Doctoral Handbook

Adult and Postsecondary Education Programs

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Welcome…

to the doctoral programs of Adult and Postsecondary Education in the College of Education at the University of Wyoming. We are excited to have you as colleagues in our programs and look forward to collaborating with you in the future. This handbook is intended to be a general orientation to your program. It provides resources that will help you navigate your graduate experience. Frequently refer to this guide as you progress through your program.

You may also want to visit the program Adult and Postsecondary Education website to keep up-to-date with department and program news. You should also monitor the University’s graduate student regulations and policies (maintained at the Registrar’s website). It is your responsibility to become familiar with the rules, regulations, and procedures involved in graduate work.
Faculty & Staff

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Research Interests: Community Colleges, Organizational Leadership, Law of Higher Education

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Research Interests: Higher Education- Economics, Policy and Planning, Philosophy of Social Science
Your Advisor

As you entered the graduate program you were assigned an advisor. We try to match student and faculty interests in advising decisions. Common interests and ideas help create a positive working relationship, promote research collaboration, and streamline doctoral work. Despite this pairing, it is your responsibility to build a relationship with your advisor. To begin this process setup an appointment to meet your advisor (e.g., face-to-face or via telephone). You may also want to establish regular meetings to discuss research ideas, course offerings, and professional goals.

Take time to explore the researcher interests of your advisor. Summary interests are located in this guide and on the program website. Individual profiles on the webpage often contain links to a curriculum vitae, recent publications, or additional information. Read some of these resources and discuss them with your advisor.

Your advisor will help you select yearly goals, identify a committee, formalize a program of study, and complete your dissertation. Unless changed, your advisor will also become your committee chair.

Establishing Successful Relationships:
Although your advisor wants you to succeed in the program, (s)he will not force you to do anything. You must take the initiative to build a successful relationship. Below are some recommendations:

- Faculty at the University of Wyoming are busy. All have research responsibilities and agendas, prepare and teach courses, grade assignments, and provide national and local service. Try to find answers to your questions prior to confronting your advisor. Be proactive. University, college, and program websites contain much information. Check these resources, contact office managers, and ask other students first.
- If you can’t find what you need, do not wait for your advisor to come to you. When you have questions, want to discuss research ideas, or prepare for programmatic exams, initiate the conversation with your advisor.
- Schedule appointments with advisors in advance and thank them for their time.
Show commitment to your professional development. When you say that you will do something be sure to follow through.

Think how your research interests might better align with those of your advisor.

Receive criticism in a professional manner.

Selecting a New Advisor:
During the course of your program you may need to change your advisor. There are many reasons to change an advisor. You may not share common interests—making it difficult for your advisor to help you in your research. Personalities may not match or you may find it difficult to meet. Changing advisors (and later committee chairs and members) is a normal part of the graduate experience and should not cause personal feelings of failure, frustration, or stress.

During your first year, you should get to know as many faculty members as possible to see how they interact with you and whether their research interests are similar to your own. Familiarizing yourself with faculty members will help you as you form your committee and conduct your research. It will also help you to brainstorm research ideas, refine thoughts, and progress in your professional development.

If you want to switch your advisor, you should first inform him or her and talk about the idea. Based on this meeting, you should then setup meetings to speak with prospective new advisors. Be sure to articulate why you would like her/him to be your advisor—generally this is because they have similar research interests and you work well together. Remember, they may not be willing or able to serve as your advisor depending on their own work and advising load.

When a faculty member from your program decides to serve as your new advisor, you will need to notify your former advisor, contact the office manager, and submit the Committee Assignment/Change Form which can be linked from the website for Graduate Forms, Petitions, and Guidelines at the Registrar’s website.
Program Pillars

Adult and Postsecondary Education programs build upon four pillars or foundations to help students become well-rounded professionals. These include educational foundations, learning and development, technological understanding, and research and scholarship.

*Educational foundations* focus on the socio-cultural analyses of education in your program area. Foundations include the philosophical and historical perspectives that shape your field over time. They also include relevant theories and rationales that influence past and present research and inquiry.

*Learning and development* includes conceptual analyses of human development, learning theories, principles, practices, and/or models that apply to knowledge or skills acquisition.

*Technological understanding* involves the conceptual analyses of information access, technological skill, literacy, and/or procedures for use in your program.

*Research and scholarship* involves advanced work in research necessary for understanding, analyzing, and interpreting data and research design. This area also focuses on skills and expertise in conducting, synthesizing, and disseminating original research.

