



Graduate School of Education
PennGSE

**University of Pennsylvania
Graduate School of Education**

**Graduate Student Handbook
2015-2016**

Contents

OUR VALUES	3
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	5
Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.).....	5
Master of Science (M.S.) Degree: Statistics, Measurement Assessment, and Research Technology	9
Master of Philosophy in Education (M.Phil.Ed.): Policy Research, Evaluation, and Measurement	11
Master of Philosophy in Education (M.Phil.Ed.): Professional Counseling.....	13
Doctor of Education (Ed.D.).....	14
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)	25
ACADEMIC POLICIES	43
CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	43
Equal Opportunity & Harassment Policies	46
Exceptions to Policies	49
GRADING POLICIES	50
Leave of Absence, Withdrawal, and Readmission Policies.....	54
Policy on Secular and Religious Holidays.....	55
Registration Policies & Procedures.....	56
Penn's Ethics & Original Research Handbook for Students	61

OUR VALUES

At Penn GSE, your academic development will be framed by themes that permeate your graduate experience. Student Services offers guidance and support in navigating your educational journey.

An Inclusive Community

As a community of scholars and practitioners, we unite through different [organizations](#) to enact our shared values and responsibilities. We value the uniqueness of people and perspectives, and we celebrate people's differences, talents, and abilities through [international gatherings and cultural celebrations](#). Ultimately, we are bound together by our [community-wide events](#).

- [GSE Student Organizations](#)
- [GSE Events Calendar](#)
- [Greenfield Intercultural Center](#)

Wellbeing

We acknowledge that physical and emotional health are important and affect our ability to engage productively in our work. In addition to the [four fitness centers](#) on campus, Penn also provides [psychological services](#) and [campus health programs](#) such as [massage therapy](#), [weekly meditations](#), and the [Healthy Food Truck initiative](#) for a holistic approach to wellness.

- [Pottruck Health and Fitness Center](#)
- [Counseling & Psychological Services at Penn](#)
- [Sexual Trauma Treatment Outreach and Prevention](#)
- [Campus Health Programs](#)
- [Tips for a Better Night's Sleep](#)
- [Weekly Meditations](#)
- [Healthy Food Truck Initiative](#)
- [Massage Therapy](#)

Leadership

At the [Graduate Student Center](#) and through [GSE Student Government](#), we invest in and contribute to the future of the university and the profession. We strive for professional excellence by establishing and using our best efforts to achieve high expectations.

- [Graduate Student Center - LET's Go Training for Student Organization Leaders](#)
- [GSE Student Government](#)

Integrity

We define integrity as acting according to the values, beliefs and principles we hold; it is how we respond if we are faced with a moral dilemma when no one is watching. It is also being aware of actions that constitute violations of the [Student Codes of Conduct](#) and understanding the role of the [Office of Student Conduct](#) on campus. With the help of our [Academic Integrity Guide](#), we commit to maintaining strong morals by understanding how to collaborate on research and acknowledge our sources responsibly.

- [Academic Integrity Guide for Students](#)
- [Office of Student Conduct](#)
- [Student Codes of Conduct](#)

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Master's of Science in Education degree programs require between 10-13 CU's. Check with your division coordinator or academic advisor for the requirements for your degree program. Your academic advisor will assist in planning an appropriate program of study to meet degree requirements. All students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0.

To earn an M.S.Ed. degree, the student must complete 10-13 course units (Students should consult with the division for the appropriate number of courses required for their specialization) and pass the master's comprehensive examination, thesis or portfolio.

- Courses must be at the 500 level or above
- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better
- One course must be a distribution (course outside of student's division, with a GPA of at least 3.0 for this course)

ADVISOR

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor upon admission. The advisor will help plan the student's program of study, assist in selecting courses, provide academic advising and monitor academic progress. Students should contact their advisors individually in the first semester of the students first year before the drop/request period has concluded. The planned program of study should be developed between the advisor and the student in the first semester of the first year of study. The planned program of study can be revised over time. After this initial meeting, students and advisors are mutually obligated to stay in regular contact, preferably twice a year, but always at the start of the academic year to review progress and consider alterations to the planned program of study. While the advisor will know much about GSE policies, rules do change. Students should always consult the Student Handbook or the Student Records Office for the most current academic policies, procedures and deadlines for completing academic requirements. To request a change in advisor, the student should see the division coordinator for procedures.

DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT

Candidates for the M.S.Ed. degree must demonstrate knowledge of the field of education beyond the area of specialization. This requirement is met by satisfying the distribution requirement. To meet the distribution requirement, students must complete one approved graduate level GSE course outside the student's area of specialization, earning a grade of "B" or better. Students should check with their Division Coordinator for a list of courses approved to fulfill the distribution requirement. Further requirements regarding these courses may be specified by each division.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION (OR PORTFOLIO OR THESIS)

Master's degree candidates must demonstrate thorough knowledge of the field of specialization by passing a comprehensive examination in their area of study. The examination/portfolio/thesis serves an educational and evaluative purpose through which students are expected to review and integrate what they have learned in their coursework and fieldwork. All examinations are administered in accordance with the rules set forth in the Code of Academic Integrity. Comprehensive formats vary. The faculty in each specialization determines the appropriate examination format and is responsible for communicating the guidelines, expectations, rationale and evaluation criteria for examination to students. Students may be asked to do one or more of the following: take a timed, written examination administered at GSE, complete a take-home examination, write a master's thesis, undertake a field project or submit a portfolio. If a sit-down examination is given, it must be at least three hours duration. Students are permitted two opportunities to pass the comprehensive examination. Students who are unsuccessful after two tries will be withdrawn from the degree program. In order to qualify to take the examination, students must first fulfill the following requirements:

- Be formally admitted to a master's degree program in the Graduate School of Education.
- Be registered for the term in which they apply. If coursework has been completed, or student is submitting work for previous Incompletes, student must be registered for Master's Registration (EDUC 990) during the term in which the examination is taken. Enrollment in EDUC 990 is considered full-time status and may affect the student's enrollment in University mandatory health insurance.
- Have completed at least six course units, or be enrolled in at least the sixth course unit of graduate study toward the degree.
- Have a GPA of 3.0 or better.
- Have paid tuition for all previous semesters.
- [Register to take the master's comprehensive examination](#) by completing the form online by the deadline listed in the [GSE academic calendar](#).

There may be additional criteria required to take the comprehensive exams. Check with the division coordinator or faculty advisor.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

GSE does not accept courses from another university to be counted as part of a 10 course unit master's program. Some master's degree programs that require 11 or more CU's may accept 1-2 courses in transfer under the following conditions:

- If the desired course is to be taken after matriculation in a degree program at GSE, the course must be approved by the advisor
- Student must matriculate at least one semester before submitting the transfer of credit form.
- Transfer credit will only be granted if the grade received is a "B" or higher. Grades of
- "Satisfactory" or "Pass" are not transferable.

Fill out and submit the [Application to Transfer Credit](#).

TIME LIMITATION

A maximum of six consecutive years from the date of matriculation in a master's degree program will be allowed for completion of the work for the master's degree, including satisfactory completion of all examinations required. Official leaves of absence will not automatically change this time limit.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The [GSE academic calendar](#) lists the deadlines for completing degree requirements in order to graduate in any academic term. **All degree candidates must [apply to graduate online](#) at the beginning of the term in which they plan to receive the degree.** Failure to apply for graduation by the published deadline will make it impossible to receive the degree at the time desired.

- All coursework, including exam/thesis/portfolio must be complete
- Student must be registered in the term in which they intend to graduate
- Student's bill must be paid in full
- Successfully complete 10-13 CU's,
- Take only courses at or above the 500 level
- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Take one distribution requirement (a course outside the area of specialization) and earn at least a "B"

GSE holds a commencement ceremony each year in May for students who will be receiving their degrees in that term, as well as for those who completed their degrees in the previous year. Additionally, students who will be receiving their degrees in the following August may participate in the May ceremony if they:

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0

AND

- Have completed eight course units of a 10 course unit program, or 9 units of an 11 CU program, or 10 course units of a 12 course unit program

– OR –

- Have passed the comprehensive examination (or thesis or portfolio)

Master of Science (M.S.) Degree: Statistics, Measurement Assessment, and Research Technology

Students typically complete the 8-CU minimum requirement for the M.S. degree in SMART in one academic year of full-time study. Studies leading to this M.S. degree include coursework, a research apprenticeship, and a written general examination in the content of SMART.

The core content of master's level coursework includes statistical methods, measurement, evaluation, research technology, and policy research. A minimum of 8 courses is required for the M.S. degree, 7 of which constitute the SMART core. One elective course is selected in accordance with the student's career goals. The elective course is taken within the Graduate School of Education, but outside the Policy, Management, and Evaluation Division, to satisfy the School's distribution requirement. In addition, Ed. 667 (Introduction to Statistics), or its equivalent, is required prior to degree matriculation, or must be taken during the first term of study as a 9th CU for the M.S. degree. The M.S. degree then will require more than two full terms of course registration since a maximum of 4 CUs per term is permitted.

RESEARCH APPRENTICESHIP

Inasmuch as master's degree students are preparing for careers in empirical research, primarily using quantitative methods, an integral part of the learning experience is completion of an individually tailored research apprenticeship arranged in consultation with the student's advisor. This arrangement will be by mutual agreement of the student, the student's advisor, and perhaps an alternate faculty sponsor. Typically, the student will participate in significant aspects of faculty research in progress. The nature of the research apprenticeship will vary with the student's preparation, the characteristics of the research, and the stage of the research. This experience involves a commitment of 6 hours per week for an academic year. The purpose is to provide the student with practical research experience on an ongoing basis during the course of master's studies. The student may or may not be compensated for services rendered under the research apprenticeship, or might be compensated for part of the time. Performance in the research apprenticeship must be satisfactory, as certified by a student's academic advisor, as a condition for admission to General Examination for the M.S. degree.

RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

Research experience is required of at least one term in duration that includes the preparation of at least one comprehensive scholarly or scientific paper. The research requirement is satisfied in multiple ways by the SMART program. First, the core content of the SMART curriculum is composed of courses of research character, each of which is one term in duration. Second, the apprenticeship experience represents supervised research and is of two terms duration. Third, the policy research review paper required by Education 829 (Policy Research Seminar) represents a comprehensive scholarly paper.

MASTERS GENERAL EXAMINATION

Toward the end of completion of course requirements, masters students are required to pass a general examination in the core content of SMART. Contact the Division Coordinator for examination requirement and procedures.

Master of Philosophy in Education (M.Phil.Ed.): Policy Research, Evaluation, and Measurement

The Master of Philosophy in Education (M. Phil.Ed.), is a 6 CU (minimum) program with a required comprehensive examination and an empirical research project. The M.Phil.Ed. degree is for students who wish to continue their graduate studies after having finished a relevant Master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania. The relevant master's degree for students who wish to pursue the M.Phil.Ed. with a specialization in PREM is the M.S. degree in Statistics, Measurement, Assessment, and Research Technology (SMART) offered by the Graduate Group in Education. Therefore, students admitted for study leading to the M.Phil.Ed. in PREM are expected to complete all course requirements for SMART. Students matriculating for the M.Phil.Ed. degree in PREM from outside the University of Pennsylvania must complete all course requirements for SMART and all program requirements for the M.Phil.Ed.

The 6-CU minimum requirement for this degree (after completion of a relevant conventional masters degree) can be completed in one academic year of full-time study. Graduate study leading to the M.Phil.Ed. degree studies in PREM includes coursework, a research apprenticeship, independent empirical research, and a written comprehensive examination in the content of the degree. Students who have earned Master's degrees at other institutions will be allowed to transfer up to four applicable courses toward the minimum of 14 courses required for the M.Phil.Ed. (i.e., a minimum of 8 courses for the M.S., plus a minimum of 6 additional courses for the M.Phil.Ed.).

