

2018-2019

DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

HANDBOOK OF
PROCEDURES



WATSON COLLEGE *of* EDUCATION

Doctorate in Educational Leadership Handbook of Procedures

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Overview of the Program

Faculty members in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) established the Doctorate of Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) program in 2007 with a mission to “prepare graduates to be informed, proactive, reflective agents of change to improve public schools and other educational organizations for the benefit of all students, particularly in southeastern North Carolina.” Since its inception, the program has successfully graduated over 100 scholar-practitioners.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a reference for students and faculty members about a range of program procedures and to guide decision-making and advising. Students in the program will receive a copy of the handbook when they enter the program. The handbook is updated on a regular basis as new procedures are introduced and existing procedures are modified by faculty vote. If questions arise that are not answered in the handbook, students and faculty members should communicate with the Ed.D. program coordinators.

Program Goal

The primary goal of the Ed.D. program is to prepare scholar-practitioners who investigate and integrate research-based practices and policies that make a positive impact on their educational environments.

[Updated by Vote on 3/16/16]

Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the Educational Leadership doctoral program will be able to:

1. Integrate social justice principles into practice;
2. Engage in research, evaluation and data-driven decision making to contribute to education practice, policy, and theory;
3. Lead systemic organizational change to facilitate educational reform;
4. Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in order to be successful in rapidly changing, complex environments (e.g., technology, problem solving);
5. Critically examine and imagine ways to change how our work as educational leaders is situated in economic, political and cultural systems; and
6. Develop a raised consciousness of global educational policies and practices.

[Updated by Vote on 3/16/16]

Program Structure

The Ed.D. program is structured as a single academic program with three specializations. All students in the program take a set of core courses in leadership, social justice, and research methods, after which they take courses in their specialization. Students must declare a single specialization when they apply to the program; however, they can take elective courses in any of the three specializations in consultation with their advisor. Students may petition to switch specializations within their first year. The process for this is outlined in the Academic Regulations and Procedures section. The three specializations are as follows:

Description of Educational Administration Specialization

The specialization in Education Administration (Ed Admin) focuses on the preparation of scholar-practitioners in the field of education administration. The program provides in-depth study of the organization, administration, staffing, funding, and executive level leadership experience at public/private PreK-12 levels of education and other organizations.

Description of Curriculum and Instruction Specialization

The specialization in Curriculum and Instruction (C & I) focuses on the preparation of curriculum and instruction specialists. The specialization provides in-depth study of areas related to curriculum and instruction, such as planning and design, innovation and change, accountability and assessment, policy and law, diversity and special education, and supervision and resource management.

Description of Higher Education Specialization

The specialization in Higher Education (Higher Ed) focuses on the preparation of scholar-practitioners in the field of higher education and student affairs administration. The specialization provides in-depth study of the organization, administration, staffing, funding, and student experience at postsecondary education institutions.

Program Delivery Format

The program delivery format is hybrid, with a combination of synchronous face-to-face instruction and asynchronous online instruction. This typically means that students meet for synchronous face-to-face class sessions bi-weekly during the evening. Throughout the semester, students are responsible for completing readings, engaging in discussions with peers, and other activities related to course content. Consistent with our commitment to applied and experiential learning, program faculty strive for a high level of social presence during asynchronous online weeks. The program also features a distance education option for students who reside outside of the Wilmington area. These students attend the synchronous face-to-face

class sessions using Zoom, a platform that allows them to be part of the classroom experience virtually.

Contact Information

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Admissions

The Ed.D. program accepts students from a variety of backgrounds and actively seeks to craft a diverse cohort each year. This includes diversity of experiences and skills, which gives students the opportunity to learn inside and out of the classroom and to build professional relationships that can last their entire career. Students are admitted to begin coursework in the fall term. Students are not admitted to begin coursework in the summer or spring terms prior to their anticipated enrollment.

Students will be admitted to the Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership based upon a recommendation from the Ed.D. Admissions Committee within each specialization. Students must select one of three specializations at the time of application: 1) Educational Administration; 2) Curriculum and Instruction; or 3) Higher Education. Admission decisions will be based on several factors, including, but not limited to, fulfillment of eligibility requirements, documented promise as a scholar-practitioner, and available resources.