As you begin your doctoral experience refer to these pillars frequently. They lay the foundation of your electronic portfolio, periodic assessments, and professional development.
Ed.D. & Ph.D. Defined

Graduate study in Adult and Postsecondary Education at the University of Wyoming aims to provide a balance between theory and practice. Attention is directed toward the union of learning that is required by circumstances (requisites) and learning that enriches life. These nationally recognized graduate programs in Adult and Postsecondary Education offer courses of study which prepare individuals to work in diverse areas. Two types of doctoral programs are offered. Each is distinguished on several levels. The following section describes some of these distinctions. For additional information, please visit our program website.

Ed.D.:
The Ed.D. (the terminal professional degree in education) is designed for practitioners who desire to improve their practice as educators and leaders. The Ed.D. degree is intended to permit students to affiliate with a particular program unit, take a concentration of offerings in that unit, and complete a core program that includes course work from other units in the College of Education. The route involves depth in an area of concentration, scholarship, and advanced research and problem-solving skills. The Ed.D. is designed for students who intend to work as administrators, instructional leaders, directors, and related practitioner positions. The research emphasis leans towards the interpretation, integration, and use of existing research. The student’s graduate committee approves degree requirements and course work. The writing of a problem based dissertation is required and must be completed within four years of completing your preliminary exam. As developing leaders, and given the context of their position and institution, graduates will be competent in organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, advocacy, and professionalism (AACC, 2005).

Ph.D.:
The Ph.D. in Education prepares students for careers of scholarly inquiry and teaching in higher education. The program consists of (1) continuous research or inquiry, (2) courses and professional experiences in education and related fields designed to develop a comprehensive academic basis for future work in research and teaching, and (3) teaching and other related experiences tailored to individual needs and career goals. Each student works closely with an advisor and supervisory faculty committee to select courses, topics of research and inquiry, and teaching experiences.

Effective preparation for the Ph.D. stems from collaborative research and inquiry into topics of mutual interest by students and faculty members. A major portion of the program consists of students and faculty members collaborating on research and inquiry. Successful Ph.D. applicants tend to have high aptitude for research and inquiry and express interest in general topics that the faculty of the College are actively pursuing. Ph.D. students have a longer residency requirement, must take 12 hours of advanced research courses, 12 hours of dissertation credits, and nine hours of college core courses.
Residency Requirement

Ed.D.
Ed.D. students have a residency requirement that consists of two spring meetings. Each meeting lasts between one to two days and is conducted at the University of Wyoming main campus. The first meeting usually takes place near the conclusion of your first year in the program. This meeting is typically focused on selecting a dissertation chair, committee members and preparing for a problem based dissertation.

Your second spring residency usually takes place after you have completed your coursework. At this point you will receive detailed training on prospectus and dissertation work, research methods, data collection instrumentation, and other program-related topics.

Ph.D.
As a Ph.D. student in the College of Education you are usually required to complete a four-semester full time campus residency to become better immersed in the college community and to focus on scholarly efforts aligned to committee members’ research interests. This residency must be completed in four consecutive semesters. Summer semester may count towards this requirement. Typically, residency takes place after completing the majority of your coursework (including advanced research requirements). This gives you the skill set to collaborate with campus faculty on joint research projects, conduct pilot studies in preparation for dissertation work, and engage in academic discourse to promote teaching and learning.
# Program Requirements

**DOCTOR OF EDUCATION**

**EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

**ADULT AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION COGNATE**

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

(77 CREDIT HOURS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDAD 5720</td>
<td>Leader as Change Agent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDAD 5850</td>
<td>Leader as Direction Setter</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5260</td>
<td>Educational Issues in Race, Class, &amp; Gender</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5600</td>
<td>Higher Education Finance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5630</td>
<td>Advanced Organizational Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5640</td>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5670</td>
<td>Community College Issues &amp; Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5680</td>
<td>Issues in Higher Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5750</td>
<td>Advanced Learning Theories</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5880</td>
<td>Internship</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5600 or EDRE 5640</td>
<td>First Research Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5610 or EDRE 5650</td>
<td>Second Research Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE - TBD</td>
<td>Third Research Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5660</td>
<td>Dissertation Prospectus</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRST 5980</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Total Coursework: 41 hours  
Master’s Coursework: 30 Hours  
Dissertation Hours: 6 Hours  
TOTAL PROGRAM: 77 Hours

*(Minimum 77 hours to graduate with Ed.D. in Adult and Post-Secondary Education Cognate)*

