

University of South Florida  
Department of Leadership and Counseling and Adult, Career, and  
Higher Education  
Doctoral Program in Counselor Education

New Student Orientation Handbook  
Fall Semester

August 12, 2015

## **The Ph.D. Program in Counselor Education and Supervision**

### Doctoral Program Faculty

Dr. Teresa Coogan	State University of New York at Buffalo
Dr. Herbert Exum	University of Minnesota
Dr. Cindy Topdemir	University of South Florida
Dr. Carlos Zalaquett	University of Texas at Austin

### Academic Program Specialist (Program Assistant)

Ms. Lisa Adkins

### Program Description

The University of South Florida Doctoral Program in Counselor Education and Supervision is designed with an emphasis on providing those skills and competencies necessary for individuals to function as exemplary and effective counselor educators in a university setting. The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree consists of at least 74 graduate semester hours beyond the Masters degree, and includes advanced coursework in counseling, 700 clock hours of practicum and internship, and the dissertation. The program has been developed to meet the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

The doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision is intended to be a research and theory intensive experience designed to provide a balance of intellectual and experiential learning resulting in professional educators who have multiple competencies as researchers, theorists, and problem-solvers in human growth and development. The doctoral program emphasizes theory and research as opposed to clinical skill development and is designed primarily for students who desire to become professors. Although multicultural human growth and development and social justice are the organizing themes of the program, there are other concentrations or research specialization areas represented by the faculty.

The training in the doctoral program will include a wide variety of assessment and intervention strategies ranging from individual and small group methods to classroom or residence hall programs on to broadly focused community-based initiatives.

The doctoral program also endorses the multicultural competency standards of the American Counseling Association. Accordingly, research and programmatic interventions designed to reduce racism and sexism and other forms of oppression through education and advocacy are a natural outgrowth of this position as well as a high priority of the Counselor Education faculty.

Doctoral students will work closely with faculty members in designing, implementing and evaluating innovative educational and psychological solutions for important human problems. Generally, there will be an emphasis on interventions that are field-based or that take place in natural settings, but experimental methods that require laboratory facilities will also be encouraged.

The primary mission of the program is to prepare graduates who will typically find employment as assistant professors of counselor education at research intensive or research extensive universities.

#### Admission to the Doctoral Program

In order to apply for the program, applicants should complete the USF Graduate School application as well as the Counselor Education Program internal application. Both are available on line. Applicants should send their completed applications along with three (3) recent letters of recommendation directly to Sandy Turner, the CEP Program Assistant. The program accepts applications for fall admission only and the deadline for completed applications is January 1.

The faculty seek to attract a carefully selected group of students from educational and community services who may now be functioning as teachers, school counselors, mental health therapists, educational administrators, school psychologists, social workers or community planners. The faculty would expect applicants to have had at least three (3) years of post-masters professional experience in their respective fields. Entry will be limited to those applicants that offer evidence of (a) high intellectual competence, (b) strong professional commitment and (c) successful leadership experience. Typically, five (5) to seven (7) students are admitted each year.

A 48 hour master's degree in counseling (or a closely related field) including a 600 hour internship (a CACREP requirement) and coursework in counseling theories, career counseling, multicultural counseling, gender issues, and basic statistics will be a prerequisite for admission. Applicants that meet most, but not all, of these requirements may be admitted "With Conditions" and may then meet the additional course work requirements as part of the doctoral program.

Accepted Ph.D. students who have not written a master's thesis will be required to complete an In Lieu of Thesis project some time early during the doctoral program and prior to taking the comprehensive examination and , therefore, well in advance of the dissertation. Students and their advisors negotiate this process. The project is typically a small study intended to demonstrate the student's ability to conduct supervised research.

Personal interviews will be required for admission except in situations that would require extensive travel. Interviews typically may last from 45 to 60 minutes. Applicants will also be expected to complete a written work sample and case study analysis in addition to the interview. This process typically requires from 60 to 90 minutes but there will be no actual time limit. The counselor education faculty members are very interested in attracting students from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds. The program values plurality and members of the counselor education faculty wish to actively solicit applications from members of all the diverse communities that comprise contemporary American society.

#### Program of Study

The faculty anticipates that the typical doctoral student will be a professional counselor currently employed in an agency, school or institution of higher education and will plan to take at least two (02) courses each semester including the summer sessions. Students progressing at that rate would typically complete the doctoral program in four and one half to five years. Doctoral students who need no supplemental courses and who pursue full-time study (at least 09 credits) each semester, including summer sessions, could complete the program three one half to four years. The exact length of the program, however, depends to a great degree on the student's career goals as well as the nature of the student's research interests.

The PhD. program is comprised of the following elements:

**Research Core:** A minimum of 36 credits of course work in: (a) inferential statistics (04 credits), (b) research design (04 credits), multivariate (04) and qualitative methodology (04 credits) and (d) dissertation research (24) credits).

