

The Special Education Doctoral Student Handbook

Department of Special Education

College of Education

Illinois State University



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This handbook is a supplement to the *Graduate Catalog* and Illinois State University's Graduate School *Mission Statement, Bylaws, Regulations and Procedures* for students seeking a doctoral degree in special education from Illinois State University. It is intended to answer questions about enrollment in the doctoral program and to clarify the requirements and procedures that must be followed to earn the degree. Each student should become familiar with the contents prior to meeting with his or her academic advisor.

For further information, students are invited to consult with Dr. Maureen E. Angell, Doctoral Program Coordinator for the Department of Special Education at Illinois State University [(309) 438-8980 (voice) or (309) 438-3467 (TDD)].

The Special Education Doctoral Program

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Special Education is a degree offered by Illinois State University for persons seeking leadership positions in the field of special education. Doctoral students complete formal course work and professional experiences related to teacher preparation and program leadership and conduct research in the field of special education that culminates in completion of a doctoral dissertation.

Course Requirements

Graduation from the program is determined not only by completion of specific courses but also by demonstration of established competencies. Each student's plan of study includes four components: core course work, specialty course work, elective course work, and dissertation.

Core Course Work (8 courses, 24 credit hours)

EAF 508 – Applied Educational Research **or** EAF 509 – Research Design in Education

EAF 510 – Research Methods/Stats in Education II

EAF 415 – Qualitative Research

SED 501 – Doctoral-Level Scholarship

SED 502 – Legal & Policy Issues Affecting Special Education Program Administration*

SED 512 – Single Subject Design Research

SED 513 – Program Evaluation in Special Education*

SED 540 – Contemporary Topics & Issues in Special Education*

Specialty Course Work (7 courses, 21 credit hours)

SED 514 – Personnel Preparation in Special Education
SED 515 – Seminar in Special Education Research
SED 522 – Grant Writing in Education
SED 579 – Advanced Technological Applications in Special Education
SED 594 – Proposal Development in Special Education
SED 598.01 – Professional Practice in Teacher Preparation
SED 598.02 – Professional Practice in Special Education Research

Elective Course Work (15 credit hours – several popular options are listed below)

C&I 409 – Student Diversity in Educational Practices
C&I 491 – Internships in College Teaching
EAF 410 – Research Methodology and Statistics in Education I*
EAF 465 – Managing Human and Fiscal Resources in Education*
EAF 478 – Legal Bases of Public Education*
EAF 482 – Administration Seminar*
SED 410 – Educational Assessment and Planning for Individuals with Disabilities*
SED 422 – Teaching Diverse Learners*
SED 447 - Administering Educational Programs for Students with Disabilities*
SED 454 – Collaboration/Consultation in Special Education*
SED 445 – Curriculum Development
SED 482 – Seminar in Special Education Research
SED 516 – Doctoral Research Seminar – Professional Development*
SED 517 – Special Education Directorship*
SED 520 – Seminar in Special Topics in Special Education
SED 598.03 – Professional Practice in Program Administration*

**Course includes standards associated with State of Illinois Post-Master's Certification as Director of Special Education*

Dissertation (15 credit hours)

SED 599 – Dissertation Research

The Doctoral Student

Program Planning and Advisement

The Doctoral Program Coordinator will meet with each doctoral student during the student's first semester in the program and will then assign the student to an academic advisor (i.e., SED graduate faculty member) based on mutual research interests and the student's program and career goals. Each student is responsible for developing a Plan of Study in consultation with the academic advisor. Students should have their Plans of Study in place prior to completing 18 credit hours in the program. The Plan of Study identifies course work (including electives) and a projected time line for completing all program requirements. The Department's Doctoral Program Committee will review each student's progress after the student has taken 18 credit hours of coursework and after the student has taken 36 credit hours of coursework.

The Plan of Study must be submitted to the Graduate School at the beginning of the semester in which a student intends to graduate. This Plan of Study is subject to approval by the Doctoral Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and Graduate School Director.