COURSEWORK

The core content of coursework includes advanced statistical methods, measurement, research design, and completion of an independent research project. A minimum of 6 courses (after completion of a relevant conventional master's degree²) is required for the M.Phil.Ed. degree, 5 of which constitute the PREM core and 1 of which is an elective. Research Apprenticeship: Inasmuch as M.Phil.Ed. degree students are preparing for careers in empirical research, primarily using quantitative methods, an integral part of the learning experience is the completion of an individually-tailored research apprenticeship arranged in consultation with the student's advisor. This arrangement will be by mutual agreement of the student, the student's advisor, and perhaps an alternate faculty sponsor, as reviewed by the PREM faculty. Typically, the student will participate in significant aspects of faculty research in progress. The nature of the research apprenticeship will vary with the student's preparation and interests, the characteristics of the research, and the stage of the research. This experience involves a commitment of 6 hours per week for an academic year for full-time students (appropriate arrangements will be made for part-time students). The purpose is to provide the student with practical research experience on an ongoing basis during the course of M.Phil.Ed. studies. The student may or may not be compensated for services rendered under the research apprenticeship, or might be compensated for part of the time. Performance in the research apprenticeship must be satisfactory, as certified by a student's academic advisor, as a condition for admission to Written Comprehensive Examination for the M.Phil.Ed. degree.

INDEPENDENT EMPIRICAL RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

M.Phil. students satisfy the independent empirical research requirement by enrolling in Ed. 829(b), as described in detail in this PREM Program Description under Ed. 829(b) and the section entitled “Research Paper.”

WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Towards the end of completion of course requirements, M.Phil.Ed. degree students are required to pass a written 3-hour comprehensive examination in the core content of the M.Phil.Ed. curriculum.

Master of Philosophy in Education (M.Phil.Ed.): Professional Counseling

This program involves an additional year of advanced study in the mastery of professional counseling, clinical assessment, and consultation services immediately following completion of the one-year Counseling and Mental Health Services M.S.Ed. Program, which requires a minimum of 10 CU's. Consult the APHD Division Coordinator for further details about the M.S.Ed. Counseling and Mental Health Services Program. Students may choose to complete the PC program either full-time or at a slower pace through a part-time course of study. PC is a 10-course-unit program with a required oral clinical comprehensive examination and a written report of that examination.

INTERNSHIP

An integral part of the learning experience is the completion of a 600-hour internship in a counseling setting. The nature of the internship will vary based upon the student's interests. The purpose of the internship is to provide students with clinical experience on an ongoing basis during the course of their M.Phil.Ed. studies. The internship is arranged by mutual agreement of the student, the student's academic advisor, the PC internship course instructor, and the supervisor at the field site (who must be at least a licensed master's-level mental health professional). The student may or may not be compensated for services rendered under the internship experience. Performance in the internship must be rated as satisfactory via a first-semester evaluation process based upon the assessment of the student's progress by the field site supervisor, the student's academic advisor, and the PC program faculty. Satisfactory performance in the first half of the student's coursework is a prerequisite for admission to the Oral and Written Clinical Comprehensive Examination for the M.Phil.Ed. degree.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The Oral Clinical Comprehensive Examination process for the M.Phil.Ed. program is designed to assess the student's working knowledge of the three major themes of the program: (1) applied counseling/clinical services; (2) understanding of clients' cultures and contexts; and (3) lifespan human development. The examination assesses the student's competence in using and integrating applied skills in settings where counselors work. The clinical examination uses a case presentation format to evaluate the student's level of competency as a counselor.

Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

Purpose of Degree

The Doctor of Education degree is intended for students who are interested in the application of scholarship and research to educational endeavors. Coursework, examinations and the dissertation emphasize the reflective use of research as the basis of informed educational practice. Students are required to attain comprehensive knowledge of education, intensive knowledge of an area of specialization, skills in critical evaluation of research pertinent to the specialization, and proficiency in the planning and execution of research on topics in the practice of education.

Course Requirements

At least 12 course units of graduate work must be taken at the University of Pennsylvania. One course must be a research seminar in the area of specialization. The program of study may include work completed for the master's degree. Up to eight course units may be transferred from another institution upon approval of a student's advisor. All degree students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 for all courses applied toward the degree.

Transfer of Credit

GSE will, under certain conditions, accept equivalent credit toward the degree. Up to eight graduate level CU's taken at GSE, Penn, or another institution, may count toward the Ed.D. degree. Transfer credit is not automatically accepted or applied toward the doctoral degree. Students must follow formal procedures to request the application of transfer credit toward GSE degree requirements. The acceptance of transfer credits does not override specialization requirements. In order to receive transfer credit students must have earned a grade of at least "B" for all courses. Grades of "Satisfactory" or "Pass" are not transferable. No academic work done while the student was an undergraduate will be counted toward a graduate degree with the exception of courses taken when the student was an official sub-matriculate in the Graduate School of Education. The following conditions apply to transfer of credit:

- Graduate credits were earned at the University not more than 10 years prior to admission to the doctoral program.
- A maximum of four course units may be counted toward the degree for courses taken while a student is enrolled in the College of General Studies.
- A maximum of eight course units of graduate level coursework earned at GSE, Penn, or another institution within the preceding 10-year period may be accepted upon recommendation of the advisor.

For courses taken more than 10 years prior to admission to the ED.D. program, within or outside the University, students must show that:

- a grade of "A" or "B" has been earned;

- the faculty advisor and the division chair agree that the courses are acceptable;
- the student has enrolled in relevant graduate-level courses or engaged in appropriate academic activity after completion of courses for which credit is requested;
- when there is not agreement between the student's advisor and division chair, the student must pass an examination in the content areas for which credit is requested.

PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Students must be admitted to a degree program before a request for transfer of credit can be considered. To request transfer of credit, students must:

- Obtain the appropriate [transfer of credit request form](#).
- Complete the form in consultation with their advisor and obtain the necessary approvals from the advisor and division chair.
- Submit an official copy of the transcript
- Student must matriculate at least one semester before submitting the transfer of credit form.

Penn InTouch will reflect the transfer credits on your transcript.

Residency Requirement

All doctoral students must satisfy a residency requirement as a condition for earning the degree. The residency requirement is defined as completion of at least four course units within two successive terms in University courses approved for graduate credit by the Graduate School of Education. A maximum of two of these four course units may be taken in summer sessions continuous with the academic year term in which the remaining course units are taken (e.g., spring/fall, fall/spring, summer/fall or spring/summer). This requirement may be fulfilled at any time after the student has been admitted to GSE for post-baccalaureate coursework. Some programs require full-time study in every semester. Consult the division for more information.

Advisor

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor upon admission. The advisor will help plan the student's program of study, assist in selecting courses, provide academic advising and monitor academic progress. Students should contact their advisors individually in the first semester of the student's first year before the drop/request period has concluded. The planned program of study should be developed between the advisor and the student in the first semester of the first year of study. The planned program of study can be revised over time. After this initial meeting, students and advisors are mutually obligated to stay in regular contact, preferably twice a year, but always at the start of the academic year to review progress and consider

alterations to the planned program of study. While the advisor will know much about GSE policies, rules do change. Students should always consult the Student Handbook or the Student Records Office for the most current academic policies, procedures and deadlines for completing academic requirements. To request a change in advisor, the student should see the division coordinator for procedures.

Students on dissertation should also communicate with their advisors twice a year so that progress is closely monitored. Once a student has formed a dissertation committee, the committee chair automatically becomes the student's advisor.

Evaluations and Examinations

QUALIFICATIONS EVALUATION (ALSO KNOWN AS PROGRAM CANDIDACY)

The purpose of program candidacy is to provide rigorous review and feedback to Ed.D. students regarding their academic progress within the first two years of study. Program candidacy is a prerequisite to doctoral candidacy. Minimum school-wide criteria are described below. Additional requirements about the timing, process and materials for program candidacy review may be further specified by each specialization. Check with your academic advisor or division coordinator for details.

Eligibility for Qualifications Evaluation (Program Candidacy)

- Program candidacy review must be completed after completion of 6, but not more than 8 CU's, and no later than the fourth semester of coursework.
- Students must have completed (or be in the process of completing) the residency requirement.

Eligibility will be assessed according to the following criteria: satisfactory performance in courses as shown by the student's GSE transcript and faculty recommendations; a coherent course of study as illustrated by the planned program of study and prospectus; and a demonstration of the ability to do research as demonstrated by a research paper.

Procedure for Qualifications Evaluation

- Specialization faculty reviews the student dossier.
- Specialization faculty votes to recommend student for program candidacy.
- Division faculty votes whether to admit student to program candidacy.
- The student is given feedback in conference or in writing about the decision, his/her performance and future course of study.

Students who are recommended for program candidacy are permitted to continue in the program. Students who do not pass program candidacy are withdrawn from the degree program.

Appeal of Qualifications Evaluation

Students may appeal to the division chair if the program faculty does not admit them to program candidacy. Students may appeal to the Committee on Degrees if the division does not admit them to program candidacy.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The preliminary examination is a test of knowledge in the candidate's area of specialization. The examination requires students to demonstrate knowledge and reasoning in the key content areas in their specialization as specified by the academic division. The format of the examination varies from program to program, but must include at least six hours of examination, at least three hours of which must be written. All examinations are administered in accordance with the rules set forth in the Code of Academic Integrity. Students should consult their advisor about the particular form of the examination they will take. Doctoral candidacy is conferred upon successful completion of the doctoral preliminary examination.

Students are permitted two opportunities to pass the preliminary examination. If they are unsuccessful after two tries, they will be withdrawn from the doctoral program.

To be eligible to take the preliminary examination students must:

- Have been admitted to program candidacy
- Have the recommendation of their advisor
- Submit evidence satisfactory to the advisor of ability to do research in their area of specialization
- Be registered for the term in which the exam is taken
- [Register to take the preliminary examination](#) using the form on the website (by the deadline listed in the [GSE academic calendar](#)).

Doctoral candidacy is conferred upon successful completion of the doctoral preliminary examination.

FINAL ORAL DEFENSE HEARING

A public, oral presentation of the dissertation is required. The presentation must either include, or be followed by, an oral examination.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Lack of significant progress in completing degree requirements for two consecutive years (exclusive of time when on official leave of absence) will automatically terminate candidacy or eligibility to apply for candidacy if not already attained. Therefore, students should take the initiative in providing their advisor with evidence of continuous progress; in the absence of such evidence, advisors may apprise themselves of their advisee's status each term and refer a student to the Committee on Degrees if satisfactory progress is not maintained.

TIME LIMITATION FOR COMPLETING ED.D. REQUIREMENTS

Ed.D. students are expected to complete all degree requirements within 7 years of the completion of coursework. After 5 years on dissertation, students are required to meet with their advisors to review their progress and status and to co-write a report outlining the student's progress and plans for completion of the degree within 7 years. This report is to be placed in the student's folder. In very unusual circumstances, Ed.D. students can petition for an additional 2 years, see Recertification Procedure for Ph.D. students. Official leaves of absence will not automatically change these time limits.

The Dissertation

FORMING A DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Students must consult with their advisor for assistance in selecting a group of at least three people with earned doctorates to serve as the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee is responsible for evaluating their proposal for dissertation research, for supervising the preparation of a dissertation on an approved problem, and for evaluating the dissertation. Committee members should be selected on the basis of their relationship to the dissertation content.

