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Procedures and Requirements

**Department of  
Special  
Education &  
Communication  
Disorders**

**PH.D. DEGREE**



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## **Doctor of Philosophy Degree Programs Associated with the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders**

This Handbook in conjunction with the Graduate Bulletin (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/bulletin>) serves as a guide for students and faculty designing and implementing Ph.D. programs of study within the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. The Department offers Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees through two unified programs of the University of Nebraska – Lincoln’s (UNL) Graduate School: (a) Educational Studies and (b) Human Sciences. The Department’s Ph.D. program in Educational Studies focuses on Special Education; and the Department’s Ph.D. program in Human Sciences focuses on Communication Disorders. The program in Communication Disorders is further divided to emphasize either Audiology and Hearing Science or Speech-Language Pathology.

### **Ph.D. Program Descriptions**

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

- Institutions of higher education,
- Research agencies or organizations, or
- Governmental or non-profit organizations focusing primarily on research and/or program evaluation.

Students entering a Ph.D. program wishing to acquire endorsement, certification, and/or licensure in Special Education, Audiology, or Speech-Language Pathology may be able to perform the required associated coursework and practicum experiences concurrently with their Ph.D. studies; however, some students may have to pursue completion of these professional credentials outside their Ph.D. programs.

**Special Education.** The Ph.D. in Educational Studies with an emphasis in Special Education prepares scholars for leadership roles focusing on the generation of new knowledge or the reinterpretation of existing knowledge related to special education topics. This is inclusive of the scientific evaluation of techniques and programs used in schools and other agencies to facilitate the learning of people with disabilities. This focus may be applied in nature and function to improve special education practices, but it also may relate to theory development beyond practice-related issues. Ph.D. students in Special Education acquire the academic and experiential knowledge necessary to perform research and to pursue university teaching positions. Within this framework, a doctoral program in Special Education may emphasize research, grant writing, the evaluation of educational practices, and/or teacher preparation. The focus of study is on typical/atypical development in children and youth, learning theory, instructional design and evaluation, and factors associated with social and academic success or independence. Research aspects of the program prepare students to work independently and on teams to design and implement scientific investigations. Teaching, service, and outreach experiences incorporated into the Ph.D. program assist students in their development of skills necessary for working with professional organizations, institutes of higher education, schools, and other agencies and programs that prepare or support special education professionals or services to students with disabilities.

**Audiology and Hearing Science.** The Ph.D. in Human Sciences with a specialization in Communication Disorders and an emphasis in Audiology and Hearing Science prepares scholars both in applied and basic aspects of the human auditory and balance mechanisms. Ph.D. students in Audiology and Hearing Science acquire the knowledge and expertise to

assume leadership roles in research, teaching, and clinical management depending on individual program goals and objectives. The focus is on biophysics, neurophysiology, and advanced investigatory techniques. Research aspects of the program prepare students to work independently on the design and implementation of scientific investigations. Teaching experiences assist students in developing skills necessary for university teaching positions in communication science and disorders. Students wishing to function primarily as clinical practitioners should matriculate into the Au.D. (Doctor of Audiology) program rather than the Ph.D. in Human Sciences program. The Au.D. program prepares students for clinical positions in hospitals and other medical settings as well as in freestanding private practices.

**Speech-Language Pathology.** The Ph.D. in Human Sciences with a specialization in Communication Disorders and an emphasis in Speech-Language Pathology prepares scholars both in applied and basic aspects of communication. Ph.D. students acquire the knowledge and expertise to assume leadership roles in teaching, research, and/or clinical management related to the theory and understanding of human communication disorders. Students pursue advanced studies of theoretical and applied issues relevant to the acquisition, remediation, supplementation, and/or loss of speech, language, and communication abilities. Research aspects of the program prepare students to work independently to design and implement scientific investigations. Teaching experiences assist in students' development of skills necessary for university teaching positions in communication science and disorders.

### **Knowledge Base**

A Ph.D. degree recognizes an individual's high level of scholarly achievement with regard to the generation and dissemination of knowledge within a particular field. Ph.D. programs are distinct from professional doctorate degree programs (e.g. Au.D.) in that they involve scholarly and research activity designed to promote the acquisition of new knowledge and/or the reformulation of existing knowledge rather than emphasizing preparation for service as a practitioner. The requirements and knowledge base for the Ph.D. in Educational Studies and the Ph.D. in Human Sciences is consistent with traditional practice, although both degrees have strong applied and professional components. Ph.D. education is not a single focused entity but varies to accommodate diverse students' objectives in career goals and specializations.

