date for the oral comprehensive examinations had been established, the student will confirm that date with the committee and with the Graduate Coordinator. If no preliminary date had been established, the

student will now work with the major professor, the other committee members, and the Graduate Coordinator to identify and schedule a date for the oral comprehensive examinations. The major professor will also communicate with the Graduate Coordinator to ensure that the oral comprehensive examinations have been appropriately announced to the Graduate School and to acquire the required reporting form from the Graduate School.

9. Conducting the Oral Comprehensive Examinations. Graduate School policy requires all committee members to be present at the same time for oral comprehensive examinations (videoconferencing or teleconferencing arrangements are acceptable). Thus, oral comprehensive examinations are group meetings, including at least the student and all committee members. By university policy, oral comprehensive examinations are open to all members of the University of Georgia faculty, and all University of Georgia faculty members may ask questions of the student. Other guests invited by the student may attend at the discretion of the major professor. Oral examinations will typically be scheduled for 2 hours. Oral examinations will be structured such that the major professor and the other members of the committee ask the student questions that begin with the list of possible questions provided in the Appendix. This list will have been available to the student well before the oral examination itself. Any faculty member may ask any follow-up questions or any questions about related topics that emerge based on the student's answers. The major professor is responsible for leading the meeting, ensuring that all members of the committee have the opportunity to ask questions, ensuring that any other University of Georgia faculty members have the opportunity to ask questions, and ensuring that meetings remain focused on allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge. Depending upon the quality of the answers, engagement of the student in generating faculty discussion, nature of the connections across topics, etc., the number of questions students will respond to during the oral comprehensive examinations will vary.

10. Scoring the Oral Comprehensive Examinations. At the end of the oral comprehensive examinations, the student and any visitors will be asked to leave the room, and the committee will discuss the student's overall performance. Each committee member will then judge the student's performance on the oral comprehensive examinations to be either "pass" or "fail," as required by the Graduate School. These judgments are recorded on the required reporting form provided by the Graduate School. Graduate School policies require the student's performance on the oral comprehensive examinations to be judged as passing by all committee members, or by all but one committee member, for the student to be considered to have passed the comprehensive examinations as a whole.

- If no more than one committee member votes "fail" for the oral comprehensive examinations, the student has passed both written and oral comprehensive examinations and has therefore passed the required comprehensive examinations. This information will be communicated to the student verbally immediately after the committee's discussion.
- If more than one committee member votes "fail" for the oral comprehensive examinations, the student has not passed the oral examinations and therefore has not passed the required comprehensive examinations. This information will be communicated to the student verbally immediately after the committee's discussion.
- Because the primary questions are available to students prior to their oral examinations,

and because oral examinations include by design multiple opportunities for the faculty to request further information or for students to attempt to convey their knowledge, there are no provisions for repeated oral comprehensive examinations or for re-attempting oral comprehensive examinations. A student who fails oral comprehensive examinations (defined as more than one “fail” vote) will be considered to have failed comprehensive examinations as a whole and will be advised to discontinue the Ph.D. program. In addition to the verbal report provided to the student immediately after the committee’s discussion, the major professor will also provide a written statement of the negative outcome of the examinations to the student within one week of the oral examinations. The major professor will also inform the Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate School (through the required reporting form) that the oral examinations were not passed and that comprehensive examinations as a whole were therefore not passed.

Appeals. Students at the University of Georgia have the right to appeal academic decisions. The decision that a student has failed comprehensive examinations would be considered a decision of graduate curriculum requirements and would be appealed first to the department. Policies and procedures are available from the [university](#) and from the [college](#).

Application and Revision History. These procedures were developed during Fall semester 2016 and differ from common practice in the department before that time. For any comprehensive examinations occurring during the 2016-2017 academic year or during Summer semester 2017, faculty committees will work with students to determine specific procedures that are as close as possible to these new procedures but without penalizing students in any way if they had been expecting or preparing for some other system for the comprehensive examinations. Comprehensive examinations scheduled in Fall semester 2017 and later will follow these procedures.

