ABOUT US

The Reno Area
Channeling the crystal waters of Lake Tahoe, the Truckee River runs leisurely through downtown Reno. Numerous mountain ranges rise ruggedly from the desert basin, providing stunning views and unmatched sunsets.

The University
- Boasts a fitness facility of more than 108,000 square feet
- Offers affordable, top-tier education
- Houses one of nation’s most technologically advanced libraries
- Provides students the opportunity to work closely with research faculty and professionals

As Nevada’s flagship land-grant institution, the University has been instrumental in the history of the nation’s fastest-growing state. One of the top 150 research universities in the country, the University of Nevada, Reno is fully accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the official accrediting agency of most Western states.

The University of Nevada, Reno was founded in 1874 as the State University of Nevada in Elko, Nevada, about 300 miles northeast of its present-day campus in Reno. The site for the university preparatory school in eastern Nevada (where no state institutions had previously been located) proved to be impractical, as nearly half of the state’s residents lived in the Reno-Carson City area. In 1885, the legislature approved the move of the University from Elko to Reno.

In the last 35 years, the University has met the challenges of leadership in what is now the fastest-growing state in the country, with student enrollment rising to more than 21,000 in fall 2016. Most recently, the university replaced the Jot Travis Student Union with the Joe Crowley Student Union, one of the most transformational buildings ever built on campus. This 167,000-square-foot, "green" environmentally friendly facility signals a shift in campus expansion, offering the campus and community a new
centrally located "front door" to the University from Virginia Street. In 2008, one of the nation’s most technologically advanced libraries, the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, opened next to the Crowley Student Union, further signaling the campus’ move north. In 2016, the new 78,000 square foot William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center opened to provide a central building for all student services and in 2017 the university broke ground for a new arts center. The university’s most recent building addition is the E. L. Wiegand Fitness Center. The new fitness facility is more than 108,000 square feet with three basketball gymnasiuums, areas for weightlifting, cardio training, mind-body training, a fitness staircase, 1/8th mile running track and a multitude of new fitness classes and activities.

The University of Nevada, Reno is an affordable Tier One university. Our students pay 80 percent less than the average Tier One institution, making UNR a best buy amongst Tier One universities. Unlike many public research universities, the University of Nevada, Reno offers its students the chance to get up close and personal with highly credentialed faculty, researchers and professionals. Ph.D. professors regularly teach undergraduate students and invite them to research labs or internships. Graduate students work closely with professors on major research projects while developing their own research skills and projects. UNR Faculty are world renown, respected members of their fields and often bring home research and career achievement awards.

Along with its academic benefits, the University of Nevada, Reno is a beautiful campus located in one of the most picturesque areas of the country. From the 100-year-old, elm tree-lined Jeffersonian quad to the state-of-the-art Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, the campus possesses historic beauty and digital convenience alike. Nestled at the base of the Sierra Nevada, the city of Reno is closer to cities such as Sacramento and San Francisco than Las Vegas. In contrast to Las Vegas, Reno offers its residents an invigorating taste of all four seasons.

Channeling the crystal waters of Lake Tahoe, the Truckee River runs leisurely through downtown Reno. Numerous mountain ranges rise ruggedly from the desert basin, providing stunning views and unmatched sunsets. Located on the border between the Great Basin and the Sierra Nevada, Reno has been dubbed “America’s Adventure Place” for its impressive and diverse geographic offerings. With crystal clear Lake Tahoe 30 minutes to the west, the barren Black Rock Desert to the northeast, and Yosemite a short road trip to the southwest, Reno is a great destination for nature lovers and adrenaline junkies alike.

Reno offers a favorable quality of life that has been recognized by numerous national sources, including Forbes magazine. Reno’s population enjoys an array of cultural activities, including museums, numerous theatre companies, a symphony, ballet and opera. There are several major venues for concerts, sporting events and other live performances, including the Lawlor Events Center on campus and the Reno Events Center, located less than a 10-minute walk from campus. In recent years, Reno has experienced a Bohemian cultural renaissance, with a growing arts community, increasing international flavor and the annual counterculture festival, Burning Man.
INTRODUCTION

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Doctoral Program in the College of Education. If you have not already done so, visit the College website to become familiar with the College, our programs, and our faculty.

The Ph.D. program in Education prepares you at an advanced level to work in the professorial ranks of higher education or assume positions of leadership in schools and agencies. The degree provides rich preparation by exposing you to a wide variety of courses and experiences related to fundamental theories and concepts associated with education, as well as current issues and trends in teaching and learning. Strengths of the program lie in the opportunity for you to be exposed to a variety of courses and to faculty members in the College of Education and the University, while having a defined area of emphasis for your study. The Ph.D. program leads to both a broad and a deep scholarly knowledge of education, with an emphasis on the production of new knowledge within the profession.

