Welcome to the Educational Psychology and Educational Technology PhD Program! We hope this handbook will help introduce you to the program and serve as a helpful resource to you throughout your graduate study. This handbook should be available to you online throughout your program. If at any point in the future you have difficulty locating it, please ask your advisor for assistance.

This Handbook has the following eleven sections, which have been specified by University guidelines, along with three appendices that incorporate the current policies for the Preliminary Examination, Research Apprenticeship (Practicum) and Comprehensive Examination:

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW
II. PROGRAM COMPONENTS/PLAN OPTIONS
III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
IV. SELECTION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION ADVISOR
V. FORMATION OF THE GUIDANCE COMMITTEE
VI. THESIS/DISSERTATION DEFENSE AND FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION
VII. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
VIII. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES: INTEGRITY AND SAFETY IN RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES
IX. STUDENT CONDUCT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION
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Appendix A: Preliminary Examination Policy
Appendix B: Research Apprenticeship Policy
Appendix C: CEPSE Comprehensive Examination Policy
Appendix C-1: EPET Comprehensive Examination Policy, Option I
Appendix C-2: EPET Comprehensive Examination Policy, Option II
Appendix D: Program Planning Form
We want you to be successful in this program, and we want policies and expectations in the program to be clear to you. This Handbook is designed to help, but information from your advisor, Guidance Committee, the program's orientation session (which you are required to attend at its first offering following your admission to the program) will also be essential.

This handbook has been written to be consistent with University and College of Education policies. The following documents will be referenced in the different sections of the handbook, and students may wish to consult them for further detail on particular issues.

- Academic Programs: http://www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/ucc.asp
- Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR): http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/default.pdf
- Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships: http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/all/ris04.pdf
- Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities: http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/all/ris04.pdf

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The doctoral program in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology (EPET) is designed for persons who show promise of becoming scholars and leaders in the study of human learning and development in varied educational settings and/or the design, development, use, and impact of diverse technologies supporting learning and teaching. The program emphasizes rigorous scholarship and analytic perspectives on learning, development, and technology embedded in culture and society. The program prepares graduates to pursue careers in university research and teaching, research and development of online learning environments in diverse educational settings, and leadership roles in school systems and the private sector.

The EPET doctoral program seeks and welcomes applicants from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds (including but not limited to psychology), educational and technological experiences, and social, economic and cultural backgrounds. Its faculty, in both emphasis areas (see below), bring a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, research experiences and traditions, and cultural and life experiences to their work, and we actively seek to maintain and expand that diversity.

The EPET program is one of several doctoral programs in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education (CEPSE). Faculty in other CEPSE doctoral program areas, especially School Psychology, Special Education, and Measurement and Quantitative Methods, share interests with EPET faculty and students and frequently serve on EPET students' Guidance Committees. Such linkages are also common with faculty in the Department of Teacher Education and the Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education program (HALE) in the Department of Educational Administration.

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Doctoral students in the Educational Psychology and Educational Technology program focus their studies in the following emphasis areas:

1. **Educational Psychology**

   Faculty and doctoral students in this emphasis area investigate human learning and development in various settings such as schools, workplaces, communities, and homes. Through these investigations, faculty and students seek to understand and improve educational practice. Program participants often base their analyses in specific domains, including mathematics, literacy, and science. Students whose interests in this area concern the learning and development of literacy may select to pursue the Language and Literacy Option (see section IIIg of this document).

2. **Educational Technology.**

   Faculty and doctoral students in this emphasis area seek to understand and improve the use of powerful technologies to support learning and teaching. Students engage in research and development seeking to understand the pedagogy, policy, and design of media and technologies in support of learning, nationally and internationally, in formal environments such as traditional and online classes as well as in informal environments such as homes and after-school programs.

3. **Program Elements**

   As a student in the Educational Psychology and Educational Technology Program, you will engage in study and experiences to meet the goals outlined above. At a minimum these include the following formal program elements:

   1. a program of coursework (the Program Plan below) that meets program requirements and is approved by a faculty Guidance Committee as coherent and appropriate;

   2. passing the Departmental Preliminary Examination;

   3. satisfying the Department's Research Apprenticeship requirement;

   4. passing the Program's Comprehensive Examination;

   5. successfully defending a Dissertation Proposal; and

   6. successfully completing the Dissertation.