Admissions Requirements

[Source: [Graduate School Website](#)]

1. A Master's degree in school administration, supervision, curriculum, instruction, higher education, student affairs, or related field from an accredited university (official transcripts from undergraduate and graduate school are required)
2. An application for graduate admission (available at www.uncw.edu/gradschool).
3. Official transcripts of all college work (undergraduate and graduate).
4. An overall graduate grade point average of at least 3.0 out of 4.0 in undergraduate and graduate coursework

5. A score of at least 79 on the internet-based (TOEFL) version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for applicants whose native language is not English or a score of 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System
6. A minimum of three years of documented leadership experience.
7. Three written recommendations by individuals in professionally relevant fields addressing the applicant's potential to succeed in a doctoral program. Recommendations from individuals who have supervised the applicant will be given greater weight.
8. Essay identifying a current issue in education and describing potential ways that the issue can or should be addressed by leaders in the field. Where possible, applicants should describe and discuss how their professional and educational background and research interests align with this issue and its resolution.
9. Current vitae/resume.
10. Interviews with Education Leadership faculty to be conducted in the spring for selected candidates.
11. Application and supplemental documents must be submitted by the [published deadline](#)

Application Deadlines

[Source: [Graduate School Website](#)]

Priority Consideration	March 15
Final Deadline	May 15

Deferring Admission

[Source: [Graduate School Website](#)]

The process to request a deferral is outlined below:

1. Complete the [deferral form \(PDF\)](#) and have it considered by the [Program Coordinator](#) prior to the first day of classes for the semester originally accepted. Keep in mind that only accepted students may be considered for a deferral. Deferments may only be considered for up to one academic year and not all programs consider deferrals.
2. Specific instructions will be sent from the Graduate School once an approved deferment has been received.
3. Financial awards or scholarships do not carry over to the following year. Students must re-apply to be considered for financial awards, scholarships, and financial aid.

Orientation

All admitted students are required to attend a one-day, in-person orientation for Ed.D. program on the UNCW campus prior to the start of their first semester of coursework. This orientation typically happens in August 1-2 weeks prior to the first day of classes. Specialization coordinators will communicate orientation information to all admitted students.

Degree Requirements

[Source: [Graduate Catalogue](#)]

The program of study for the Doctorate in Educational Leadership includes core courses and specialization-specific courses. A total of 60 credit hours are required for graduation. Students must fulfill the requirements for a specific specialization of study and work closely with an advisor to plan their program of study.

Program Core

The primary purpose of the program core is to provide all students with a foundation in leadership and organizational theory and practice. Other courses in the core prepare students as researchers. All courses in the core are required for graduation and are offered in a specific sequence.

- [EDL 601 - Leadership Theory](#) Credits: 3
- [EDL 605 - Social Foundations of Education](#) Credits: 3
- [EDL 609 - Leading Change in Educational Organizations](#) Credits: 3
- [EDL 641 - Applied Research](#) Credits: 3
- [EDL 699 - Dissertation in Education](#) Credits: 3-6 (Taken twice for 3 credit hours each)

AND choose six credit hours of additional research courses from the list below:

- [EDL 642 - Program Evaluation](#) Credits: 3
- [EDL 643 - Quantitative Research](#) Credits: 3
- [EDL 644 - Qualitative Research](#) Credits: 3

Program Specializations

Students choose one of three program specializations: Leadership in Educational Administration, Leadership in Curriculum and Instruction, or Leadership in Higher Education. Courses in each specialization build upon the foundation of leadership, organizational development, and research. Courses are offered on a rotating basis and a final program of study will be determined in consultation with an advisor. Courses in the program typically begin with the EDL prefix.

Educational Administration Specialization

Students will take a set of courses that focus on areas related to executive level leadership, such as policy, law, regulation, technology, curriculum, assessment, decision making, global achievement, and resource management.

All students are required to take Educational Administration specialization core courses (15 credits) and two internship courses (2 credits each). Students will select from internship courses that focus on: international perspectives (requires study abroad), business organizations, or education and government organizations. Specific details will be determined in consultation with a faculty advisor. Students will also select appropriate electives (17 credits) to meet the program requirement of 60 credits.

Specialization Core (15 Credits):

- EDL 604 - Educational Policy, Governmental Regulation and School Law Credits: 3
- EDL 607 - Generating, Managing, and Aligning Resources in Schools Credits: 3
- BUS 624 - Strategic Management and Planning Credits: 3
- EDL 621 - Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Credits: 3
- EDL 623 - Accountability Credits: 3
- or
- EDL 642 - Program Evaluation Credits: 3

Internship Courses (4 Credits):

- EDL 661 - Education/Government Internship Credits: 3
- EDL 664 - International Internship Credits: 3

Electives (17 Credits):

- 17 credit hours at the 600 level; up to 6 credit hours of 500 level courses may be included with advisor approval.