Plan of Study Form

The Department of Special Education's *Degree Audit Form* is shown on pages 5-8.

Residency (Scholarship Development Program) and Time Limitations

Residency at Illinois State University allows for (a) adequate time to concentrate on doctoral-level study and research, (b) active involvement on a regular basis in the professional activities of the Department of Special Education, and (c) direct access to libraries, laboratories, and research tools necessary for doctoral-level research. In lieu of traditional residency requirements, but to meet the same objectives, all doctoral students (including off-campus cohorts) must fulfill Scholarship Development requirements as described on p. 7 of this handbook.

All work for the doctoral degree, including the dissertation, must be completed within 8 calendar years. The *Graduate School Regulations and Procedures* should be consulted for detailed information on how the time limitation is defined. If the program is not completed during this time, the student may be required to take additional course work, another comprehensive examination, or both. *The student is responsible for checking and complying with the residency and program completion time limitation regulations. The student is also responsible for complying with continuous enrollment regulations during the dissertation phase.*

Student's Last Name

First Name

UID #



Degree Audit Form for Doctoral Degrees (replaces all previous plan of study forms, university and program-specific)

Instructions:

1. Please do not submit this form until the student has enrolled for his or her final semester.
2. Coordinators may choose to fill in course names and numbers themselves, or they may delegate that task to the student or a staff member, who will then forward the form to the coordinator for review. Rationales and requests for exceptions need to be completed by the coordinator.
3. After reviewing this form with the student, the graduate coordinator emails it, along with any required attachments, to Grad.Degree.Audit@ilstu.edu. Submission directly from the graduate coordinator's ISU email account serves as the coordinator's signature on the form and is required for the degree audit.

Semester of first enrollment in this program _____
m/yy

Catalog year for degree audit

- ☐ Follow catalog for year of admission
- ☐ Follow catalog for year of graduation

Time limitation

- ☐ This student is graduating within the time limit stated in the catalog.
- ☐ This student is NOT graduating within that time limit. Degree audit requires *extension form*.
<http://www.grad.ilstu.edu/downloads/Extensionoftime.pdf>

Currency of ISU credits

- ☐ All ISU credits listed in this plan will be no more than 8 years old at the time of graduation.
- ☐ Some ISU credits listed here will be OVER 8 years old at the time of graduation. Degree audit requires a letter or email message from the *department in which each class was offered*, stating that the *student's knowledge from the class* is still current.

Coursework from another University

- ☐ Plan contains no coursework from another university.
- ☐ Plan contains coursework from another university. An official transcript must be submitted to the Graduate School.

University limits on general courses

- ☐ **No** more than 12 hours of Independent Study 500.
- ☐ Plan exceeds university limits on general courses; program requests an exception. Degree audit requires a letter or message from the program *explaining the rationale* for counting excess general courses, *and Graduate School approval*.

Substitutions or exceptions

- ☐ Courses listed below meet all catalog requirements.
- ☐ Courses listed below do NOT meet all catalog requirements; program requests a *substitution or exception*. Degree audit requires a letter or message from the program, *describing all requested substitutions or exceptions* and the program's rationale for each one, and Graduate School approval.

Additional University Requirements

- ☐ GPA is 3.0 or higher; students with gpa's lower than 3.0 will not graduate
- ☐ Only graduate level courses with a grade of A, B, or C, may be used.
(C's are not allowed in some programs or in some courses.)
- ☐ If 300 level courses were taken the mainframe must indicate "G" for graduate
- ☐ Syllabi must be submitted for courses offered under the same number but with different content (e.g. Seminars, Topic Courses, Studies, Workshops).
- ☐ If choosing the dissertation option, a minimum of 15 dissertation hours (599.00) is required, and a maximum of 15 hours is allowed to be used in the degree audit.

See next page to list courses taken for degree requirements.