   Study and experiences beyond this minimum will result in a more successful and satisfying program. These informal program elements include:

   1. ongoing interaction with a group of fellow students around professional readings and experiences;

   2. attending brown bag sessions, seminars, colloquy, dissertation defenses, and other opportunities to learn from others outside the context of courses;

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3. attending professional conferences in your area(s) of primary interest;

4. teaching or assisting with teaching one or more courses for undergraduate and/or masters students;

5. working on faculty-led research projects, preferably multiple projects led by different faculty;

6. apprentice-reviewing journal articles, conference presentations, proposals, and/or other professional documents;

7. developing and submitting one or more professional papers for publication

8. serving on program and department committees, e.g., faculty search committees, and other activities.

Students are not expected to undertake and complete all formal and informal elements simultaneously. Some general guidelines about the timing of completion are given here, for formal and then informal program elements; more detail on specific components is given below.

All students take the departmental Preliminary Examination at the end of the first year of coursework and are expected to form their Guidance Committee by the end of their first year. The student's program plan is developed in consultation with the Guidance Committee, typically by the end of the 3rd semester. The Research Apprenticeship (or "Practicum") is a pre-dissertation empirical research experience conducted during the second or third year and designed to prepare students to conduct their dissertation. (See Appendix A for additional information about the Preliminary Examination.)

When the Research Apprenticeship has been completed and 80% of coursework has been completed, students may take Comprehensive Examination, which is designed to demonstrate breadth of knowledge in the field. After passing the Comprehensive Examination, the may propose their dissertation to their Guidance Committee. The Dissertation is a culminating demonstration of the student's depth of knowledge in the area of scholarly concentration.

From the time they enter the program, students are encouraged and directed to undertake informal elements (a) and (b) and toward either research and/or teaching opportunities as their prior experience and interests suggest (informal elements (d) and (e)). Attendance at professional conferences is encouraged from the beginning of students' programs. Students are encouraged to seek opportunities to present their work or work with faculty at conferences throughout their studies. Students should prepare themselves to write professional papers for publication as soon as possible in their studies, beginning in many cases with co-authoring papers and chapters with faculty. Students can expect guidance from their advisor and Guidance Committee in finding and carrying out these elements.

II. PROGRAM COMPONENTS/PLAN OPTIONS

Both the formal (required) and informal (recommended) components of the program, listed in section I, are described here; detailed requirements for completing each of these
program components are described in Section III. This section provides additional information about three required components: the coursework required to complete the Ph.D. degree.

**a. Program Emphasis Areas**

Students choose, typically prior to admission to the program, an emphasis in either Educational Psychology or Educational Technology. Students may change their emphasis area at any time during their program, provided they are willing and able to complete the degree requirements for that emphasis area.

**b. Advisors and Guidance Committees**

When admitted to the program, each student will be assigned a Temporary Advisor, based on research interests. As the student's interests and professional goals change and develop, the student may retain that faculty member as the advisor or seek a suitable replacement. The student and the advisor work together to select the rest of the Guidance Committee, consisting of 4 tenure system faculty who can support the student's intellectual development and progress in the program.

**c. Coursework Requirements and Program Plans**

Although a doctoral program is more than a collection of doctoral courses, courses do play an important role in supporting students’ learning about a range of perspectives and issues relevant to technology and education, to support the development of their own research focus, and to participate in intellectual communities. The EPET program requires at least 14 courses. Course requirements are intended to provide students with a common grounding in important knowledge and issues while providing maximum flexibility to build a program suited to the student's individual professional goals. The requirements ensure a rich grounding in understanding and carrying out research. Each student is expected to work closely with his or her Guidance Committee to select courses that provide sufficient exposure to other perspectives important for studying chosen educational issues. The product of this discussion is the students' program plan ("Report of the Guidance Committee"), which lists the specific courses. Specific course requirements are given below in Section III.

**d. The Departmental Preliminary Examination**

The Preliminary Examination, given to all CEPSE doctoral students at the beginning of their second year of doctoral study, consists of a written critique of a published research article in the student's emphasis area, either Educational Psychology or Educational Technology. Students are given eight hours to complete this task. Details about the Preliminary Examination are found in Appendix A of this document.