**Theory Core:** At least 12 credits of course work in advanced counseling theories, cognitive-behavioral methods and research, clinical supervision theory and practice, and career development.

**Clinical Core:** A minimum of 09 credits drawn from: advanced counseling practicum (03 credits), counseling supervision practicum (03 credits), advanced doctoral internship (03-08 credits).

**Professional Practice Core:** 06 credits distributed as follows: MHS 7930 Advanced Seminar in Counseling, the professional issues seminar (04 credits) leading to the development and submission of a manuscript for publication review and EDF 7239 Supervised Experience in College Teaching (02 credits), and MHS 6311 Online Counseling (03 credits).

Supervised practice teaching may be completed while a student serves as a teaching assistant (TA) for an undergraduate course or while serving as a TA for a faculty member who is teaching a graduate course.

**Cognate:** 12 credits. Three to four courses in a single unified field (e.g., Psychology, Instructional Technology, Educational Measurement, etc.) or an interdisciplinary supporting program of three to four courses representing a unified theme (e.g., Educational Psychology, Qualitative Research, Children and Families, Measurement and Evaluation, etc.)

**Applied Computer and Instructional Technology Competence:** 03 credits: MHS 6311 Online Services in Counseling.

**Supplementals:** Any additional coursework that must be added to the student’s plan of work if the student’s master’s degree content did not meet the standard curricular requirements of the program. Students admitted “With Conditions” will need to take these courses.

The following list of courses is comprised of the courses students typically will need if they do not have a masters degree in counseling.

MHS 6006 Principles of Counseling	(fall only)	4 credits
MHS 6070 Mental Disorders	(ss/fs)	3 credits
MHS 6200 Assessment and Appraisal	(sp/ss)	4 credits
MHS 6340 Career Development	(ss/fs)	4 credits
MHS 6400 Theories of Counseling	(spring only)	4 credits
MHS 6800 Practicum in Counseling	(fs/sp)	4 credits

The exact number of supplemental courses a student will need to take depends on the content of the student’s masters program. The student’s advisor determines which courses the student will need to take.

Prerequisites

It is important to note that many of the courses in the Ph.D. program do not have prerequisites other than “doctoral student status”, but there are exceptions. For example, EDG 7931 Practicum in the Supervision of Counseling has the following prerequisites:

*(prerequisites, continued)*

MHS 7401 Advanced Counseling Theories

MHS 7610 Consultation and Supervision Theory

EDG 7931 Cognitive Behavioral Research Seminar

This exception is noteworthy because Advanced Counseling Theories and the Cognitive Behavioral Research Seminar are offered only once each year during the spring semester. Also, students who need to complete masters-level supplemental courses would also need to complete these courses before registering for advanced courses covering similar content at the 7000-level.

The In Lieu of Thesis Project (EDG 7910)

This project is a requirement for all students who did not complete a master’s thesis as part of their master’s program. The purpose of the project is for students to demonstrate basic competency in research design and data analysis. Students may complete the project at any time during the doctoral program, and work may be completed over several semesters, but the project most have been completed before students are cleared to take the Comprehensive Examination. The project does not require an advisory committee, but it does require IRB certification. The student’s major professor (advisor) is typically the supervisor for this project.

Variations in the Clinical Core

The **clinical core** in the counselor education program is comprised of three basic courses: two (02) practica and one (01) internship. The content and requirements for the practica are essentially the same for all students. However, although the purpose of the internship is the same for all students, the content of the internship may vary depending on negotiations between students and their advisors. The following paragraphs provide a more detailed description of the courses that comprise the clinical core.

**The Advanced Practicum in Counseling** is a seminar with a 250-clock hour field experience in counseling with actual clients at a clinical facility or through a private practice. During the in-class portion of the class, students will engage in discussions related to their techniques used in clinical practice as well as their theoretical orientation and the literature that supports the use of these techniques. Students will also be expected to present an in-depth report of two (2) of their long-term cases and also participate in weekly group supervision of other students’ work. This course is offered each semester.

**The Advanced Practicum in the Supervision** is the second half of a two-course sequence in clinical supervision. The first half focuses on theory and research while the second focuses on applications. The Advanced Practicum, itself, also has two components: the in-class seminar and the laboratory-based practicum. During the practicum in supervision, doctoral students serve as the clinical supervisors for master's-level novice counselors enrolled in MHS 6800 Practicum in Supervision. These classes meet in one of the observation rooms in the EDU 255 suite.