Curriculum and Instruction Specialization

Students will take a set of courses that focus on areas related to curriculum and instruction, such as planning and design, innovation and change, accountability and assessment, policy and law, diversity and special education, and supervision and resource management. All students are required to take Curriculum and Instruction specialization core courses (6 credits) and two internship courses (2 credits each). Students are required to participate in an international internship course (requires study abroad) and will select from two other internship courses that focus on: business organizations or education and government organizations. Specific details will be determined in consultation with a faculty advisor. Students will also select appropriate electives (26 credits) to meet the program requirement of 60 credits.

Specialization Core (6 Credits):

- EDL 665 - Curriculum Studies Credits: 3
- EDL 621 - Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Credits: 3

Internship Courses (4 Credits):

- EDL 664 - International Internship Credits: 3
- EDL 661 - Education/Government Internship Credits: 3
- or
- EDL 663 - Business Internship Credits: 3

Electives (26 Credits):

- 26 credit hours at the 600 level; up to 6 credit hours of 500 level courses may be included with advisor approval.

Higher Education Specialization

Students will take a set of courses that focus on areas related to higher education, such as student learning theory, innovation in higher education, accountability and assessment, policy and law, and resource management. All students are required to take Higher Education specialization core courses (18 credits) and one internship course (2 credits). Students will select from internship courses that focus on: international perspectives (requires study abroad), business organizations, or education and government organizations. Specific details will be

determined in consultation with a faculty advisor. Students will also select appropriate electives (16 credits) to meet the program requirement of 60 credits.

Specialization Core (18 Credits):

- EDL 630 - Proseminar in Postsecondary Education I Credits: 3
- EDL 631 - Law & Policy in Higher Education Credits: 3
- EDL 632 - Higher Education Finance Credits: 3
- EDL 633 - Today's College Student Credits: 3
- EDL 634 - Proseminar in Postsecondary Education II Credits: 3
- EDL 635 - The Academic Profession Credits: 3

Internship Course (2 Credits):

- EDL 661 - Education/Government Internship Credits: 3
- or
- EDL 663 - Business Internship Credits: 3
- or
- EDL 664 - International Internship Credits: 3

Electives (16 Credits):

- 16 credit hours at the 600 level; up to 6 credit hours of 500 level courses may be used with advisor approval.

Exit Requirements

All Ed.D. students must:

1. Complete and pass an oral comprehensive examination.
2. Propose and defend a dissertation topic.
3. All students must take and pass 6 credits of [EDL 699 - Dissertation in Education](#)

Complete, successfully defend and submit a dissertation to the Graduate School.

Course Sequence and Suggested Timeline

The program is structured with the assumption that students take 2 courses per term, including summer. This amounts to 6 courses per year. Following this schedule, students typically complete coursework in 3 years. Following completion of coursework, students must complete three milestones (the oral comprehensive examination, dissertation proposal defense, and dissertation defense). Completion of these milestones typically takes an additional 1-1.5 years. Below is the sequence of courses as of Spring 2018.

Fall Year 1	Spring Year 1	Fall Year 2	Spring Year 2	Fall Year 3	Spring Year 3
Specialization Core					
EDL 601	EDL 605	EDL 641	Additional	Additional	EDL 609

			Research Course	Research Course	
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Internship and Directed Independent Study (DIS)

Internships give students in-depth experience in settings that are not possible within the university classroom. The opportunity to intern in an international, business, or government setting will enrich the doctoral experience. All internships are carefully planned and completed under the guidance of a university faculty member.

Students in the Ed.D. program must complete internships as indicated in the Educational Administration, Curriculum & Instruction, and Higher Education program of study. The internship requirement may differ within each concentration. Additional internships may be taken as electives. Internship courses are typically offered during the summer, but it is possible for students to complete internship hours during the fall and spring terms with permission of the specialization coordinator and course instructor.

Advising Structure

Throughout coursework, the specialization coordinators serve as advisors for students in their specialization. This means that specialization coordinators will assist students with course selection, registration, and planning their program of study. Specialization coordinators should serve as the first point of contact if students have any questions or concerns about the program. Specialization coordinators are also responsible for evaluating students' academic performance annually. Once students begin working on the post-coursework milestones and officially begin working with their Dissertation Advisory Committee Chair, the DAC Chair becomes their first point of contact for any questions or concerns. The specialization coordinators are still available to answer questions and assist students with registration.

Post-Coursework Milestones

Students in all specializations of the Ed.D. program must complete three post-coursework milestones in order to graduate: 1) oral comprehensive examination, 2) dissertation proposal defense, and 3) dissertation defense. During their final term of coursework, students should make an appointment to discuss post-coursework milestones with their specialization coordinator.

Forming the Dissertation Advisory Committee

All three post-coursework milestones require participation of a committee of 3-4 eligible members called the Dissertation Advisory Committee (DAC). Unless it is reconstituted, the committee will consist of the same members through all 3 milestones. The committee includes a chair and at least two other members. All DAC members must have graduate faculty status and all DACs must have at least one member from the EL department.