GRADUATE SCHOOL
DEGREE AUDIT FOR DOCTORAL DEGREES

NAME		UNIVERSITY IDENTIFICATION NO.	DATE DEGREE EXPECTED
ADDRESS		EMAIL	WORK PHONE HOME PHONE
MAJOR	SEQUENCE SED		
CHECK ONE: <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ed.D. <input type="checkbox"/> Au.D.			

ISU GRADUATE COURSES				
Dept. No. and Course No.	Course Title	Sem. Hrs.	Grade	Sem/Yr
591 501	Doctoral-Level Scholarship	3		
591 502	Legal & Policy Issues Affecting Sp Ed ProgAdm	3		
591 512	Single Subject Research in Special Education	3		
591 513	Sem in Evaluation of Sp Ed Programs	3		
591 514	Personnel Preparation in Special Education	3		
591 515	Seminar in Special Education Research	3		
591 522	Grant Writing in Special Ed and Habilitation	3		
591 540	Seminar in Contemporary Topics in Special Ed	3		
591 579	Advanced Technological Applications in Sp Ed	3		
591 594	Dissertation Proposal Development	3		
591 598.01	Professional Practice in Teacher Preparation	3		
591 598.02	Professional Practice in Applied Research	3		
590 508 or 509	Applied Educl Research or Res Design in Educ	3		
590 510	Research Methodology & Statistics in Educ II	3		
590 415	Qualitative Research in Educational Settings	3		
591 599	Dissertation Research			
591 599	Dissertation Research			
591 599	Dissertation Research			

Total Transfer Hours _____
Must be listed on page 2

Total Graduate Hours _____
(ISU courses + Transfer courses)

By submitting this form and the required attachments from his or her ISU email account, the graduate coordinator confirms that:

- any additional departmental or school requirements for graduation not listed on this form have been met,
- the student has seen this plan and concurs with it,
- this plan is ready to be audited for completion of the degree.

Please use this page, if needed, to list additional courses required for the degree.

Pg. 2

ADDITIONAL ISU GRADUATE COURSES				
Dept. No. and Course No.	Course Title	Sem. Hrs.	Grade	Sem/Yr

Total Hours Transferred _____

Total Graduate Hours _____

Courses From Other Universities Being Used to Meet Degree Requirements				
University	Course Number and Title	Sem. Credit Hrs	Grade	When Taken

Total Hours Transferred _____

Total Graduate Hours _____

(ISU courses & courses from other Universities)

By submitting this form and the required attachments from his or her ISU email account, the graduate coordinator confirms that:

- any additional departmental or school requirements for graduation not listed on this form have been met,
- the student has seen this plan and concurs with it,
- this plan is ready to be audited for completion of the degree.

Rev. 5/10

Scholarship Development, Dissertation Committee, Comprehensive Examination, Candidacy, Defenses, Degree Completion

Scholarship Development Program in Lieu of Residency Requirements

The Department of Special Education supports the doctoral student's completion of a Scholarship Development Program in lieu of traditional residency requirements. The Scholarship Development component of the doctoral program socializes doctoral students into the academy by affording them opportunities to engage throughout their doctoral program in scholarship activities with SED faculty members.

The Scholarship Development Program is student-initiated and monitored, must occur with at least two different SED faculty members, and must be completed prior to the dissertation defense. The Scholarship Development Program consists of at least three different activities from the following:

- 1 co-presentation at a professional meeting or conference with at least one faculty member
- 1 peer-reviewed journal manuscript co-authored and submitted for publication with at least one faculty member
- 1 State- or Federal-level grant proposal co-authored with at least one faculty member
- 1 review of a journal article (as assigned by the editor of a professional journal) in collaboration with a faculty member.

Doctoral students will be responsible for planning and completing individualized Scholarship Development activities. This planning and completion begins early in the doctoral program (during SED 501) to ensure that the doctoral student meets the requirements before the dissertation proposal phase of the program. Students must take the initiative to inquire about opportunities for collaboration with faculty and pursue these opportunities.