Doctoral students provide both individual and group supervision for at least three (3) and no more than six (6) students. Their clinical supervision includes 2.5 hours of group supervision and 1 hour of individual supervision for each student each week, written feedback for students' video and audiotapes, weekly communication with on-site supervisors and at least one site visit for each student. The in-class seminar component for the doctoral supervisors involves a separate a 2 hour group supervision meeting plus a 1 hour individual supervision session each week. Students discuss the progress of their groups each week as well as critique each other's taped supervision sessions. Students are advised to take the Advanced Practicum in Supervision toward the end of their program of studies because the time demands tend to be higher than in other courses. This class is typically offered during the fall and spring semesters of each academic year.

**The Advanced Internship** is a 600-clock hour experience typically completed outside the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations but not necessarily outside of the University of South Florida. The purpose of the Advanced Internship in Counselor Education is to give doctoral students the opportunity to experience what it is like to work in a setting other than the one in which they typically work in order for them to learn new skills and techniques that will help them to meet their long-term career and professional goals.

The internship may be performed in a clinical or a non-clinical setting or at more than one setting depending upon the student's professional background and long-term goals. Typically, students complete the internship in two to three consecutive semesters, but other arrangements may be negotiated with the student's advisor. Also, the internship may be completed out-of-state upon approval of the advisor. This course will be offered each semester.

Time Limits and Residency

According to university regulations, all coursework taken after admission to the Ph.D. program and before admission to candidacy must be completed within five (5) academic years for all students who enter with a master’s degree. After admission to candidacy, students have five (5) academic years to obtain the doctoral degree. Accordingly, students technically have up to 10 years to complete their Ph.D. Though these are university regulations, program expectations for degree completion are somewhat shorter. Students who are making satisfactory progress in the CEP doctoral program typically complete their coursework within three (3) academic years and then complete the remainder of their degree requirements within one (01) additional academic year. The time to degree completion may be lengthened due to extenuating circumstances, but students typically graduate within four (4) years of admission.

Students are permitted to take leaves of absence of up to one year (12 months). The request for the leave must be made in writing and approved by the major professor and program coordinator prior to beginning the leave. Students who fail to take courses during either the fall or spring semester for more than one semester without an approved leave will be dropped from the program. The university form that is used to make the request for a leave of absence is available on line.

University regulations also require that students must complete a residency requirement of two (02) consecutive semesters of full-time (at least nine (09) credit hours) enrollment in coursework. The CEP also has this requirement. Most students meet the residency requirement while serving as teaching assistants (TAs). Students who elect not to serve as teaching assistants, however, are still required to meet the residency requirement. An example of a typical plan of student in Counselor Education and Supervision follows.

Counselor Education Program Standard  
Ph.D. Program of Study

1. Major: Counselor Education and Supervision (45 Semester Hr. minimum.)

A. College Requirements I:

	<u>Courses</u>		<u>Semester Hours</u>
	EEX 7743	Philosophies of Inquiry	3
B.	MHS 7980	Dissertation	24 (minimum)

C.	Specialization Coursework: (All must be 7000 or 6000-level)	
	MHS 6311 On-line Services in Counseling	3 (summers)
	MHS 7740 Planning, Eval., & Accountability	3 (on-line)
	or	
	(EDF 7493 Sys. Approaches for Prog. Plan & Eval.)	4
	MHS 7401 Adv. Counseling Theories	4
	MHS 7610 Consultation and Supervision Theory	3
	MHS 7930 Adv Seminar in Counseling	4
	EDG 7931 Adv. Practicum in Counseling	4
	SDS 7830 Adv. Internship in Counseling	3
	EDG 7931 Cognitive Behavioral Research Seminar	3
	EDG 7931 Practicum in Supervision of Counseling	3
	EDG 7931 Proposal Preparation	3
	EDG 7931 Advanced Assessment	4
	EDG 7931 Advanced Career Development	4
	EDG 7931 Multicultural Counseling & Social Justice	4
II.	Cognate (select at least 3 courses) Single subject or interdisciplinary option	12 (minimum)
III.	Measurement/Statistic/Research Design	15
	Required	
	EDF 6407 Statistical Analysis I	4
	EDF 7408 Statistical Analysis II	4
	EDF 7484 Statistical Analysis III	4
	EDG 7931 Qualitative Res. I	3
	Recommended	
	EDF 7437 Advanced Educ. Measurement	3
IV.	Foundations (College requirements II)	7-8
	A. Philosophical/Social Foundations	
	EDF 6705 Gender and the Educational Process	3
	B. Psychological Foundations (Ed. Psyc.) (select one)	
	EDF 7145 Cognitive Issues in Instruction	4
	EDF 7133 Adolescent Development	4
	or	
	EDG 7931(any other seminar of choice)	4

The standard plan of study (POS) presented here is a general template rather than a specific list of required courses. This means that although there are several courses that all students in the doctoral program will take, program faculty members do not expect that every POS will be identical. Doctoral program faculty encourage students to design a POS that reflects their unique goals and interests as well as one that meets the basic requirements of the Counselor Education Program.