The first step of the post-coursework process is to meet with the specialization coordinator to discuss the process. With guidance from the Specialization Coordinator, students will communicate with an eligible faculty member and request that this person chair the DAC. Students should plan to discuss with their potential chair their tentative dissertation topic and timeline. It is required that the student's doctoral advisory committee be chaired by a faculty member in the Educational Leadership department, with graduate faculty status, preferably in the student's research area or methodology. If a student's research area or anticipated methodology aligns with a faculty member outside of the EL department, students are able to request an exception, with written approval from the coordinator of their specialization and the department chair. Students will email or write a letter outlining the request and providing reasons for this request. The specialization coordinator and chair will consult in the decision. All decision should occur within two weeks of the student request in writing.

If a student's doctoral advisory committee is chaired by a faculty member outside of the EL department, at least one of the other committee members must be an EL faculty member. Faculty external to the department will be provided opportunity for training that will include the handbook and guidelines paramount for consistency and continuity college-wide.

Tips for Selecting a DAC Chair

When selecting a DAC Chair, students should consider the following factors:

- Faculty member's research expertise and interests
- Faculty member's methodological strengths and preferences
- Faculty member's availability during anticipated timeline
- Experiences in a faculty member's courses

When selecting DAC committee members, students should work in consultation with their DAC Chair, who will assist them with this process. Additional factors to consider:

- Including a committee member because of their research expertise and interests
- Including a committee member to help with methodological questions
- Including a committee member for additional support and mentoring
- Availability of committee member during anticipated timeline

A [Dissertation Advisory Committee Form](#) must be submitted and signed by the specialization coordinator and the EL department chair, approving committee membership, prior to any work with DAC, such as the oral comprehensive examination or enrolling in EDL 699. The form should be signed by the specialization coordinator first, who will ensure the student has met all requirements to begin post-coursework milestones. The form then goes to the department chair to sign and give to the departmental administrative associate.

The Role of the DAC Chair and Committee Members

The DAC Chair is responsible for helping students to navigate all three of the post-coursework milestones. They serve as advisors and primary points of contact for their advisees, though they

often need to work with specialization coordinators for registration and questions related to procedures. Although it is difficult to capture all of the tasks associated with serving as a DAC chair, important responsibilities include:

- Explaining the post-milestone processes, including helping students to understand what the Oral Comprehensive Examination, Dissertation Proposal Defense, and Dissertation Defense entail.
- Coordinating with other DAC members to construct questions for the Oral Comprehensive Examination and assisting with scheduling and finding a location for the post-coursework milestones.
- Helping students to understand the structure and expectations of the dissertation proposal and dissertation.
- Helping students with the research design of their dissertation.
- Suggesting useful resources and helping students to make contact with data collection sites, if appropriate.
- Reading chapter drafts and providing students with constructive feedback.
- Meeting (in-person, phone, or virtually) to discuss their project and answer questions.
- Determining when a student is ready to schedule their dissertation proposal defense and dissertation defense.

DAC committee members play an important role in supporting students, reading their work and providing feedback, and ultimately determining in consultation with the DAC Chair if a student passes a milestone and graduates.

Reconstituting the DAC

Students have the option to reconstitute their Dissertation Advisory Committee after the oral comprehensive examination but before the proposal defense. Reconstituting the DAC requires completion of a new approval form, with signatures from all members of the new committee, the specialization coordinator, and the department chair. Students also have the ability to replace committee members in the event that a faculty member leaves the department, takes on an administrative position, takes a leave of absence, or experiences other circumstances that severely limit the faculty member's ability to actively participate in the advising process. However, students cannot replace a faculty member on their committee because students do not agree with a faculty member's feedback or expectations. Any conflicts involving students and committee members, or conflicts between committee members, should be brought to the attention of the specialization coordinator and department chair. Students should submit the conflict in writing (email or letter) to both the specialization coordinator and department chair with an overview of the conflict.