**e. The Research Apprenticeship**

The College of Education requires completion of a Research Apprenticeship by students in all doctoral programs in the College. Students in CEPSE doctoral programs meet this requirement through the Research Apprenticeship described in Appendix B of this document. For EPET students, this requirement is administered and directed by EPET faculty. The goal of the Research Apprenticeship is for students to become experienced with the nature of empirical research prior to undertaking their dissertations. To complete the Apprenticeship, the student
must compose and defend a formal research proposal, complete and write up the research, and
give a formal presentation of the results.

f. The Comprehensive Examination

After completing the Research Apprenticeship and at least 80% of the coursework
specified in the program plan, the student may apply to take the Comprehensive Examination,
administered at the beginning of fall and spring semesters each year. As of January 2008, there
are two options for the comprehensive exams. For Option I, each student writes responses to
three questions. Two of these are selected by the student from a set of four common questions
focused on core theory and research in educational psychology and technology. The third
question is a specialization question assessing the knowledge in the students' area of
concentration. Students are given 32 hours to respond to these 3 questions. All questions are
prepared by EPET Program faculty and are not communicated to students in advance. The
complete policy is found in Appendix C below.

For Option II, the student submits two papers followed by an oral examination. The
complete policy is found in Appendix C-1 below.

g. The Dissertation

The final program component is the doctoral dissertation. The dissertation must
represent original research and make a significant contribution to knowledge in the field. After
successfully completing the Comprehensive Examination, the student must successfully defend
a formal dissertation proposal to the Guidance Committee (now typically called a "Dissertation
Committee"), carry out the proposed research, and defend their Dissertation. Dissertation
defenses include both oral presentations to the committee and the written dissertation itself,
conforming to guidelines provided by the Graduate School (http://grad.msu.edu/format.htm).
Students must register for and complete a minimum of 24 credits of doctoral dissertation
research (CEP 999) their programs.

h. Informal Program Elements/Components

In addition to required program components, students are encouraged to engage in the
following activities, as appropriate for their scholarly and professional goals. These informal
program components constitute an important part of a rich doctoral education:

- ongoing interaction with a group of fellow students around professional
  readings and experiences;
- attending brown bag sessions, seminars, colloquy, dissertation defenses, and
  other opportunities to learn from others outside the context of courses;
- attending professional conferences in your area(s) of primary interest;
- teaching or assisting with teaching one or more courses for undergraduate
  and/or masters students;
- working on faculty-led research projects, preferably multiple projects led by
  different faculty;

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• shadow- or apprentice-reviewing journal articles, conference presentations, proposals, and/or other professional documents;

• developing and submitting one or more professional papers for publication

• serving on program and department committees, e.g., faculty search committees, and other activities.

III. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

This section specifies more clearly and in more detail the steps required to complete the Ph.D. degree in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology. It specifically details the following program components: (1) Admissions requirements, (2) course requirements, and (3) other program requirements.

a. Admissions Requirements

Persons who hold degrees from a variety of disciplines may apply for admission. The review of applications focuses on previous study and experience, compatibility between academic and professional goals and this doctoral program, and demonstration of potential for successful advanced degree work. Persons are admitted to the program only for fall semester. The deadline for submitting applications for admission is January 5 of the year in which admission is sought. Application by the December 1 of the preceding year is encouraged for full consideration for financial support. If space is available in the program, late applications will be accepted. The following information is required for application:

• University Application

• Departmental Application

• Two (2) official copies of transcripts from all previous institutions attended

• Three (3) letters of recommendation

• Graduate Record Examination Scores

• Vita or Resume

• Writing Sample

For more information: http://ed-web2.educ.msu.edu/cepadmit/

English Language Proficiency.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to be proficient in English as a condition for regular admission to MSU. Such applicants will be required to demonstrate their proficiency by meeting certain minimum standards on one of the following tests:

1. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

2. Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)

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3. Michigan State University English Language Test

For details and required scores, see Academic Programs: Graduate Education, page 4.

b. Doctoral Course Requirements:

Candidates for the Ph.D. degree in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology will complete at least 14 courses, meeting the following requirements:

1. Proseminar.

The two-semester Proseminar must be taken during the first year of the program (Fall and Spring semesters of Year 1). These two courses are designed to help build students' academic skills and professional learning community, introduce them to historically and currently important issues in technology, learning, and related fields, and provide them with a preliminary look at the scholarly themes that characterize the program.

