

## Doctoral Programs in Special Education

The Doctor of Education (Ed. D.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.) degrees represent alternate but comparable doctoral programs in special education. The student chooses one of these degree options depending on the student's stated goals.

### Doctoral of Education (Ed.D.) in Special Education

This program prepares scholars for leadership roles in teaching, teacher education, applied research, evaluation, curriculum development, policy development, and program supervision and development depending on a student's program goals and objectives. The emphasis is upon the application of theory and applied research to the improvement of educational practice in special education.

Students in this program may be projected to work in a wide array of leadership or applied clinical research positions in higher education, state education agencies, school systems or other organizations. The program is individualized and flexible enough to allow individuals to prepare to be scholarly practitioners in a wide variety of settings.

Students in this program may be full time or part time doctoral students so long as they arrange to meet Graduate College residency requirements. Students may also take some courses via distance education delivery, although this doctoral program is not considered a distance education program, and many needed courses and seminars may not be available via distance education. Students will need to meet regularly in person with their advisor.

### Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Special Education

This program prepares scholars for leadership roles focusing on the generation of new knowledge, or the reformulation of existing knowledge through research efforts. The emphasis is conducting original research which adds to theory or understanding related to topics related to special education. While this research may be applied and may improve special education practice, it is also associated with theory development beyond issues related to practice.

Students in this program are expected to be preparing to work in research oriented positions in higher education or other research organizations. This program will have consistent expectations for research preparation to assure that the graduate is able to implement research in a variety of settings.

Students in this program are expected to be full time doctoral students on-campus for the duration of their program, and will meet Graduate College residency requirements in this way.

### Principles for Both Ed. D and Ph. D Doctoral Programs

For doctoral students in both programs:

- Doctoral student programs will be concerned with in-depth mastery of subject matter in a specific specialty area of interest. Completing this goal generally calls for being able to synthesize the knowledge base for topics related to the student's interest in special education.
- Students in these programs will need to develop knowledge and skills to carry out research related to their goals and interests. This will require sequential experience in posing questions, developing hypotheses, designing research projects to evaluate them, and carrying out the research. Such experiences should extend throughout the doctoral program, and the dissertation should be the capstone research experience, not the first or only experience in research.

- Both doctoral programs will expect students to become excellent teachers in higher education and other settings focusing on adult education and professional development and the dissemination of information. This will require sequential experiences in developing skills at making presentations, teaching courses, practicum supervision and program/course curriculum development.
- All doctoral students will be expected to be academic professionals equipped with sufficient broad knowledge of special education to provide leadership to the field of special education, contribute to teams within an agencies or institutions, and to contribute to the field through professional organizations.
- All doctoral students will show strong capability to undertake professional writing of various kinds, including the ability to develop and write grant applications.

## **Required Content and Experiences**

More specifically students in both the Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs will be expected to develop capabilities in the following four areas:

### **Teaching**

All doctoral studies must include one or more new teaching experiences for students, reflected in a teaching practicum experience. Teaching activities must involve students in the planning, preparation, delivery, and evaluation of instruction to post-secondary students or to other suitable groups of adults in both on-campus and distance delivery formats. All experiences must be accompanied by regular, intensive and individualized supervision and feedback from university-based faculty supervisors and field-based supervisors.

Appropriate teaching activities could take many forms including teaching an entire course as a graduate teaching assistant, co-teaching a part of a course with a faculty member, teaching or tutoring students in a small-group format outside the structure of a formal course offering, and preparation and implementation of in-service workshops or staff development programs. Teaching activities must include familiarity with instructional technology and instructional software, and should also include understanding of pedagogy and organization of distance delivery of instruction.

### **Research**

All doctoral programs must include a substantive research component that addresses and extends the professional knowledge base in the student's primary area of interest. All research experiences must be accompanied by regular, intensive and individualized supervision and feedback from university-based faculty supervisors and field-based supervisors. The research component of all programs should include enough breadth and depth of training research tools so that the student is able to make scholarly contributions to his or her field of study. Students must be familiar with the latest technologies related to literature searches, data gathering, data analysis, and reporting of results of research.

### **Service**

All doctoral programs should involve some new service activities which might include contributions to higher education institutions or to professional organizations. This might involve contributions to curriculum, search, scholarship or other committees related to the role of the institution. Service to professional organizations may also include contributions in the form of serving as an officer, committee members, reviewer or volunteer. Service activity may range widely in nature and scope, but involve the delivery of pedagogical or technical knowledge by the doctoral student. Service experiences may provide students with the opportunity to diagnose and solve organizational problems and be effective contributors to these types of organizations.

