

LLED Doctoral Program Requirements

Students are responsible for information on the [Graduate School](#) website. See, especially the [Graduate Bulletin](#) and the Graduate School's [Academic Regulations & Procedures for the Doctor of Philosophy \(PhD\)](#).

Students are responsible for filing paperwork required by the Graduate School and the department on time. The Graduate School also publishes [Important Dates & Deadlines](#) and required [Graduate Forms](#) on their website. The Language and Literacy Education department's Student Affairs Professional can also assist with this information and can be reached at lled@uga.edu.

Admission

An applicant may be admitted as a prospective candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree upon certification by the major department that he or she is a person of proper attainment and promise, that appropriate courses may be adequately given, and that student's research can be adequately supported and directed. Such admission must be to an authorized field and must be approved by the Graduate School.

Acceptance of Credit by Transfer

No courses taken at another institution prior to admission to the doctoral degree program at UGA are eligible for transfer. A maximum of nine hours of credit earned after admission to UGA may be transferred (1) if they constitute a logical part of the student's program, (2) are accepted by the major professor, advisory committee, graduate coordinator, and the dean of the Graduate School, (3) have not been used in a degree program at another institution, and (4) fall within the time limit of the degree. No grade below B may be transferred. Transfer credit may not be used to satisfy the residency requirement and may not be used in the 16 hours of 8000- and 9000-level credit on the program of study. Transfer grades are not used in calculating cumulative averages. All requests for transfer credit, with accompanying official transcripts, must be in the Graduate School at least 30 days prior to the time the student plans to graduate.

Residence

Students must enroll for 30 consecutive hours, which may include summer semesters. Full-time enrollment is encouraged by the department but is not required. Fifteen hours of 9000 (Dissertation Research) can count toward the residency. Students who wish to take a leave of absence for more than 2 semesters must contact the Graduate School for approval.

Time Limit

All requirements for the degree, except the dissertation and final oral examination, must be completed within a period of 6 years. This time requirement dates from the first registration for graduate courses on the student's program of study. A candidate for the doctoral degree who fails to complete all degree requirements within 5 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.

Probation and Dismissal

Students may be dismissed at the end of any semester if they have not made sufficient academic progress to warrant continuance of study. See further information at [Academic Regulations and Procedures](#) on the Graduate School website.

Review of Progress Toward the PhD

Each Spring Semester, Language and Literacy Education doctoral students are required to complete the [LLED Timeline and Annual Progress toward Degree Completion for Doctoral Students report](#), email it to their advisors, and meet with their advisors to review their academic progress by April 15.

Advisor and Advisory Committee

Before the end of the first year of residence of a prospective candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree and upon the recommendation of the departmental graduate coordinator, the dean of the Graduate School shall appoint an advisory committee for the student. In order to be admitted to doctoral study, at least one graduate faculty member of the department must agree to serve as the student's advisor, or major professor. The student may request an advisor during the admissions process, and that request will be given due consideration.

Advisory committees must be composed of a minimum of 3 UGA graduate faculty members and be chaired or co-chaired by a graduate faculty member of the Language and Literacy Education Department. Additional voting members may be appointed to the committee, including no more than one non-UGA faculty member, who must hold the terminal degree in their field of study. If there are more than 3 committee members, there must be greater than 50% graduate faculty representation. Co-chairs of a committee count as 1 member, so there must be an additional 3 committee members with a total then of 4 members.

The student may request a change in the composition of the advisory committee when circumstances warrant such a change. To request a change, the student must submit a written letter of petition explaining the reason for the change to the graduate coordinator, the department head, and the advisory committee, who, in consultation, will make a determination on the student's request. Under no circumstances will such a change be approved if the request is based on the student's unwillingness, inability, or failure to meet reasonable expectations of scholarship under the direction of members of the advisory committee. To change the composition of the committee, the student must file the Graduate School's Advisory Committee for Doctoral Candidates form (revised), which must be signed by the Graduate Coordinator.