First Year Ph.D. Program of Study

The following sequence of courses is suggested for all first year doctoral students. One sequence of courses is for students who are teaching assistants (TAs). Another is for full time students who are not teaching assistants, and the other is for part time students. Although students are admitted for the fall semester, interested students may begin the program in the summer session as non-degree seeking students. Any courses taken during the summer will transfer into the student’s program of study.

**Summer Session**

MHS 6311	Online Services in Counseling	3
MHS 7930	Advanced Seminar in Counseling	2
EEX 7743	Philosophies of Inquiry	3
EDF 6407	Statistical Analysis I	4

**Fall Semester**

**For TA**

EDF 6407	Statistical Analysis I	4
MHS 7930	Advanced Seminar in Counseling	2
EEX 7743	Philosophies of Inquiry	3

**Full Time Regular**

EDF 6407	Statistical Analysis I	4
MHS 7930	Advanced Seminar in Counseling	2
EEX 7743	Philosophies of Inquiry	3
EDG 7931	Multicultural and Social Justice	4

**Part Time Students**

EDF 6407	Statistical Analysis I	4
MHS 7930	Advanced Seminar in Counseling	2
or		
EEX7743	Philosophies of Inquiry	3
MHS 7930	Advanced Seminar in Counseling	2
<u>EDG 7910*</u>	Directed Research	1

A third course is added in this option so that the total number of semester hours will be six (06)

**Spring Semester**

**For both TA and Full Time Regular**

EDF 7408	Statistical Analysis II	4
MHS 7930	Advanced Seminar	2
MHS 7401	Advanced Counseling Theories	4
MHS 7610	Supervision Theory and Consultation	3

**Part Time Students**

EDF 6407	Statistical Analysis I	4
MHS 7930	Advanced Seminar	2

Students must maintain continuous course enrollment while admitted to the program. This means students should take at least two courses during the fall and spring semesters. Although students are not required to take course during the summer session, they are encouraged to take at least one course.

Doctoral Portfolio

The doctoral portfolio is a means of assessing the professional development of doctoral students. The assessment focuses on the seven (7) competency areas in the USF doctoral program in counselor education and supervision, which include the following: *teaching, supervision, consultation, program evaluation, research, professional development, and advocacy and social justice*. The portfolio is comprised primarily of written documents that demonstrate mastery of the set of learning objectives associated with the seven competencies that undergird the program. Completion of the portfolio is an ongoing cumulative process and takes several semesters to complete. Most of the learning objectives may be completed in classes. However, several must be completed external to the classroom. The portfolio should be completed prior to applying to take the comprehensive examination.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Product</b>
<i>Teaching</i>	Students will articulate a personal philosophy of teaching	Document
<i>Supervision</i>	Students will articulate a personal philosophy of supervision	Document
	Students will develop two instructional units related to clinical supervision	Documents
<i>Consultation</i>	Students will articulate a personal philosophy of consultation	Document
	Students will develop, implement, and evaluate a consultation project	Document
<i>Program Evaluation</i>	Students will articulate a personal philosophy of evaluation	Document
	Students will design and implement a project in program evaluation	Document
<i>Research</i>	Students will demonstrate the ability to conduct high quality research suitable for publication	Document
	Students will submit at least two (2) manuscripts for publication	Documents
	Students will present at least two (2) papers at professional conferences	Documents
<i>Professional Development</i>	Students will demonstrate a commitment to continuing education in their areas of expertise by attending thematic conferences	Documents
	And/or workshops	
	Students will participate in service activities related to the preparation of professional counselors and the advancement of the profession	Documents
<i>Advocacy and Social Justice</i>	Students will articulate a personal philosophy of advocacy	Document
	Students will design and implement a project related to advocacy for social justice	Document

### Advisors and Committees

One of the major differences between master's education and doctoral education in counseling is the role that the student's advisor and advisory committee play in determining the student's plan of study during the doctoral program. Although all Ph.D students have a similar set of courses that they must take, their cognate courses and their research projects are typically the result of consultation with their advisors and their advisory committees. Each student's advisor and advisory committee determine to a large degree what the each student's program of study will include as well as the direction of the student's dissertation research. Accordingly, selecting an advisor and advisory committee is an important aspect of doctoral education.

All students that are admitted to the doctoral program must have a **sponsor**. A sponsor is a faculty member who agrees to serve as a **temporary advisor** for a student and as such agrees to help that student to select courses, to develop a plan of study, and to manage the complexities of the academic environment. However, students must eventually select a formal advisor who is also called the **major professor**.

Students may select a major professor at any time (including prior to admission), but the selection must be made prior to the end of the third semester of coursework in the program. The **major professor** or **advisor** is responsible for helping students select the members of their advisory committees, suggesting courses for the students program of study; supervising the in lieu of thesis project; supervising the preparation of the examination prospectus, the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation; and making sure that all relevant forms regarding the student's progress are completed and submitted in a timely manner. The major professor also serves as the student's academic mentor, advocate, and primary contact for academic issues or professional concerns.