Milestone 1: Oral Comprehensive Examination

The oral comprehensive examination is a requirement of all specializations of the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. The comprehensive exam is a 2-3 hour oral assessment in which students respond to questions formulated by their Dissertation Advisory Committee (DAC). Questions typically ask students to draw upon professional experiences and knowledge gained

through coursework, as well as literature reviewed in preparation for the exam. Questions often relate to students' tentative dissertation topic. Students should consult with their specialization coordinator in order to form the DAC. Students are permitted to complete the comprehensive exam after:

- All leadership core, specialization core, and methodological requirements within the specialization program of study have been met
- A total of 54 credit hours of coursework (out of 60) are satisfactorily completed or in progress
- Resolution of any incomplete (or "I") grades from prior coursework
- Receiving approval from their DAC chair
- Completion and submission of the DAC form

DAC members, led by the chair, should meet or communicate via email to determine questions for the exam. The DAC chair will send the questions to the student two weeks prior to the examination date. During the exam, the student answers all of the questions provided to them. They are able to answer the questions in any order. Students are permitted to bring and consult a one-page, double-sided sheet of notes during the examination. After answering the questions and any probing or clarifying questions, the student will leave the room and the DAC will deliberate on the quality of responses. The DAC chair should record the results of the examination, and the chair and committee members should sign the [Comprehensive Examination Form](#). The chair and committee members should also complete the [Comprehensive Examination Rubric](#). The form, rubrics, exam questions, and the students' sheet of notes should be turned into the departmental administrative associate. If a student fails to pass the comprehensive examination on the first attempt, they are permitted to try again. Depending on the reasons for not passing, the DAC may decide that the candidate must (a) retake the entire comprehensive examination with the same, modified, or new questions; or (b) retake part of the comprehensive examination with the same, modified, or new questions. The DAC will determine the amount of time needed before the candidate retakes the exam. If a student fails the comprehensive examination twice, they are dismissed from the program.

Milestone 2: Dissertation Proposal Defense

The dissertation proposal defense is a meeting between students and their DAC to discuss the dissertation proposal. Dissertation proposals consist of complete or abridged versions of chapters 1-3 of the dissertation. Students receive approval from their DAC chair to schedule the proposal defense. Students distribute their proposal to DAC members with sufficient time for the committee to thoughtfully read the document, ideally no less than 10-14 days. If a committee member has serious reservations about the proposal, they should communicate with the chair prior to date of the proposal meeting. During the proposal meeting, students typically provide a 20-25-minute presentation based upon their proposed dissertation, with significant attention to the proposed research design. The remainder of the meeting is dedicated to providing constructive feedback and comments to help shape students' dissertations. Following the presentation and discussion, the student will be asked to leave the room, during which time the DAC will determine if the student's proposal has committee approval to move forward to IRB

review and data collection. Chairs must submit a [Dissertation Proposal Defense Form](#) to the departmental administrative associate after the meeting and enter a petition in DegreeWorks if the student successfully passed the defense.

Milestone 3: Dissertation Proposal Defense

The dissertation defense mirrors the structure of the proposal defense. Students receive approval from their DAC chair to schedule the dissertation defense. Students distribute their dissertation to DAC members with sufficient time for the committee to thoughtfully read the document, ideally no less than 10-14 days. If a committee member has serious reservations about the dissertation, they should communicate with the chair a minimum of five days prior to the date of the defense. Students typically provide a 20-25-minute presentation based upon their dissertation, with significant attention to the analysis and results. The remainder of the meeting is dedicated to addressing questions and providing feedback. Following the presentation and discussion, the student will be asked to leave the room, during which time the DAC will determine if the student's dissertation satisfies all requirements and meets criteria of quality. Upon completion of the dissertation defense, if the student receives a "pass" or "pass with changes" decision from the DAC the student makes editorial changes requested. If significant changes are needed, the defense decision is "fail" and the defense must be rescheduled. DAC members must sign the Dissertation Defense Form, and the doctoral candidate must turn in this document to the departmental administrative associate. When the DAC chair agrees that the editorial changes made are sufficient, the doctoral candidate submits the final dissertation to the Educational Leadership administrative associate and the UNCW Graduate School (see UNCW Graduate School submission requirements).

Routing of Required Forms

The [Dissertation Advisory Committee Form](#) should be e-signed by all committee members, then given to the department chair to review and sign. The specialization coordinator provides the final signature on this form and gives it to the department's administrative associate to file.

All other required forms (e.g., the Dissertation Proposal Defense Form, Dissertation Defense Form) should be signed by committee members during the milestone meetings, then given to the specialization coordinator to review and sign. The specialization coordinator gives the form to the department's administrative assistant to file. Additional information about forms related to the milestones can be found in each of the milestone sections above.

Academic Regulations and Procedures

Registration Procedures

Students are responsible for registering each semester. Specialization coordinators will communicate with students via email or in-person during advising sessions the courses for which they should register. For additional guidance, students should consult the Course Sequence and Suggested Timeline section of this handbook.

Please take note of the following regulations during registration:

- Students are permitted to take up to 6 credit hours at the 500-level (with approval of the specialization coordinator).
- Students are permitted to take up to 3 credit hours of Directed Independent Study (EDL 691).