The chair of an Ed.D. dissertation committee must be a member of GSE standing faculty or be a member of the associated faculty approved to chair dissertation committees. Click [here](#) for a list of faculty authorized to chair EdD dissertation committees. Students should see their academic advisor for specific information.

Approval Process for a Dissertation Committee

To formalize the committee, submit a completed [Request for Appointment of the Dissertation Committee and Scheduling of the Oral Proposal Form](#) to the Student Records Office. The committee must be formally approved before students can hold their oral proposal hearing. Allow at least three weeks for the request to be reviewed by the Assistant Dean's office. To

request a change in dissertation committee, students must complete a [Request for Change of Dissertation Committee form](#). Changes to the committee must be approved by the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs.

RESEARCH ON HUMAN SUBJECTS

Students must obtain University approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before they may conduct research on human subjects for their dissertation study. Since education research generally involves little or no risk to the participants, the University permits GSE students to apply for an expedited review by the IRB. Detailed information about these procedures is available from the [Office of Research Services](#).

ORAL PROPOSAL

Procedure for Oral Proposal of Dissertation

All doctoral candidates must present their dissertation proposals orally to the dissertation committee. To schedule the oral proposal, the student must:

Decide with the committee members on a day, date and time to hold the proposal.

Submit the [Request for Appointment of Dissertation Committee and Scheduling of Oral Proposal Form](#) signed by the chair and each committee member with the proposal abstract, to the Student Records Office at gse-sro@gse.upenn.edu at least two weeks in advance of the date the hearing is to take place. The Student Records Office will assign a room for the proposal hearing and notify the student, the committee members and the division coordinator. The notice will also be posted on the [GSE calendar](#), and the building monitors.

Having passed the oral proposal, the student will be issued a signed ballot verifying that fact. A second copy of the ballot must be submitted to the Student Records Office so that this information can be added to the student's transcript. A third copy of the ballot is for the dissertation chair's records.

The student, the chair, and majority of the committee are *required* to be physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

Although all members of a student's dissertation committee are *expected* to be physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings, in extenuating circumstances one member, or a minority of the committee, *may be physically absent as long as the absent member(s) participate(s)* in the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

At the oral proposal hearing, the dissertation committee will review the proposal with the student and help refine the proposed dissertation project. The committee will vote on the proposal and indicate any revisions that might be required before the student may be allowed to proceed with

the dissertation research. Oral proposal hearings are not normally held during the summer. Candidates who wish to have the oral proposal hearing during the summer must secure the approval of all committee members. If approval is granted, the student will be required to register for courses, or for dissertation supervision (EDUC 995) for the summer session in which the oral proposal hearing is held. After the dissertation proposal is approved, three ballots will be signed by the committee. One ballot is for the student, one for the chair, and one for the Student Records Office. Students must complete all remaining requirements for the degree within a period of four years. For an extension of time to complete the dissertation, students may petition the Committee on Degrees. Students must have the recommendation of the dissertation committee chair to be considered for an extension of this time limit.

GSE Standards for the Oral Proposal

Your committee will determine whether you pass your oral proposal hearing. Your proposal must pass the following criteria:

- The topic is stated clearly and relevant background literature reviewed and evaluated.
- The research question(s) are stated clearly.
- The contribution and importance of the research question(s) with respect to relevant literature, theory, policy, and/or practice are articulated in a convincing manner.
- The research plan and methods are appropriate and adequate to study the research question(s) posed, and are explicitly described.

STANDARDS FOR THE DISSERTATION

1. The topic is stated clearly and relevant background literature reviewed and evaluated.
2. The research question(s) are stated clearly.
3. The contribution and importance of the research question(s) with respect to relevant literature, theory, policy, and/or practice are articulated in a convincing manner.
4. The research plan and methods are appropriate and adequate to study the research question(s) posed, and are explicitly described.
5. The research plan and methods are implemented effectively.
6. The research produced trustworthy evidence that bears on the research question(s).
7. The conclusions follow convincingly from the evidence and its interpretation.
8. The dissertation manuscript is coherent, well structured, clearly written and is in accordance with the specifications of a standard style manual regarding grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.

9. With appropriate revisions, the dissertation is of sufficient quality to be publishable in an academic or practice-oriented journal that is peer reviewed.

FORMATTING THE DISSERTATION

- The Table of Contents is accurate in terms of headings and page numbers.
- Citations and the bibliographic/reference section are formatted in accordance with a standard style manual.
- The title page, pagination, abstract, notes, bibliography, tables, and figures are formatted in accordance with the [University of Pennsylvania Doctoral Dissertation Manual](#).
- See the Dissertation Formatting Templates below for more details:
 - [Dissertation Format](#)
 - [Abstract Template](#)
 - [Copyright Template](#)

FINAL DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION

The final oral defense is approximately one and a half hours in length and is based upon the candidate's dissertation. To schedule the final oral examination, doctoral candidates must submit the completed the [Final Defense Hearing Form](#) and abstract to the Student Records Office at least two weeks in advance of the date of the final defense. The Student Records Office schedules the meeting room and formally notifies the dissertation committee that the meeting has been scheduled. Students and Education faculty are also invited to attend these presentations.

The student, the chair, and majority of the committee are required to be physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

Although all members of a student's dissertation committee are expected to be physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings, in extenuating circumstances, one member, or a minority of the committee, may be physically absent as long as the absent member(s) participate(s) in the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

At least one term must elapse between passing the preliminary examination and the final defense. At the discretion of the dissertation committee, the candidate will be recommended to the faculty of the Graduate Group in Education for the degree of Doctor of Education. After the final defense hearing, three ballots will be signed by the committee. One ballot is for the student, one for the chair, and one for the Student Records Office.

Final oral examinations are not normally held during the summer. Candidates who wish to have the final oral examination during the summer must secure the approval of all committee members and register for Dissertation Supervision (EDUC 995) for the summer session in which the final oral examination is held.

Procedure for Scheduling the Final Defense of the Dissertation

To schedule the final defense, the student must:

- Mutually agree with the committee members on a day, date and time to hold the defense.
- Submit the [Final Defense Notification form](#) signed by the dissertation chair and the proposal abstract to the Student Records Office at least two weeks in advance of the date the hearing is to take place. The Student Records Office will assign a room for the defense hearing and notify the student, the committee members and the division coordinator. The notice will also be posted on the bulletin board in the second floor administrative suite, and the building monitors.
- Having passed the final defense, the student will be issued a signed ballot verifying that fact. A second copy of the ballot must be submitted to the Student Records Office so this information can be added to the student's transcript. A third copy of the ballot is for the dissertation chair's records.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR ED.D. DISSERTATIONS

- Dissertation, copy one printed on 100% acid-free paper with abstract
- Dissertation, copy two printed on 100% acid-free paper with abstract
- Two (2) Title Pages printed on 100% acid-free paper.
- One additional copy of the abstract and title sheet (unsigned) printed on 100% acid-free paper
- Microfilming contract supplied by the Student Records Office
- Receipt showing zero balance if balance was recently paid

FILING AND DEPOSITING THE DISSERTATION

Students must:

- [Apply to graduate](#) by the deadline listed on the [GSE academic calendar](#).
- Arrange to have their dissertation chair review their dissertation and sign the two Title Pages on 100% acid-free paper.
- Make an appointment to have the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs review the first copy of the dissertation (printed on plain paper). Put the dissertation and their two signed Title Pages in a sturdy box with a lid. Students should leave an e-mail address and phone number where the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs may contact them if necessary. Students must allow at least three weeks for this process. The Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs will arrange for the Dean to sign the Title Pages.

- Complete the microfilming contract. The cost for microfilming and the cost for copyrighting (optional) are subject to change. Students will be billed directly by GSE via their bursar bill. If they wish to order additional copies of a dissertation, they should follow the instructions included in the microfilming contract.
- Submit all required documentation to the Student Records Office by the deadline listed on the [GSE academic calendar](#). Both copies of the dissertation (one must be on 100% acid-free paper), signed Title Pages, additional abstract with title sheet (unsigned), microfilming contract and Survey of Earned Doctorates. Each copy of the dissertation must be in a separate box with lid.

DISSERTATION RESEARCH ABROAD

A student who will conduct dissertation research abroad for the semester registers for Dissertation Research Abroad status. Submit the [Request for Dissertation Research Abroad](#) to the Student Records Office.

Graduation

The [GSE academic calendar](#) lists the deadlines for completing degree requirements in order to graduate in any academic term. All degree candidates must [apply to graduate on-line](#) at the beginning of the term in which they plan to receive the degree. Failure to apply for graduation by the published deadline will make it impossible to receive the degree at the time desired.

GSE holds a commencement ceremony each year in May for students who have completed degrees during the past academic year. Doctoral students who have successfully defended their dissertation by the last day of graduate classes listed on the spring semester of the GSE academic calendar may also participate in the ceremony in May. August graduates who participate in the May commencement ceremony:

- must apply to graduate in August by the deadline listed in the GSE academic calendar.
- will have their diplomas mailed to them by the Office of the Secretary of the University three months after they have completed their degree requirements.

August and December graduates are also invited to participate in the spring commencement exercises that follow completion of their degrees.

Doctoral students who have successfully passed the final defense of the dissertation may participate in the May graduation ceremony even if they will officially graduate in the next term. **The final defense must be held, and the ballot submitted to the Student Records Office, by the last day of the spring semester.**

Tuition is waived the semester after students pass the final defense hearing. This waiver is only for one semester and cannot be extended.

Certificate of Advanced Study

Students who complete all requirements for a Doctor of Education except the preliminary examination and the dissertation may apply to the Assistant Dean to receive a Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS). The CAS is a form of recognition for completing significant doctoral level study in an educational field. Students who elect to receive a CAS will not be eligible to re-enter a degree program and complete the doctorate at a later date. A CAS may be awarded to students matriculated in the Graduate School of Education who:

- are in good standing;
- have completed all requirements for an approved doctoral specialization of study except the preliminary examinations and the dissertation; and
- are recommended by the faculty of the appropriate program.

The certificate contains:

- The name of the School and the University;
- The name of the student;
- The title of the field of specialization in which the advanced study was completed;
- The signature of the Dean of the Graduate School of Education.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Purpose of the Degree

The Ph.D. is an intensive, theory-based study of education for scholars who want to pursue careers in research or teaching at colleges and universities. Doctoral students are expected to become competent in both qualitative (action research, case study, ethnographic methods) and quantitative (statistical data analysis, survey research and measurement) research methodologies. Students gain hands-on experience and practical competencies through service-based placements, mentorships, and research assistantships, and undertake independent research culminating in a dissertation that makes an original contribution to knowledge about educational practice or policies.

Course Requirements

At least 12 course units of graduate work must be taken at the University of Pennsylvania. One course must be a research seminar in the area of specialization. The program of study may include work completed for the master's degree. Up to eight course units may be transferred from another institution upon approval of a student's advisor. All degree students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 for all courses applied toward the degree.

The faculty determines the curricular requirements for its program. The course of study can include a combination of specific required courses, electives, teaching, independent study or laboratory rotations, colloquia, and demonstration through examination of comprehensive knowledge in the major field.

A student who enters the Ph.D. program with a bachelor's degree will be expected to spend two to three years taking 3-4 course units a semester before satisfying the graduate group's academic requirements, passing the required examinations and being Advanced to Candidacy. Faculty may require more extensive preparation through additional work, especially those programs with substantial language requirements. Students who enter with a master's degree or other transfer credit may satisfy the formal course requirements more quickly. Faculty has flexibility to establish the optimal timetable and requirements for their own students and to respond to the specific academic needs of individual students.