This manual will guide you through the policies and procedures related to applying for and earning an advanced degree in education. Another source of information about your doctoral program is the UNR General Catalog available online (http://catalog.unr.edu/). Additional program information may be available in your area of emphasis. Please carefully read these documents as they guide you through the successful completion of your application and program.

The information in this manual is intended to centralize and clarify information found in a variety of sources to facilitate advisement and your success. This document, however, is not a substitute for ongoing meetings with your academic advisor (also known as your committee chair). This relationship is critical to the successful completion of your program.

The College of Education offers one doctoral degree (Ph.D.). Areas of Emphasis are available in the Education Doctoral Program. They are:

- Counseling Education and Supervision
- Information Technology in Education
- Educational Leadership
- Equity and Diversity in Education
- Literacy Studies
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education
- Special Education and Disability Studies
# PROGRAM PHASES AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The doctoral graduate program is characterized by four stages: (1) the application phase; (2) the coursework phase; (3) the examination phase; and (4) the graduation phase.

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<td>Complete course work</td>
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<td>Submit copies of final dissertation (paper or electronic format) to the graduate school</td>
<td>Signed copies of cover sheet (Graduate School web site)</td>
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Please note that you are responsible for all of your paperwork throughout your entire graduate program. Your paperwork in your graduate program is not the responsibility of your academic advisory chair or committee members.
APPLICATION PHASE
Regular Admission Requirements for Doctoral Programs (Ph.D.)

Minimum Admissions Criteria for Regular Doctoral Admission

1. **International Students: TOEFL score of 550** (unless you have a college degree from a U.S. institution)
2. **Undergraduate and Graduate GPA 3.00** (university requirements)
3. Preference for applicants who hold a master’s degree from a regionally accredited institution in an area appropriately related to the chosen emphasis area. High achieving applicants who possess only a Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution will be considered. Emphasis of prior degree area(s) should be appropriately related to the chosen emphasis area.
4. **Graduate Record Exam (GRE).** All applicants must complete the GRE. Scores for Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Analytical Writing are each considered by the review committees. Although high scores are expected in all three areas, particular emphasis is placed on the Analytical Writing subtest.

   Information about the GRE can be obtained from the Student Advisement Center in the College of Education or from [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org). You will need to request that scores be sent to the UNR Graduate School (institution code 4844).

Additional information regarding the admission process:

5. Graduate faculty in the area of emphasis and the doctoral admissions committee must both recommend admission
6. At least one faculty member in the area of emphasis must be willing to serve as temporary chair of the applicant’s committee.
7. The COE recommends, but does not require, that you have at least three years of relevant professional field experience by the time you finish your degree. This may be three years of work experience related to the area of emphasis prior to admission, three years of related work experience while in the doctoral program, or some combination thereof.

Please note that the application process is competitive and not all applicants are accepted.
Provisional Admission for the Doctoral Programs (Ph.D.)

If you do not meet the expectations for full admission to the doctoral program, you may be considered for provisional admission. For such consideration, your potential for success in doctoral study must be evident in your application and at least one faculty member must be willing to serve as your initial advisor. If you are granted provisional admission, you must meet the following requirements to attain full admission status:

- Complete at least 9 credits of course work, prescribed by the student’s committee chair and to include at least one research course.
- Complete the designated 9 credits within one calendar year.
- Earn an overall GPA in these courses of 3.5 with no grade lower than a B. (Note: B- is considered to be lower than a B.)

The student’s initial chair will report the student’s performance on the above criteria at the end of the provisional period. Courses completed during provisional status may be applied toward the doctoral degree with approval of the student’s committee.

Admission Procedures for Doctoral Programs (Ph.D.)

There are two parts to the application process. You must apply to the Graduate School and the College of Education.

Graduate School Application

This application is submitted on-line at http://www.unr.edu/grad/admissions/apply. If you wish to take some course work while awaiting approval for admission to the graduate program, you will want to apply to the Graduate School for admission as a “Graduate Special” student. Graduate Special standing allows you to take up to nine graduate credit hours that may apply to your doctoral program.

Graduate School Application Components:

1. The UNR Graduate School application, which can be completed online at http://www.unr.edu/grad/admissions/apply;
2. A nonrefundable application fee;
3. An official GRE score report sent directly from ETS (which administers the GRE) to the UNR Graduate School. The UNR institution code is 4844. A copy of the official score report for the GRE may be submitted for scores more than 5 years old;
4. Official transcripts from every post-secondary institution that you have attended must be sent directly from each institution. Hand-carried transcripts, even with official seals, will not be accepted. Transcripts must be sent school-to-school.
5. If you are an international student applying from a country where English is not the dominant language, an official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score report sent directly from ETS (which
administers the TOEFL) to the UNR Graduate School. UNR’s institution code is 4844. You do not need to submit a TOEFL score report if you earned an undergraduate or Master’s degree at an accredited university or college in the United States.