Final Approval Granted January 2013
**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**  
**ADULT AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION COGNATE**

**PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (81 CREDIT HOURS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doctoral Core</th>
<th>Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRST 5600 Introduction to Doctoral Studies (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNSL 5900 Practicum in College Teaching (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDCI 5600 Diversity (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EDCI 5810 Writing for Publication (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5750 Advanced Learning Theories (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EDRE 5660 Dissertation Prospectus (3)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students must take 9 credit hours from the list above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5600 Descriptive Research (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5610 Group Comparison Research (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5620 Correlational Research (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5630 Multivariate Research (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EDRE 5640 Intro to Qualitative Research (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRE 5650 Advanced Qualitative Research (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EDRE 5660 Mixed Methods Research (3)</td>
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</table>

Students must take 12 credit hours from the list above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doctoral Cognate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDAD 5650 Leader as Communicator (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDAD 5720 Leader as Change Agent (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5260 Educational Issues in Race, Class, &amp; Gender (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5600 Higher Education Finance (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5630 Advanced Organizational Leadership (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADED 5680 Issues in Higher Education (3)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students must take all 18 credit hours listed above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dissertation</th>
<th>Required</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRST 5980 Dissertation (12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Coursework                               | 39 Hours |
| Master’s Coursework:                           | 30 Hours |
| Dissertation Hours:                           | 12 Hours |
| **TOTAL PROGRAM:**                             | 81 Hours |

*(Minimum 81 hours to graduate with Ph.D. in Adult and Post-Secondary Education Cognate)*  
Final Approval Granted January 2013
**Events Timeline**

Students seeking doctoral degrees in the College of Education are expected to complete their degree within four years of entrance. While individual abilities and situations may vary, below is a timeline highlighting program milestones to fulfill this goal.

### End of 4th Year: Defend dissertation/Graduation

- Apply for employment
- Write dissertation or alternative project
- Collect and analyze dissertation

### End of 3rd Year: Defend Prospectus and obtain University of Wyoming IRB approval.

- Conduct a pilot study
- Obtain IRB research approval
- Complete preliminary exam
- Complete core & content courses

### End of 2nd Year: Preparation for your Preliminary Exam

- Attend Spring Residency
- Program of study meeting
- Form doctoral committee
- Refine research ideas

### End of 1st Year: Selection of a chair and members for your dissertation. Completion and filing of your Program of Study.

- Attend Spring Residency
- Explore interests of faculty members
- Develop/refine research ideas
- Develop portfolio goals

### Admission: Become familiar with the problem based dissertation format and faculty who might chair your dissertation.
Retention & Dismissal Policies

Retention policies and procedures are based on the expectation that students who enroll in our programs are self-directed. Your acceptance in any program does not guarantee your fitness to remain in that program. The faculty is responsible for assuring that only those students who continue to meet academic program standards and who make adequate yearly progress toward degree completion are allowed to continue. Faculty members seek to identify additional help students may need to be successful and to recognize outstanding student achievements.

Continuous Registration:
All students are required to demonstrate annual academic progress. A component of this progress requires you to complete 9-12 credit hours per year towards your program of study. Under some circumstances (e.g., work schedule, family situations, travel) you may be unable to enroll in courses for a semester. During these times you should enroll in one credit hour of continuous enrollment. These hours do not count towards graduation but will keep your status active in the program. You are allowed to enroll in a maximum of four semesters of continuous enrollment. Exceptions to this rule are made on a case-by-case basis with your advisor. If you require additional time away from program courses, you should petition for a leave of absence from the university. If you do not enroll in classes for a 12-month period, your status will be deactivated, you will be dismissed from the program, and you have the option to reapply to the program for readmission.

Coursework:
You are expected to earn a minimum grade of "B" or “S” in each graduate-level course you take. If a student borders on making unsatisfactory progress (as evidenced by grades and/or less than average evaluations by department faculty), they meet with their faculty advisor to discuss the problem(s), review appropriate measures of correction, and establish a timeline for change. However, severity of the problem(s) may not allow for this method and informal methods are not procedurally required. The programs define "unsatisfactory" performance in graduate level course work as a grade of "U" or "F" in any course and/or more than two grades below a "B." Obtaining one course grade of “F” or “U,” more than two course grades below a “B,” a cumulative GPA lower than a “B” average, or failure to meet all requirements of a remediation plan will result in program dismissal. Students who have been dismissed for unsatisfactory performance in graduate level course work will not be allowed to take courses in the programs as unclassified students.
Program Exams:
You are expected to complete program exams in a timely and satisfactory manner. The following exams are used to document progress through the Adult and Postsecondary Education doctoral programs:

- Preliminary defense
- Prospectus defense
- Dissertation defense

Failure to pass any of these exams after two tries will result in program dismissal.