The Ph.D. programs associated with the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders are designed to be individualized and flexible enough to allow students to prepare to be researchers, academicians, and/or program/project administrators. The coursework required targets the major area of specialization along with supportive areas such as learning theory, psychosocial development, pedagogy, psychoacoustics, physical acoustics, sensory physiology, educational technology, neurology, or development across the lifespan. The Ph.D. program in Special Education requires a common knowledge base in special education populations and practices, and the program in Communication Disorders requires a common knowledge base either in speech-language pathology or audiology.

The Ph.D. programs require that students become familiar with the scientific and professional literature in the general area of Special Education or Communication Disorders that underlies the area(s) of concentrated study. The common goal of both Ph.D. programs is the development of a thorough understanding of the scientific process and of the knowledge and research skills needed to apply that process to the generation of new knowledge and the reinterpretation of existing knowledge. This statement is not to minimize or restrict the extent or type of research training or to imply that such training will be the same for all students; rather it is based on recognition of the applicability of scientific training both to basic and applied knowledge.

Five general principles concerning the integration and sequencing of content govern the scope and structure of the Ph.D. programs in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. Specific goals and areas of specialization will vary in accordance with students' interests.

1. Ph.D. programs focus on in-depth mastery of subject matter in a specialty area of interest. Achieving this goal generally requires that students broaden their knowledge base in related fields (e.g., psychology, health science, physiology, education, business administration, physical sciences, social sciences, etc.) and synthesize information across areas.
2. Ph.D. programs provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to carry out research and evaluation procedures related to their goals and interests. This requires sequential experiences in posing questions, developing hypotheses, designing research/evaluation studies to test hypotheses, and executing research/evaluation projects. Such experiences should extend throughout the Ph.D. program, and the dissertation should be the capstone experience rather than the first or only research/evaluation experience.
3. Ph.D. programs provide students with opportunities to gain experience and expertise disseminating information to others in a variety of postsecondary and professional education settings. This includes experiences in making professional presentations, teaching courses, supervising practicum experiences, and developing training program or course curricula. As appropriate, students will have opportunities to learn about principles of instruction, methods of evaluation, instructional technologies, and teaching/presentation approaches/tools.
4. Ph.D. programs equip students with the skills they need to develop into professionals who provide leadership within their areas of expertise. This includes learning to contribute individually or through collaborative efforts to agencies, institutions, or professional organizations.
5. Ph.D. programs ensure students have opportunities to develop professional writing skills to engage in activities such as writing technical reports and generating manuscripts for publication, grant applications, and textbooks and other educational materials.

### **Admissions Criteria and Procedures**

Students entering the Ph.D. program in Special Education typically hold both Bachelor's and Master's degrees. The focus of one or both of these degrees provides the student with training and experience in special education or a related discipline (e.g., psychology, speech-language pathology, etc.). Students entering the Ph.D. program in Communication Disorders typically hold Bachelor's degrees with a liberal arts and science focus in addition to background in the area of human communication science and disorders. Students may also have Master's degrees or clinical doctorate (e.g. Au.D.) in speech-language pathology, audiology, or related disciplines (e.g., linguistics, psychology, engineering, etc.); however, a Master's degree or clinical doctorate (e.g. Au.D.) is not a condition of admission for the PhD in Communication Disorders.

Students entering the Ph.D. program in Special Education have the option of enrolling as part-time or full-time students. Only full-time students (i.e., students enrolled in a minimum of 9 credits both fall and spring semesters and 6 credits in the summer) are accepted into the Ph.D. program in Communication Disorders.

Decisions about admission to the Departmental Ph.D. program are based on two factors:

1. Obtainment of sponsorship for admission from a faculty member agreeing to serve as the student's advisor and mentor, and
2. The score an applicant obtains on a departmental cumulative point system used in the admission process.

Every Ph.D. applicant must be sponsored for admission by a faculty mentor. A faculty member agreeing to serve as a sponsoring mentor must provide a written statement of that intent for inclusion in the application file and for review during the admissions process. This agreement is based on the faculty member's interview with the applicant and a review of the application materials. The faculty mentor serves as the student's Supervisory Committee Chair or Co-Chair and academic advisor.