Program of Study

The degree will be granted in recognition of proficiency in research, breadth and soundness of scholarship, and thorough acquaintance with a specific field of knowledge, not upon completion of any definite amount of work prescribed in advance. Evidence of such attainment must be provided through the presentation of an acceptable dissertation upon completion of independent research and the passing of such written and oral examinations as may be prescribed.

The student must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours in order to be admitted to candidacy. The student, in consultation with the advisory committee, may decide to take additional semester hours. The program of study should consist of 16 or more hours of 8000- and 9000-level courses. The following courses cannot be included in the 16 hours: 9000 (Doctoral Research), 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation), and directed/independent study courses. Fifteen hours of 9000 can count toward the residency.

The student and the advisory committee will determine an area or areas of specialization.

A preliminary program of study developed by the student and the major professor 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 and should consist of 16 or more hours of 8000- and 9000-level courses in addition to research, dissertation writing, and directed study.

A final program of study will be submitted to the Graduate School prior to notification of the comprehensive examination.

Grade Average

To be eligible for graduation, a student must maintain a 3.0 (B) average on the graduate transcript and a 3.0 (B) average on the program of study.

Course Requirements

1. The student must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours in order to be admitted to candidacy. The student, in consultation with the advisory committee, may decide to take additional semester hours. The program of study should consist on 16 or more hours of 8000- and 9000-level courses (e.g. QUAL 8400, ERSH 8610) in addition to research (LLED 9000), dissertation, and directed study.
2. LLED 8000, preferably taken the during the student's first Fall Semester.
3. At least 4 research courses approved by the advisory committee. The University of Georgia is a Research-Extensive University; and the student is expected to engage in a variety of research experiences, including courses, the research apprenticeship described below, and other experiences.

4. A research apprenticeship (LLED 9000, Doctoral Research or another experience). Doctoral students are required to participate in a research apprenticeship in which they work closely with a faculty member in order to gain experience and skills in conducting research. Faculty research mentors can be from inside or outside the department and college. The apprenticeship must consist of a minimum of 1 semester (3 credit hours) of LLED 9000, Doctoral Research or the equivalent. The apprenticeship may involve an on-going faculty project or may be a project initiated by the student and faculty member during the apprenticeship. The apprenticeship could include, for example, writing an IRB or grant proposal, data collection, data analysis (e.g., a qualitative analysis, a statistical analysis), writing a research report, or another project that enhances the student's ability to conduct rigorous educational research.

Cultural Diversity Requirement

Cultural diversity includes but is not limited to gender, educational and socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language, religion, national origin, physical and mental health, and sexual orientation. Graduates of the University of Georgia and the College of Education should acquire an understanding and respect for differences within and across cultures including their own.

For this requirement, students must design, in consultation with the major professor, a *Learning Plan* that furthers their knowledge of cultural diversity issues that apply to language and literacy education and that suits their professional goals and prior experiences. This requirement can be met through curricular and extra-curricular experiences—courses, research, learning projects (e.g., a reflective study of teaching students who are culturally/linguistically diverse, compiling a portfolio that documents understanding of issues related to diversity), study-abroad experiences, lectures, workshops, conferences, community service, and so on. Through these experiences, students should develop a critical awareness of the issues related to diversity in society and professional settings and explore different cultural perspectives that influence the construction of knowledge, practice, and research.

Comprehensive Examination

A student must pass comprehensive written and oral exams administered by the advisory committee and have an approved prospectus/proposal before being admitted to candidacy for the degree.

To pass each examination, written and oral, each member of the advisory committee will cast a written vote of pass or fail on the examination. To pass each examination, the agreement of the advisory committee is achieved with no more than one dissenting vote and no abstentions.