Professional Conduct:
In addition to maintaining high scholastic standards, you should develop professional skills necessary to work effectively with a variety of people. The faculty expects you:

- To be committed to personal growth and professional development,
- To be concerned about others,
- To be able to receive and give constructive feedback
- To effectively apply the skills and understandings covered in course work

Further, you are expected to adhere to the codes of ethics of your professional associations (e.g., American Association of Adult and Continuing Education, the American Educational Research Association, or the Council for the Study of Community Colleges). Examples of behaviors that may evidence professional impairment include but are not limited to:

- Violation of professional or academic standards such as plagiarism
- Inability or unwillingness to acquire or manifest professional skills or understandings at an acceptable level of competency
- Behaviors that can reasonably be predictive of poor future professional functioning (e.g., extensive tardiness, excessive late work, unwillingness to accept feedback)
- Disrespect shown towards faculty, staff or other students

Members of the faculty evaluate student performance on an ongoing-basis. The faculty makes judgments as to students' professional conduct based on observations of course performance, evaluations of students' oral and written work, and performance in internships if applicable. Formal evaluations are also conducted at key stages of the student's program, including preliminary examinations, prospectus approvals and dissertation defenses. When, in the professional judgment of a program faculty member, a student is not meeting professional guidelines or meeting university standards, the faculty member will consult with the department head to determine appropriate actions. Actions may include (but are not limited to) formal reprimand, unsatisfactory grades, a mandatory leave of absence, additional course work, formal probation, encouragement to withdraw from the program, or formal dismissal.
Professional Organizations

One purpose of your doctoral program is to help you transition from a student role into a professional colleague role. As you complete your program, you will experience some of this transition. Active participation in professional organizations can accelerate this process and help you form networks that span the globe.

Several organizations emphasize Adult and Postsecondary Education, including:
- American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)
- American Educational Research Association (AERA)
- Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)
- Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC)
- Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association (NRMERA)

As a doctoral student, you are required to join at least one of the professional associations listed above for the duration of your program. We encourage you to attend and present at an annual conference. Additionally, you are encouraged to attend conferences from one or more of the other organizations listed above.
Committee Formation

To form a doctoral committee, you should begin by meeting with your proposed chair. This can be done in person or via telephone. Normally your chair will be the advisor you were assigned when admitted to the program. Together, you will confirm whether your advisor will serve as your chair and identify other potential committee members. Generally speaking, the identification of committee members will be based on your proposed content area and research methodology. It is your responsibility to set up a meeting with each proposed committee member. During the meeting you should indicate why you want that individual on your committee and what role they may serve. Ask them if they are willing to serve. Do not be discouraged if they disagree. They may be busy at that particular time or may not see a fit with your research interests. If they agree, an e-mail should be sent by each committee member to the Adult and Postsecondary Education Office Associate indicating their agreement to serve. This same procedure is followed when changing a committee setup. The committee form is located at http://www.uwyo.edu/uwgradsupport/docs/forms/CommitteeAssignment.doc. If you have any additional questions please contact your advisor.

Program of Study Meeting:
After you have identified your committee, and if your chair agrees, you may proceed to schedule your Program of Study meeting. As you prepare for this meeting, your chair may ask you to prepare a one to two page paper detailing your anticipated program completion, content area and research methodology. You will present this paper at your Program of Study meeting along with the completed Program of Study document. The Program of Study document lists the courses you must take in order to graduate. Please use care in preparing this document. Be sure to solicit the advice of your chair. Each committee member must sign this document.
Preliminary Exam

As you near the completion of your coursework, you should schedule through your committee chair to take a preliminary exam. As part of this exam, you will write responses to three or four questions (determined by your committee) related to the foundations of your field, current practices, scholarly research, and research methodologies. Answers to each question should be between ten to twelve pages (excluding references) and should be written in accordance with current APA guidelines. You will have five days to answer these questions and cannot receive help from anyone. The university allows a minimum of two weeks for your committee to evaluate your exam. After that time, they will determine if you passed your written exam. If that occurs, you will have an oral defense in front of your committee. Once you pass this oral exam, you will be admitted into candidacy and will have four years to complete and defend your dissertation.