The cumulative point system used in admission decisions involves objective evaluation of some or all of the following:

1. Undergraduate grade point average (GPA);
2. Graduate GPA;
3. Three components (i.e., verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing) of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE);
4. Three letters of recommendations from people able to comment on the student's potential to succeed in a Ph.D. program;
5. A copy of a Master's thesis or other substantive academic or professional written work;
6. A written statement of the rationale for pursuing doctoral education and intended professional goals upon degree completion;
7. Reports of previous work or research experiences (i.e., a current vita); and
8. Personal on-campus interview (at the request of the potential faculty mentor).

### **Milestone Summary for Program Completion**

Graduate Studies establishes and publishes a Milestone Summary relating to a student's PhD program. The associated timeline can be found at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral>. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize him/herself with deadlines for submission of forms and documents to Graduate Studies.

### **Supervisory Committee**

Every Ph.D. student has a Supervisory Committee that assists him/her with developing a program of studies to match desired professional goals. The Supervisory Committee is established before the student has completed 45 of the minimum 90 credit hours required for a Ph.D. degree. The Supervisory Committee includes a minimum of four resident (i.e., within the NU system) graduate faculty members of the University of Nebraska. The Committee Chair must have graduate faculty status and be affiliated with the program granting the student's degree. Graduate Faculty Associates can serve as committee members on a Ph.D. student's Supervisory Committee, but they cannot serve as the Committee Chair or Co-Chair. The Committee includes a minimum of two graduate faculty from the student's home department (one can be the Supervisory Committee Chair) and at least one graduate faculty member from a department external to the academic department or program/area in which the degree will be granted but within the University of Nebraska system. The signature of the Departmental

Graduate Chair is required at the time of filing the Supervisory Committee form (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral>).

In accordance with the Graduate Bulletin, the roles of the members of the Supervisory Committee are as follows:

- **Chair:** The Chair of a doctoral student's committee serves as the advisor and mentor of the student. The Chair may not serve as the Outside Representative or a designated reader.
- **Member:** All members of the committee vote to allow the student into candidacy, request an extension and determine the outcome of the student's dissertation defense. Members may serve as the Reader or Outside Representative
- **Reader:** Two members of the committee are designated as readers. They and the Chair read the draft(s) of the dissertation to determine whether the student is ready to defend. They sign the *Application for Final Oral* if the student is approved to move forward with the defense. Courtesy Members may serve as Readers.
- **Outside Representative:** One member must be external to the student's major program but within the University of Nebraska system. If the student is seeking a minor, the faculty member representing the student's minor may serve as the Outside Representative. He or she may serve as a Reader on the student's committee.
- **Courtesy Member:** Faculty external to the University of Nebraska system may serve as a fifth committee member on the student's committee. Courtesy Members may serve as Readers and have voting rights for the student's committee. Only one Courtesy Member may serve per committee. A Courtesy Member may not serve as Outside Representative.

A student can change his/her Supervisory Committee Chair (i.e., faculty mentor) through negotiations with the current and future mentor. Any such changes must first be approved both by the Chair of the Department Graduate Committee and the Chair of the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders; then, final approval comes from the Dean of Graduate Studies. Changing mentors is a process that helps ensure a student's Ph.D. education needs are met. A student can also request a change in the faculty serving as members of the Supervisory Committee. Such a change is made through negotiations among the Supervisory Committee chair, current Supervisory Committee members, and future Supervisory Committee members. The Chair of the Graduate Committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies must approve any changes to the Supervisory Committee membership. Such changes allow students to receive appropriate guidance for program and dissertation planning and execution. The Change of Committee form is available at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral>.

### **Annual Review**

All Ph.D. students participate in an annual review process to ensure they remain informed about their progress in the program. The Graduate Secretary will send a reminder email containing the Annual Review form to each student and his/her faculty mentor near the conclusion of each spring semester. The Supervisory Committee Chair meets with the student before the completion of each Spring Semester and reviews a summary written by the student on the Ph.D. Annual Review form. The Committee Chair then adds comments in the appropriate section, secures the student's signature, and provides a copy to the other members of the student's Supervisory Committee. A copy of the Ph.D. Annual Review form is also provided to

the Department Graduate Committee Chair each year. Reviews are due by the last day of the spring semester.