Admission to Candidacy Requirements

The student may be admitted to candidacy when:

1. All prerequisites set as a condition for admission have been satisfactorily completed;
2. Research skill requirements have been met;
3. The final program of study has been approved by the advisory committee, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Dean of the Graduate School;
4. A grade point average of 3.0 (B) has been maintained on all graduate courses taken and on all completed graduate courses on the program of study [no course with a grade below C may be placed on the final program of study];
5. Written and oral comprehensive examinations have been passed and reported to the Graduate School.
6. The advisory committee, including any necessary changes in the membership, is confirmed and all its members have been notified of their appointment;
7. All products have been successfully completed including: literature review, grant proposal, pre-dissertation study, conference presentation, and an article submitted for publication;

8. A prospectus for the dissertation study has been read and approved by the advisory committee; and
9. The residence requirement has been met.

The Application for Admission to Candidacy form must be submitted to the Graduate School as soon as possible following the completion of these requirements (<http://grad.uga.edu/index.php/current-students/forms/>).

Candidacy begins on the date the form is received in the Graduate School. The Graduate Coordinator must notify the Graduate School should there be a reason to delay admission to candidacy as indicated on the comprehensive examination report form. After admission to candidacy, a student must register for a combined minimum of 10 hours of dissertation or other appropriate graduate credit during the completion of the degree program. Students planning to graduate the same semester they enter candidacy must be admitted to candidacy by the published deadline for candidacy during that semester and register for 10 hours. The student must also meet all other deadlines for graduation in that semester. A student must register for a minimum of 3 hours of credit in any semester when using UGA facilities, and/or faculty or staff time.

Dissertation Prospectus and Defense

A dissertation prospectus is a written proposal consisting of research question(s), hypothesis, or a statement of a critical problem, supportive literature review, and methodology for answering the question or studying the problem. The prospectus must be defended in front of the advisory committee. The proposal must be approved by the major professor before distribution to committee members. The committee must receive this proposal at least two weeks before the scheduled oral presentation and defense. The advisory committee must approve the prospectus before a student can be admitted to candidacy.

Obtaining IRB Approval for Research Involving Human Subjects

All research conducted on human subjects must receive approval from the UGA Internal Review Board (IRB) before the research can begin. This often includes secondary data analysis. In some instances an exception is granted from the IRB but the student must fill out the correct forms requesting an exemption. It is imperative that IRB approval is obtained for ethical purposes, but it is also necessary to include this information on the dissertation defense form. The Graduate School will not approve an application for graduation unless the proper IRB approval has been granted and the IRB approval number is included on the final defense form.

Dissertation Approval and Defense

When the major professor is satisfied with the completed dissertation, s/he will certify that it has his/her approval and is ready to be read by the committee. The major professor will then have the student distribute copies of the dissertation to the remaining members of the advisory committee, schedule a final oral defense, and ask the Graduate Coordinator to notify the Graduate School (<http://grad.uga.edu/index.php/current-students/policies-procedures/oral-comps-dissertation-defenses/>). Subsequently, the Graduate School will announce the time and place of the defense of the dissertation to the University community. The committee members will have two weeks to read and evaluate the completed dissertation.

The defense of the dissertation will be chaired by the student's major professor. Three of the

members of the advisory committee must approve the student's dissertation and defense and must certify their approval in writing.

Students must register for a minimum of 10 hours of dissertation and no more than 24 hours of such credit. The number of hours enrolled will depend upon the amount of work required to complete their research. Instructions for typing and preparing the dissertation can be found in the [Student Guide to Preparation and Processing](#). The student should check with the Graduate School during the semester the dissertation is written to assure that the most recent guidebook is being used.

Graduation

Required Forms

Any student wishing to graduate MUST apply for graduation and submit all necessary forms no later than the Friday of the second full week (the first full week for summer) of classes in the semester of the anticipated graduation date. The graduation application, as well as all required forms may be found online at the following website:

Before being admitted to candidacy, students must submit the following forms:

- *Application for Admission to Candidacy*
- *Advisory Committee*
- *Final Program of Study*

After admission to candidacy, during the semester in which the dissertation is completed, students must submit the following forms:

- *Application for Graduation*
- *Dissertation and Final Examination Approval*
- *Electronic Thesis & Dissertation (ETD) Submission Approval*

Late Filing of Graduation Forms

A graduate student who misses a graduation deadline by failing to file the Application for Graduation, Advisory Committee Form, and/or completed Program of Study Form will have the option of paying a single fee of \$50 (check or money order in U.S. dollars) for late processing of all required forms. A completed Late Filing for Graduation Form, all required graduation forms, and the late fee payment must be submitted to the Graduate School Office of Enrolled Student Services within 45 calendar days of the original deadline. After the 45 day late period, no students will be added to the commencement roster for the current semester.