Although the scholarship development requirement is a minimal requirement to be met, several doctoral students participate in scholarship activities beyond this minimal requirement. These doctoral students seek to enrich their doctoral studies experience by collaborating with faculty members on a number of scholarly activities throughout their doctoral programs for various reasons. Some of these reasons are:

- Many potential jobs, especially those in higher education, require candidates to have a range of scholarly skills.
- Students often find the application of what they learn in coursework through various scholarly activities a deeply enriching experience that helps solidify their learning.
- Scholarly activities can be focused on doctoral students' current work in the field, making them valuable innovators in their positions.
- Skills acquired through scholarly activities such as program evaluation, grant writing, training, presenting empirical evidence, and writing professional papers are extremely useful in PreK-12 education, higher education, and special education administration positions.
- Students often develop rich lifelong professional relationships with faculty members and other students with whom they have collaborated on scholarly endeavors.

The Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee will be formed at least one semester prior to the student's enrollment in SED 598.02 (Professional Practice in Special Education Research). The Dissertation Committee will have the following characteristics: (a) the committee will consist of no fewer than three SED Graduate Faculty members; (b) the Committee Chairperson (or at least one of the Committee Co-Chairs) and a majority of the committee must be full members of the SED Graduate Faculty; (c) additional committee members may be faculty members from SED or other departments, colleges, or institutions (e.g., a statistician from the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations or a content specialist from a related field) at the department's discretion. Proposed committee members who are not members of the Illinois State University Graduate Faculty must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. All committee members must have terminal degrees. Dissertation committee members will collectively provide the expertise essential to support the doctoral candidate's dissertation investigation.

The Chair of the Dissertation Committee will be selected by the student and appointed from the SED graduate faculty by the Graduate School Director with the recommendation of the Department of Special Education. The Committee Chairperson may or may not be the academic advisor with whom

the student has worked throughout his or her doctoral program regarding the student's Plan of Study. The Committee Chairperson is responsible for directing the dissertation, communicating with other Committee members regarding the rules that govern their actions, establishing the timelines which the Committee must meet, and assisting the student with filing required Graduate School forms.

Comprehensive Examination in Special Education

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to formally admit doctoral students to candidacy for the doctoral degree. Upon completion of the Comprehensive Examination students are deemed qualified to undertake completion of their dissertations and subsequent dissertation defense. The Comprehensive Examination provides students with an opportunity to integrate knowledge and engage in critical thinking about key issues and concerns facing special education and related disciplines. Students also demonstrate their ability to use professional written language (within APA 2009 style) to communicate effectively.

Procedures for the Comprehensive Examination are as follows:

1. A doctoral student may schedule his or her Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations only after completion of at least 51 hours of course work toward the doctoral degree. Two Comprehensive Examination Evaluation Subcommittees comprised of members of the Dissertation Committee will be formed at least 1 month before the student intends to take the Comprehensive Examination. If the Dissertation Committee includes one or more nonSED faculty members, that member's or those members' involvement in the Comprehensive Examination development and evaluation is optional.
2. Two Comprehensive Examination Evaluation Subcommittees will be formed from among the Dissertation Committee members: one for foundational knowledge and one for the student's specialty area. These evaluation subcommittees will, in consultation with the student, recommend two comprehensive projects. One of these projects will allow the student to demonstrate foundational knowledge, competence, and skills and the other project will allow the student to demonstrate knowledge, competence, and skills in his or her specialty area. Examples of products include, but are not limited to: a written exam, a programmatic evaluation, a grant proposal, a scholarly paper addressing concepts or issues in the field, a manuscript appropriate for submission

to a peer-reviewed journal, and an action research project. The Comprehensive Examination Evaluation Committee as a whole will approve of the type, number, and scope of the assigned comprehensive examination projects. Taken together, the two projects are intended to provide a comprehensive demonstration of the student's breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding in both foundational and specialty areas. Students may begin work on comprehensive projects only with the approval of the Comprehensive Examination Evaluation Committee.