## **Outreach**

All doctoral students should participate in educational outreach activities. Outreach involves providing information or professional expertise to others beyond the University or professional organizations, but may include service to schools or other agencies, organizations or settings. Projects may include conducting workshops, curricular development associated with implementing an intervention program, serving as an expert witness, providing clinical services, appearing in the popular media, testifying to governmental bodies, etc. These activities may not always be planned, but should be documented and evaluated.

## **Doctoral Program Logistics and Organization**

### **Admission Criteria**

Admission to both doctoral programs will be the same, and will use a cumulative point system, which may include the following criteria:

- Grade Point Average - Undergraduate
- Grade Point Average - Graduate
- Graduate Record Examination (involves three components)
- Recommendations
- A written statement of the rationale for pursuing doctoral education and intended professional goals upon completion of the degree.
- Samples of the prospective student's writing
- Personal interview (at the request of the potential faculty advisor)
- Other information

The details of the criteria and point system will be subject to the policies of the Special Education Graduate Governance Committee.

### **Faculty Sponsor**

The student must be sponsored for admission by a faculty member who will agree to serve as that student's advisor. That faculty member will typically require that the student provide samples of writing, a resume, references and other information from the admission file, and will also typically require an interview. A form for the potential advisor to sign is a part of the application process and must be completed before the application for admission is processed in the Department.

#### **Potential Faculty Advisors**

The faculty members who may advise doctoral students as of November 2010 are:

- Malinda Eccarius
- Michael Epstein
- Sue Kemp
- John Maag
- Chris Marvin
- Gary Meers
- Ron Nelson
- Reece Peterson
- Bob Reid
- Marilyn Scheffler
- Ellin Siegel
- Tessa Wright

### **Supervisory Committee**

The supervisory committee must be composed of at least four regular faculty members at the University of Nebraska. The chair must be a faculty member from the UNL Special Education Division, and at least one faculty member must be from outside of Special Education.

# The Ed.D. Program

The Ed.D. is intended as an applied research degree for people to work in a variety of settings including:

- College and University teaching
- Clinical work in special education
- Administration of special education programs
- Program evaluation in areas related to special education and disability
- Middle management supervisors or consultants in special education

The program is intended to permit individuals in these programs to complete a rigorous doctoral degree on a part time basis if desired.

## Part Time and Distance

Students in this program would be able to attend part time, and by distance education for at least some classes. However, it is not presently possible to complete this program exclusively via distance education offerings. Regular weekly or bi-weekly meetings with the student’s advisor which may or may not be associated with course credits should be expected.

<b>Ed. D. Program of Study</b>		
<b>Coursework from Masters Degree Program (maximum credit hours that can be transferred)</b>		
Foundational knowledge in special education	36	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>36</b>
<b>Doctoral Courses (minimum credit hours)</b>		
Evaluation, Research Methods, and Statistics	18	
SPED 995 – Doctoral Seminar in Special Education (arranged by advisor)	12	
SPED 896 –Field Experience or Practicum (this will include at least 3 credits related to “teaching”)	6	
SPED 999 – Doctoral Dissertation or field investigation	15	
Electives – Specialized courses, independent studies, appropriate courses	15	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>66</b>
<b>Minimum Total</b>		<b>102</b>

## Comprehensive Examination

As a part of the coursework for the Ed.D., students will be expected to be involved with a minimum of five different “projects” and to submit at least three “products” related to these projects. When the advisor believes that these projects are completed, they would be submitted to the student’s doctoral committee, and, if judged satisfactory by the committee, might constitute completion of the preliminary examination for the doctoral degree.

Examples of possible products submitted for the preliminary examination:

- Literature review
- Teaching evaluation/curriculum project
- Internship report
- Applied grant proposal
- Applied research study including data
- Program evaluation
- Pilot study
- Publishable manuscript

A more conventional on-campus or take-home written examination might also be required at the direction of the advisor and committee.

## Dissertation

Students will complete a project paper, which will serve as a dissertation for the Ed.D. Program. This paper might be based on earlier work but will be distinct from work done for the preliminary exam. The project might take the form of:

- Policy evaluation
- Research project
- Program evaluation
- Traditional research study
- Published or publishable manuscripts

**Final Oral Examination**

A final oral examination addressing the dissertation is required.