CEP 900. Proseminar in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology
CEP 901A. Proseminar in Educational Psychology or
CEP 901B Proseminar in Educational Technology

2. Inquiry/Research Sequence.

The following four courses concerning educational inquiry and research are also required. In these courses, students learn basic competence in conceptualizing and carrying out empirical research in the broad field of education:

CEP 930. Educational Inquiry
CEP 932. Quantitative Methods in Educational Research I
CEP 933. Quantitative Methods in Educational Research II
CEP 995. Practicum in Research Design and Data Analysis

In addition, students are strongly advised to take CEP955 Research Design in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology in the fall of their second year, and to take TE931 Qualitative Methods in Educational Research at some time in their program.

3. Emphasis Area Selective Courses.

Three required selective courses chosen from a longer list of courses provide breadth of understanding in educational issues and meet College of Education basic knowledge requirements. Each emphasis area has its own list and students in that emphasis area must choose from that list.

*Educational Technology Selectives*

CEP 909. Cognition and Technology

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CEP 915. Literacy and Learning in Sociocultural Context
CEP 917. Design of Media for Learning
CEP 951. Technology, Society, and Culture
CEP 952. Technology in Higher Education
CEP 953. Teachers and Technology
CEP 956. Mind, Media, and Learning
CEP 957. Learning in Complex Domains

Educational Psychology Selectives

CEP 902. The Psychology of Learning School Subjects
CEP 903. Cognitive Development across the Lifespan
CEP 904. Social-Emotional Development across the Lifespan
CEP 905. Cultural Perspectives on Learning and Development
CEP 907. Psychological Study of Teaching
CEP 910. Motivation and Learning
CEP 911. Intellectual History of Educational Psychology
CEP 912. Psychological and Cognitive Aspects of Literacy Learning
CEP 913 Psychology and Pedagogy of Mathematics Education
CEP 915. Literacy and Learning in Sociocultural Context
CEP 957. Learning in Complex Domains

4. Area of Concentration.

Students must identify and complete at least five additional courses (that is, courses that have not been used to complete other program requirements) in their area of concentration, within Educational Psychology or Educational Technology. Students are encouraged to include some coursework from outside the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education. Emphasis area and concentration courses must provide a coherent program of study in the student’s area of concentration and be approved, in advance, by the student’s Guidance Committee. Research methodology courses beyond the required four courses list above may count as concentration courses. Courses listed above selectives may be used, as appropriate, as concentration courses, provided that they have not been used to complete other program requirements listed above (that is, a single course cannot be counted as completing two or more program requirements). Students may select suitable doctoral courses offered by

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other units subject to approval of the Guidance Committee. At most two Masters-level courses (800 level courses) may be permitted as concentration courses, at the discretion of the Guidance Committee.

c. Preliminary Examination.

Student must pass a departmental Preliminary Examination, focused on scholarly writing and the critique of research at the end of the first year of doctoral study.

d. Research Apprenticeship.

Student must satisfactorily complete a Research Apprenticeship.

e. Comprehensive Examination.

Student must satisfactorily complete the comprehensive examination, Option I or Option II, administered by the EPET program.

f. Dissertation.

Student must satisfactorily complete and defend a doctoral dissertation.

g. University Residency Requirement.

Student must satisfy the University's residency requirement of six credits of coursework in two consecutive semesters. Given the degree requirements outlined above, satisfying this requirement is unproblematic for most students.

h. Language and Literacy Option

The Language and Literacy Option is available to students who are enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology. The option is designed for students who aspire to be scholars, curriculum developers, and policy leaders in literacy at school, district, state, national, and international levels. The option focuses on literacy theory, research, and education, and is for students who wish to address issues of literacy development, literacy use, literacy instruction, the literacy contexts of social, cultural, and linguistic differences, and the possibilities of transforming how people read and take action in their worlds. For further information visit the Language and Literacy website at http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/phdliteracy/.

Students must meet the requirements of the option specified below, in addition to the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology (with emphasis in either Educational Technology or Educational Psychology). Credits earned in the Option may also be counted toward the requirements for the Degree.

1. All of the following courses (15 credits):

   CEP 912. Psychological and Cognitive Aspects of Literacy Learning
   CEP 915. Literacy, Learning and Development in Sociocultural Context
   TE 946. Current Issues in Literacy Research and Instruction
TE 958. Using Literacy to Learn: Curriculum and Pedagogy

TE 959. Acquisition and Development of Language and Literacy

2. The following course (4 credits):

TE 931. Qualitative Methods in Educational Research

3. Research courses.

Two advanced inquiry/research courses related to the student's field of interest

4. Electives.

Two additional electives related to the student's field of interest

5. Research Apprenticeship.

The student's required Research Apprenticeship (Practicum, CEP 995) should focus on a problem in language and literacy education.