While you must take this exam on your own, you are encouraged to think about and prepare for it well in advance. Seeking advice from your advisor, your committee, and faculty who teach research methods is encouraged.

Ideas to consider while preparing for this exam:

Foundations:
- Who are the key theorists in the field?
- How do their theories compare and contrast with each other?
- How do these theories influence practice?
- How do courses in your program of study fit together to make you a better professional?
- How does information from these courses intermix and combine to deepen your understanding of the field?

Current Practice:
- How does the field influence your current profession?
- How does your profession influence the field?
- What are some advantages and limitations of program theories based on your work environment?

Scholarly Research:
- What topic are you interested in studying for your dissertation?
  - What facets of this broader topic are you interested in exploring in depth?
- What have other researchers said about these facets?
  - How credible, relevant, accurate, and timely are these sources?
  - What is missing from previous studies?
- Do not just summarize what others have done as you explore scholarly research. Use previous research to build and support arguments about the state of the field.
Research Methods

What are some potential research questions that you are interested in examining as part of your dissertation?

- What quantitative or qualitative methods best address these questions?
- Do you have the background/knowledge to use these methods?
- What are some advantages and disadvantages of using particular methods?

- Where are some potential research sites?
  - Can you adequately examine your research questions at this site?
  - How might collected data help you to answer potential research questions?
  - How might you analyze your data?

- Who might participate in your study? Will you be examining texts or making observations?
  - What are some selection criteria that you could use to recruit participants?
  - What are some advantages and limitations of using these selection criteria?
  - What benefits and risks might your participants face?

When you pass your preliminary exam, you will be admitted to candidacy, can begin your prospectus, and have four years to complete your graduate work.
Prospectus Defense

Prior to beginning your dissertation research, you must defend a prospectus before your committee. You may also need to obtain approval from the university Institutional Review Board and any other organizations where data will be collected. Generally, a prospectus contains advanced drafts of the first three chapters of your dissertation (or a suitable document if you will be completing an alternative project). These include an introductory chapter that introduces the topic, research questions, and significance of the study, a literature review, and a detailed methods chapter. Ideally, you will already have drafts of these documents from your preliminary exam. In some cases, you may also have conducted a pilot study.

Once you complete your prospectus, you will submit it to your chair for review. If your chair approves the document, it will be transmitted to your committee for review. Review by committee members takes a minimum of two weeks. If your committee determines that your prospectus is of sufficient quality, an oral exam will be scheduled. During this exam, you will defend your prospectus before your committee. They may ask you to clarify or change certain aspects of your research methodology or literature review. Once you pass your prospectus defense, you will need to submit the signed prospectus forms to the program's office associate. You may also need to obtain Institutional Review Board approval (assuming you are working with human subjects) before you may begin dissertation data collection.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Before you can conduct research that involves human subjects, you must obtain permission from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Wyoming. Guidelines for obtaining approval are located at http://www.uwyo.edu/research/Research/human-subjects/index.html. The IRB is composed of university faculty as well as individuals not affiliated with the university. The full board meets monthly to review applications for human subjects research and to determine if subjects and researchers will be effectively protected during data collection, examination, and dissemination. A list of IRB members and meeting dates can be found at http://www.uwyo.edu/research/Research/human-subjects/IRBmeeting-dates.html.

Although IRB proposals are accepted at any time, they are reviewed according to the IRB's schedule. Therefore, it is important that you plan ahead. No human subjects data can be collected prior to IRB approval. A general review of materials can take upwards of 4-6 weeks before feedback is provided. Additional time may be needed to make changes to your proposal.
Proposals must be submitted at least two weeks prior to a full board meeting to be examined that month.

A proposal can be written in a word processing document and typically contains the following sections:

1. Name and contact information of the investigators
2. Title of the research project
3. Anticipated duration of the project
4. Purpose of the project
5. Description of human subjects participation
6. Research procedures
7. Extent to which participants will be identified
8. Description of participant benefits
9. Description of participant risks
10. Description of how informed consent will be obtained
11. Copies of consent forms, survey instruments, interview protocols, assessments, and other research documents
12. A letter from your committee chair indicating review and approval of the proposal
13. Letters of agreement from other involved institutions (colleges, hospitals, schools, etc.)