Commencement

Formal commencement exercises are held in May and December. Graduate students graduating in the Summer will be given the opportunity to participate in the December graduate ceremony. Candidates for degrees are urged to participate in graduation exercises, but they are not required to attend.

Detailed information, including ceremony dates, can be found at:

Departmental Appeals Procedures

University of Georgia students have the right to appeal academic decisions. Usually the appeal goes first to the unit responsible for the decision, for example, grades to the faculty members who assigned the grades; department requirements to the department; college or school requirements to the school; university requirements to the Educational Affairs Committee. An unfavorable ruling at one level can be appealed to the successive levels. A faculty decision can be appealed to the department; a department ruling can be appealed to the college in which the instructional unit is located; a college-level ruling can be appealed to the Educational Affairs Committee; the Educational Affairs Committee ruling can be appealed to the President of the University; and, except for grade appeals, the President's ruling can be appealed to the Board of Regents.

Additional details on appeals of academic matters, including special provisions for appeals in academic dishonesty cases, can be obtained from the Office of the Vice President for Instruction.

(a) Grades

Any student, undergraduate or graduate, who believes that he or she received an incorrect or unfair grade due to factual error, improper or unprofessional bias, or evaluation different from the stated course objectives/criteria or other public criteria, may appeal the grade. Grades are appealed within the department and college in which they are earned, not in the department and college in which the student's major resides. Exception: Grade appeals, when a grade of I (Incomplete) has lapsed to a grade of F, must go directly to the UGA Educational Affairs Committee. Please note that all grade appeals must be initiated within one calendar year from the end of the term in which the grade was recorded.

Appeal route:

1. Instructor
2. Department Head*
3. Dean's Office
4. Graduate School
5. UGA Educational Affairs Committee*
6. UGA President
7. Board of Regents

*Prior to review at each of these levels, the faculty member who assigned the student's final grade will receive a copy of the student's letter of appeal and be given the opportunity to provide a response for those reviewing the appeal.

(b) Departmental Curriculum Requirements

Graduate curriculum requirements are available in each student's major department. Although academic advising is required of all students every semester, students are

ultimately responsible for their knowledge of these requirements, their course registration, and their progress toward degrees. However, occasionally it may be appropriate for a department or college to waive one or more of its requirements for students on a case-by-case basis as it sees fit, most often when there are extenuating circumstances. Any student who feels he or she is deserving of a waiver of department or college requirements has the right to appeal.

Appeal route:

1. Department Head
2. Dean's Office
3. Graduate School
4. UGA Educational Affairs Committee
5. UGA President
6. Board of Regents

(c) Other Appeals

The following appeals must go directly to the UGA Educational Affairs Committee:

1. Board of Regents' requirements
2. Learning support
3. Learning disabilities
4. Grade appeals, when grade of I (Incomplete) has lapsed to F
5. Accuracy of student records
6. Posthumous degrees

Additional Policies

Additional UGA policies with which students are expected to be familiar and adhere to:

- (a) Grievance Policy found at http://legal.uga.edu/Grievance_and_Disciplinary_Review_Policy.html
- (b) Academic Honesty Policy found at <http://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>
- (c) Sexual and Discriminatory Harassment policy at <http://eoo.uga.edu/title-ix-sex-discrimination-harassment>
- (d) Responsible Conduct in Research policy found at www.ovpr.uga.edu/docs/policies/research/responsible-conduct
- (e) Probation and Dismissal found at <http://grad.uga.edu/index.php/current-students/policies-procedures/academics/probation-and-dismissal/>

Appendices

Annual Degree Progress Report

Student _____ Major Professor _____

of semesters completed/credit hours completed _____ / _____

Program Requirements	Rating	Comments/Plan of Action
Committee formed	1 2 3	
Program of study/Required Coursework	1 2 3	
Preliminary Comprehensive Examination	1 2 3	
Products		
Literature review	1 2 3	
Grant proposal	1 2 3	
Pre-dissertation study	1 2 3	
Conference presentation	1 2 3	
Article submitted for publication	1 2 3	
Supervision	1 2 3	
College teaching	1 2 3	
Comprehensive exams	1 2 3	
Prospectus	1 2 3	
Dissertation	1 2 3	

1 = Not started

2 = In progress

3 = Completed

Faculty: Overall Evaluation/Recommendations:

Student: Reflections/Short- and Long-Term Goals:

Committee Members:

_____ (Chair)

Possible Questions for Oral Comprehensive Examinations, for Students Seeking to Advance to Candidacy for the Ph.D. in the Department of Communication Sciences and Special Education

Questions to be asked at oral comprehensive examinations will begin with one or more of the following initial questions. Follow-up questions will be asked that will require students to demonstrate both depth and breadth of knowledge in any related areas.