**College of Education Application**

In addition to the application for the Graduate School, you must also apply for admission to the College of Education.

**College Doctoral Application Components:**

1. A completed application form (attached to this manual);
2. A signed dispositions form (attached to this manual)
3. A résumé or curriculum vitae emphasizing credentials and experiences relevant to a doctoral program in education - your CV should include:
   a. Contact information - name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address,
   b. All post-secondary school experience - institutions, dates attended, majors, and degrees completed,
   c. Work history relevant to this application - employer, supervisor’s name, supervisor’s contact information, dates employed, job description, and accomplishments,
   d. Other relevant experiences;
4. A Statement of Intent that includes a Philosophy of Education - your statement may include explanations for why you want a doctoral degree, why you want to pursue this particular area of emphasis, and why you want to study at UNR, as well as your personal views about the purpose of education, and the roles of students and teachers;
5. Three letters of recommendation. These letters may be provided electronically through the Graduate School website or may be submitted directly to the college in sealed envelopes. The letters should be from three people who have personal knowledge of your academic, and professional qualifications, as well as your dispositions to the extent that they are relevant to doctoral studies and post-doctoral careers;
6. One sample of scholarly writing. This writing sample should offer evidence that you understand the expectations of scholarly writing in terms of content as well as format.

**Application information should be sent to:**

College of Education Doctoral Program Coordinator
Mail Stop 278
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV 89557-0278

We encourage you to communicate with individual faculty members who share your scholarly interests. The better faculty understand your professional goals and interests, the better the match between you and your faculty mentors. You can find faculty contact information on the [College of Education website](#).

**Doctoral Application Deadlines**

There are specific deadlines for admission to the doctoral program.

- Fall admission deadline is February 1
- Spring admission deadline is November 15
Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of Graduate Assistantships (GAs) are available in the college. Strong priority is given to doctoral students with strong professional experience who can contribute to our teaching mission. You must be fully admitted before beginning any GA work.

Graduate Assistants serve at the will of the College, with decisions to re-hire dependent on faculty evaluations and related factors. There is a limit of 3 years for masters students and 5 years for doctoral students to be on state-funded assistantships (these restrictions do not necessarily apply to grant-funded assistantships).

Graduate Assistant Admission and Selection Process

The GA application deadline is March 1st for the next fall semester. If vacancies occur during the year or for a spring semester, previous applications, as well as new applications, will be reviewed. Therefore, students admitted during fall semesters should file an application early if interested in a position. A College application is available on-line (http://www.unr.edu/education/academics/graduate-assistantships). To be eligible for a graduate assistantship, you must be admitted to a graduate program and cannot be admitted on a provisional basis.

GA Selection and Assignments. Priorities for GA selection include the following:

a) Ability to teach courses and/or supervise in the field or in clinical settings;
b) Preference to continuing students/seniority;
c) Preference to doctoral students; and
d) Other COE priorities/considerations or special skills.

Types of assignments and priorities for GA assignments include:

a) Teaching or supervision in undergraduate or, in some cases, master’s programs;
b) Professors who need accommodations;
c) New/non-tenured professors;
d) Course assistance based on total student FTEs generated by faculty;
e) Other COE priorities/considerations:
   a. editorial assignments;
   b. assignments for administration;
   c. specific needs of instructors related to research or other assignments.
Doctoral Advisement

We want to provide you appropriate supports throughout your time in the doctoral program. We expect that by the time you complete your program, you are capable of being an independent scholar, colleague, and leader in education. The following would be a typical sequence of events related to doctoral student advising:

1. **Temporary Advisor** is assigned by the College of Education Doctoral Committee with input from the Faculty in the Area of Emphasis. This Temporary Advisor is responsible for guiding you through the process of selecting courses and becoming oriented to the program.

2. **Doctoral Advisor**, also known as your **Chair**, is chosen by you. We strongly recommend that you choose your advisor in the first few semesters. In all cases this must be done before coursework is completed, but the completion of degree requirements is made easier if you select your advisor sooner rather than later. Your Chair will guide you in developing the Program of Study. The Chair must be a specialist in the content area of your projected dissertation work; and the Chair may also serve as the methodologist, if qualified (see below for more information regarding a methodologist). As you progress through the program, you may identify faculty who would better serve as your chair or dissertation advisor. It is your right to change chairs in such cases.