Students' files are stored in locked cabinets in the Departmental Graduate Secretary's office. Students can access any information in their files other than letters of recommendation submitted at the time of application to the program to which a student waived the right to access. No one other than the student him/herself and appropriate University personnel can access student files.

### **Program Policy Decisions**

The graduate faculty in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders sets policy for the Doctoral Program in Educational Studies and the Doctoral Program in Human Sciences. A typical Program of Studies in Human Sciences or Educational Studies is 90 hours, minimally, and includes a minimum of 12 hours of dissertation (999), 15 hours of research/evaluation, and 12 hours of doctoral seminar.

### **Curricular Requirements**

The Program of Studies should be filed in the Office of Graduate Studies with at least half of the program of courses remaining to be taken for the student's doctoral program.

The Program of Studies should

- be filed in the Office of Graduate Studies within the same semester as the appointment of the Supervisory Committee;
- contain at least 90 semester credit hours including a minimum of 12 or a maximum of 55 hours of dissertation research;
- include any departmental language or research tool requirements and the general area of research for the dissertation;
- reflect a major from the list of approved doctoral programs from which at least half of the graduate work, including dissertation, will be done.

The Supervisory Committee will determine what course work taken prior to filing of a Program of Studies, including hours earned toward the masters degree(s), will be accepted as part of the 90-hour program.

- The Supervisory Committee is not obligated to reduce the doctoral Program of Studies by applying course work completed prior to its appointment.
- Prior course work should be assessed in relation to its contribution to framing a research foundation for the doctorate. Each course accepted must be determined to be current and relevant in relation to the desired degree.
- No graduate credit will be accepted from a previously awarded doctoral degree at any institution, including UNL.
- The time limit on granting the doctoral degree is eight years from the time of filing the student's Program of Studies in the Office of Graduate Studies.

Occasionally, a student may need to modify his/her Program of Study after it has been filed with the Dean of Graduate Studies. In such a case, the student should consult with his/her Supervisory Committee Chair about possibly changes. The Supervisory Committee approves

any subsequent change in the program. The Supervisory Committee Chair will email the Graduate Secretary with information about any agreed upon changes to a student's Program of Study, and the action is then reported in writing to the Office of Graduate Studies.

A *Ph.D. Program of Study Planning Document* appears in the Appendix. The document provides organizational support for the program planning process and is available for use by Ph.D. students in collaboration with members of their Supervisory Committees. Along with the completed *Program of Studies* form available at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/Doctoral-Program.pdf>, a copy of the *Program of Study Planning Document* is submitted to the Chair of the Department Graduate Committee for approval prior to submission of the *Program of Studies* form to the office of Graduate Studies. Submission of this paperwork should occur within the same semester as appointment of the Supervisory Committee and before the student has completed half of the Ph.D. coursework.

**Program Goals and Objectives.** Each Ph.D. *Program of Study Planning Document* contains student-identified goals or objectives. At least one goal/objective addresses each of the following areas: primary content emphasis, secondary or related content emphasis, and research/evaluation design and statistics. Additional goals/objectives may address student-specific areas of interest such as the development of college-level teaching skills, attainment of grant-writing expertise, mastery of distance education technology and course organization, or mastery of technology-based diagnostic and evaluative procedures. Members of the Supervisory Committee are responsible for assisting students in developing a program of study that prepares them adequately to meet the multiple program goals and objectives outlined in their *Program of Study Planning Document*.

**Content Emphasis.** The student's content emphasis addresses both the academic and experiential knowledge necessary for gaining professional competence in an area of focus. Examples of content emphasis areas in Special Education include behavioral disorders, autism spectrum disorders, early childhood, learning disabilities, and literacy issues; examples of content emphasis areas in Audiology and Hearing Science include pediatric audiology, balance and vestibular functioning, and amplification; examples of content emphasis areas in Speech-Language Pathology include infant development and communication, aphasia, child language disorders, motor speech disorders, traumatic brain injury, and augmentative and alternative communication. The preceding are examples of content emphasis areas and not exhaustive lists.