**CITI Training:**
Before you can submit the necessary forms for IRB approval you must complete a series of training modules offered at [http://www.citiprogram.org/](http://www.citiprogram.org/). On this site you will create a user account and complete several modules relating to the safe and ethical use of human subjects data. Upon completing these modules you will be presented with a certificate of completion. Be sure to save an electronic copy (and print a hard copy) of this certificate. Your certificate of training must accompany your IRB proposal.
Dissertation

After you have successfully defended your prospectus (and obtained IRB approval, if necessary) you may begin dissertation data collection and analysis. By this time you are well on your way to becoming an expert in your field. Your literature reviews and previous research have helped establish you as a scholar in your area. Your dissertation committee and others that you work with have formed a professional network that will help you to succeed in your research. Be sure to continue working closely with these individuals.

Previous work with your dissertation committee should guide dissertation research. Be sure to follow the guidelines spelled out in your prospectus and IRB proposal. Always keep your committee chair advised of your progress. If you encounter difficulties, unforeseen phenomena (e.g., participant risks, procedures outside of your control that influence data collection, etc.) be sure to report them to your committee chair and, if requested, to the Institutional Review Board.

Allow for adequate time to complete your dissertation research. Remember that although your committee chair and your committee members want you to complete your work in an efficient and timely manner, the most important criterion for completion is submission of a high quality dissertation. While you are working on your dissertation you must enroll in dissertation credit hours. If you have not completed your dissertation after meeting your program’s minimum requirements for dissertation credit hours, you will need to continue enrolling in a minimum of one dissertation credit hour per semester until you successfully defend your dissertation. Your chair is responsible for ensuring that you complete a high quality dissertation. Accordingly, there may be occasions where you are asked to make revisions on how you present, analyze, and interpret your data. To help you maintain balance in this portion of your life, set small goals that lead to your dissertation completion. Support groups will assist you in your data analysis and writing. The more graduate students can support each other through this process, the more satisfying your overall experience will be. Your colleagues will hold you accountable and you will thank them for it in the end.

Be sure to format your dissertation based on guidelines outlined in the Appendix to this document.

Dissertation completion is time sensitive. Be sure to check university deadlines for graduation requirements.

When you complete a draft of your dissertation that satisfies your chair, it will be sent to the rest of your committee. University policy allows committee members two weeks minimum to review this document. If deemed satisfactory by your committee an oral defense will be scheduled.

Upon successful completion of your defense you will be asked to make revisions to your document and submit your dissertation electronically. Guidelines for electronic submission can be found at http://www.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/school?siteId=98
**Graduation and Beyond**

The conclusion of your career as a graduate student can be stressful. Not only are you finishing your dissertation and planning for a defense that may be months away, but you may also be applying for jobs, anticipating future moves, and trying to establish yourself in a professional community that extends beyond the university. Several steps can be taken to create a smoother transition. These include actively participating in professional communities (local, regional, and national) prior to graduation, thinking carefully about what job you want, researching entry-level requirements, and establishing specific short term goals to make yourself more competitive.

Often students conduct dissertation research while concurrently applying for positions. Each of these activities can fill a workday. Be sure to schedule sufficient time for both. Learn how and when positions are posted for your field. Spend time during these last months to apply for positions. Yet, remember that most employers intend to hire people who have graduated. Do not neglect your dissertation work while applying. Remember, the best dissertation is a completed dissertation.

**PhD:**
If you are a PhD candidate interested in a faculty position in academia, you should identify what types of jobs you would like during your first years in your program. When time permits, carefully review position postings and become familiar with the required and desired qualifications for appointments in your field. These qualifications will give you a sense of what skills you need to develop during your career as a graduate student. As you enter the last years in your program, consider applying for one or two of these positions to become familiar with the process. How will you organize your curriculum vitae to position yourself for the job? Whom will you ask to write letters of recommendation? What will you write in your cover letter? This experience will give you confidence. It will also provide you an early opportunity for faculty and peer feedback to improve your portfolio and presentations skills.
Above all, do your homework before you apply for positions. Become familiar with institutional and departmental websites. Learn about the faculty, staff, and department leaders in the units that you want to join. Become familiar with the research and scholarship produced by those faculty. They may become your closest colleagues and research partners. Learn about the department’s undergraduate and graduate curricula. What classes might you be able to teach? Consider completing a brief review of one or more recent dissertations produced by graduate students in the department. If you know someone that works at the institution, approach them and inquire about the position and the community. Are you a good fit for the position? Are you a good fit for the work environment? Would you enjoy living in the community? As a general rule, only apply for positions that you would want to accept.