3. **Changing Emphasis Area after Admission**. Any student accepted to the Ph.D. who desires to change the emphasis area after acceptance to the original area, is required to submit a letter of request explaining why the change is desired to the College Doctoral Committee. The student will be expected to apply to the new doctoral emphasis area. The faculty in the requested emphasis area must review the request and the student’s file and indicate, if the student is accepted, their willingness to Chair and/or serve on the student’s committee as well as make a recommendation to grant the request or not. Subsequently, the College of Education Doctoral Committee will review the request and emphasis are input to determine if the request should be approved. Any student requesting such a change is cautioned that additional coursework will likely be needed in that the core content of the new emphasis area must be met. After the College of Education Doctoral Committee approves the request to change the emphasis area, the Graduate Director must submit a memo approving the change to the Graduate School.

4. **Advisory/Examining Committee** is a faculty group that will support your graduate education. They also approve your program coursework, comprehensive exam, and dissertation. All Committee members must hold Graduate Faculty Status. The committee must contain a minimum of five members. At least three of those members must serve in your area of emphasis. At least one of the members must be from outside the area of emphasis. This last member serves as the Graduate School Representative.

It is the responsibility of the student’s committee chair to ensure that there is at least one member of the committee who is expert in the type of research the student plans to undertake. It should be noted that a student's committee is often formed before a dissertation topic is identified. The committee make-up, including the chair
of the committee, may be changed at any time in order to provide appropriate expertise and support for the student during the dissertation process.

5. **The Program of Study** (POS) is completed with your advisor and lists the courses you will take in the doctoral program. It must be approved by your Advisory/Examining Committee in your first few semesters. More information about the POS is provided below.

## COURSEWORK PHASE

### Student Responsibilities

Each student is responsible for all university, graduate school and graduate program requirements including deadlines, dates for registration, change of registration, fee payment, filing of programs of study, changes in program of study, and application for graduation. Each student is responsible for the maintenance of a campus environment that is conducive to intellectual curiosity, civility and diversity. Each student is responsible for informing the university of changes in address, phone number, enrollment changes which might affect financial aid or assistantship awards, and/or any other circumstances which could affect satisfactory progress towards a degree. Each student is responsible for attending class and completing all assignments in accordance with the expectations established by their instructors and programs of study (UNR general catalog - Student Expectations).

### Program of Study

The program of study (POS) allows you to plan your program coursework. After completion of about 18 graduate credits, meet with your chair and complete a draft of the Program of Study. This form, available online through the Graduate School, lists all of the courses that you will take. The POS must be approved by all members of the Advisory/Examining Committee. The Advisory/Examining Committee is made up of at least five graduate faculty members (see discussion above). With the approval of your advisor, some courses selected for the program of study may be changed as you progress through your program. The Doctoral Graduate Director must also review course changes. It is important to note that required core and research courses can NOT be removed from the program of study. If changes occur, a "Change of Program" form must be filed with the Graduate School prior to applying for graduation. All Graduate School forms are located at [http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms/](http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms/)

### Continuous Enrollment Requirement

Once you are admitted to a graduate program, you must be continuously enrolled in a minimum of 3 graduate credits during both fall and spring semesters (summers excluded) or apply for a leave of absence. Graduate Assistants must be enrolled for a minimum of 6 graduate credits each regular semester. Forms for such a leave may be obtained on-line from the Graduate School site.

### Doctoral Program Residency Requirement

You must complete a two-semester residency sequence consisting of successive semesters, excluding summer, of at least 9 credits each semester.
Grading

All course work for an advanced degree must be completed with a grade of “C” or better. This means a course for which you receive a “C minus” or below cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements. If the course is required, you will have to re-take the course. An overall GPA of 3.0 must be maintained.

S/U Grades: There are limits to the number of Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (previously called Pass/Fail) credits that may be applied to a degree, for doctoral degrees the limit is nine (9). This limit is not applicable to thesis or dissertation credits.

The Mid-Program Review

The mid-program review is to ensure you are making good progress toward completion of your degree. In addition, it seeks to ensure that you have had or will have opportunities to engage in activities that build the skills of a productive, independent scholar and leader. Examples of these opportunities include college teaching, writing for publication, professional presentations, grant writing and evaluation, professional service. The mid-program review is conducted by the Chair of your committee and one other member of your committee near the time you have completed 36 credits of doctoral coursework.

COURSE WORK REQUIREMENTS

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program requires a minimum of 96 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree, which includes 24 credits of dissertation. Of the remaining 72 credits, a maximum of 24 credits (with grades of B or better) may be applied from a master’s degree program or previous post-baccalaureate graduate studies program toward the doctoral degree. These credits must be approved by your chair, the College of Education Doctoral Director of Graduate Study, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Credit for completion of a thesis or special project may not be included.

At least 30 credits of 700-level courses beyond the bachelor’s degree, exclusive of dissertation credits, are required for the Ph.D. degree. As many as 18 credits of 700-level course work may be used from a master’s degree program (University General Catalog, under Graduate School). Degree requirements must be completed within 8 years of admission to the program.