The student's **advisory committee** is typically formed sometime during the student's second year in the program. The committee is comprised of at least four (04) members, including the major professor, and at least one (01) of the committee members must be from outside the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations. This means that the typical doctoral committee in Counselor Education will have three (03) members from the CEP and one (01) member from outside of the faculty of the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations. However, it is not unusual for the committee to be comprised of two (02) members from the CEP and two (02) members from outside the CEP. If the outside faculty member is from a college other than the College of Education, the faculty member may need to complete a special form allowing her or him to serve on COEDU committees.

The advisory committee is responsible for providing consultation regarding research projects and the dissertation proposal and also for serving as the examining committee for the comprehensive examination, the proposal defense, and the dissertation defense. The advisory committee verifies through their signatures that the student has mastered certain milestones toward degree completion.

**Annual Review of Progress**

Each year the faculty of the CEP will meet to discuss the academic and professional development of each doctoral student in order to determine how well students are making progress toward achieving program competencies and other professional goals. This meeting provides students and their advisors an opportunity to discuss students’ strengths and achievements as well as an opportunity to address areas in need of development. The review focuses primarily on the seven (7) competency areas in the PhD. program:

- Teaching
- Program Evaluation
- Research
- Supervision
- Professional Development
- Consultation
- Advocacy and Social Justice

However, students’ interpersonal skills, professionalism, completion of program milestones, and employment strategies are also discussed during the review.

The first part of the review consists of the student’s written self-assessment, which describes the student’s development in the competency areas including completion of program milestones. Once the self-assessment has been completed, the student and advisor schedule a meeting to review the document. The advisor then writes a separate summary evaluation, which is forward to the program coordinator and to the student. Students have the opportunity to reply to the advisor’s summary statement if they think it is incomplete or otherwise in error. The advisor’s statement serves as the basis for the discussion that takes place regarding students’ progress. If a student’s academic performance, ethical behavior, or professional development is found to be *unsatisfactory* in any manner, the advisor, in consultation with the faculty, will draft a professional development plan to address the concern(s). The annual review for the following year will include progress related to this plan. If a student’s academic performance, ethical behavior, or professional development is found to be *deficient*, the advisor, in consultation with the faculty will develop a remediation plan, which may require frequent progress reports.

Annual reviews are typically scheduled at the end of the fall semester of each academic year. All students, except first year students, are required to submit an annual review of progress until they are admitted to candidacy. After that point, the student's advisory committee will assess the student's progress each semester.

Doctoral Program Milestones

The doctoral program may be conceptualized as having five (5) distinct milestones. These milestones allow students to gage their progress in the program in a more informative manner than counting the months or years that they have been enrolled in the program. The program's milestones are completion of: *coursework, the clinical sequence, the comprehensive examination (negotiated examination), the proposal defense, and the dissertation defense.*

1. *Completion of coursework:* Completion of core courses, cognate courses, and College of Education required courses.

2. *Completion of clinical sequence:* Completion of the advanced practicum, the advanced internship, and the practicum in the supervision of counseling.

Milestones 1 and 2 must be completed before students may submit the prospectus for the comprehensive examination. The Office of Graduate Studies Also must verify that students have completed all required coursework. Milestones 3, 4, and 5 all require the involvement of the student's advisory committee, which serves as the examining committee for each of the milestones.

3. *Comprehensive examination:* Completion of the negotiated examination in Counselor Education and Supervision. Upon successful completion of the examination, the student's examination committee will submit the Verification of Examination Results form to the Office of Graduate Studies. The student may then complete the Application for Candidacy form to the Dean's Office.

4. *Proposal defense* Students who have been admitted to candidacy may schedule a proposal defense. During the defense, doctoral candidates present their proposals for dissertation research and then answer questions regarding the substance of their proposals form their examining committees. Upon successful defense of the proposal, students engaged in the Option I dissertation may begin their dissertation research.

(*milestones*, continued)

5. *Final defense*

Students present the results of their dissertation research and then answer questions on the substance of their research that are posed by their examination committees. Upon successful completion of the dissertation defense, students will have met all curricular requirements for the doctoral degree in Counselor Education and Supervision.

**The Comprehensive Examination: The Negotiated Examination in Counselor Education**

Description

The negotiated examination is the third of the five milestones that mark progress in the doctoral program in counselor education. It occurs midway between course completion and the proposal defense and represents the major transition point in the student’s plan of work. The negotiated examination is an independent research project conducted by one student over a six-week period. The purpose of the negotiated examination is for students to demonstrate highly developed skills in the review and critical analysis of theory and research as well as the ability to synthesize relevant findings into a compelling argument for new conceptual frameworks and/or further research in a given area.