6. Certification.

Upon completion of the required courses, the student should contact the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education and request certification for the Language and Literacy Option. After certification is approved by the department chairperson and the Dean of the College of Education, the Office of the Registrar will enter on the student's academic record the name of the Option and the date it was completed. This certification will appear on the student's transcript.

IV. SELECTION OF ADVISOR

a. Temporary Advisor

Incoming doctoral students are assigned a Temporary Advisor upon admission to the program, based on (a) the existing research interests and expertise in the Program faculty and (b) the research interests of the student as expressed in the application materials. The Temporary Advisor plays an important role in helping the new student become familiar with the program and doctoral study at MSU. To facilitate the transition into doctoral study, incoming students should contact their Temporary Advisors as soon as possible after accepting admission. The Temporary Advisor answers questions about opportunities for assistantships, program requirements, expected time lines, the procedures and timing for selecting a Permanent Advisor and Guidance Committee, and other details about the doctoral experience. During the first year, the Temporary Advisor is the most important resource for the student in choosing courses and assistantships, making connections with other faculty, and shaping his or her program and research interests.

b. Permanent Advisor (Chairperson of the Guidance Committee)

During the first year, or by the beginning of the second year, the student selects a Permanent Advisor, who will serve as the chairperson of the Guidance Committee. Students may choose to ask the Temporary Advisor to serve as Permanent Advisor, but students are encouraged to feel free to ask another faculty member to serve as their Permanent Advisor if

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they feel there is a closer match with their interests. The Permanent Advisor and Guidance Committee (described below) are responsible for working with the student to develop his or her program of study, up through the completion of coursework and the passing of the Comprehensive Examinations. In order to help maximize the student’s academic and professional growth, the chairperson is at minimum responsible for the following:

- Assisting the student in selecting appropriate faculty members for the Guidance Committee.

- Helping the student to understand and fulfill all of the requirements and policies of the Program, Department, College, and University, including the completion of forms required by those requirements and policies.

- Helping the student identify, pursue, and secure all of the academic, professional, research, and teaching opportunities that would appropriately contribute to his or her career aspirations.

- Assisting the student in scheduling and preparing for three required official meetings of the Guidance Committee: (1) To approve the program, (2) to evaluate the Dissertation proposal, and (3) to evaluate the Dissertation. At least three Committee members must be present to constitute an official meeting. The Guidance Committee may and typically does meet additionally as needed.

- Coordinating the activities of the student and the Guidance Committee to plan the student’s program, select and find appropriate research and teaching assistantships, find and read key pieces of research, and prepare for the Comprehensive Examination. See the Program Planning Form in Appendix D.

- Aiding the student in planning for and conducting the Research Apprenticeship, including the selection of an appropriate committee (see below for details).

- Supporting the student’s preparation of a dissertation proposal and selection of appropriate Dissertation Committee members and changing Dissertation Committee members as needed (see below for details).

- Resolving any conflicts or problems that may arise between Guidance Committee members and the student.

Every student has the right to work with a Permanent Advisor who is intellectually suitable to direct their development as a researcher and scholar. It is the responsibility of the EPET Program to work with all students until each finds and undertakes work with an appropriate Permanent Advisor. It is the student's responsibility to articulate his or her research interests, first in the goal statement when applying to the EPET Program and at all points during the program as his or her research interests change and develop.

*Who May Serve as a Permanent Advisor?* All tenure system EPET Program faculty are eligible to serve as temporary or Permanent Advisors for EPET students. An EPET student must have an EPET Program faculty member serving as Permanent Advisor through the comprehensive exams. EPET students may seek co-advisors if appropriate to their scholarly

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goals. The Permanent Advisor may serve as director of the student’s Dissertation. In some cases, another faculty member – from EPET or elsewhere in the department or College – may be the best choice to serve as dissertation director. In all cases, the Permanent Advisor/chair of Guidance Committee must be an EPET faculty member.