**Second or Related Content Emphasis.** In-depth mastery of a primary content area typically requires a student to have a broad knowledge base in one or more related fields either within or beyond the bounds of the selected profession. For example, a Ph.D. student whose primary content emphasis is childhood disorders of language and literacy may wish to expand his/her knowledge of child development as a secondary content emphasis; alternately, another Ph.D. student with the same area of primary content emphasis may choose to obtain expertise in genetic syndromes associated with developmental disabilities as the related content emphasis. Students work with their Supervisory Committees to identify appropriate areas of related content emphasis to match their professional goals and objectives. The number and type of courses selected to ensure adequate mastery of the second or related content emphasis is at the discretion of the Supervisory Committee and should be documented on the Program of Study Planning Document.

**Research Design and Statistics Requirements.** All Ph.D. students must complete a minimum of 15 credit hours of coursework in research/evaluation design and statistics. This coursework should provide the student with a foundation both in introductory and advanced statistical and research methods. The selection of specific courses to satisfy this requirement is at the discretion of a student's Supervisory Committee and should be documented on the Program of Study Planning Document.

**Research Experiences and Doctoral Seminars.** Ph.D. students participate in research activities every semester in which they are enrolled in the program. This includes semesters both prior to and during performance of dissertation research. Students should produce a minimum of two manuscript-quality documents related to their research experiences over the course of their Ph.D. programs.

The Doctoral Seminar provides graduate faculty with an opportunity to mentor doctoral students by working intensively with them on outcome-based projects of shared scholarly interest. All Ph.D. students complete a minimum of four semesters of three-credit Doctoral Seminars (SLPA 995 or SPED 995) prior to candidacy and under the supervision of the Supervisory Committee Chair, Co-chair, or another Committee member. Most full-time Ph.D. students complete the Doctoral Seminars in consecutive semesters—including or excluding summer semesters at the student's discretion; part-time Ph.D. students should complete at least one Doctoral Seminar per year to maintain adequate progress in the program. The Doctoral Seminar plan for each student must be described in the *Program of Study Planning Document* and approved by the Supervisory Committee. The plan includes a description of projects and expected products. These Doctoral Seminars are not formal classes; rather, they are individual research mentoring experiences with faculty advisors. Successful performance in each Doctoral Seminar requires a student's active participation in one or more on-going scholarly projects and the production of a tangible product as specified in the student's *Program of Study Planning Document*.

**Teaching, Supervisory, and Service Experiences.** All Ph.D. programs must include one or more new experiences for students within the realms of teaching, supervision, or providing professional services. Experiences fulfilling this requirement may include teaching semester-long courses or providing one-time lectures, workshops, and in-services; making research presentations to students, colleagues, faculty members, and professionals in practice; providing professional consultations or clinical supervision related to an area of expertise; and/or participating in service activities contributing to higher education institutions or professional organizations. The breadth and frequency of teaching, supervisory, and professional service experiences should be described in the *Program of Study Planning Document* and are individualized to each student's needs, skills, and goals. Students receive feedback regarding teaching, supervisory, and service experiences from their mentors or others designated by their mentors.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

The intent of the comprehensive examination process is to allow a student to demonstrate mastery of subject matter within the areas specified in the *Program of Study Planning Document*. The examination cannot be waived, but it can be tailored to the special needs of individual students. Students must complete their comprehensive examinations to be admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. Students typically take the comprehensive examination upon or near completion of the academic coursework requirements for their program. This typically occurs prior to initiating work on a dissertation project, although a student may begin some

dissertation work prior to completing the comprehensive examination if so approved by the Supervisory Committee. In all cases, the student works with his/her Supervisory Committee Chair to specify in writing a plan for the comprehensive examination and has it approved by the Supervisory Committee before initiation of the process. Refer to the Milestone Summary for information about dates for submitting documents pertaining to comprehensive exams (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral>).

The members of a Supervisory Committee and others they choose to enlist will read and evaluate a student's written comprehensive examination products. A student must pass all parts of the written comprehensive exam to be admitted to candidacy. An oral examination is not required as part of the comprehensive examination process; however, if the student does not complete the written examination successfully, the Committee can choose to administer an oral examination limited to the specific portion of the written examination not successfully completed. Alternately, the Committee can require the student to rewrite the failed portion(s) of the examination. The earliest a second oral or written comprehensive examination opportunity will occur is the academic term or summer following the failed attempt. Failure to pass the second attempt at the comprehensive examination results in automatic review of the student's performance with the possibility of program termination.