The customary maximum load for a Ph.D. student is four course units each semester; exceptions for a fifth course unit may be made in extraordinary cases upon approval of the graduate dean.

Faculty may establish examination requirements in addition to the University's standards.

Residency Requirement

All doctoral students must satisfy a residency requirement as a condition for earning the degree. The residency requirement is defined as completion of at least four course units within two successive terms in University courses approved for graduate credit by the Graduate School of Education. A maximum of two of these four course units may be taken in summer sessions continuous with the academic year term in which the remaining course units are taken (e.g., spring/fall, fall/spring, summer/fall or spring/summer). This requirement may be fulfilled at any time after the student has been admitted to GSE for post-baccalaureate coursework. Some programs require full-time study in every semester. Consult the division for more information.

Inquiry Skills

- All Ph.D. students in education must demonstrate competence in the use of at least one inquiry skill relevant to scholarship and/or professional practice in their field of specialization
- Inquiry skills may include empirical research skills, appropriate foreign languages, computer programming or other skills specified by the specialization
- Courses used to satisfy the inquiry skill requirement do not count toward the minimum number of course units required for the degree

Transfer of Credit

GSE will, under certain conditions, accept equivalent credit toward the degree. Up to eight graduate level CU's taken at GSE, Penn, or another institution, may count toward the PhD. degree. Transfer credit is not automatically accepted or applied toward the doctoral degree. Students must follow formal procedures to request the application of transfer credit toward GSE degree requirements. The acceptance of transfer credits does not override specialization requirements. In order to receive transfer credit students must have earned a grade of at least "B" for all courses. Grades of "Satisfactory" or "Pass" are not transferable. No academic work done while the student was an undergraduate will be counted toward a graduate degree with the exception of courses taken when the student was an official submatriculant in the Graduate School of Education. The following conditions apply to transfer of credit:

- Graduate credits were earned at the University not more than 10 years prior to admission to the doctoral program (see 4 below).
- A maximum of four course units may be counted toward the degree for courses taken while a student is enrolled in the College of General Studies.

- A maximum of eight course units of graduate level coursework earned at GSE, Penn, or another institution within the preceding 10-year period may be accepted upon recommendation of the advisor.
- or courses taken more than 10 years prior to admission to the Ed.D. program, within or outside the University, students must show that:
- a grade of “A” or “B” has been earned;
- the faculty advisor and the division chair agree that the courses are acceptable;
- the student has enrolled in relevant graduate-level courses or engaged in appropriate academic activity after completion of courses for which credit is requested;
- when there is not agreement between the student’s advisor and division chair, the student must pass an examination in the content areas for which credit is requested.

PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Students must be admitted to a degree program before a request for transfer of credit can be considered. To request transfer of credit, students must:

- Obtain the appropriate [transfer of credit request form](#).
- Complete the form in consultation with their advisor and obtain the necessary approvals from the advisor and division chair.
- Submit an official copy of the transcript
- Student must matriculate at least one semester before submitting the transfer of credit form.

Penn In Touch will reflect the transfer credits on your transcript.

Advisor

- Each student is assigned a faculty advisor upon admission
- The advisor is responsible for helping to plan the program of study, guiding the student’s work until completion of coursework and the preliminary examination, and monitoring the student’s academic progress
- If the advisor judges the quality of an advisee’s work to be inadequate, he or she may recommend to the division chair that the student not be allowed to continue in the program

- Students should contact their advisors individually in the first semester of the student's first year before the drop/request period has concluded
- After this initial meeting, students and advisors are mutually obligated to stay in regular contact, preferably twice a year, but always at the start of the academic year to review progress and consider alterations to the program of study
- The planned program of study should be developed between the advisor and advisee in the first semester of the first year of study, and can be revised over time
- Students on dissertation should also communicate with their advisors twice a year so that progress is closely monitored
- Students should always consult the GSE website or the Student Records Office for the most current academic policies, procedures and deadlines for completing academic requirements
- To request a change in advisor, a student should see the division coordinator for procedures
- Once a student has formed a dissertation committee, the committee chair automatically becomes the student's advisor

Evaluations and Examinations

QUALIFICATIONS EVALUATION

A Qualifications Evaluation of each student is conducted after the completion of 6 but not more than 8 CU's. The evaluation is designed by the specialization faculty and may be based on an examination or on a review of a student's overall academic progress. Satisfaction of this requirement is necessary in order to continue in the graduate program and is recorded in the student's academic record. The student and the school's graduate office must be notified of the outcome of the evaluation.

Eligibility for Qualifications Evaluation (Program Candidacy)

Program candidacy review must be completed after completion of 6, but not more than 8 CU's, and no later than the fourth semester of coursework. Eligibility will be assessed according to the following criteria: satisfactory performance in courses as shown by the student's GSE transcript and faculty recommendations; a coherent course of study as illustrated by the planned program of study and prospectus; and a demonstration of the ability to do research as demonstrated by a research paper.

Procedure for Qualifications Evaluation

- Specialization faculty reviews the student dossier.
- Specialization faculty votes to recommend student for program candidacy.
- Division faculty votes whether to admit student to program candidacy.
- The student is given feedback in conference or in writing about the decision, his/her performance and future course of study.

Students who are recommended for program candidacy are permitted to continue in the program. Students who do not pass program candidacy are withdrawn from the degree program.

Appeal of Qualifications Evaluation

Students may appeal to the division chair if the program faculty does not admit them to program candidacy. Students may appeal to the Committee on Degrees if the division does not admit them to program candidacy.

CANDIDACY EXAMINATION

A Candidacy Examination on the major subject area is required. This examination is normally held after the candidate has completed all required courses. Feedback will be provided to the student within one month. Satisfactory completion of the Candidacy Examination requirement is recorded in the student's academic record. Upon successful completion of the Candidacy Examination, the student is advanced to Candidacy. Normally, a student should advance to candidacy by the end of the third year. The maximum time limit for a student to be advanced to candidacy is five years, after which time the student will be dropped from the rolls.

- Doctoral candidacy is conferred upon successful completion of the candidacy examination (formerly doctoral preliminary examination).
- The Ph.D. student must pass a candidacy examination in the field of his or her major subject
- The candidacy examination is a test of knowledge in the student's area of specialization, requiring students to demonstrate knowledge and reasoning in the key content areas in their specialization as defined by their academic division, including:
 1. depth and breadth of familiarity with the literature in their field of study
 2. synthesis of material across core content courses taken in the doctoral program
 3. ability to critically analyze issues in the field
 4. knowledge and understanding of the intellectual domains and research paradigms relevant to their field of study

5. the ability to present cogent arguments including the effective use of evidence

- Examination results should be communicated to students within four weeks of the date the examination was taken
- Members of the Ph.D. examination committees must be drawn from the standing or associated faculties
- Students are permitted two opportunities to pass the candidacy examination; if they are unsuccessful after two tries, they will be withdrawn from the doctoral program

To be eligible to take the candidacy examination, students must:

- Have passed the Qualifications Evaluation;
- Have the recommendation of their advisor
- Submit evidence satisfactory to the advisor of capacity to do research in their area of specialization
- Be registered for the term in which the exam is taken
- Register to take the candidacy examination by the deadline listed in the [academic calendar](#).

FINAL DEFENSE

A public, oral presentation of the dissertation is required. The presentation must either include or be followed by an oral examination.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

- All doctoral students are reviewed by the faculty on a regular basis to evaluate their progress
- Evaluation is based on a review of coursework, fieldwork, progress and other relevant criteria
- All students are expected to make steady progress toward completion of degree requirements unless a leave of absence has been granted
- Lack of significant progress in completing degree requirements for two consecutive years (exclusive of time when on official leave of absence) will automatically terminate enrollment

TIME LIMITATION

Beginning in 2010-11, the University's maximum time limit for completion is ten years after matriculation. Graduate students who have been dropped after ten years may petition the graduate group to return as a student for a maximum of one year in order to achieve recertification and defend the dissertation. The faculty has no obligation to continue working with a student who has been dropped, nor is there any presumption that a graduate group will respond favorably to a petition for re-admission. If the faculty wishes to recommend re-admission, it must present to the graduate dean a list of faculty members willing to serve as a dissertation committee and a detailed, realistic plan of how the student will, within one year of reenrollment, achieve recertification, pass the dissertation examination, and submit the final copy of the dissertation. If re-enrollment is approved by the graduate dean, such a student must pay reduced rate tuition for two semesters, unless all requirements are completed within one semester.

RECERTIFICATION

A student who is re-enrolled after expiration of the time limit must satisfy the recertification criteria designed by their graduate group and approved by the Graduate Council of the Faculties (or retake and pass the Candidacy Examination). The new deadline for completion of all requirements for the Ph.D., including recertification, shall be within one year.

Ph.D. students in the Graduate Group in Education who have not completed all their degree requirements within 10 years of matriculation may submit a petition to the Graduate School of Education's Committee on Degrees for a one-year extension. The petition must be submitted to the Committee on Degrees at least 2 months prior to the end of the 10th academic year. To qualify for an extension, the student must meet the following four conditions:

1. The student must have had his or her dissertation proposal accepted, the Ballot Form signed by the student's Dissertation Committee, and submitted to the Student Record Office.
2. The student must submit a progress report and plan to his or her dissertation committee. The purpose of this report/plan is: to document which degree requirements the student has completed; to provide a rationale for why he or she has been unable to complete all the requirements within the 10 year period; and to provide a timeline/schedule of steps for completion of the remaining requirements within a one-year extension. The student's chair and a majority of his or her dissertation committee must review and approve the progress report and plan.
3. The student must then submit the progress report and plan to the Committee on Degrees for their review and approval.
4. The student must re-take a Candidacy exam that documents familiarity with the current status of their field.

The Dissertation

The final stage and culmination of doctoral study is preparation of a dissertation. The dissertation is an independently produced piece of original research on a problem in education prepared under the supervision of a dissertation committee. The dissertation should show high attainment and power of independent research, and represent a significant contribution to human knowledge. A GSE Ph.D. dissertation should include:

- A research problem that is clearly located in the relevant literature;
- A research question(s) or research hypothesis(es);
- A theoretical orientation or conceptual framework that is used to provide some of the background and rationale for:
 1. a description of the significance of the dissertation research, and
 2. the selection of the research methods approach(es) chosen to investigate the research question(s) or hypothesis(es);
- Description of approach(es)/method(s);
- Data presentation and analysis (i.e., findings, results); and
- Implications for theory, policy, practice, and/or further research

Multiple authorship of dissertations is allowed as long as no publication is used as dissertation material for more than one student and as long as the candidate includes for publication a concise account of his or her contribution to the whole work.

Dissertations based on joint work with other researchers are allowed provided that in such cases a unique and separate dissertation is presented by each degree candidate. The candidate must include a concise account of his or her contribution to the whole work. Authorship of a dissertation by more than one degree candidate is not allowed.

FORMING A DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Students must consult with their advisor for assistance in selecting a group of at least three people with earned doctorates to serve as the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee is responsible for evaluating their proposal for dissertation research, for supervising the preparation of a dissertation on an approved problem, and for evaluating the dissertation. Committee members should be selected on the basis of their relationship to the dissertation content.

Students must complete the doctoral preliminary and minor examinations before seeking formal approval for a dissertation committee. Upon advancement to candidacy, each student has a Dissertation Committee consisting of at least three faculty members (including at least two members of the Education Graduate Group). A list of Education Graduate Group members is

available [here](#). The third member may be a scholar external to the University of Pennsylvania with a doctoral degree, including a qualified individual who does not hold faculty rank at a college or university. To include an external member on their dissertation committee, students must have approval from the committee chair and the Assistant Dean for Academic & Student Affairs.