Written Exams

1. The format, content, and scope of the written comprehensive exams will be determined by the advisory committee .
2. The student may choose sit-down or take-home written exams or a combination of each.
3. Students will have up to 20 weeks to complete take-home written exams. The 20-week period begins the day the advisory committee approves the student's questions.
4. *For sit-down exams*, the student will have 3 hours for each of 3 questions that synthesize coursework and readings, usually in the areas of concentration selected early in the program in consultation with the advisory committee. The student may bring to the exam only a list of references; the student may not bring computer files.
5. *For take-home written exams*, the student will write 1-3 papers that synthesize coursework and readings, usually in the areas of concentration selected early in the program in consultation with the advisory committee. The total number of pages for written take-home exams, regardless of the number of questions, should be about 60 pages.
6. The student may discuss written exams with fellow students at any time except during the sit-down session. If writing take-home exams, the student may ask fellow students, but not faculty, for feedback on drafts of papers.
7. Faculty may not provide feedback to students about their written exams until all exams have been completed and submitted.
8. If, after reading a student's written exams and before the oral defense, the advisory committee determines that one or more papers requires revision, the student will be required to revise based on direction from the advisory committee. Students will have 1, and only 1, opportunity to revise. Under extenuating circumstances, a student may apply to the advisory committee for an extension of the revision period. Students who do not revise successfully may not proceed to comprehensive oral exams and will be withdrawn from the PhD program.

Oral Exams

1. Once the written comprehensive exams have been approved by the advisory committee, the student is ready to proceed to the oral comprehensive examination.
2. All members of the student's advisory committee must be present simultaneously for the oral exam.
3. To pass the oral examination, the agreement of the advisory committee is achieved with no more than one dissenting vote and no abstentions. If there is more than one dissenting vote, the student will have 1 more opportunity to pass the oral exam with 1 month to prepare except under extenuating circumstances approved by the advisory committee.
4. The oral exam is open to all members of the faculty and is announced by the Graduate School.

Dissertation Prospectus/Proposal

The major professor and advisory committee guide the student in planning the dissertation. The student shall prepare a dissertation prospectus (proposal). When the major professor certifies that the prospectus is satisfactory, it must be formally considered by the advisory committee in a meeting with the student. This formal consideration may not take the place of the comprehensive oral exam. Approval of the prospectus signifies that the advisory committee believes it proposes a satisfactory research study. Approval requires the agreement of the advisory committee with no more than one dissenting vote as evidenced by their signing the department's Result of Prospectus Hearing form, which, together with the approved prospectus/proposal, is filed with the graduate coordinator.

The student's dissertation prospectus meeting will not precede the written and oral comprehensive exams except under extenuating circumstances approved by the advisory committee.

All members of the student's advisory committee must be present simultaneously for the prospectus presentation.

The specific content and format of the dissertation prospectus/proposal may vary depending on the research methods employed. The prospectus may be drafts of 3 dissertation chapters (e.g., theoretical framework, literature review, methodology), or equivalent information in another format, such as a research grant proposal. Conventionally, a prospectus/proposal is about 20-35 pages long. Regardless of form, the following should be included:

- a. Theoretical framework
- b. Statement of the problem
- c. Research questions
- d. Significance of the problem
- e. A partial literature review (enough to document the need for the project and to establish a theoretical framework)
- f. Thorough discussion of procedures and methods to be employed in the investigation, including at least participant selection, data gathering procedures, data analysis, validity, and so forth
- g. Potential importance, implications, and limitations of the investigation
- h. Anticipated time-table for completing the dissertation project
- i. References

The student should submit the prospectus to the advisory committee at least 2 weeks before the prospectus/proposal meeting.

Students must be admitted to candidacy before registering for LLED 9300, Doctoral Dissertation.

Admission to Candidacy

The student is responsible for initiating an application for admission to candidacy so that it is filed with the dean of the Graduate School at least one full semester before the date of graduation. The application is a certification by the student's major department that the student has demonstrated ability to do acceptable work in the chosen field of study and that:

1. All prerequisites set as a condition to admission have been satisfactorily completed
2. Research skills 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. An average of 3.0 (B) has been maintained on all graduate courses taken and on all completed 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 exams 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. A dissertation prospectus has been approved.
8. The residency requirement has been met

After admission to candidacy, a student must register for a combined total 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 that semester. A student must register for a minimum of 3 hours of credit in any semester when using University facilities and/or faculty or staff time. Once a student has been admitted to candidacy, the department has an ethical responsibility to ensure that appropriate faculty mentorship is provided to the candidate for completion of the degree.