The comprehensive examination process differs for students earning degrees in Educational Sciences versus Human Sciences. Each is outlined separately in the following sections.

**Process for Ph.D. Students in Educational Studies.** Students earning a Ph.D. in Educational Studies with an emphasis in Special Education may, at the discretion of their Supervisory Committee, complete (a) a conventional on-campus or take-home written examination and/or (b) a minimum of three different "projects" stemming from their previous Ph.D. coursework. For the latter option, a student submits to their Supervisory Committee the final form of at least three written products related to the selected projects. Examples of possible written products include: (a) a substantial literature review, (b) a course teaching evaluation, (c) a program or policy evaluation, (d) a submission-ready grant proposal with the student as the Primary Investigator, (e) a pilot research study including data and with the student as the Primary Investigator, and (f) a publishable manuscript with the student as the Primary Investigator. If judged satisfactory by the Committee, these products constitute completion of part or all of the comprehensive examination for the student's Ph.D. degree.

**Process for Ph.D. Students in Human Sciences.** Students earning Ph.D.'s in Human Sciences with an emphasis in Audiology and Hearing Sciences or Communication Disorders take their comprehensive examinations over a one- to four-week period. A student's responses to examination questions must provide evidence of proficiency in specific content areas and evidence of the integration of information across multiple areas through generation of newly conceived projects or papers. The final form, content, and duration of the examination is negotiable between the student and his/her Supervisory Committee.

## Dissertation

**Role of the Dissertation and Dissertation Research.** A Ph.D. dissertation represents the beginning of an individual's scholarly work, not its culmination. As such, dissertation research should provide students with hands-on, directed experience in the primary research/evaluation methods of their discipline and should prepare students for the type of research/scholarship that will be expected of them after receiving the Ph.D. degree. More specifically, the Ph.D. dissertation should: (a) reveal a student's ability to analyze, interpret, and synthesize

information; (b) demonstrate the student's knowledge of the literature relating to the project and acknowledge prior scholarship underlying the dissertation; (c) describe the methods and procedures used; (d) present results in a sequential and logical manner; (e) discuss fully and coherently the meaning of the results; and (f) demonstrate the student's ability to convey information clearly through writing. The work must contain sufficient detail to permit replication of the study by an independent investigator.

**Dissertation Options.** Dissertations can either be (a) traditional in form and focus on one research project or (b) multi-project in form and consist of a series of related research projects that appear as individual research reports with integrated literature review, discussion, and future directions sections. A student selecting the multi-project dissertation approach should work closely with his/her Supervisory Committee throughout the course of the research to ensure agreement among Committee members about focus, procedures, and analyses.

**Dissertation Defense.** The final examination for the Ph.D. degree (i.e., the dissertation defense) includes two parts of an oral presentation: a public portion and a closed portion. The public portion includes a presentation of the dissertation research by the student and a general questioning session. This portion is open to members both of the University community and the public. At the end of the public portion, only the Supervisory Committee members, invited faculty, and the student him/herself remain present for the closed questioning portion of the oral examination. After completion of the closed questioning period, the Supervisory Committee confers in private to decide whether the student's dissertation work and defense is sufficient in its present form or requires minor or major modification/remediation. Requiring a student to repeat the defense procedures is at the discretion of the Supervisory Committee for any dissertation work judged to need major modification. The earliest a second final examination opportunity will occur is the academic term or summer following the failed attempt. Failure to pass the second dissertation defense attempt results in automatic review of the student's performance with a possibility of program termination. Refer to the Milestone Summary for information about dates for submitting documents pertaining to the dissertation defense (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral>).

### **Policy for Ph.D. Student Funding**

**Barkley Doctoral Scholars.** Barkley Doctoral Scholars are full-time Ph.D. students associated with the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. Part-time students are ineligible. Barkley Doctoral Scholars receive graduate assistantships with full tuition remission up to 12 credit hours per semester (i.e., fall, spring, and summer), stipends paid monthly, and an option to purchase health insurance. Such appointments extend for a full year and have the possibility of being renewed for up to two additional years. All policies regarding graduate assistantships are available for review at [www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/funding/assistantships](http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/funding/assistantships). Funding beyond three years typically comes from external sources.