**Ed.D. Program Example**

The sequence of courses for the Ed.D. may be quite varied and as a result is difficult to describe. Students will have diverse interests and will range from being full-time to part-time students. Some courses may be taken via distance delivery and other may be taken on campus.

As a result programs might be quite diverse. This example is based on a program of taking 6 hours per semester over a six-year period including summers.

YR	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
1	Statistics/ Research 1 (3 cr.) Elective (3 cr.) Doc Sem (1 cr)	Statistics/Research 2 (3 cr.) Elective (3 cr.) Doc Sem (1 Cr.)	Statistics/Research 3 (3 cr.) <b>Lit Review Product Completed</b>
2	Statistics/Research 4 (3 cr.) Elective (3 cr.) Doc Sem (1 cr.)	Statistics/research 5 (3 cr.) Field Experience (3 cr.)	Statistics/Research 6 (3 cr.), <b>Program Eval Product Compltd</b>
3	Doc Semr Grant Wrtnng (3 r.) <b>Grant Product Compltd</b>	Field Experience (3 cr.) <b>Doc Teaching Experience Compltd</b>	Electives (3 cr.)
4	Doc Sem (3 cr.) <b>Diss. Proposal Topic Approved</b>	Elective (3 cr.) <b>Preliminary Examination Compltd</b>	Continue work on dissertation proposal
5	Dissertation (3 cr.) <b>Diss. Proposal Approved</b>	Dissertation (3 cr.) <b>Service and Outreach Requirements Compltd</b>	Continue work on dissertation
6	Dissertation (3 cr.)	Dissertation (3 cr.) <b>Final Oral Examination</b>	

**Examples of Research and Statistics Courses in Ed.D. Programs:**

**Prerequisite from Masters degree**

- EDUC 800 Foundations of Educational Research

**Standard courses typically required of all Ed.D. students (6 credits):**

- EDPS 859 Statistical Methods
- EDPS 860 Applications of Selected Advanced Statistics

**Student will take additional courses from this list to make at least 18 credits total:**

- EDPS 945 Computer assisted resrch data anal
- EDUC 900A Experimental Research
- EDUC 900B Small N/Single Case Research
- EDUC 900D Survey Research
- EDUC 900J Historical Research
- EDUC 900K Qualitative Research
- EDPS 969 Nonparametric statistics
- Course on Evaluation Research

# The Ph.D. Program

The Ph.D. is intended as a research degree for people who expect to work in:

- Research-oriented institutions of higher education,
- Other research agencies or organizations, or
- Governmental or non-profit organizations focusing primarily on research.

The program is intended to permit individuals in these programs to complete a rigorous doctoral degree focusing on research in special education.

## Part-Time and Distance

Students in this program are expected to be full-time doctoral students on campus for the duration of their program.

## Distribution of Courses

<b>Ph. D. Program of Study</b>		
<b>Coursework from Masters Degree Program (maximum credit hours that can be transferred)</b>		
Foundational knowledge in special education	36	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>36</b>
<b>Doctoral Courses (minimum credit hours)</b>		
Evaluation, Research Methods, and Statistics	18	
SPED 995 – Doctoral Seminar in Special Education (arranged by advisor)	12	
SPED 896 –Field Experience or Practicum (this will include at least 3 credits related to “teaching”)	12	
SPED 996B – Readings in Special Education	6	
SPED 999 – Doctoral Dissertation	15	
Electives – Specialized courses, independent studies, appropriate courses	9	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>72</b>
<b>Minimum Total</b>		<b>108</b>

## Comprehensive Examination

As a part of the coursework for the Ph.D. students will be expected to be involved with a minimum of five different “projects” and to submit at least three “products” related to these projects. When the advisor believes that these projects are completed, they would be submitted to the student’s doctoral committee, and, if judged satisfactory by the committee, might constitute completion of the preliminary examination for the doctoral degree.

Examples of possible products submitted for the preliminary examination:

- Substantial literature review
- Teaching evaluation
- Grant proposal
- Pilot research study including data
- Publishable manuscript

A more conventional on campus or take-home written examination might also be required at the direction of the advisor and committee.

## Dissertation

The culminating project would be the dissertation:

- Traditional research study
- Published or publishable manuscripts

## Final Oral Examination

A final oral examination addressing the dissertation is required.