The Dissertation Committee meets at least once annually with the student to review the student's progress. The student prepares an Annual Dissertation Progress Report and the committee gives timely feedback (within one month) and confirms whether progress is satisfactory. A copy of the signed progress report is submitted to the Supervisor/Advisor and Graduate Group Chair and is documented by the school in the student's PhD Worksheet.

One person is designated the chair. **The chair of a Ph.D. dissertation committee must be both a member of the standing faculty and a member of the Graduate Group in Education.** The dissertation committee chair becomes the official faculty advisor.

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR A DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

To formalize the committee, submit a completed [Request for Appointment of the Dissertation Committee and Scheduling of the Oral Proposal Form](#) to the Student Records Office. The committee must be formally approved before students can hold their oral proposal hearing. Allow at least three weeks for the request to be reviewed by the Assistant Dean's office. To request a change in dissertation committee, students must complete a [Request for Change of Dissertation Committee form](#). Changes to the committee must be approved by the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs.

RESEARCH ON HUMAN SUBJECTS

Students must obtain University approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before they may conduct research on human subjects for their dissertation study. Since education research generally involves little or no risk to the participants, the University permits GSE students to apply for an expedited review by the IRB. Detailed information about these procedures is available from the [Office of Research Services](#).

ORAL PROPOSAL

Procedure for Oral Proposal of the Dissertation

All doctoral candidates must present their dissertation proposals orally to the dissertation committee. To schedule the oral proposal, the student must:

Decide with the committee members on a day, date and time to hold the proposal

Submit the [Request for Appointment of Dissertation Committee and Scheduling of Oral Proposal Form](#) signed by the chair and each committee member with six copies of the proposal abstract, to the Student Records Office at least two weeks in advance of the date the hearing is to take place.

The Student Records Office will assign a room for the proposal hearing and notify the student, the committee members and the division coordinator. The notice will also be posted on the bulletin board in the second floor administrative suite.

Having passed the oral proposal, the student will be issued a signed ballot verifying that fact. A second copy of the ballot must be submitted to the Student Records Office so that this information can be added to the student's transcript. A third copy of the ballot is for the dissertation chair's records.

The student, the chair, and majority of the committee are *required to be* physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

Although all members of a student's dissertation committee *are expected to be* physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings, in extenuating circumstances one member, or a minority of the committee, *may be physically absent as long as the absent member(s) participate(s)* in the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

At the oral proposal hearing, the dissertation committee will review the proposal with the student and help refine the proposed dissertation project. The committee will vote on the proposal and indicate any revisions that might be required before the student may be allowed to proceed with the dissertation research. Oral proposal hearings are not normally held during the summer. Candidates who wish to have the oral proposal hearing during the summer must secure the approval of all committee members. If approval is granted, the student will be required to register for courses, or for dissertation supervision (EDUC 995) for the summer session in which the oral proposal hearing is held. After the dissertation proposal is approved, three ballots will be signed by the committee. One ballot is for the student, one for the chair, and one for the Student Records Office. Students must complete all remaining requirements for the degree within a period of four years. For an extension of time to complete the dissertation, students may petition the Committee on Degrees. Students must have the recommendation of the dissertation committee chair to be considered for an extension of this time limit.

GSE Standards for the Oral Proposal

Your committee will determine whether you pass your oral proposal hearing. Your proposal must pass the following criteria:

1. The topic is stated clearly and relevant background literature reviewed and evaluated.
2. The research question(s) are stated clearly.
3. The contribution and importance of the research question(s) with respect to relevant literature, theory, policy, and/or practice are articulated in a convincing manner.
4. The research plan and methods are appropriate and adequate to study the research question(s) posed, and are explicitly described.

STANDARDS FOR THE DISSERTATION

1. The topic is stated clearly and relevant background literature reviewed and evaluated.
2. The research question(s) are stated clearly.
3. The contribution and importance of the research question(s) with respect to relevant literature, theory, policy, and/or practice are articulated in a convincing manner.
4. The research plan and methods are appropriate and adequate to study the research question(s) posed, and are explicitly described.
5. The research plan and methods are implemented effectively.
6. The research produced trustworthy evidence that bears on the research question(s).
7. The conclusions follow convincingly from the evidence and its interpretation.
8. The dissertation manuscript is coherent, well structured, clearly written and is in accordance with the specifications of a standard style manual regarding grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.
9. With appropriate revisions, the dissertation is of sufficient quality to be publishable in an academic or practice-oriented journal that is peer reviewed.

FORMATTING THE DISSERTATION

- The Table of Contents is accurate in terms of headings and page numbers.
- Citations and the bibliographic/reference section are formatted in accordance with a standard style manual.
- The title page, pagination, abstract, notes, bibliography, tables, and figures are formatted in accordance with the [University of Pennsylvania Doctoral Dissertation Manual](#).
- See the dissertation formatting templates below for more details
 - [Dissertation Format](#)
 - [Abstract Template](#)
 - [Copyright Template](#)

FINAL DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION

The final oral defense is approximately one and a half hours in length and is based upon the candidate's dissertation. To schedule the final oral examination, doctoral candidates must submit the completed Final Defense Hearing Form and abstract to the Student Records Office at least two weeks in advance of the date of the final defense. The Student Records Office schedules the meeting room and formally notifies the dissertation committee that the meeting has been scheduled. Students and Education faculty are also invited to attend these presentations.

The student, the chair, and majority of the committee are *required to be* physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

Although all members of a student's dissertation committee *are expected to be* physically present at the oral proposal and final defense hearings, in extenuating circumstances, one member, or a minority of the committee, may be physically absent as long as the absent member(s) participate(s) in the oral proposal and final defense hearings.

At least one term must elapse between passing the preliminary examination and the final defense. At the discretion of the dissertation committee, the candidate will be recommended to the faculty of the Graduate Group in Education for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. After the final defense hearing, three ballots will be signed by the committee. One ballot is for the student, one for the chair, and one for the Student Records Office.

Final oral examinations are not normally held during the summer. Candidates who wish to have the final oral examination during the summer must secure the approval of all committee members and register for Dissertation Supervision (EDUC 995) for the summer session in which the final oral examination is held.

PROCEDURE FOR SCHEDULING THE FINAL DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION

To schedule the final defense, the student must:

1. Mutually agree with the committee members on a day, date and time to hold the defense.
2. Submit the [Final Defense Notification form](#) on [the academic forms page](#) of the GSE website, signed by the dissertation chair, and six copies of the proposal abstract, to the Student Records Office at least two weeks in advance of the date the hearing is to take place. The Student Records Office will assign a room for the defense hearing and notify the student, the committee members and the division coordinator. The notice will also be posted on the bulletin board in the second floor administrative suite, and the building monitors.
3. Having passed the final defense, the student will be issued a signed ballot verifying that fact. A second copy of the ballot must be submitted to the Student Records Office so this information can be added to the student's transcript. A third copy of the ballot is for the dissertation chair's records.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR PH.D. DISSERTATIONS

- Dissertation, two copies, both printed on 100% acid-free paper with abstract
- Two (2) Title Pages printed on 100% acid-free paper. The Title Pages must read: “A Dissertation in Education” and will be signed by the dissertation chair and the Graduate Group Chair.
- One additional Abstract with title sheet (unsigned) printed on 100% acid-free paper
- Form 152 (Acceptance of Dissertation) from the student’s file in the Student Records Office
- Form 153 (Certificate of Dissertation), from the student’s file in the Student Records Office
- Microfilming contract, supplied by Grad Arts & Sciences
- Survey of Earned Doctorates, supplied by Grad Arts & Sciences
- Survey of Doctoral Students’ Opinion, supplied by Grad Arts & Sciences
- Receipt showing zero balance if balance was recently paid

Acceptance of the Dissertation

The Graduate Group reports to the graduate office regarding acceptance of the Ph.D. dissertation and its suitability for immediate publication by the prescribed deadline. Here is how the process works. Once the dissertation is approved, Form 152 (Acceptance of Dissertation) is signed by the entire committee. The student brings the completed form to the Student Records Office. When the student is ready to file the dissertation with the Graduate Group Chair for signature, the student picks up Form 152 with Form 153, (Certification of Dissertation), at the Student Records Office. Dissertations must follow the format prescribed in the Dissertation Manual, which describes in detail the requirements for preparing and filing the dissertation. Please allow three weeks for Graduate Group Chair approval before dissertation is filed with the Graduate Group in Arts and Sciences.

PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSION OF THE DISSERTATION

Dissertations must follow the format prescribed in the [Dissertation Manual](#). All dissertations will be microfilmed according to the plan provided by ProQuest. The publication requirement will not be satisfied by any other form of publication, although microfilming does not preclude later publication by other methods.

The following is a brief summary of dissertation regulations. Students interested in submitting the dissertation in electronic format (on disc or CD ROM) should obtain special instructions from the Graduate Division Office. Candidates also should familiarize themselves with any

special requirements imposed by the graduate groups under which they are working. A candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy must comply with the following requirements:

1. Submit to the Graduate Division Office, SAS, 3401 Walnut Street, Suite 332A, at the designated times two printed unbound copies of the dissertation and a certificate (Form 153) from the chairperson of the group stating that they are complete and correct copies in satisfactory form for microfilming. These copies will not be returned to the author.
2. Submit to the Graduate Division Office an abstract of 350 words or less. (Any text beyond the 350-word limit will be cut off during microfilming.) This abstract will be published in Dissertation Abstracts, a bimonthly publication that receives wide distribution. A copy of the abstract should accompany the original copy of the dissertation.
3. Submit to the Graduate Division Office a microfilm contract.
4. Pay a fee (subject to change) to cover the cost of microfilm publication. If a registered copyright is desired, an additional fee (subject to change) will be required. The dissertation is not available for distribution until it has been microfilmed.
5. Submit the completed questionnaire entitled, "Survey of Earned Doctorates," and a Microfilm Agreement Form. Students are asked to fill out the "Survey of Ph.D. Recipient's Opinion."

FILING THE DISSERTATION

After successfully completing the final oral examination and making any required revisions to the dissertation, the dissertation must be filed with Van Pelt Library for microfilming by University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan. All dissertations will be microfilmed according to the plan provided by University Microfilms. Microfilming does not preclude later publication by other methods. Consult the GSE [academic calendar](#) for filing deadlines pertinent to graduation dates. Before graduation, the candidate must submit to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences the microfilm contract, complete the Doctoral Opinion Survey, pay the microfilming fee, and submit the original and one copy of the final typed version of the dissertation.

DISSERTATION RESEARCH ABROAD

A student who will conduct dissertation research abroad for the semester registers for Dissertation Research Abroad status. Full Tuition is charged for students in years 1-4, and Reduced Tuition for students in years 5-10. Submit the [form to request dissertation research abroad](#) to the Student Records Office.

EXTRAMURAL RESEARCH

If graduate credit is sought for research work pursued at laboratories not officially a part of the University of Pennsylvania (for example, where the investigator is not a member of the graduate group), the student must obtain prior permission from the graduate chair. [University Policies Regarding Intellectual Property](#) apply in the case of research conducted in extramural settings.

PATENT POLICY RELATING TO RESEARCH

A dissertation submitted as a part of the requirements for a degree is the property of the University, and any patent rights arising there from are governed by the Patent Policy of the University of Pennsylvania. An invention or discovery resulting from research carried out in University laboratories as a part of a post-doctoral or other non-degree program is the property of the University, and any patent rights arising there from are also governed by the Patent Policy of the University of Pennsylvania.