Overall Ph.D. Curriculum Structure -- minimum credits for degree: 96

21 credits: Research
24 credits: Area of emphasis in one of the following:

• Counseling Education and Supervision
• Information Technology in Education
• Educational Leadership
• Equity and Diversity in Education
• Literacy Studies
• Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education
• Special Education and Disability Studies

24 credits: Cognate (comprised of a second area of emphasis, interdisciplinary courses related to the emphasis area, or other courses to support, deepen, or broaden your advanced preparation)

24 credits: Dissertation

Coursework earned as part of a master’s degree can count toward the area of emphasis, as well as toward the research or cognate areas, depending on relevance. Decisions about prior coursework are approved by your chair and your Advisory/Examining Committee.

Possible Foundational Courses
While we do not require Foundational Courses, we offer suggested courses for you to consider:

• EL 712 History of Education
• EL 713 History of Education in the United States
• EL 718 Social Foundations of Education
• EL 719 Philosophy of Education
• EL 722 Crucial Issues in Education
• EL 738 Legal and Ethical Issues in Higher Education
• EL 741 Politics, Policy and Ethics
• CEP 636R Cognitive Learning
• CEP 705 Advanced Human Growth and Development
• CEP 738 Learning Theories in Education
• CEP 794R Issues and Trends in Higher Education Student Development
• SW 610 Human behavior in the social environment I
• SOC 463/663 Social Psychology of Education
• PSY 416/616 Cognitive Psychology
• PSY 419/619 Conditioning and Learning
• PSY 432/632 Human Memory
• PSY 729 Human Memory
• PSY 731-732 Theories of Learning
• HDFS 431/631 A, B, C Adv Studies in Human Dev and Family Studies
• HDFS 700 Graduate Studies in Human Development and Family Studies
• HDFS 720 Theories of Human Development
• HDFS 730 Family Theories
Detailed Ph.D. Curriculum Description

Required Research – 21 credits
Doctoral study requires both depth and breadth of knowledge in research design and statistics to provide scholars with tools of inquiry and analysis. Faculty members of the College of Education believe in the critical importance of educational research and its ability to contribute to the systematic improvement of teaching and learning. Consequently, there is a strong commitment to ensuring the research competence of all students who graduate from our doctoral program. Doctoral program experiences are designed to ensure that the educational professionals who complete our program have the skills needed to locate research that is relevant to their own present and future professional roles and duties, evaluate the research of others, and design, conduct and disseminate the results of their own research studies. The research and statistics courses in the college are designed to contribute to the mastery of these skills. The following required courses are designed to provide a solid foundation for doctoral study and research, as well as for a career in academia or leadership in education. Substitutions of equivalent courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Study, as well as by your Advisory/Examining Committee.

Core Courses
- EDUC 779 Doctoral Seminar in Education (optional, depending on area of emphasis)

Required Research Courses
- EDRS 740 Univariate Statistics *
- EDRS 741 Non-Parametric Statistics in Education
- EDRS 752 Qualitative Research in Education

Research elective (must select from the following with advisor/committee):
- EDRS 743 Multivariate Statistics
- EDRS 745 Advanced Research Design
- EDRS 753 Advanced Qualitative Research in Education
- EDRS 755 Mixed Methods Research in Education
- EDRS 761 Program Development and Evaluation
- EDRS 771 Special Topics in Advanced Educational Measurement and Statistics
- EDRS 785 Survey Research in Education
- EDRS 790 Research Applications in Education

Special topics research course such as Single Subject Design; Mixed Methods Design
Others from outside COE (with approval)

* Lower level courses such as EDRS 640 and EDRS 700 or equivalents are prerequisites
Area of Emphasis – 24 credits

The doctorate in Education must include one of eight broad areas of emphasis. Coursework defining each area is determined by the Advisory/Examining Committee in close consultation with the student. The eight areas of emphasis are described below (in alphabetical order). For more information and referral to faculty in various areas, please contact the Dean’s Office at 775-784-4345.

**Counseling education and supervision.** This emphasis is an excellent fit for individuals who wish to pursue counselor education positions, excelling in research, writing, teaching, service, securing external funding, assuming professional leadership roles in the counseling field, and providing clinical supervision.

**Educational leadership.** This emphasis area focuses on advanced leadership preparation as it applies to K-12 or to higher education settings. The Ph.D. prepares students for leadership or teaching at the college level or for roles in policy analysis and research. The Ed.D option is available in this area of emphasis for practicing professionals in K-12.

**Equity and diversity in education.** This program allows educators and those in related fields to enhance their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work more effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

**Information technology in education** - This emphasis provides a strong theoretical and practical foundation in dynamic instructional design, and prepares students to learn and integrate contemporary technology in a variety of educational and training settings. Research skills will be developed with a solid publication agenda as well.