## Ph.D. Program Example

YR	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
1	SPED 995 – Smnr in Special Education (Professional Issues) (3 cr) EDPS 859 – Statistical Mtds (3 cr) SPED 896 – Directed Field Exp (Lit Review) (3 cr) Elective/Cognate (3 cr)	SPED 995 – Smnr in Special Education (Professional Issues) (3 cr) SPED 995 – Smnr in Special Education (Single Subject Research) (3 cr) EDUC 800 – Foundations of Ed Research (3 cr) SPED 896 – Directed Field Exp (Lit Review) (3 cr)	SPED 996B – Readings in Special Education (3 cr) Elective (3 cr) <b>(Literature review due)</b>
2	SPED 995 – Smnr in Special Education (Grant Writing) (3 cr) EDPS 941 – Int Stat Mtds (3 cr) SPED 896 – Directed Field Exp (Field Research) (3 cr) Elective (3 cr)	SPED 995 – Smnr in Special Education (Teaching) (3 cr) EDPS 942 – Int Stat Mtds (3 cr) SPED 896 – Directed Field Exp (Field Research) (3 cr) Elective (3 cr)	SPED 996B – Readings in Special Education (3 cr) Elective (3 cr) <b>(Research paper due)</b> <b>Comprehensive Exam</b>
3	SPED 999 – Dissertation (8 cr) Statistics Elective (3 cr)	SPED 999 – Dissertation (6 cr) Statistics Elective (3 cr)	SPED 999 – Dissertation (6 cr)

## Examples of Research and Statistics Courses in Ph.D. Program:

### Prerequisite from Masters degree

EDUC 800 Foundations of Educational Research

### Standard courses typically required of all Ph.D. students (6 credits):

EDPS 859 Statistical Methods  
EDPS 860 Applications of Selected Advanced Statistics  
EDPS 941 Intermediate Statistics: Experimental  
EDPS 942 Intermediate Statistics: Correlational  
EDPS 969 Nonparametric statistics

### Student will take additional courses from this list to make at least 18 credits total:

EDPS 971 Structural Equation Modeling  
EDPS 987 Multivariate Statistics  
EDPS 945 Computer assisted research data analysis  
EDUC 900A Experimental Research  
EDUC 900B Small N/Single Case Research



## B. Research and Statistics

All Ed.D. students must complete EdPsync 860 Applications of Selected Advanced Statistics or equivalent and one other 900 level statistics or evaluation course.

All Ph.D. students must select either a quantitative, evaluation, or qualitative emphasis . Quantitative Emphasis - at least one additional 900 level statistics course; Evaluation Emphasis - EdPsync 860 or Ed Psync 900 level statistics course and one 900 level program evaluation course; Qualitative Emphasis - Ed Psync 860 or Ed Psync 900 and another course with a qualitative emphasis. (6 - 9 Hrs.)

All doctoral students must complete Ed 800 Foundation of Educational Research and at least three other research design courses approved by the student's supervisory committee. Courses include: Educ 900A Correctional and Experimental Methods; 900B Single Case/Small Methods; 900D Survey Methods; 900J Historical Methods; 900K Qualitative Approaches. (9 Hrs.)

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Dept and Course /No.	List Here Both Completed and Proposed Courses Course Title
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## C. Doctoral Seminars

All doctoral students must complete at least four consecutive semesters of doctoral seminars , SpEd 995 Doctoral Seminar, ( before candidacy) under the supervision of the chairperson or co-chairperson of their Doctoral Supervisory Committee. List seminars under Area of Emphasis. (12 Hrs.)

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Dept and Course /No.	List Here Both Completed and Proposed Courses Course Title
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# Special Education Doctoral Student Practical Experience Planning Document

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## I. Teaching

All doctoral studies must include a new teaching experience for students which must be accompanied by regular, intensive and individualized supervision and feedback from university-based faculty supervisors and field-based supervisors. Describe Planned Experiences:

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Supervisor

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## II. Research

All doctoral students must include a substantive research component that addresses and extends the theoretical and professional knowledge base in the student's primary area of interest. Describe Planned Experiences:

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Supervisor

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## III. Service

All doctoral studies must include service activities that extend substantively the professional skills of students. Describe Planned Experiences:

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Supervisor

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## IV. Outreach

All doctoral studies must include outreach activities that extend substantively the professional skills of students. Describe Planned Experiences:

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Supervisor

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