Dissertation Approval and Oral Defense

A student pursuing the PhD must present a dissertation on some subject connected with the major field of study. The dissertation must represent originality in research, independent thinking, scholarly ability, and technical mastery of a field of study. The conclusions must be logical, the literary form acceptable, and the contribution to knowledge must meet publication standards.

Faculty who serve on the advisory committee at the time the dissertation research is undertaken must be faculty members knowledgeable in the areas of the student's research and should be selected irrespective of their departmental affiliation.

The major professor has the primary responsibility for guiding research, but the student should consult all members of the advisory committee to draw upon their expertise in relevant areas.

When the major professor is satisfied with the completed dissertation, he or she will certify that it has his or her approval and is ready to be read by the advisory committee. The major professor will then distribute copies of the dissertation to the remaining members of the advisory committee and schedule a final oral dissertation defense. The graduate coordinator must notify the Graduate School at least 2 weeks prior to the final oral defense. Subsequently, the Graduate School will announce the time and place of the dissertation defense to the University community.

The student and the advisory committee will determine the format of the dissertation. See the [Graduate School](#) website for further University requirements for the dissertation.

Dissertation Feedback Meeting. (Optional, to be determined by the advisory committee) When the advisory committee chair is satisfied with a complete draft of the dissertation, the advisory committee will meet with the student to give substantial feedback before the final oral dissertation defense. The student must give the dissertation to the committee at least 2 weeks before the meeting. After this meeting, the student may spend weeks or months revising the dissertation in preparation for the final oral dissertation defense.

With the advisory committee chair's consent and at least 2 weeks before the scheduled final oral dissertation defense, the student will submit the dissertation to the advisory committee who will read the dissertation in preparation for the final oral dissertation defense.

Written assent of committee members is required before a dissertation can be approved as ready for a final oral defense. No more than 1 dissenting vote may be allowed for the approval of the dissertation. If the advisory committee declines to approve the dissertation as ready for the final defense, the major professor will notify the student and the Graduate School.

The final oral defense of the dissertation is chaired by the student's major professor and attended by all members of the advisory committee simultaneously for the entire examination period. The advisory committee must approve the student's dissertation and oral defense with no more than 1 dissenting vote and must certify their approval in writing. An abstention is not an appropriate vote for the final defense. If there is more than 1 dissenting vote, the student fails the oral defense but may have 1, and only 1, more opportunity to successfully defend the dissertation. The results of the final oral dissertation defense must be reported to the Graduate School at least 2 weeks prior to the graduation date of the current semester.

Format of the oral defense. At the final oral dissertation defense meeting, the student will give an initial 15-20 minute conference-type presentation that will be followed by questions from the advisory committee. The initial presentation is open to all members of the university community. The question-answer session is open only to faculty members unless a special provision is made and agreed upon by all members of the advisory committee.

Submitting the Dissertation

Once the dissertation has been approved by the advisory committee and the oral defense has been passed, the dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School for final approval no later than 2 weeks prior to graduation of the following semester. Dissertations that are not submitted by this deadline must be defended again and approved by the advisory committee before they will be considered by the Graduate School for final approval.

One complete formatted copy of the dissertation must be electronically submitted to the Graduate School for a format check no later than 4 weeks prior to graduation. The Graduate School must receive the Formal Defense Approval form and an electronic submission of the corrected dissertation no later than 2 weeks prior to graduation. This official copy of the dissertation will be electronically submitted by the Graduate School to the main library for archiving.

Application for Graduation

An application for graduation form must be filed with the Graduate School no later than Friday of the second full week (the first full week of summer) of classes in the semester of the anticipated graduation date.