Tuition

Ph.D. students will be charged Full Tuition until they have completed 4 years of full-time study. The time may be as brief as three years if a student enters with credits from a post-baccalaureate degree program or successfully completes the Ph.D. in less than 4 years.

If the student has not earned the Ph.D. degree by the end of the 4 years, the student will be charged Reduced Tuition until the degree is awarded, or for a maximum of 6 additional years. Continuous enrollment is required through year ten (or until graduation), with exception for approved leave.

After a maximum of 6 years at Reduced Tuition, the student ceases to be enrolled. (See above, Time Limit for Completion of the Ph.D. Degree.)

With permission and recertification from the graduate group (see section above, “Recertification”), a student may reenroll for a final year in order to defend and deposit the dissertation. Such a student must pay reduced rate tuition for a final two semesters, unless all requirements are completed within one semester.

Childbirth and Adoption

A student in a Ph.D. program at Penn is eligible for time off of eight weeks for the birth or adoption of a child. The student must notify the graduate group chair and Advisor/Supervisor in writing, at an early date, of his/her plans to initiate a “Time Off” period, so that appropriate arrangements can be made to cover any teaching/research responsibilities.

- Normally the “Time Off” period commences within two weeks of the birth or adoption.

- During the “Time Off” period, the student remains enrolled full-time. In order to facilitate a rapid return, s/he may participate in the program as fully as s/he deems appropriate. By remaining on full-time status, student visa status and loan repayment schedules, if any, will remain unchanged.
- The student is entitled to academic accommodation including relief from academic requirements, such as postponement of exams and course requirements.
- A student receiving stipend support is entitled to continuation of support during the “Time Off” period as follows:
 1. Students receiving stipends from University/school funds are entitled to draw support for eight weeks during the academic year.
 2. Students funded by government grants or other external funding sources are entitled to benefits as determined by the funding agency.

Family Leave of Absence

A student in the Ph.D. program at Penn may take an unpaid Family Leave of Absence for the birth or adoption of a child, child care, or care of an immediate family member (spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent) with a serious health condition. University policy on family leave is available in the Pennbook, [here](#).

1. Students may take a Family Leave of Absence for one or two semesters.
2. The student is expected to notify the graduate group chair and adviser in writing of his/her plans to take a Family Leave at an early date, so that appropriate arrangements can be made to cover any teaching/research responsibilities.
3. Family Leave “stops the clock” on the student’s academic requirements, including service requirements, for the duration of the leave.
4. During the period of Family Leave, the student may arrange to continue Student Health Insurance, but is responsible for the payment of his or her own premiums. Upon paying a fee, students on approved Family Leave will retain their PennCard, e-mail accounts, library privileges, and building access.
5. Funding commitments from the institution are deferred until the student returns from Family Leave. Students receiving funding from external sources, such as government grants, are subject to the conditions established by the funding source.
6. Service requirements (e.g., teaching, research) will be met by the student following return from Family Leave.

7. Requests for extension of Family Leave beyond one year, or for repeated Family Leaves, may be made. Approval of an extension, deferral of funding, and continued academic accommodation is at the discretion of the Graduate Dean.

***IMPORTANT:** If you anticipate adding a dependent (e.g., newborn) to your Penn Student Insurance Policy while on Family Leave, you must remain in ACTIVE student status at the start of the fall semester. Students should arrange with their school/division to maintain full-time student status for at least 31 days from the start of fall classes, after which time the Family Leave status can be recorded in the Student Records System. After the birth/adoption, contact the SHS Insurance Coordinator to enroll the dependent. The premium for dependent coverage is payable directly to Aetna Student Health.

Graduation

The GSE [academic calendar](#) lists the deadlines for completing degree requirements in order to graduate in any academic term. All degree candidates must [apply to graduate on-line](#) at the beginning of the term in which they plan to receive the degree. Ph.D. students must apply on-line to graduate with Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Failure to apply for graduation by the published deadline will make it impossible to receive the degree at the time desired.

GSE holds a commencement ceremony each year in May for students who have completed degrees during the past academic year. Doctoral students who have successfully defended their dissertation by the last day of graduate classes listed on the spring semester of the GSE academic calendar may also participate in the ceremony in May. August graduates who participate in the May commencement ceremony:

1. Must [apply to graduate](#) in August by the deadline listed in the [GSE academic calendar](#).
2. Will have their diplomas mailed to them by the Office of the Secretary of the University three months after they have completed their degree requirements.

August and December graduates are also invited to participate in the spring commencement exercises that follow completion of their degrees.

Doctoral students who have successfully passed the final defense of the dissertation may participate in the May graduation ceremony even if they will officially graduate in the next term. **The final defense must be held, and the ballot submitted to the Student Records Office, by the last day of the spring semester.**

Certificate of Advanced Study

Students who complete all requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy except the preliminary examination and the dissertation may apply to the Assistant Dean to receive a Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS). The CAS is a form of recognition for completing significant doctoral level study in an educational field. Students who elect to receive a CAS will not be eligible to re-enter a degree program and complete the doctorate at a later date. A CAS may be awarded to students matriculated in the Graduate School of Education who:

- are in good standing;
- have completed all requirements for an approved doctoral specialization of study except the preliminary examinations and the dissertation; and
- are recommended by the faculty of the appropriate program.

The certificate contains:

- The name of the School and the University;
- The name of the student;
- The title of the field of specialization in which the advanced study was completed;
- The signature of the Dean of the Graduate School of Education.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY DEFINITIONS

(From the [Academic Integrity Code of the University of Pennsylvania](#))

GSE prohibits conduct that is contrary to accepted principles of academic honesty. Membership in this community imposes both an obligation to comply with its rules and the responsibility to assist in their enforcement.

It shall constitute a violation of the GSE Code of Student Academic Integrity for any student knowingly and purposefully to engage in any activity that has the effect or intention of interfering with the education, pursuit of knowledge, or fair evaluation of a student's performance. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Cheating:** using or attempting to use unauthorized assistance, material, or study aids in examinations or other academic work or preventing, or attempting to prevent, another from using authorized assistance, material, or study aids. Example: using a cheat sheet in a quiz or exam, using a cell phone or other technology to obtain or share information during an exam, altering a graded exam and resubmitting it for a better grade.
- 2) Plagiarism:** using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment. Example: copying another person's paper, article, or text from a website and submitting it for an assignment, quoting someone else's ideas without attribution, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate.
- 3) Fabrication:** submitting contrived or altered information in any academic exercise. Example: making up data for an experiment, fudging data, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources.
- 4) Multiple submissions:** submitting, without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement.
- 5) Facilitating academic dishonesty:** knowingly helping or attempting to help another violate any provision of the Code. Example: working together on a take-home exam.
- 6) Unfair advantage:** attempting to gain unauthorized advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise. Example: gaining or providing unauthorized access to examination materials, obstructing or interfering with another student's efforts in an academic exercise, lying about a need for an extension for an exam or paper, continuing to write even when time is up during an exam, destroying or keeping library materials for one's own use.
- 7) Misrepresentation of academic records:** misrepresenting or tampering with or attempting to tamper with any portion of a student's transcripts or academic record, either before or after coming to the University of Pennsylvania. Example: forging a change of grade slip, tampering with computer records, falsifying academic information on one's resume.

Infractions can occur in any academic situation including, but not limited to, a course, research project, independent study, presentation, qualifying examination, preliminary examination, or dissertation.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

GSE embraces the principle that faculty members have wide authority to judge the academic work of their students. The University's policy titled "Faculty Authority to Assign Grades and Academic Integrity" notes the distinction between academic evaluation and disciplinary action: "Faculty members have the authority to make academic judgments in relation to their students and to make decisions in the interest of furthering their student's education. Only the institution, acting through its formal processes, may discipline a student. Grades are not sanctions, even if they arise from a judgment that a student has violated a norm of academic integrity. In such cases, the grade may reflect the faculty member's view that a piece of work was done inappropriately but it represents the quality of the work, not a record of discipline for the behavior." (from the [PennBook](#): Resources, Policies and Procedures Handbook)

FACULTY MEMBER'S OPTIONS

A faculty member who concludes that a student has violated this Code has two options. The faculty member may assign a grade that reflects the faculty member's view that the work was done inappropriately, or if the faculty member believes that the violation merits disciplinary sanctions or that further investigation is warranted, the faculty member may refer the matter to the GSE's Committee on Degrees or Penn's Office of Student Conduct for discipline - depending on whether or not the student has admitted the violation.

- Faculty members are strongly encouraged to report all cases to the University's Office of Student Conduct for handling under the procedures described in the Charter of the University of Pennsylvania Student Disciplinary System.
- If the faculty wishes to handle the matter with the grading option, it should be reported to the GSE Office of Academic and Student Affairs for recordkeeping.

APPEALS IN MATTERS INVOLVING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Grade Appeals

Ordinarily, only the faculty member who gives a grade has the authority to change the grade. Therefore, a student who wishes to appeal a course grade must first discuss the matter with the faculty member. If this discussion does not yield a mutually acceptable resolution, or should a discussion not be possible, the student may follow the procedures for grade appeals outlined in the Pennbook.

Appeal in Matters Referred to the Office of Student Conduct

In matters referred to the Office of Student Conduct the appeal procedures described in the Charter will apply.

MISCELLANEOUS

A faculty member involved in an academic integrity matter will be informed of the outcome of the disciplinary proceeding by the GSE Office of Academic & Student Affairs. If the student has been found not to be responsible for an academic integrity violation, the instructor may reconsider or regrade the student based upon the outcome of the disciplinary proceedings. In the event that the student believes the final grade is unfair or fails to take account of the outcome of the disciplinary proceeding, the student may appeal the grade through the grade appeals process.

In addition to the channels outlined above, a student may take problems to the Office of Ombudsman. The [Ombudsman](#) does not have decision-making authority, but serves as an impartial mediator in helping to resolve disputes. Further, any student who feels that he or she has been subject to discrimination may take his or her complaint to the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs. The role of the Office of Affirmative Action is to coordinate compliance with certain anti-discrimination laws.

POLICY ON ETHICAL BEHAVIOR IN THE ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT

The University by its very nature values openness and promotes access to a wide range of information. Campus information systems have been designed to be as open as possible, and as such the University insists on responsible use of these systems. Computers, electronic information and computer networks are essential for information and research, instruction and administration within the academic community. Because the electronic environment is easily disrupted and electronic information is readily reproduced, respect for the work and rights of others is especially important. Any intentional behavior with respect to the electronic environment that interferes with the missions or activities of the University or members of the University community will be regarded as unethical and may lead to disciplinary action under standard University rules for misconduct and existing judicial, disciplinary or personnel processes.

The following activities are examples, but not an exhaustive list, of unethical behaviors with respect to the electronic environment:

- intentionally damaging or destroying the integrity of electronic information;
- intentionally compromising the privacy of electronic networks or information systems;
- intentionally disrupting the use of electronic networks or information systems;
- intentionally infringing upon the intellectual property rights of others in computer programs or electronic information, including plagiarism and unauthorized use or reproduction; or wasting resources (human or electronic) through such actions.

Equal Opportunity & Harassment Policies

People are GSE's most important resource and we are committed to creating and sustaining learning and working environments that take full advantage of our diversity and are respectful of differences. President Gutmann has stated that "[i]n a democracy and at great universities, diversity and excellence go together." Cross-cultural conversations and interactions help to ensure that GSE is educating leaders who will be successful in both local and global settings. The University has policies and resources to underscore its commitment to equal opportunity in a community that also values open expression and academic freedom, including those listed below.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class status in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, educational or athletic programs, or other University-administered programs or in its employment practices. Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to the Executive Director of the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, Sansom Place East, 3600 Chestnut Street, Suite 228, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6106; or (215) 898-6993 (voice) or (215) 746-7088 (fax).