The assistantship requirements for Barkley Doctoral Scholars include:

1. at least nine (9) hours of academic credit per semester (both fall and spring), six (6) hours of academic credit during the summer, or permission of the major advisor and Department Chair;
2. a work requirement of 19.6 hours per week involving teaching, supervision, and/or research that is consistent with the student's program goals;

3. the expectation that the student will not hold other employment, because he/she is enrolled as a full-time student and has work responsibilities at UNL; and
4. the expectation that the student will spend a majority of his/her time on campus when receiving funding.

**Work Activities for Barkley Doctoral Scholars.** Ph.D. students who are awarded financial aid from the Department or University during their graduate education are assigned activities that are consistent with their development as scholars. The purpose of Ph.D. education is to prepare students for academic and research positions. Within that context, assistantship tasks should be constructed with the following goals in mind: 1) lead to the learning and improvement in teaching and research skills, 2) learn how to manage laboratories and laboratory equipment, 3) learn and use current computer technology appropriate for communication sciences and disorders and/or special education, and 4) be involved in activities that lead to the improvement of technical writing skills. Independence in all of these goals is expected toward the end of a Barkley Scholar's program of studies.

Each mentor is responsible for ensuring that Barkley Scholars working under their direction have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to survive as scholars within the discipline. Variation is likely to exist in the time required for Ph.D. students to perform the various types of activity assigned to them. Students can negotiate changes in workloads and activities with advisors. However, at no time should students be expected to perform the following or similar activities unrelated to their Ph.D. education:

1. clerical work for a faculty member such as filing or office/lab organization/cleaning that is unrelated to a research project to which the student is involved,
2. attend a class and receive work credit for that activity,
3. run errands unrelated to teaching or research responsibilities,
4. take care of the faculty member's house or family member, and
5. count commuting time as work time.

Any disagreements or complaints about how students are allocating their time for their assistantships should be worked out with the major faculty advisor. When issues cannot be resolved, it is recommended that there be a meeting with the Graduate Committee Chair, Chair of the Department, faculty member and student to resolve any problems.

**Other Funding Opportunities.** Periodically the Department secures University and/or grant funds from state and federal sources to support doctoral education. When available, full-time Ph.D. students may apply and be considered for participation.

Prospective, newly admitted, or currently enrolled Ph.D. students in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders can apply for Departmental Fellowships. The Fellowships are one-time awards, varying in dollar amount. The deadline for application submission is April 20<sup>th</sup> of each year. The online application is available at <http://cehs.unl.edu/barkley/aid/index.shtml>.

Prospective, newly admitted, or currently enrolled Ph.D. students can also apply for professional development activities through Graduate Studies (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/development>).

### **General Student Responsibilities**

Nothing in this Handbook is intended to supplant information contained in the UNL Graduate Bulletin. Each student is responsible for being familiar with the information presented in the Graduate Bulletin and for knowing and observing all regulations and procedures relating to the program he/she is pursuing. In no case will the Graduate College waive regulations or grant exceptions because a student pleads ignorance or contends that he/she was not informed of the regulations or procedures of the UNL Graduate College. Graduate Bulletins are available at the University Bookstore or the Bulletin may be reviewed on-line at the UNL Graduate Studies website ([www.unl.edu/gradstudies](http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies)).

### **Student Involvement**

Students are encouraged to participate in student groups and associations that may further their professional development. Opportunities are listed at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/student-groups>.

### **Student Conduct**

Ph.D. students within the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders are held to the same standards of academic integrity and behavior as all other students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Information about student conduct is available at <http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code>.

### **University of Nebraska-Lincoln Non-Discrimination Policy**

The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment. Please see [go.unl.edu/nondiscrimination](http://go.unl.edu/nondiscrimination).

### Appendix: Ph.D. Program of Study Planning Document

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City State Zip  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mentor/Academic advisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Admitted into Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Projected Date of Program Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

#### RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

The residency requirement has been established to ensure that (a) the Ph.D. program is reasonably compact, continuous, and coherent and (b) a substantial portion is done at the University and under close University supervision.

Not more than one-third of the work for residency or nine hours total credit may be taken during the summer sessions.

Listed below are ways in which students can meet the residency requirement. Check the method that will apply for this program.

\_\_\_ For a student beginning the Ph.D. program at the University of Nebraska system with a bachelor's degree, the residency requirement for the Ph.D. is 27 hours of graduate work within a consecutive 18-month period or less, with the further provision that 15 of these 27 hours must be taken after receiving the master's degree or its equivalent.