Course registration happens through Seanet. For more information on registration, visit the Graduate School web page on registration located <https://uncw.edu/gradschool/registration/steps.html>.

Add/Drop and Withdrawal

[Source: Graduate School]

Courses may be added or dropped only during the official drop/add period, which is noted in the current University Calendar, linked from <http://www.uncw.edu/catalogue/>.

This refund policy only applies to complete withdrawals from UNCW. Students who simply withdraw from an individual class after the drop/add period receive NO refund or reduction of fees whatsoever. A student is allowed to withdraw from the University or from individual courses through the first week of the semester without having a grade entered on the academic record. From the second week through the twelfth week of the semester, any student who withdraws will receive a grade of W. A grade of W will not affect the student's grade point average.

Beginning with the thirteenth week of the semester, a grade of WF will be assigned for each course withdrawal. The instructor will assign the grade of F at the end of the semester for any student that has not gone through the withdrawal process. Should extenuating circumstances warrant, the grade of WF or F assigned for course withdrawal may be changed to a W. This determination will be made by the Graduate School. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the appeal. The decision of the dean is final and must be rendered prior to the end of the semester in which the withdrawal occurred. The grade of WF and F will affect the student's grade point average.

If the term of an individual course does not conform to the standard 15 week semester, the withdrawal period is calculated based upon the course term's equivalence (i.e., a student is allowed to withdraw from the course through the first 1/15 of the course term without having a grade entered; between 2/15 and 12/15 of the course term, a student who withdraws will receive a W; beginning 13/15, a grade of WF will be assigned for a withdrawal).

A student who plans to withdraw from a course or all courses for the term, *but plans to return to the University*, should complete the "Graduate School Course(s)/Term Withdrawal" form before or on the last day for withdrawal as indicated in the University Calendar of Events. If the student does not plan to register in the following term, then a leave of absence form must be completed

(refer to the leave of absence guidelines below). This form is located at <http://www.uncw.edu/gradschool/currentstudents/withdrawal.html> and, upon completion, should be sent directly to the Graduate School.

A student who plans to withdraw from all courses and the University, *and does not plan to return to the University*, should complete the “Graduate School Complete Withdrawal” form. This form is located at <http://www.uncw.edu/gradschool/currentstudents/withdrawal.html> and, upon completion, should be sent directly to the Graduate School.

Students who choose to completely withdraw from the University, but later decide to return, must reapply to the Graduate School and pay all applicable fees.

Faculty who wish to register an accusation of academic dishonesty or misconduct against a graduate student should immediately notify the Graduate School in writing. Graduate students may not withdraw from any course for which such an allegation of academic dishonesty or misconduct has been filed with the Graduate School. Should the student subsequently be found innocent of these charges and if the withdrawal date has passed, the student may petition the dean of the Graduate School for withdrawal from the course.

Registration During the Dissertation

While students are working on their dissertations, they are registered for courses and their DAC chair is the instructor of record. Students must be enrolled during the semester in which they intend to graduate. DAC chairs have the responsibility of communicating with their students and requesting that the department’s administrative assistant create sections/seats. Students must take 6 credits of EDL 699, after which they take 1 credit of EDL 698 to remain actively enrolled in the program. EDL 698 cannot be used to satisfy the required 60 credit hours for the Ed.D. Students may register for EDL 698 up to three times. Beyond that, students should complete a form to request permission to extend continuous enrollment (<http://uncw.edu/gradschool/registration/index.html>).

Transfer Credit

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

A maximum of twelve semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred from another regionally accredited institution in partial fulfillment of the total hours required for any graduate degree. These credits cannot have been used in fulfillment of a previous degree. When special circumstances warrant, students may petition the Graduate School for transfer of more than twelve semester hours, not to exceed one-third of the total hours required for any program. Each such petition must be accompanied by a statement of endorsement from the appropriate dean. Under no circumstances will more than two-thirds of the hours required for a graduate degree or post-baccalaureate certificate be accepted. At least one-third of the hours required for each program must be earned at UNCW.

Grades earned on transferred work must be equivalent to B or better. Transferred credit will be accepted by the Graduate School only upon recommendation of the program coordinator for the program. Graduate School must have an official transcript showing the satisfactory completion of courses offered for transfer credit. All transfer credit is evaluated individually by the Graduate School and must be submitted through the [Request for Transfer Credit Form](#). International transfer credit must be evaluated through World Education Service (WES.org). Please contact the Graduate School for questions regarding transfer credit.

Non-Degree Credit

Graduate courses taken at UNCW as a graduate or undergraduate non-degree student, before formal admission to Graduate School, will meet course requirements for a graduate degree only if approved by the departmental coordinator and the dean of the Graduate School. A maximum of 10 hours may be applied toward the degree. This does not apply to approved combined baccalaureate/master's degree programs.