POLICY ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Penn is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and activities are available on an equitable and nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected class. The University's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy can be found [here](#).

RESPECT FOR OTHERS IN THE WORKPLACE

Penn recognizes that people are the most important resource for achieving eminence in accomplishing our mission in the areas of teaching, research, community service, and patient care. Penn is an institution that values academic freedom, diversity and respect for one another. Penn is committed to the principle of nondiscrimination and does not tolerate conduct that constitutes harassment on any basis, including sexual, racial, ethnic, religious, or gender harassment. For additional information, go [here](#).

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The University defines sexual harassment as: "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes harassment when:

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or participation in academic activities;

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or study environment."

The full policy, which includes resources available to respond to questions, provide support or investigate complaints, can be found [here](#).

CONSENSUAL SEXUAL RELATIONS BETWEEN FACULTY AND STUDENTS

The relationship between teacher and student is central to the academic mission of the University. No non-academic or personal ties should be allowed to interfere with the integrity of the teacher-student relationship. Consensual sexual relations between teacher and student can adversely affect the academic enterprise, distorting judgments or appearing to do so in the minds of others, and providing incentives or disincentives for student-faculty contact that are equally inappropriate. For more information is available [here](#).

POLICY AGAINST RETALIATION

University policy prohibits retaliation for, among other things, making a good faith report regarding a possible violation of its policies, including those related to on equal opportunity or sexual harassment. The policy can be found [here](#).

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES FOR RESOLVING INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

The University has resource offices that will provide information, support and advice to individuals who have questions or concerns regarding University policy, including the following:

- [African American Resource Center](#)
- [University Chaplain](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#)
- [Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center](#)
- [Penn Women's Center](#)
- [Special Services Unit, Division of Public Safety](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)

FORMAL COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING OFFICES

An individual who wishes to report an allegation of discrimination or harassment may contact Dean Porter, his or her department chair, or one of the designated University resource offices. If a report is made to one of the offices listed below, the staff of that office is responsible for ensuring that appropriate action is taken by the University.

- [Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs](#)
- [Office of Staff and Labor Relations, Division of Human Resources](#)
- [Office of the Ombudsman](#)
- [Office of the Vice Provost for University Life](#)

- [Penn Housing Services](#)
- [Office of Student Conduct](#)

SUPPORT WITHIN GSE

GSE offers information and support to any student, faculty, or staff member who has concerns or believes he or she has been treated in a discriminatory manner. The following members of the GSE community are available to provide support and information:

- [Stanton Wortham](#), Professor
- [Jessie Harper](#), Assistant Dean for Diversity and Faculty Affairs
- [Charles Washington](#), Instructional Technology & Multimedia Service Coordinator
- [Lois MacNamara](#), Assistant Dean
- [Maureen Cotterill](#), Teacher Education Coordinator
- [Theresa Singleton](#), Human Resources Coordinator

Exceptions to Policies

GSE COMMITTEE ON DEGREES

The Graduate School of Education Committee on Degrees considers petitions from student seeking exception to the school's academic policies or procedures. The Committee is made up of GSE faculty and administrators and reviews individual requests during the fall and spring semesters. Students who wish to make a petition to the Committee on Degrees should contact the [Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs](#).

GRADING POLICIES

COURSE GRADES

The following grades for Graduate School of Education courses will be entered on the student's record at the close of the term.

GRADE	GRADE POINTS
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	Failure
I	Incomplete

All courses are graded according to the preceding chart, with two exceptions: Instructors of practicum and fieldwork courses in Education may submit a "Pass/Fail" report as the final evaluation of the course performance of students enrolled in the Graduate School of Education. These courses include EDUC 515 and 555.

Instructors of internship courses EDUC 975 and 976 may submit a "Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory" report as the final evaluation of the course performance for students enrolled in the Graduate School of Education. Note: Ph.D. students may not count coursework with a "Pass/Fail" grade toward degree requirements.

SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE

All students in the Graduate School of Education are expected to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 for all courses applied toward degree requirements. Students who fail to maintain this minimum standard of satisfactory performance will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. Failure raise the cumulative GPA to a 3.0 at the end of the semester on probation will result in termination from the degree program.

In addition to the grade point average requirement, continuation in all degree programs of the Graduate School of Education is dependent upon maintenance of satisfactory performance through all phases of the program as judged by the student's advisor or dissertation

committee. Final determination of satisfactory performance rests with the Committee on Degrees.

STUDENT EVALUATION AND GRADE INFLATION

Student evaluation is the prerogative and responsibility of the faculty and an important educative act. Each student is entitled to the careful and timely review of his or her academic work. Grades are the means by which such evaluations are efficiently communicated to external groups (e.g. doctoral admissions committees, fellowship committees, employers) and, most importantly, to the student. The compression of grades in the upper range (grade inflation) has occurred at many colleges and universities and the phenomenon is particularly prevalent at highly selective institutions. There are, of course, circumstances in which grades may be somewhat skewed toward the upward range such as independent studies or small advanced doctoral seminars. Further, some faculty members use the “mastery” approach to teaching, providing students with feedback and the opportunity to rework certain assignments for a higher grade. Nevertheless, without variation in grades, it is impossible to differentiate between “distinguished” work (the criterion for an A in graduate grading system at Penn) and “good” work (the criterion for a B). Grade inflation is problematic because it unfairly penalizes students whose exemplary work deserves to stand apart through the recognition of an A. Inflated grades also can mislead students and give them an unreasonably optimistic assessment of their performance. At Penn, the expectation is that grade distributions in courses fall predominantly in the A to B range and that the notional mean of most courses (excluding small seminars and so forth and subject to the professional judgment of individual faculty members) is a B+.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Lack of significant progress in completing degree requirements for two consecutive years (exclusive of time when on official leave of absence) will automatically terminate candidacy or eligibility to apply for candidacy if not already attained. Satisfactory progress is evaluated by the student’s advisor or dissertation committee. Students should take the initiative in providing advisors with evidence of continuous progress; in the absence of such evidence, advisors may apprise themselves of their advisee’s status each term and refer a student to the Committee on Degrees if satisfactory progress is not maintained. Final determination of satisfactory progress rests with the Committee on Degrees.

INCOMPLETES

Students are expected to complete all coursework during the semester in which a course is taken. However, faculty members may give a grade of Incomplete to a student who is unable to finish course assignments by the end of the term. No GSE instructor is required to give grades of Incomplete. It is up to each faculty member to decide if and when Incompletes will be given. When an Incomplete is assigned, both the faculty member and the student must comply with school regulations governing the timely completion of coursework.

All incomplete coursework must be turned in by the deadline for registration to take either the master's comprehensive or doctoral preliminary examination. If a student subsequently receives a grade of Incomplete in a course taken in the semester preceding the semester in which the master's comprehensive or preliminary examination is taken, all outstanding work for the course must be submitted to the instructor within the first week of the semester in which the exam is to be taken. Any grade of Incomplete appearing on the transcript at the time either the master's comprehensive or preliminary examination is taken will become a Permanent Incomplete and may not be removed from the record. Exceptions to this policy may be made by petition to the Assistant Dean.

One-Year Time Limit

Students have one year from the end of the term in which a grade of Incomplete is assigned to finish all coursework unless:

- the faculty member has informed the student in writing of a shorter time frame within which the outstanding work must be submitted; or
- the student has been granted an extension of the one-year time limit by the Assistant Dean, upon recommendation of the faculty member.

Procedures for Completing Coursework during the One-Year Extension Period

Students must give the faculty member at least three weeks to read late assignments and submit a grade. More time may be required by individual faculty members, particularly at the end of the semester. It is the student's responsibility to find out how much time the faculty member requires to review course work and submit a grade.

The student may not expect a faculty member to review his/her work during the summer unless a prior agreement has been reached between the student and the faculty member.

Once the student submits all outstanding coursework to the faculty member for review, the faculty member evaluates the student's academic performance and sends a signed, dated change of grade form to the Student Records Office for processing.

The Registrar's Office must receive the change of grade form by the end of the academic term that is one year from the term in which the course is taken. Furthermore, the Student Records Office needs one week to record and send the change of grade information to the Registrar's Office.

If the student follows the timeline for submitting work, but the faculty member is unable to meet the Registrar's deadline for having a grade recorded, the student will not be penalized with a Permanent Incomplete, and an extension will be granted.

If a student fails to follow the timeline for having coursework reviewed by the deadlines, the faculty member and the School have no obligation to submit a grade by the Registrar's deadline, or to grant a further extension. Refer to the policy on Incompletes listed above.

Permanent Incompletes

Any Incompletes (I) that are on a student's transcript for one year or more become frozen by the Registrar's Office as Permanent Incompletes (I*). The Registrar automatically changes I to I* after the end of the semester that is one year from the term in which the course is taken. For example, a grade of I given in fall semester becomes I* after the end of next fall term. There will be no refund of tuition for courses that are recorded as I*. Any required course that shows a grade of I* must be retaken at the regular tuition rate.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the School's time limit on Incompletes are granted to students only with written recommendation of the faculty member and approval by the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs. Extensions are normally approved only when the student is experiencing a personal or family medical emergency or an ongoing debilitating condition, when the student is called for military duty, or when the faculty member does not submit the change of grade in a timely way. While other circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis, students should be aware that exceptions are not normally granted when the student reports that family or job responsibilities prevent him/her from meeting academic obligations. When extensions are granted, a new time limit is established by the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs in consultation with the faculty member.

GSE STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE POLICY

A GSE student who wishes to register a grievance regarding the evaluation of his/her academic work or a matter related to the program or a course should discuss the matter with the faculty member and then, if not satisfied, the Program Director and then, if not satisfied, with the Division Chair. If the grievance is not addressed, the student should then discuss this issue with the GSE Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs.

Leave of Absence, Withdrawal, and Admission Policies

Leave of Absence Policy

The University requires degree students to be continuously registered every semester until all degree requirements have been met unless a leave of absence has been approved. Degree students who intend to become inactive must submit a request for a leave of absence online. The request for leave of absence requires written approval from the student's advisor. Leaves of absence are normally approved for up to one year.

Eligible degree students who wish to request a leave of absence must submit the online form ([link here](#)) prior to the term when the leave is desired (if possible), or at least during the drop/request period of the semester. Failure to register for coursework, master's thesis or dissertation status without permission from the University does not constitute a leave of absence. If students request a leave after the beginning of the semester, normal drop and withdrawal deadlines apply. Leaves of absence will not be granted retroactively for terms when students failed to register or request a leave. The granting of a leave of absence does not automatically change the time limit for completing degree requirements. Time spent in military service does not count under the time limit.

Once a leave of absence is approved, students may not register for courses, submit assignments to faculty, request a change of grade, hold dissertation hearings, sit for exams or graduate during a leave of absence. Additionally, students on leave of absence do not have to access to Penn or PennGSE resources. Students on an approved leave of absence who wish to retain access to Penn's facilities (in particular, the library) must pay a fee per term of absence. This fee is added to the Student Financial Services bill by the PennGSE Registrar. Students who are interested in this option should contact the PennGSE Student Records Office (gse-sro@gse.upenn.edu). Students returning from leave of absence must notify the Student Records Office in order to be register and return to active status. Once written permission has been granted by the Assistant Dean for the semester(s) in question, the Student Records Office will register the student.

Click [here](#) for the Request for Leave of Absence form.