**Literacy studies.** Literacy instruction, development, learning, and assessment are the core areas of this emphasis.

**Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education.** This emphasis area explores the effective teaching of math and science, as well as applications of various technologies in these fields and their impact on society. Students may focus on math or science education specifically, but will have a broad exposure to the MSTS area.

**Special education and disability studies.** Study in this area emphasizes issues of disability as they apply to education and human service agencies. Students may focus broadly across disability areas and age ranges, or they may focus more narrowly. Courses are available in the categorical areas of learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, autism, intellectual disabilities and severe multiple disabilities, and early childhood special education. Cross-categorical courses are also offered, as well as special topics courses related to key contemporary issues in special education.

Cognate - 24 credits

The cognate is made up of courses that provide depth and/or breadth to a student’s program as approved by the student’s advisory/examining committee. These courses may represent a second area of emphasis as defined above, may be interdisciplinary, or may be made of graduate credits from the master’s degree that represents a related and coherent area of study.
The dissertation is the culminating experience for the doctoral degree. It represents an independent research project that makes a contribution to the field of study.

**EXAMINATION PHASE**

**Comprehensive Examination**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the doctoral Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate independent scholarly knowledge, writing skills, application, analysis, and synthesis.

The comprehensive examination includes written and oral components. The exam is completed near the end of coursework (a minimum of 75% of the student’s required coursework must be completed) and must be completed no later than eight calendar months before graduation. Doctoral students do not enroll in coursework for the comprehensive exam.

**Written Exam**

Students work with their chair to prepare for the written comprehensive exam. They develop 2-4 questions that should include one research methodology question and up to three content and/or theory questions. (For doctoral students in counseling, these will focus on CACREP standards.) The student’s committee reviews the proposed comprehensive exam questions, suggests revisions, and approves the final version.

The total length for the comprehensive exam should be about 75-100 double-spaced pages, including references. Students have four months to complete the comprehensive exam from the time their committee approves the proposed questions until the exam is submitted to the committee chair. (Exception: Doctoral students in counseling will write papers on four questions, each of which will be 12 pages long. These students will have one month to complete the exam.)

Students may not receive any help from others, including their committee chair, in preparing the content of or in writing their comprehensive exam. Receiving help with the comprehensive examination is considered academic dishonesty. Any proposed modifications to the procedures above must be approved by the College of Education Doctoral Committee and will be considered in exceptional circumstances only.

**Oral Comprehensive Exam**

Typically, the student schedules an oral defense of the written exam with the full committee to occur within approximately one month after submitting the exam. The oral portion of the exam is an opportunity for the student to respond to the committee’s questions and for the committee to evaluate the quality of the student’s work.

**Possible Outcomes**

Potential outcomes for the comprehensive exam are as follows:
• **Pass** both written and oral portion and move on to dissertation.
• **Revisions required.** A question or multiple questions are rewritten by the student within one month and reviewed by the committee.
• **Not passed.** The student does not pass the exam but has one opportunity to retake it. If the student does not pass on the second attempt, he or she is dismissed from the program (Graduate School policy).

When the comprehensive exam is successfully completed, the “Application for Admission to Candidacy Comprehensive Examination Report” is submitted to the Graduate School.

**Role of your Advisory/Examining Committee:**

1. Review the student’s questions;
2. Read responses from the examination;
3. Evaluate the examination as Pass or Fail (according to demonstration of doctoral-level knowledge, writing skills, analysis and synthesis); and
4. Administer your Oral Examination.

**Retaking the Comprehensive Exam**

If the student does not pass the written exam on the first attempt, the exam can be retaken only one additional time per Graduate School policy. The committee might require specific remediation activities to be completed prior to the second attempt. On successful completion of the remediation task(s) (if required), the student will be permitted to take the written exam a second time. If the exam is not passed the second time, the student will be dismissed from the program.

If the student does not pass the oral exam on the first attempt, the student may retake the oral exam a second time. If the student does not pass the oral exam on the second attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program.
Comprehensive Exam Process

Student Writes Comps

- Student Passes
  - Yes: Proceed to Oral Comps
    - Yes: Proceed to Dissertation
    - No: May retake Oral Comps
  - No: May retake written exam; remediation tasks might be required
    - Yes: Student Passes
      - Yes: Proceed to Dissertation
      - No: Program Dismissal
    - No: Program Dismissal

- No: Program Dismissal
Dissertation and Oral Defense

Ph.D. candidates complete a minimum of 24 credits of dissertation research by registering for EDUC 799. The 24 credits are typically spread over several semesters. Be sure to talk to your advisor about these credits and the expectations for progress on the dissertation each semester you are registered.