Annual Review and Academic Progression

All doctoral students in the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership will be evaluated annually on their academic performance and progress towards completion. The annual review will require that students complete an Ed.D. Annual Review Form, which incorporates information about completion of degree requirements, significant accomplishments, and any academic challenges. This form will be turned into the appropriate specialization coordinator (i.e., higher education, curriculum and instruction, or educational administration). The coordinator will review the form, along with each student's degree audit. The coordinator will assess each student's progress as 'satisfactory' or 'unsatisfactory'. In the event of unsatisfactory progress, the coordinator will meet with the student to create an Academic Development Plan for the following year. If a student's progress is assessed as unsatisfactory in more than one year, the coordinator can initiate steps to remove the student from the Ed.D. program, in consultation with the department chair and the associate dean of the Watson College of Education.

Grading and Appeals

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

Students are subject to the same grade requirements as other graduate programs at UNCW. Three grades of C, one grade of F, or one grade of U (e.g. thesis/dissertation) results in dismissal from the graduate program. There is no "D" grade in the Graduate School. Further, if a student falls below a 3.0 GPA at any time, he or she goes on academic probation and has either three subsequent courses or nine hours to bring the GPA up to at least a 3.0. In addition, a student must have at least a 3.0 GPA in order to begin any program specific comprehensive examination and/or thesis work.

Any student considering an appeal on a final course grade should understand that each faculty member has the academic freedom and responsibility to determine grades according to any method chosen by the faculty member that is professionally acceptable, communicated to

everyone in the class, and applied to all students equally. However, discriminatory, arbitrary, or capricious academic evaluation by a faculty member is a violation of a student's rights and is the only valid ground for a final course grade appeal. Any intent to appeal must be made in writing to the Graduate School within 30 days of the issuance of the grade in dispute. Students will not be allowed to enroll in courses while appealing a grade that would result in dismissal from the graduate program; however the Dean of the Graduate School may allow continued enrollment in unusual circumstances. Grades not appealed by that time become permanent.

These procedures are not to be used in cases involving student academic dishonesty or in cases where a student disputes the final course grade for reasons other than alleged discriminatory, arbitrary, or capricious academic evaluation by a faculty member.

Any student who contests a final course grade under this procedure shall first attempt to resolve the matter with the instructor involved. Failing to reach a satisfactory resolution, the student may appeal the grade in accordance with the steps outlined below.

1. The student shall present the appeal in writing to the chair of the department within which the contested grade was awarded. The written statement shall limit itself to a factual description of evidence pertaining to the valid ground for the appeal and documentation of all attempts to reach resolution. By conferring with the student and the instructor, the chair will seek resolution by mutual agreement. The chair will provide a written statement of the results of this effort to the faculty member and student.
2. Failing to resolve the issue in Step 1, the student shall present the written appeal and all documentation of attempts to reach resolution to the dean of the college or school, in which the protested grade was awarded. The dean, by conferring with the student and the instructor, will seek resolution by mutual agreement. The dean will provide a written statement of the results of this effort to the chair, faculty member, and student.
3. If Step 2 fails to produce a resolution, the student shall provide a written appeal request to the dean of the graduate school. The written statement shall limit itself to a factual description of evidence pertaining to the valid ground for the appeal, documentation of all attempts to reach resolution, and the student's desired outcome. This initiates the last stage of the grade appeal process.
4. Upon receipt of the written appeal request, the dean of the graduate school will convene and chair meetings of the Grade Appeals Committee, which consists of faculty members appointed by the dean of the graduate school. The committee will make recommendations to the dean following the hearing proceedings.
5. If the dean affirms the instructor's decision, he/she will notify the faculty member, student, chair, and appropriate college or school dean or director in writing. The decision made by the dean is a final university decision and may not be appealed further.
6. If the dean affirms the student's appeal, he/she shall prescribe the method by which the student will be reevaluated and communicate that to the faculty member, student, chair, and appropriate college or school dean or director in writing. If the reevaluation results in a grade change, the established Course

Grade Change procedure will be followed. The grade resulting from the reevaluation is a final university decision and may not be appealed further.

Honor Code and Honor Pledge

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

The University of North Carolina is a community of high academic standards where academic integrity is valued. UNCW students are committed to honesty and truthfulness in academic inquiry and in the pursuit of knowledge. Any member of the university community who has reasonable grounds to believe that an infraction of the Student Academic Honor Code has occurred has an obligation to report the alleged violation. This obligation is a core value of the Honor Code and must be fulfilled by each and every member of the university.