The negotiated examination is neither a literature review nor an annotated bibliography, and although it addresses questions regarding research methodology and internal validity, it is not a research proposal. Students engaged in the Option I dissertation process may not apply to take the examination until they have completed all of their coursework.

The examination has a written and an oral component. The written component has three major sections: (a) a review and critical evaluation of at least two (2) but no more than (3) theories that under gird the topic that the student intends to study, (b) a review of empirical research based on each of the theories as they are related to the student’s topic, and (c) a synthesis of the findings from the critical review of research that creates a new conceptual framework or a compelling rationale for new research in the student’s topic area. The paper should be no longer than fifty(50) double–spaced pages excluding references.

The oral component of the examination consist of students explaining how they arrived at their conclusions as well as answering questions about their critiques of theory and research. The oral component of the examination is the part of the examination that is registered with the Office of Graduate Studies as a formal examination of a candidate.

### Procedures

The student meets with the advisory committee to discuss a prospectus of no more than four pages that outlines the student's proposed approach to examining his or her topic. The topic area selected may be any area that is broadly relevant to counselor education. The prospectus will include (a) an overview explaining the topic and its importance, (b) the theories that will be reviewed, and (c) examples (citations) of studies that will be reviewed. The committee has the option to (a) accept the prospectus as presented, (b) reject the prospectus outright, or (c) accept the prospectus with changes based on suggestions that the committee makes for improving the student's research plan during the course of the committee meeting.

These options are what lend the name "negotiated" to the examination. When the prospectus is approved, the committee chairperson (the major professor) files a one-page memo that outlines the mutually agreed process and indicates the start and end dates of the examination period. Once the candidate begins the process, faculty contact is limited to brief consultation on the process but not the substance of the task.

At the end of the examination period, the student submits copies of the examination in hard copy or electronically (per the committee agreement) to the members of the advisory committee and the oral examination is typically scheduled for two weeks later. The advisory committee meets with the student and conducts the oral examination. Students who pass both the written and oral component of the examination will then be allowed to schedule the proposal defense. The oral examination and proposal defense are held ideally during the same semester, but this is not mandatory.

Students who fail the written component of the examination have only one additional opportunity to pass the written component. Students receive feedback on the reasons for their failure at the time of their oral examination. Students who fail the written component a second time will be recommended for program termination. Students who perform unsatisfactorily during the oral examination may reschedule the oral examination for at least two weeks later or as late as during the next semester. However, they may not schedule a proposal defense until the oral examination has been successfully completed.

### Exam Prospectus

The examination prospectus is a brief description of the process the student will use for critically examining a particular topic or domain from which the research proposal might be drawn.

*(exam prospectus, continued)*

It describes the process for developing a final product comprised of: (a) a critical review of the theories and research related to the topic as well as (b) a synthesis statement developed from the results of the critical review that will provide a compelling argument for research on a specific aspect of the particular topic or domain. The primary elements of the prospects are the following:

**1. Cover sheet**

**2. Background information regarding general topic or domain.** Provide information about your topic that will establish its importance and relevance to counseling or to counselor education. Discuss how the topic has been studied and the current status of knowledge relative to the topic.

**3. Three theories that address the general topic or domain.** Provide information about current theories that are used to explain or understand the topic. Describe the theory and point out similarities and differences from other theories that address the same topic.

**4. Two or three examples of studies that employ the theories in studying your topic.** For each theory, provide at least two but no more than three studies that illustrate how the theory is and/or has been used in research to study your topic. Describe the studies, but do not provide a critique of the studies at this time.

These four (4) elements should comprise no more than five (5) double-spaced single-sided pages including the cover sheet.

Examination Assessment Criteria

A. The Written Examination

The written examination is deemed suitable for defense if the student:

1. addresses and develops each aspect of the assignment
2. uses sentences that are grammatically and mechanically correct
3. uses transitional words and phrases that logically connect the examination's key elements.
4. presents ideas in a logical and sophisticated progression that supports the main points and conclusions of the examination
5. synthesizes relevant findings from a critical review of theory and research to form a compelling argument for a new study

If one or more members of the examining committee conclude that the written component of the examination is not suitable for oral defense, the examining committee will meet with the student but will not conduct the oral examination. Instead, the committee will give the student specific feedback (based on the criteria for assessment) relative to the weaknesses of the written

component of the examination. The advisor then notifies the Office of Graduate Studies that the student has failed the written examination and has been granted one additional opportunity to pass the written exam. The student, in consultation with the major professor, may reschedule the defense within ten (10) weeks of the first examination but no later than one year beyond the first examination. Failure of the written component a second time will result in a recommendation for program termination.