\_\_\_ For a student who transfers to the University of Nebraska system with a master's degree or professional degree (e.g., Au.D.) from another institution or who takes a break in his/her graduate work at the University of Nebraska between the time of the awarding of such a degree and the time he/she starts work on a Ph.D. program, the residency requirement for the Ph.D. is 27 hours of graduate work in a consecutive 18-month period or less.

\_\_\_ For a member of the University staff who is engaged at least half time in instruction or research in his/her major department or a person employed in his/her major field, the residency requirement is 24 credit hours of graduate work within a consecutive two-year period with the further provision that he/she take at least 12 of these after receiving the master's degree or its equivalent.

**GOALS/OBJECTIVES OF Ph.D. STUDIES**

Clearly state the goals for your Ph.D. studies to provide direction for courses and experiences included in the program of studies.

**AREA OF EMPHASIS**

The area of emphasis component addresses both the academic and experiential knowledge necessary for students to gain professional competence in their area of focus. The minimum credit hour requirement for the area of emphasis is at the discretion of the student's Supervisory Committee.

**Proposed Courses**

Dept./No.	Course Title	Credit Hours
-----------	--------------	--------------

**Courses in Progress or Completed**

Dept./No.	Course Title	Credit Hours
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**Professional Experiences**

**SECOND OR RELATED AREA OF EMPHASIS**

The area of emphasis component addresses both the academic and experiential knowledge necessary for students to gain professional competence in their area of focus. The minimum credit hour requirement for a second or related area of emphasis is at the discretion of the student's Supervisory Committee.

**Proposed Courses**

Dept./No.	Course Title	Credit Hours
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**Courses in Progress or Completed**

Dept./No.	Course Title	Credit Hours
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**Professional Experiences**

**STATISTICS AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

All Ph.D. students must complete at least fifteen credits of coursework in statistics and research design. Additional coursework is at the discretion of the Supervisory Committee.

**Proposed Courses**

Dept./No.	Course Title	Credit Hours
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**Courses in Progress or Completed**

Dept./No.	Course Title	Credit Hours
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**DOCTORAL SEMINARS**

All Ph.D. students must complete at least four doctoral research seminars under the supervision of a faculty member and before registering for dissertation credit.

Seminar Focus	Faculty Member	Proposed Product
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Seminar 1:

Seminar 2:

Seminar 3:

Seminar 4:

### **TEACHING/SUPERVISORY/SERVICES EXPERIENCES**

The method for completing this requirement should be documented.

### **DISSERTATION**

Each candidate must complete a dissertation that demonstrates the acquisition of a high level of research skill and the subsequent generation of new knowledge in one's field of study. The project must be proposed to, monitored by, and approved by the candidate's Supervisory Committee. A general topic may be stated below. Most students enroll for at least 12-55 hours of dissertation credit (SPED 999 - Doctoral Dissertation).

*The dissertation is of no fixed length. It should treat a subject from the candidate's special field and be approved by the supervisory committee. It should show technical mastery of the field and advance or modify former knowledge—that is, it should treat new materials, find new results, draw new conclusions, or interpret old materials in a new light.*

**Research activities involving human subjects or live vertebrate animals may not be conducted at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln unless the research activities have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board.**

### SUMMARY

Summary of requirements for Ph.D. degree program:

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1. Credit hours transferred to the Ph.D. program from another institution  | _____ |
| 2. Credit hours in which incomplete, pass, or letter grade report<br>have been received from UNL courses including MS at UNL | _____ |
| 3. Credit hours in progress or to be taken   | _____ |
| 4. Total credit hours in program   | _____ |

**NOTES:**

1. At least 45 credit hours must be completed at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (lines 2 and 3). For students in the combined Au.D./Ph.D. program, at least 60 credit hours must be completed at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (lines 2 and 3).
2. Students must complete at least 45 credit hours after approval of the program (line 3). Combined Au.D./Ph.D. students must complete at least 60 credit hours after approval of the Ph.D. program (line 3).
3. The minimum number of credit hours for Ph.D. programs is 90 hours (line 4). For combined Au.D./Ph.D. programs, the minimum number of credit hours is 120 hours (line 4).

**PROGRAMS OFTEN EXCEED THE MINIMUMS NOTED ABOVE.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Mentor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date