Academic dishonesty takes many forms, from blatant acts of cheating, bribery, or similar misdeeds to the more subtle forms of plagiarism, all of which are totally unacceptable in an institution of higher learning. Reporting and adjudication procedures have been developed to enforce the policy of academic integrity, to ensure justice, and to protect individual rights. Complete details may be found in the current [Code of Student Life](#) and the [Faculty Handbook](#).

All students enrolled at UNCW are subject to the UNCW Student Academic Honor Code (hereafter referred to as the Honor Code), which is intended to help every member of the UNCW community appreciate the high value placed on academic integrity and the means that will be employed to ensure its preservation. Students are expected to perpetuate a campus culture where each student does his or her own work while relying on appropriate resources for assistance. In such a climate students enjoy a special trust that they are members of a unique community where one's thoughts and words are attributed correctly and with proper ownership, and where there is little need for systems to sanction those who cheat. As such, all UNCW students shall commit to the principles and spirit of the Honor Code by adhering to the following pledge:

“As a student at The University of North Carolina Wilmington, I am committed to honesty and truthfulness in academic inquiry and in the pursuit of knowledge. I pledge to uphold and promote the UNCW Student Academic Honor Code.”

A graduate student assigned a course grade of “F” as a result of an Honor Code offense will be deemed ineligible to continue in the UNCW Graduate School. The full UNCW Student Academic Honor Code may be viewed at uncw.edu/cosl.

Academic Grievance Procedure

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

Graduate students who have academic or procedural concerns, other than grades, should attempt to resolve those concerns at the lowest academic level as soon as possible (and no more than 90 days) after the event giving rise to the complaint. The first level for redress is with the appropriate faculty member. Within 30 days of failing to reach a satisfactory resolution with the faculty member, the student may appeal to the department chairman. Failing resolution at the department level, the student may, within 10 business days, appeal jointly to the dean for the student's academic area and to the dean of the Graduate School. The deans (or their

designees) will conduct interviews with all parties to arrive at a resolution of the issue. The mutually agreed upon decision of the deans will be final and not subject to further appeal. Complaints that fall within the categories of sexual harassment, improper personal relationships, personal discrimination, unlawful workplace harassment, or workplace violence should be filed in accordance with Appendix J of the UNCW Code of Student Life.

Time to Degree Limits

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

A graduate student has five calendar years (masters) or six calendar years (doctoral) to complete his or her degree program. The period begins with the student's first term of work after formal admission to a degree-granting program. Work completed as a non-degree student does not initiate the five-year period for completing a degree program.

When extenuating circumstances warrant, an extension of the time limit for completing a graduate program may be granted to a student upon his or her petition to the Graduate School. Such petitions must include an explanation and the endorsement of the student's advisory committee, program coordinator, and EDL department chair.

Leave of Absence

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

Students who will not use university resources should apply to the Graduate School for a leave of absence. Students choosing this option must complete a leave of absence form. If a graduate student requests, and is granted a leave of absence, the student must return in the term specified on the Leave of Absence form. If a student fails to continue in the agreed upon term, then he/she must reapply for admission.

Graduation Procedures

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

Students must complete all degree requirements to be eligible to walk in a graduation ceremony. Graduate students who have completed all degree requirements for July graduation, may walk in the December ceremony and their names will be listed in the December commencement program; graduate students who have completed all degree requirements for December graduation, may walk in the December ceremony and their names will be listed in the December commencement program; graduate students who have completed all degree requirements for May graduation, may walk during the May ceremony and their names will be listed in the May commencement program. A graduate student may walk only in the graduation ceremony in the term in which they graduate.

Students who have completed all requirements for a degree or certificate must apply to graduate **before** the graduation application closes. If an application is not entered by the application close date, the student will need to apply to the next open graduation term.

Students who are scheduled to graduate must complete all requirements for the degree or certificate by the end of the semester. The end of the semester date can be found on the University Calendar which is listed in the Graduate Catalogue for each academic year. If requirements are not met by that date, the student will be moved to the next graduation date and term.

Students are also required to submit an electronic copy of their final dissertation to the Educational Leadership administrative associate for maintaining a database internally.

UNC Online

[Source: Graduate Catalogue]

UNC Online is a web portal that facilitates inter-institutional registration for online classes between all 17 campuses of the UNC System. If you are an active student at UNCW, you have the opportunity to register for an online class offered by another UNC campus. Students are not required to pay tuition at the other campus, since UNCW tuition applies to these courses as well. Courses are taught online or through videoconference technology. For an overview of this inter-institutional registration program and to view lists of available online classes and to begin the registration process, visit the [inter-institutional registration portal](#).

Appendix A: Forms

Appendix B: Advising Resources