#### B. The Oral Examination

The oral examination is deemed satisfactory if the student answers questions from the examining committee in a manner that demonstrates:

1. a clear understanding of the subject matter.
2. a clear understanding of the factors used to critique research
3. the ability to address relevant issues not expressly discussed in the examination

If two or more members of the examining committee conclude that the oral component of the examination is not satisfactory, the examination committee will meet again to conduct a second oral examination. The committee will also give the student specific feedback (based on the criteria for assessment) relative to the weaknesses of the oral component of the examination. The student, in consultation with the major professor, may reschedule the defense within ten (10) days of the first examination but no later than one month beyond the first examination. Failure of the oral component for a second time may result in a recommendation for additional coursework and/or a new written negotiated examination.

#### **The Dissertation Proposal Defense**

There are two (02) options for the dissertation in Counselor Education and also two (02) distinct formats for the dissertation defense. The first dissertation proposal defense format discussed will be the format for the Option I or traditional dissertation.

##### Option One Defense

Upon successful completion of the negotiated examination, students may then develop their dissertation proposals and apply to the Graduate School for *Admission to Candidacy*.

The application process for Candidacy may take from two to four weeks, but students must be admitted to candidacy before they will be allowed to schedule their proposal defense through the College of Education Graduate Studies Office.

The dissertation proposal is typically the first three chapters of the student's proposed dissertation, and the purpose of the defense is to test students' ability to design and conduct high

quality independent research projects. The following is an example of a typical dissertation proposal format for a quantitative study.

Doctoral program handbook, p. 18

### **Dissertation Proposal Format (Option i)**

**Title page** (use Graduate School format)

#### **Chapter I Introduction**

Background of the problem or issue

Statement of the problem (one or two paragraphs which describe basic difficulty or area of concern, felt need, etc.)

Significance of the study (brief discussion of why this study is important: how does it add to the current body of knowledge related to this topic)

Purpose of the study (goals and objectives)

Research questions to be answered (if a quantitative study) or Questions Guiding the Inquiry (if qualitative)

Conceptual or substantive assumptions regarding the problem

Conceptual Framework---a graphic representation of the relationships among major variables plus a narrative delineation of the research problem and explication of relationships among the major variables .

Definition of major terms (operational definitions)

Scope and delimitation of the study (narrowing of focus)

#### **Chapter II Literature Review**

Historical background of problem or issue (you will have done most of this in the negotiated exam)

Review and critical evaluation of studies pertinent to problem area.

Clear statement of the concepts, assumptions, and/ or postulates underlying the problem being investigated ( you should have already done this in your exam)

Presentation of deducible consequences or predictions that are logically consistent with Hypotheses (if quantitative research).

#### **Chapter III Design and methodology**

Discussion of logic, structure, and design of study

Specification of control of threats to external and internal validity (quantitative designs) or of procedures to increase the trustworthiness of the findings (qualitative designs)

Second presentation of formal hypotheses (quantitative research) or guiding questions (qualitative)

Description of the sample (quantitative designs) or the participants (qualitative designs)

Doctoral program handbook, p.19

*Chapter III of proposal format, continued*

Instruments (quantitative designs) or Description of the Researcher (qualitative designs)

Data collection procedures

Statistical analysis (quantitative designs) or data analysis (qualitative designs)

Statement of any methodological assumptions

References

### **College procedures.**

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs assigns an Outside Chairperson to preside over the defense. This person typically will be a faculty member from outside the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations. Students should provide a copy of the proposal to all members of the advisory committee at least three (3) weeks prior to the date on which the defense is scheduled. During the proposal defense, students are expected to present and discuss the formal plan (proposal) for an original study on a topic approved by their major professor. Students then answer questions from their advisory committee related to the research problem and method of inquiry. Students demonstrate their competency through the quality of answers they provide to the committee.

After the advisor committee has exhausted its questions, it meets in the examination room in the candidate's absence to decide whether the candidate has passed or failed the examination. Candidates who successfully pass the defense will make whatever changes the advisory committee suggests as a result of the meeting and then begin their dissertation research. Candidates who do not successfully pass the proposal defense may not start their dissertation research and will have one other opportunity to pass the defense. Candidates who are unsuccessful a second time will be dismissed from the program. Successful students move on to their dissertation research.

### **The Final Defense: Oral Defense of the Dissertation**

#### Scheduling

The final defense must be held at least three (3) weeks prior to the end of the term in which the candidate plans to graduate. After the major professor has determined that the

dissertation is ready for defense, candidates should distribute copies of the completed dissertation to all the members of the advisory committee and to the outside chair.

Doctoral program handbook, p. 20

This should happen at least four (4) weeks prior the intended examination date. In order to schedule the defense, the candidate must submit a copy of the **Request for Ph.D./Ed.D. Degree Final Oral Examination** form, which has been signed by all the members of the advisory committee and two copies of the dissertation to office of the COEDU Graduate Studies Office at least three (03) weeks prior to defense.