Doing this research well in advance of an interview will set you apart from other candidates. When you receive telephone and on campus interviews regarding these positions you will have an opportunity to ask informed questions. Be sure to have your own questions for the search committee, department head, dean, and students. Be prepared to discuss your research agenda, your publication and presentation record, and your goals for research and scholarship over the next five years. Even if you are not offered the position, you will be able to expand your professional network. Above all, don’t be discouraged if you don’t receive an offer. Obtaining a doctoral degree is hard work. Just getting this far is reason to celebrate. Take the time to enjoy the moment and reflect on your accomplishments.

EdD:
If you are an Ed.D. candidate interested in a leadership position in postsecondary education or as a manager in private or public sector organizations, you should also identify the positions you would like to attain. Try to do this early in your program. Again, when time permits, carefully review position postings and become familiar with the required and desired qualifications for appointments in your field. As you enter the last year in your program, consider applying for one or two of these positions to become familiar with the process. You will also need to think about organizing your curriculum vitae to position yourself for the position and whom to approach for letters of recommendation. Remember that as a practitioner, most search committees will expect you to offer references from university faculty and leaders in your field who can speak to your leadership experience, leadership potential, and ability to solve problems and implement change. These considerations should be addressed in your cover letter. Your responsibility in studying positions and organizations is as important as your colleagues’ need to study the curriculum and research when pursuing a faculty or research position in the academy. You will be better prepared for positions if you learn about the organization’s stated mission, values, and operational goals; its leadership structure; its primary programs and services; its reputation in the community and state; its primary business clients and partners; and the history and viability of its main funding streams. You may not be able to acquire current or complete information about each of these conditions. Remember employers are searching for leaders who will add value to the organization. You can only discuss your potential to add value if you are familiar with the organization.
Ed.D. Problem-Based Dissertation

The purpose of this document is to review the categories of problem-based dissertations and identify sample topics, research questions, methods and deliverables for each category.

**Type I – Understanding the Problem**

What to Study:

1. Symptoms, causes, and nature of an actionable problem

Type I dissertations focus on helping others understand an actionable problem. These dissertations should also align with theories, research, literature, and paradigms that are appropriate for our field and areas of expertise. Because the focus is understanding a problem, it should be described in retrospective or concurrent terms as opposed to prospective or hypothetical terms. The dissertation should also be contextualized by a focused and concise review of scholarly and professional literature.

Sample research questions:

1. What dispositions, behaviors, organizational structures, resource flows, etc. describe the problem or explain the problem’s recurrence?
2. How is the problem indicated at the research site?
3. What factors cause or reproduce the problem?

Central research questions should closely tie to an organizational setting. Unambiguous data should also confirm the problem. Description and explanation of how the problem is indicated or the factors causing the problem should be appropriate for Adult and Postsecondary Education. The objective is to frame research questions that help understand the problem. Data collection, analysis, and interpretation should respond to research questions that acknowledge this specific focus. You should locate and explicate theories and models that closely relate or help explain the problem.

The study (data, methods, research designs):

1. Recognize patterns in data
2. Compare cases or observe behaviors
3. Use archival/administrative data that indicate the problem at the research site
4. Use surveys/behavior observations to show how the problem is produced

Quantitative and qualitative methods are appropriate for Type I dissertations. Surveying entire (but small) populations (without randomized sampling) may be appropriate. Straightforward analyses using descriptive statistics on archival data, case studies, or bounded narratives might also be appropriate. However, methodologies that do not clearly and directly help others understand the problem are probably inappropriate.

Deliverable:

Deliverables should help an organization, community, or group understand the problem and/or suggest areas for further study. You should evidence the main patterns of the problem.
**Type II – Designing or Selecting a Solution**

**What to study?**
1. Defining desired outcomes; modeling behavior changes
2. Perceived adequacy or fit of the solution to the problem
3. Process of designing or selecting a solution

Type II dissertations help an organization or program design or select a solution for an identified, well-documented problem. The starting point for Type II dissertations is to confirm that the problem is well understood. Once this confirmation occurs, a desired outcome or solution is explored. Thus, Type II dissertations require an understanding of the problem and the existence of available data and professional knowledge to help you define desired outcomes, model new behaviors, assess the adequacy or fit of a particular solution, or propose a process for defining or selecting a remedy. This study should be contextualized by a focused and concise review of scholarly and professional literature.

**Sample Research Questions:**
1. What features of the created design or program will reduce the problem?
2. What assumptions do stakeholders/decision makers have regarding potential solutions?
3. What alternatives are available; why were they rejected?
4. What criteria for impact or success are chosen/suitable?
5. Did leaders have an adequate understanding of the problem?
6. Did leaders have an adequate theory of how the remedy might work?
7. Where/why do design or adoption processes break down?