Dissertation Proposal

1. The dissertation proposal is a substantial portion of your dissertation (often the first three chapters) that you submit to your committee for suggestions and approval before beginning any data collection. While developing the proposal, you will also want to prepare your application for approval of your study by the Research Integrity Office’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). Most studies require this approval to ensure the protection of your participants. Information can be found at http://www.unr.edu/research-integrity

2. You will work with your Chair to prepare for a dissertation proposal defense. You should ensure that all committee members receive a copy of the dissertation proposal at least two weeks before the defense.

3. At the proposal defense, the Advisory/Examining Committee may determine that you have earned a pass, pass with revisions supervised by the Chair and other designated committee members, or that they require a new dissertation proposal defense.

4. If you are required to have a second proposal defense the Advisory/Examining Committee determine if you pass, pass with revisions supervised by the Chair and other designated committee members, or fail. If you fail the second proposal defense, you are dismissed from the program.

5. When your dissertation proposal has been approved, you can submit your IRB application. Approval may take considerable time, depending on the nature of your study and the appropriateness of your application. Working directly with personnel in the Research Integrity Office can help this process considerably. Depending on the nature of your study, you may also need approval by one or more school districts or other agencies. Generally, districts require that you go through university IRB approval prior to submitting materials to the district.

6. If you choose to change the Committee Chair at any time after the dissertation proposal was successfully defended, a new proposal defense must be scheduled and completed.

The Dissertation

The dissertation is a significant piece of original research, written to standards of referred publication. A couple of different options for the format of the dissertation are possible and you should work with your Chair in determining which is appropriate for you. Your Chair and Methodologist (and other committee members as appropriate) will guide you through the conducting and writing the final dissertation. No data may be collected without IRB approval, unless your study does not require such approval. Guidelines for the preparation of the dissertation are available from a variety of sources, including:

- The graduate School website offers – THESIS AND DISSERTATION PREPARATION GUIDELINES
- APA manual (most recent edition)
Dissertation Oral Defense (Must adhere to UNR Policies)

1. You will work with the Committee Chair to prepare for an oral dissertation defense. You should ensure that all committee members receive a copy of the dissertation at least two weeks before the defense;
2. According to the UNR catalog all members of the student’s committee must be in attendance for the dissertation defense.
   http://catalog.unr.edu/preview_entity.php?catoid=6&ent_oid=605&hl=%22dissertation%22&returnto=search
3. At the dissertation defense, the Committee may determine that you have earned a pass, passed with revisions supervised by the Chair and other designated committee members, or that they require a new dissertation defense. It is also important to note that the defense is unsuccessful if more than one (1) negative committee vote is cast.
   (http://catalog.unr.edu/preview_entity.php?catoid=6&ent_oid=605&hl=%22dissertation%22&returnto=search)
4. If there is a second dissertation defense the Committee may determine that you have earned a pass, passed with revisions supervised by the Chair and other designated committee members, or that you have not earned a passing result. If you do not earn a passing result at the second proposal defense, you are dismissed from the program.

GRADUATION PHASE

Application for Graduation

Applications for graduation are filed on-line by strict graduate school due-dates established each semester. It is very important for you to know and adhere to this deadline and it is your responsibility to be aware of the time frame for graduation. The Graduate School requires that you must be enrolled in at least three graduate credits during the semester in which you intend to graduate, or in one graduate credit if you graduate in the summer. It is your responsibility to file the appropriate paperwork on time in order to graduate.

Each semester, the Graduate School sets a date for submission of the finalized dissertation. This means the dissertation must be submitted with all recommended changes resulting from the oral defense, must be in the appropriate format, and must be accompanied by the appropriate forms (see Graduate School guidelines). This date is often several weeks prior to graduation. It is incumbent on you to schedule the dissertation defense in a time frame that is consistent with this submission deadline, as well the potential necessity of scheduling a second defense.

Completion of the doctoral degree is posted approximately 3 weeks after the end of the semester of graduation, even if all degree requirements are completed early in that semester. If you need an unofficial letter indicating completion of the degree (e.g., for employment purposes), you may request one from the College of Education Dean’s Office. However, it is important to note that this letter may not be adequate for salary negotiations or other requirements requiring an official transcript.
Application and Checklist for the Doctoral Program in the College of Education

In order to have a total picture of you as an applicant to the doctoral programs in the College of Education, we request that you provide us with a variety of materials. Please complete the form below and submit it along with the items listed on the next page. Your application will not be considered until all items have been received.