#### Procedures

The final defense is very similar to the proposal defense. The major difference is that the student's presentation will also include the results of the dissertation research. Another difference is that the final defense is a public meeting. The time, date and location of the defense as well as the title of the dissertation will be published and disseminated throughout the university and any member of the university committee may attend. After the student has presented the findings of the study, the advisory committee will again question the student on the findings, methodology and implications of the research. The candidate's competence will be assessed through the quality of the candidate's answers.

After the advisor committee has exhausted its questions, it meets in the examination room in the candidate's absence to decide whether the candidate has passed or failed the examination. Candidates who successfully pass the defense will make whatever changes the advisory committee suggests as a result of the meeting and submit their revised dissertations to the Graduate School.

Candidates who do not successful pass the dissertation defense may be dismissed from the program and the university.

#### **Dissertation General Format**

**Title page**

**Abstract**

**Acknowledgments** (optional)

**Table of Contents**

**Chapter I Introduction** (essentially the same elements as the proposal)

Narrative outline of the remainder of the dissertation (what will be in the other chapters).

**Chapter II Literature Review** (essentially the same elements as the proposal)

Summary of present chapter and introduction to the next chapter (repeat for subsequent chapters)

**Chapter III Design and methodology** essentially the same elements as the proposal)  
*Organization*

#### **Chapter IV. Results**

##### *Organization*

Exposition in terms of the framework of the hypotheses (quantitative designs) or of the guiding questions of the inquiry (qualitative designs).

Appropriate use of charts, tables, figures, and graphs

##### *Summary----*

#### **Chapter V. Summary and conclusions**

##### *Organization*

Restatement of the problem, methodology followed, and findings

Conclusions

Recommendations for additional research---new research questions

Recommendations for use of present findings.

#### **References**

#### **Appendices**

Successful defense of the dissertation typically indicates the end of one status for the student and the beginning of another. Accordingly, it would be a prudent course of action for all students to have an employment strategy that they might engage.

#### **Creating an Employment Strategy**

Doctoral students and their advisors are expected to meet periodically to discuss students' plans for employment after graduation. These meetings may occur at any point as the student progresses through program milestones, but they are particularly important as students finish their coursework. By this point, students should have a fairly clear idea of where they plan to seek employment (geographically), the type of institution in which they would like to seek employment (e.g., Carnegie classification), and the specific institutions they are considering. These planning discussions may influence the direction of the student's research as well as the conferences and workshops the student attends. Also, students will have the opportunity to make any final adjustments in any elective coursework they may need to make in order to enhance their

chances for employment. The planning discussions plus the actions students take as a result of them are termed the **employment strategy**.

Doctoral program handbook, p. 22

The employment strategy is essential for GAs, RAs, TAs and for those students who do not seek to continue their careers where they are currently employed. Doctoral students who have a specific plan for employment are much more likely to be successful because they will avoid common errors other doctoral students tend to make when they seek employment after graduation. These include ineffective practices such as sending mass applications for positions all over the country or sending generic “To Whom it May Concern”)” reference letters to potential employers.

Students who seek positions that match their training, interests, and career goals; who tailor their letters of application to the job description; and who have references that address their specific strengths relative to these positions are those most likely to become finalists and ultimately new hires. On the other hand, doctoral students who have no employment strategy are most likely to find that seeking employment becomes a frustrating, expensive, and demoralizing experience.

Although each doctoral student’s employment strategy will be somewhat different, there are a few general suggestions that should guide strategic planning relative to employment. These are the following:

1. Start early                      It is never too early to start to think about possible places for employment, and share your ideas with your advisor for feedback. Your advisor may be aware of the possibility of position a vacancy well before it is advertised so it is important to keep your advisor informed about your plans.
  
2. Be available                      If you are seeking an academic position, it is important for you to have an opportunity to meet potential employers before positions become available. This means you should be a member of organizations that focus on counselor preparation such as ACES (American Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, SACES (Southern Association of Counselor

Education and Supervision) and FACES (Florida Association of Counselor Education and Supervision), and you should make presentations at their annual meetings.

Doctoral student handbook, p. 23

This is where your potential employers will be, this is where they will have an opportunity to meet you before positions are announced, and this is where you might possibly be interviewed while or before a position is announced.

3. Be specific

Apply for positions that match your credentials. Be sure that the position description matches your training and interests. Do not apply for a position at a comprehensive university if you are really interested in a research intensive position, and do not apply for a position in counseling psychology because your program is in counselor education. Do not send generic reference letters. Always provide your references with a position description so that they can address your skills relative to the position.

4. Be prepared

Update your vita and your portfolio each semester. Review the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Counseling Today* to keep abreast of position openings and position trends. Seek an opportunity to serve as a student member of a search committee, and keep in contact with your colleagues who have been recently employed. Both of these are good ways to learn about the employment process for applicants who are invited to campus.

End of orientation material.