Type II dissertations explore the selection or design of solutions to established problems. However, students may narrow research foci to certain aspects of the design or selection process (e.g., desired outcomes, adequacy or fit of solutions, processes of designing or adopting remedies) as opposed to examining the whole process. The challenge with Type II dissertations is examine problems substantial enough for dissertation work but not so massive that they overwhelm the researcher.

**The study (data, methods, research designs):**
1. Tracing the design or adoption process
2. Effects modeling
3. On-going (participant) observation of decision making processes

Methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation should accommodate the exploration of problem solutions (whether selected or designed). Data could inform the researcher about the design or selection process – or some aspect of them. Alternatively, a study might use data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods to understand action theories used by organizations to select remedies.

**Deliverable:**
Deliverables should help organizations, communities, or groups present and explain critical aspects of the design or selection of a solution. It may include presentations of key remedy features, action theories, junctures in the decision making process, etc.
Type III – Implementation and Formative Evaluation

What to Study?
1. Process of implementation;
2. Action planning and workability of action plan
3. Ongoing control, monitoring, support given local motivation and capacity

Type III dissertations examine the implementation of identified solutions to well-documented problems. This study should be contextualized by a focused and concise review of scholarly and professional literature.

Sample Research Questions:
1. How does the adopted/designed solution play out in the context of the research site?
2. What factors facilitate or hamper implementation?
3. What adjustments in the implementation process/design are needed?
4. What negotiations took place for successful implementation?
5. What role do stakeholder and leaders play in solution implementation?
6. What factors were overlooked in the original model?
7. Was the action/implementation plan realistic under local conditions?
8. What leadership skills or personal characteristics were required for implementation?
9. How did the implementation compare to expectations?

Type III dissertations examine the implementation of solutions to established problems. The study of complex programs might reasonably focus on one or more factors facilitating or hampering implementation. Alternatively, a study of fairly straightforward programs might examine several aspects of implementation. The key is to ensure that research questions focus on implementation as opposed to underlying problems or solution design or selection.

The Study (Data, Methods, Research Designs):
1. Tracing implementation processes
2. Examining links between design and context of motivation and capacity
3. Tracing administrative steering capacities, information flows, and support
4. Observing processes; interviewing, surveying implementers
5. Reflecting on interventions during implementation

Methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation need to accommodate solution implementations. For some studies, data could inform the researcher about the implementation process, the relationship between design and implementation, or the administrative success (or failure) of implementation. Thus Type III dissertations might examine the impact of solutions on identified problems. Alternatively, data collection, analysis, and interpretation might examine the perspectives and knowledge of various parties involved in implementation processes.

Deliverable:
Deliverable should help organizations, communities, or groups by presenting and explaining critical aspects of the implementation of a solution. It may include a presentation of factors that helped or hindered implementation, suggestions for redesign, administrative processes, motivation, capacity building, etc.
Type IV – Summative Evaluation

What to Study?

1. Evaluation of impact or effect

Type IV dissertations focus on evaluating the impact of programs and processes (or certain aspects of them) that have been in place for some time. These dissertations are retrospective in nature and may focus on evaluating practice where problems have not been identified. This study should be contextualized by a focused and concise review of scholarly and professional literature.

Sample Research Questions:

1. What are the consequences of the program/process?
2. What evidence is available regarding procedural impact?
3. What evidence is available regarding educational effects?
4. What criteria explain examined outcomes?
5. What is the impact of the program on ________?

Type IV dissertations conduct summative evaluations on established programs. Students need to determine exactly what will be evaluated, how it will be evaluated, and what evidence will be used to determine impact, effect, etc.

The study: data, methods, research designs:

1. Summative evaluation designs
2. Quantitative and/or qualitative data on outcomes and implementation processes

Methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation need to accommodate summative evaluations. For some studies, data could inform others about the organization’s success in attaining certain outcomes or applying certain processes. Data, methods, and research designs for Type IV dissertations should be guided by the specific program or process and accompanying outcomes or effects to curtail unwieldy dissertations.

Deliverable:

The deliverable for Type IV dissertations should help organizations, communities, or groups by presenting and explaining a summative evaluation of a program or a process. These may include a presentation of evidence demonstrating impact and effect, suggestions for improvement of a design or organizational process, etc.