3. The Comprehensive Examination Evaluation Committee will establish a timeline for completion and submission of the projects. Typically, students will have 3 months to complete the projects. All university policies and procedures related to academic integrity will apply. See the Student Code of Conduct at http://www.studentaffairs.ilstu.edu/downloads/Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf
4. If four committee members participate in the Comprehensive Examination process, each two-member evaluation subcommittee will evaluate one project report in the assigned area. If only three committee members participate in the Comprehensive Examination process, the Dissertation Committee chairperson will evaluate both project reports and the other two committee members will each evaluate one project report. Subcommittee members will independently evaluate the assigned project and then discuss the collaborative evaluation to be presented to the student. Each two-member subcommittee will determine the pass/needs revision status of one comprehensive project.
5. If the student passes the comprehensive projects, s/he will schedule an Oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination meeting. If the student does not pass one or both projects, s/he will not schedule the Oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination meeting and a remediation plan for revision and resubmission of one or both of the project reports will be developed by the Evaluation Subcommittee(s). The student will have 1 month per project to complete the requirements of the remediation/revision plan. Only one revision per project will be allowed. If the student does not pass both written comprehensive project reports upon the second written submission (with the support of the remediation plan), the student will be dismissed from the doctoral program.
6. Upon successful completion of the two written comprehensive projects, the doctoral student will schedule an Oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination meeting. The format of this meeting resembles that of a dissertation defense. To demonstrate the ability to articulate a summary of his or her work, the student will make a brief presentation on each

completed project. This presentation will be followed by a question and answer session with the full Evaluation Committee.

7. When a doctoral student has successfully completed the written and oral components of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination, he or she enters candidacy status and may enroll in SED 594, Dissertation Proposal Writing. If a student does not successfully complete the written and oral components of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination after the one allowed written revision or after a second scheduled oral examination meeting, the student will be dismissed from the doctoral program.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

The dissertation itself may not begin until all members of the Dissertation Committee have signed the Proposal Approval Form after having agreed that the topic is worthy of pursuit and the student's proposed methodology is adequate.

The dissertation proposal defense focuses on the presentation of a proposed study to the Dissertation Committee. The candidate and the Chair of the Dissertation Committee will schedule the proposal defense. The candidate will be expected to submit a written proposal that includes a statement of the problem, a brief summary of the literature review, and a methodology section (each of which corresponds to a chapter in a dissertation) to the Committee for review at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled proposal defense. At the proposal defense the candidate should be prepared to provide an overview of the proposed study and answer questions related to the study. The committee can decide to (a) pass, (b) fail, or (c) defer a decision when evaluating a candidate's dissertation proposal defense. A candidate may begin dissertation research only with Committee approval. A candidate will not be allowed to register for more than 6 hours of dissertation course work (e.g., SED 599) until he or she has successfully completed the Dissertation Proposal Defense.

The Doctoral Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation provides an opportunity for the candidate to conduct original research and make a contribution to the field of special education. The candidate must register for at least 15 semester hours of dissertation credit (SED 599) to meet graduation requirements.

The dissertation must follow a standard format found in the Graduate School's *Guide for Writers of Doctoral Dissertations* using the style found in

the 2009 Publication Manual (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA).

In conducting the dissertation study, the candidate is expected to obtain original data and interpret these data in the light of previous work in the field. Such a study may (a) grow out of the practical educational experience demonstrated by the candidate, (b) be based on directed field experience, (c) be the scholarly study of an educational problem involving its theoretical implications and the analysis of attempted solutions in different areas, or (d) be a new interpretation or synthesis of existing research.

Complete copies of the dissertation must be given to the Dissertation Committee at least 2 weeks before the Final Dissertation Defense. One copy of the dissertation, including an abstract, must be deposited with the Graduate School for review/format check no later than the date specified in the current Graduate School Calendar, and at least 2 weeks before the Final Dissertation Defense. Candidates may defend their dissertations only when they have passed the format check by the Graduate School and have been issued a Right to Defend form.