Name two or three of the most influential researchers in your area of expertise. Discuss the context, quality, and impact of their work, with specific examples from specific publications or pieces of research.

Describe the theoretical approaches that have shaped research in your area of expertise. How does the empirical evidence support or refute those theories?

Describe the theoretical approaches that have shaped practice in your area of expertise. How does the empirical evidence support or refute those theories?

What are the professional implications of using non-evidence-based practices when serving clients? Discuss specific examples from your area of expertise.

Describe a research article published within the last 5 years that you anticipate will have a lasting influence on your field. Discuss its methodological quality and its relationship to existing theory, research, and practice.

Describe the codes of ethics that control your work as a professional in your particular subdiscipline. Describe the changes that you expect to see in these codes during your professional lifetime.

Describe the basic state and federal legislation and regulations that influence research and practice in your area of expertise. Describe the changes that you expect to see in these regulations during your professional lifetime.

Describe the basic elements of policy and of the existing organizational structures in education, healthcare, economics, tax law, religion, and/or politics, as these relate to your area of expertise. How are these policies and organizational structures developed, and how will your future research influence them?

Describe the basic tenets of a research methodology that you do not foresee yourself using frequently in your own work. Compare its underlying assumptions to those of a methodology that you do foresee yourself using.

Name three articles, chapters, books, or other scholarly pieces that all entry-level practitioners in your area of expertise should have read and should be able to incorporate into their practice. Describe why you selected these three.

Why did you select the minor area or the supplemental coursework that you selected as part of your Ph.D. program? How does that knowledge complement your primary area of expertise?

What mistakes has your field made in the past? How can your field prevent future mistakes?

What perception does the general public have of your specific area of expertise? What is the basis for their perception? What responsibilities do professionals have with respect to the general public's perceptions?

What is a "disorder" or a "deficit"? Explain the empirical, educational, legal, social, emotional, and other ramifications of these and related labels.

What are the intended general outcomes of an intervention or of an educational or clinical activity or program in your area of expertise and in related areas? How did your field settle on those as desirable outcomes and why?

Graduate Life Links

- Campus Life: <http://www.uga.edu/campuslife/>
- Graduate Student Association: <https://gsa.uga.edu/>
- Multicultural Services and Programs: <https://msp.uga.edu/site>
- LGBT Resource Center: <https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu>
- Campus maps: http://www.camplan.uga.edu/gis_campusmaps.html
- Academic Calendars: <http://www.reg.uga.edu/calendars>
- UGA Transit: <http://www.transit.uga.edu/>
- Athens Transit: <http://www.athenstransit.com/>
- Parking: <http://www.parking.uga.edu/>
- Family and Graduate Housing: <https://housing.uga.edu/family-graduate>
- Meal Plan: <http://www.uga.edu/foodservice/mealplan/index.html>
- Ramsey Student Center – Recreational Sports: <http://www.recsports.uga.edu/>
- Tate Student Center: <http://tate.uga.edu/>
- Miller Learning Center: <http://mlc.uga.edu/>
- Career Center: <http://www.career.uga.edu/>
- Bookstore: <http://www.bkstr.com/georgiastore/home>
- UGA Football: <http://gameday.uga.edu/>
- MyUGA Portal: <https://my.uga.edu/uPortal/render.userLayoutRootNode.uP>
- ATHENA: <https://athena.uga.edu/>
- eLC: <https://uga.view.usg.edu/>
- Computer Support: <http://eits.uga.edu/cts/>
- Bulldawg Bucks: <http://bulldogbucks.uga.edu/>
- University Health Center: <http://www.uhs.uga.edu/>
- Student Health Insurance: <http://www.hr.uga.edu/student-health-insurance>
- Disability Resource Center: <http://drc.uga.edu/>
- Office of International Education: <http://www.issis.uga.edu/>