Name: _________________________________________________________________________
Mailing Address: _________________________________________________________________
City: ___________________________ State: _________ Zip Code: ____________
Home Phone: ___________________________ Cell Phone: _________________________
Email Address ___________________________________________________________________

**Area of Emphasis** to which you are applying (check one):

☐ Counseling Education & Supervision
☐ Development, Learning, & Technology
☐ Educational Leadership
☐ English Language Learners/Emergent Bilinguals
☐ Equity and Diversity in Education
☐ Literacy Studies
☐ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education
☐ Special Education & Disability Studies

**Faculty member with whom you wish to work, if known:** __________________________

**Grade Point Average** (four-point scale) from your Bachelor’s degree: ______________

**Grade Point Average** (four-point scale) from your Master’s degree: ______________

**GRE Scores:**  Verbal Reasoning _____  Quantitative Reasoning _____  Analytical Writing _____

**Describe any other relevant personal experiences** (service, awards, publications, etc.)
All professional educators are expected to adhere to a professional code of conduct. Any educator pursuing graduate studies serves as a model for others. The faculty of the College of Education has adopted a set of professional behaviors or dispositions that are crucial for doctoral level students. These dispositions apply to the university setting, courses, and supervised experiences. Failure to demonstrate one or more of the dispositions may lead to an individualized plan for improvement and, in extreme cases, could lead to removal from the program. The list of dispositions is not exhaustive. Depending on the situation, there could behaviors that do not appear on the list, but which could be considered in an evaluation of readiness to continue in doctoral study.

### Reflective Practitioner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Ethics.</th>
<th>The candidate adheres to standards of ethical conduct including academic honesty and confidentiality.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration/Collegiality.</td>
<td>The candidate works effectively with colleagues and contributes to a professional collegial atmosphere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Teaching.</td>
<td>The candidate values the education profession. He or she exhibits a positive attitude toward schools, teaching, university students, K-12 students and their families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity.</td>
<td>The candidate responds to frustration and stress appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Demeanor &amp; Responsibility.</td>
<td>The candidate is prompt, is not unnecessarily absent, notifies appropriate individuals when absence is necessary, completes assignments on time, and follows through on commitments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The candidate is poised and professional in his or her demeanor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Feedback.</td>
<td>The candidate is receptive and responsive to professional feedback, incorporating suggestions into practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Reflection.</td>
<td>The candidate reflects on and evaluates his or her own behavior and work. He or she is willing to consider multiple perspectives of his or her own performance. The candidate is willing and able to recognize own difficulties or deficiencies and begin to develop potential solutions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Multicultural and Democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Focus.</th>
<th>The candidate recognizes and respects university and K-12 students as valued and unique individuals.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Diversity.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Multicultural and Democracy**

The candidate values multiple aspects of diversity. He or she respects university students, children and adults of varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, social classes, abilities, political beliefs, and disabilities.

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**Love of Learning & Strong Fund of Knowledge**

- **Initiative.**
  The candidate is independent and goes beyond minimum expectations.

- **Problem Solving.**
  The candidate is an active and effective problem solver.

- **Commitment to Learning.**
  The candidate is curious and interested in learning more about their chosen field and related areas.
  The candidate seeks out and takes advantage of opportunities for professional growth beyond the minimum expectations of what is required in classes.
  The candidate recognizes and assumes responsibility for directing and contributing to his/her own educational development.

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**Research and Scholarship**

- **Ethical Researcher.**
  The candidate understands and adheres to accepted practices regarding acknowledging and referencing other's ideas, writings, and data.
  The candidate understands and adheres to requirements for the protection of human subjects as set forth through the Institutional Review Board.
  The candidate recognizes, appreciates and generates research that contributes to their field of study.

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I have read the dispositions and professional behaviors above and I understand they describe a set of expectations for candidates enrolled in graduate programs in the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Reno. I further understand that if I do not exhibit these behaviors based on the professional judgment of program faculty, I may be asked to leave the program.

Candidate Signature ______________________________________________ Date: _________________
CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS TO PROVIDE TO THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION:

— Application form and a signed Professional Behaviors and Dispositions form (attached)

— A current résumé that outlines educational attainment and all relevant work experience

— A Statement of Intent that includes a Philosophy of Education - your statement may include explanations for why you want a doctoral degree, why you want to pursue this particular area of emphasis, and why you want to study at UNR, as well as your personal views about the purpose of education, and the roles of students and teachers

— Three letters of recommendation. These letters may be provided electronically through the Graduate School website or may be submitted directly to the college in sealed envelopes. The letters should be from three people who have personal knowledge of your academic, and professional qualifications, as well as your dispositions to the extent that they are relevant to doctoral studies and post-doctoral careers

— One sample of scholarly writing. This writing sample should offer evidence that you understand the expectations of scholarly writing in terms of content as well as format.

— Apply online to the University of Nevada, Reno Graduate School and follow requirements for official transcripts and test scores to be provided.

Send information to:

College of Education Doctoral Program Coordinator
Mail Stop 278
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV 89557-0278