Following the Final Dissertation Defense, the candidate must deposit the following items with the Graduate School on or before the date specified in the current Graduate School Calendar for final submission: (a) all changes required by the student's Dissertation Committee, (b) review of the dissertation by the Graduate School, (c) correction of all errors identified by the Graduate School, (d) two copies of the doctoral dissertation, and (e) two dissertation abstracts. All items must be signed by the Dissertation Committee members.

Final Dissertation Defense

The Final Dissertation Defense focuses on the dissertation study. The candidate and the Chair of the Dissertation Committee schedule the defense meeting. The candidate is expected to submit a dissertation that includes a statement of the problem, a review of the literature, a methodology section, a results section, and a discussion section. These components make up a five-chapter dissertation. The dissertation must be submitted to the Dissertation Committee for review at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled Final Dissertation Defense meeting.

At the Final Defense, the doctoral candidate will provide an overview of the study and findings, and answer questions related to the study. The Dissertation Committee can decide to (a) pass, (b) fail, or (c) defer a decision when evaluating a candidate's Final Dissertation Defense. Copies of the dissertation will be available to all Department of Special Education faculty members for a 10-day review and comment period; however, only Dissertation Committee members will have the opportunity to participate in the final approval decision.

Application for the Doctoral Degree

The candidate must file an on-line application for graduation with the Graduate School office at the beginning of the semester in which he or she intends to graduate. At this time, the candidate must also pay the required fees. Candidates should refer to the Graduate School website for deadline dates regarding filing the doctoral dissertation with the Graduate School for Format Check, scheduling the Final Dissertation Defense, and filing of the final approved dissertation.

CHECKLIST GUIDE FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
<input type="text"/>	1. Contact Doctoral Program Coordinator for initial advisement on coursework and assignment of an academic advisor.
<input type="text"/>	2. Meet with academic advisor.
<input type="text"/>	3. Develop an individualized Plan of Study.
<input type="text"/>	4. Develop Scholarship Development Program Plan in SED 501.
<input type="text"/>	5. Quality Checkpoint (of student progress) conducted by SED Doctoral Program Committee after 18 credit hours of coursework.
<input type="text"/>	6. Quality Checkpoint (of student progress) conducted by SED Doctoral Program Committee after 36 credit hours of coursework.
<input type="text"/>	7. Complete 51 hours of course work.
<input type="text"/>	8. Receive approval from Graduate School for Dissertation Committee.
<input type="text"/>	9. Submit written Doctoral Comprehensive Examination project(s) to Dissertation Committee at least 2 weeks prior to the Oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination meeting.
<input type="text"/>	10. Pass Oral Doctoral Comprehensive Examination.
<input type="text"/>	11. Complete and submit documentation of Scholarship Development activities prior to enrollment in SED 594 (Dissertation Proposal Writing).

☐

12. Submit Dissertation Proposal (Chapters 1, 2, and 3) to Dissertation Committee at least 2 weeks prior to Proposal Defense.

☐

13. Pass Dissertation Proposal Defense. Get approval signatures on Proposal Approval Form.

☐

14. Submit dissertation research protocol to Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval (if human subjects are involved in dissertation).

☐

15. Collect data, conduct data analysis, and write doctoral dissertation.

☐

15. Submit Plan of Study at beginning of graduation semester and apply (online) for Ed.D. Degree graduation.

☐

16. Submit Dissertation to Dissertation Committee at least 2 weeks prior to the Final Dissertation Defense. Format check by the Graduate School may be conducted during these 2 weeks. Students must have a Right to Defend form from the Graduate School before they can conduct the Final Dissertation Defense. The Right to Defend form is issued only upon successful format check.

☐

17. Pass Final Dissertation Defense.

☐

18. CELEBRATE at graduation! You will be formally "hooded" at the Commencement ceremony by your dissertation chairperson.