University Family Leave of Absence Policy

A student in the Ph.D. program at Penn may take an unpaid Family Leave of Absence for the birth or adoption of a child, child care, or care of an immediate family member (spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent) with a serious health condition. Click [here](#) for this University policy. Click [here](#) for the Request for Leave of Absence form.

Eligible degree students who want a leave of absence must submit a request to the Assistant Dean prior to the term when the leave is desired (if possible). Leaves of absence will not be granted retroactively for terms when students failed to register or request a leave. The granting of a leave of absence does not automatically change the time limit for completing degree requirements. Time spent in military service does not count under the time limit.

Students may not register for courses, hold dissertation hearings, sit for exams or graduate during a leave of absence. Students returning from leave of absence must notify the Student Records Office in order to be reactivated as current students. Students with grants to undertake dissertation research abroad that do not provide home institution fees, and who wish to maintain the University Health Insurance Plan may obtain a special registration status entitled “Dissertation Research Abroad.” This special status allows the student to remain registered, but does not incur tuition charges. Once written permission has been granted by the Assistant Dean for the semester(s) in question, the Student Records Office will register the student.

WITHDRAWAL

A student who intends to terminate candidacy for a degree at the Graduate School of Education should formally withdraw from the School by notifying the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs in writing. The effective date of separation from the University is the date on which the student files a written request for withdrawal with the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs. Students are responsible for tuition charges and other financial obligations to the University incurred before the effective date of withdrawal.

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR FORMER STUDENTS

Former students who wish to resume their studies must apply for admission to the desired degree program with the Admissions Office. Applications from former students will be considered with the rest of the applicant pool during the next admissions cycle.

Policy on Secular and Religious Holidays

No secular or religious holidays are formally recognized by the University’s [academic calendar](#). However, in setting the academic calendar for each year, the University does try to avoid obvious conflicts with any holidays that involve most University students, faculty and staff, such as July 4th, Thanksgiving, Labor Day, Christmas New Year’s Day and Martin Luther King Day. [University policy on secular and religious holidays](#) is available in the Pennbook.

Registration Policies & Procedures

Course Registration

Students register for courses using Penn in Touch. New students register for courses at the beginning of their first term. Current students register in advance during the advance registration period noted on the [academic calendar](#) for each semester.

To register:

1. Review the [GSE course roster](#), the [university course roster](#), and the registration instructions.
2. Meet with your advisor, or consult your planned program of study to determine which courses to take.
3. Obtain a permit for courses designated with a “P” on the course roster from the appropriate division .
4. Go to [Penn in Touch](#)
 - Enter your PennKey and Password
 - Click "Registration and Planning"
 - Click "Register for Courses"
 - Enter the course and section numbers

Drop/Request

There is a designated Drop/Request period each term during which time students may make changes to their course schedule without penalty. The Drop/Request period is published on the [GSE academic calendar](#). Within the dates posted on the GSE academic calendar, students may drop or register for courses through Penn-In-Touch. Course registration changes made after the published deadline will be subject to the refund schedule published in the [GSE academic calendar](#). If there is a problem with a registration/drop, students should contact the Student Records Office immediately. If students need to drop or register for a course after the drop period has ended, they must bring written permission of the instructor to the Student Records Office, where they will be manually registered or dropped and their bill will be adjusted. Once an instructor’s written permission to drop/add a course has been obtained, withdrawal from a course after the Drop/Request period will be permitted; however, a tuition refund is subject to a partial refund schedule. Students may not drop a course retroactively, that is, after the last week of the semester in which the course has been taught.

Master’s Registration (EDUC 990)

All master’s degree candidates must be registered each term for coursework or Master’s Registration until they graduate unless a leave of absence has been granted. Master’s degree candidates who have completed all coursework must register for Master’s Registration (EDUC 990.001). This registration designates the student as an active full-time master’s degree student and allows the student to meet with his/her advisor, sit for the master’s comprehensive exam, use University facilities, complete outstanding coursework and/or graduate. EDUC 990 carries no course units. The student must be registered for coursework or Master’s Registration in the term when he/she takes the comprehensive exam and in the term when he/she graduates. Any master’s student who fails to register each semester for coursework or Master’s Registration will be considered to have withdrawn from candidacy for the degree. Master’s Registration is considered full-time status which requires mandatory enrollment in student health insurance unless the student has proof of their own health insurance. If this is the case or if you have questions, contact Student Records at gse-sro@gse.upenn.edu.

Dissertation Status (EDUC 995)

Dissertation status signifies that doctoral students have completed all coursework for the doctoral degree. Dissertation status begins the first term in which they register for EDUC 995 after having completed all coursework. Students who have successfully passed the doctoral preliminary examination and have identified a committee chair are considered to be on *Dissertation Supervision*.

Doctoral students who have completed all coursework must register for EDUC 995. This registration designates them as active doctoral students and allows them to meet with their advisors, sit for exams, use University facilities and work on the dissertation. When students register for EDUC 995, they are considered full-time students for financial aid purposes. Full-time status converts to part-time status after 10 semesters of enrollment. Students who have not passed the preliminary examination and identified a committee chair will be registered for EDUC995 section 001.

Those students who have passed the preliminary examination and identified a committee chair will be registered for EDUC 995 with a section number determined by the committee chair (Each faculty member has an assigned section number). Students must contact their division and identify their committee chairs to be registered for dissertation status with a specific faculty member as chair.

Once students have registered for EDUC 995, GSE automatically re-registers them each fall and spring semester in the same section. If students change advisors, they must notify their division manager and the Student Records Office so the section number can be changed. Dissertation students are ineligible to take a leave of absence except for the reasons described below in the [Leave of Absence Policy](#). In keeping with the school's continuous registration requirements, dissertation students who fail to register each semester will be charged tuition for past semesters, if they seek if they seek to re-register, to a maximum of six terms.

Tuition is waived for one and only one semester after the student successfully passes the dissertation defense.

Continuous Registration

All degree students in the Graduate School of Education must be registered during each fall and spring term until all degree requirements have been met unless a leave of absence has been granted. To satisfy the continuous registration requirement students must be registered for coursework, master's registration tuition, or dissertation supervision. Students are not required to register for the summer unless they will sit for an examination, hold an oral proposal or defense, or graduate during the summer. Please refer to the fee schedule for current tuition for master's registration and dissertation supervision. **A degree student who has not maintained active**

status by registering each term, and who has not been granted an official leave of absence, will be considered withdrawn. Inactive students must apply for readmission to the Graduate School of Education in order to resume work toward the degree. Master's degree students must register for master's registration tuition (EDUC 990.001) if they have completed all coursework and will be taking the master's comprehensive examination that semester (including summer term) or graduating. Doctoral students, when finished with coursework, must register for dissertation supervision while working on the dissertation and completing exams. Registration is not required during the summer; however students, who plan to use University facilities, take comprehensive or preliminary examinations hold dissertation hearings or graduate must register and pay the tuition.

Students on dissertation status who withdraw or fail to maintain continuous registration will be charged tuition for past semesters if they seek to re-register, to a maximum of six semesters.

Auditing

All GSE courses are for grade only. Students who wish to attend a course without completing the assignments or taking examinations may request to audit the course. The students register in the usual way, but auditing a course requires the student to get permission from the instructor. This permission is then given to the Student Records Office for changing the grade type to audit. Auditors are subject to the normal course tuition and fees. They will not receive credit for the course, but it will appear on their transcript with "AUD" in the grade column.

Interschool Courtesy

Students of the Graduate School of Education are encouraged to take courses in other schools of the University, and students registered as candidates for degrees in other schools of the University are encouraged to take courses in the Graduate School of Education. To qualify for interschool courtesy, students must have the consent of their academic advisor and the instructor of the course in which they wish to enroll. Only courses 500 level or above are considered graduate level. Courses below the 500 level will not count toward degree requirements and will be charged at the GSE tuition rate.

Application for Graduation

All degree candidates must apply to graduate for the term in which they plan to receive the degree. To apply to graduate, complete the [online application for graduation](#), before the deadline listed on the [GSE academic calendar](#). Failure to apply for graduation by the published deadline will make it impossible to receive the degree that semester. Master of Science & Ph.D. degree candidates must apply to graduate with the [Graduate School of Arts & Sciences](#).

Course Load Per Term

The maximum course load per term is five course units for master's degree students and four course units per term for doctoral students. There is a maximum course load of four course units in the summer term, with a maximum of three course units permitted in either six-week session.

Full-Time/Part-Time Status

Coursework

Registration for three or more course units in a semester is considered full-time student status. Registration for .5 to 2.5 course units is considered part-time status. An exception to this policy is made in the case of internships. Degree candidates or certification students who are on full-time, program-required internships are considered to be full-time enrolled students. For an internship to be considered "program-required" and "full-time," it must be approved by the division and must involve work of at least 15 weeks per semester at 40 hours per week. The registration must be approved by the division. The current facilities fee rate will be charged for tuition.

Internships

Degree candidates or certification students who are on half-time, program-required internships are considered to be full-time students if, in addition to the half-time internship, they take a minimum of three course units over the academic year. For an internship to be considered "program-required" and "half-time," it must be approved by the division and must involve work of at least 15 weeks per semester at 20 hours per week. The current facilities fee rate will be charged for tuition. For further information, students should contact their division office.

Leave of Absence

If a degree student intends to become inactive, an application for a leave of absence must be submitted to the Assistant Dean. In order to maintain good standing in the Graduate School of Education, degree students must either be registered every term or have an approved leave of absence. Leaves of absence are normally approved for up to one year.

Doctoral students who have reached dissertation status will not be granted a leave of absence except for military duty, medical reasons, or when a grant is received for dissertation research abroad and the grant does not include funds to pay home institution fees. A leave of absence may also be granted for purposes of providing care to children under the age of two if the student is the primary caregiver and not gainfully employed.

Eligible degree students who want a leave of absence must submit a request to the Assistant Dean prior to the term when the leave is desired (if possible). Leaves of absence will not be granted retroactively for terms when students failed to register or request a leave. The granting of a leave of absence does not automatically change the time limit for completing degree requirements. Time spent in military service does not count under the time limit.

Students may not register for courses, hold dissertation hearings, sit for exams or graduate during a leave of absence. Students returning from leave of absence must notify the Student Records Office in order to be reactivated as current students. Students with grants to undertake dissertation research abroad that do not provide home institution fees, and who wish to maintain the University Health Insurance Plan may obtain a special registration status entitled “Dissertation Research Abroad.” This special status allows the student to remain registered, but does not incur tuition charges. Once written permission has been granted by the Assistant Dean for the semester(s) in question, the Student Records Office will register the student.

Withdrawal

A student who intends to terminate candidacy for a degree at the Graduate School of Education should formally withdraw from the School by notifying the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs in writing. The effective date of separation from the University is the date on which the student files a written request for withdrawal with the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs. Students are responsible for tuition charges and other financial obligations to the University incurred before the effective date of withdrawal.

Readmission

A student wishing to be readmitted into a degree program must reapply to the desired specialization. In order to be readmitted students will be required to have the support of their former advisor and the current division chair; complete any outstanding coursework from previous courses taken; demonstrate satisfactory performance in previous study at GSE; satisfy all financial obligations to the University; and be able to meet the time limit requirements for completing the degree. As a condition of readmission, inactive doctoral students (Ed.D. and Ph.D.) previously on dissertation status must pay past dissertation fees for each fall and spring term since last enrollment, to a maximum of six terms. All students readmitted to the Graduate School of Education will be subject to current academic policies of the Graduate School of Education.

Penn's Ethics & Original Research Handbook for Students