Changing Advisors. Students should not assume that their Temporary Advisor is necessarily the best candidate for their Permanent Advisor. The Temporary Advisor should be seen as “temporary” both by faculty and incoming students. As students gain experiences in their program, their interests and/or professional objectives may (and frequently do) shift. The Temporary Advisor may remain the best candidate for Permanent Advisor for a particular student, but that is a matter for the student and their Temporary Advisor to address together during the first year of the students’ program. Students should feel free to discuss alternative choices with their Temporary Advisor and to ask other faculty about their interest and willingness to serve as Permanent Advisor. Ultimately, a student’s transition from working with a Temporary Advisor to working with a Permanent Advisor is only achieved when the student finds that relationship is satisfactorily supporting their growth and development as a scholar.

Also, because students’ interests and objectives do change, the Permanent Advisor is also not necessarily “permanent.” Students are free to change their Permanent Advisor at any point in their program. Students considering changing their Permanent Advisor should hold in mind that building a good working relationships with any new advisor may take time.

Timeline for Selecting a Permanent Advisor. Students should use the first year of their program to get to know all Program faculty. They should select a Permanent Advisor, either their Temporary Advisor or another program faculty member by the end of their first year second semester. The timing of this choice will allow the student to work with that Permanent Advisor to (1) select the other members of the Guidance Committee and (2) develop the student’s program plan.

Program Monitoring of the Advisor-Advisee Relationships. It is the responsibility of the EPET Program Coordinator(s), in consultation with the full Program faculty, to make sure that each student in the Program makes appropriate progress towards timely selection of a Permanent Advisor and remains productive in that relationship. It is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator(s) to ensure that all newly admitted students have been assigned Temporary Advisors and that those Temporary Advisors communicate with their new advisees.

Should students experience any difficulty meeting or communicating with their advisor, temporary or permanent, they should consult with the Program Coordinator(s) about the nature of the difficulty. It is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator(s) to help the student resolve those problems.

V. FORMATION OF THE GUIDANCE COMMITTEE

a. Purpose of the Guidance Committee

The purpose of the Guidance Committee is to ensure that each student in the program makes timely progress towards their professional and scholarly goals. The Guidance Committee helps the student under its care articulate their scholarly goals and research
objectives and then help him/her to meet those goals, first by constructing and completing an appropriate program of study (Program Plan) and then by conceptualizing, proposing, and completing an appropriate dissertation study.

b. Composition of the Guidance Committee
All Guidance Committees in this Program will be composed of at least four tenure system faculty, at least two of which will be members of the EPET Program faculty. Additional members of Guidance Committees are permitted (as needed) but not required. According to University requirements, one member of each students' Guidance Committee must be a tenure stream faculty member in a University Department other than CEPSE. All other general University regulations for Guidance Committee membership must be observed.

c. Timeline/Lifespan of the Guidance Committee
   i. Formation.
      The student and his/her Permanent Advisor should meet, discuss, and compose the Guidance Committee before the end of the student's first year in the program. The objective of the first meeting of the Guidance Committee is to work with the student to plan a Program of Study and complete the program plan on the University form (www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/forms/rogc.pdf).

   ii. Role During the Coursework Phase of Students' Programs.
      The Guidance Committee should meet as frequently as needed, but at least once each year. One major focus for discussion and deliberation in the Guidance Committee should be the selection of appropriate coursework that meets the student's goals and satisfies the coursework requirements for completing the degree (see Section III: Degree Requirements above). The committee should also consider and discuss (a) research and teaching assistantship opportunities and needs, appropriate to the students' goals, and (b) possibilities for the student's Research Apprenticeship.

   iii. Role During the Dissertation Phase of Students' Programs
      The role of the Guidance Committee is slightly different in the dissertation phase of the student's program. After the student has completed all of his/her comprehension examination requirements, the committee's role is to assist the student in conceptualizing and carrying out a dissertation that is sensibly related to the student's scholarly and professional goals, is intellectually rigorous and holds potential for making a significant contribution to the field, and is feasible and appropriate for dissertation research. More specifically, the committee should assist the Permanent Advisor in reading and critiquing drafts of the student's Dissertation proposal and the segments of the Dissertation that follows. All members of the Guidance Committee must be present at the student's dissertation oral defense and offer their assessment of the student's oral presentation and written dissertation.

d. Changes to Guidance Committees
   Changes to the membership of the Guidance Committee can be made at any time, whenever the student and the Permanent Advisor agree that such changes are appropriate. Changes for appropriate reasons include but are not restricted to: (1) departure of a committee.
member from the University and (2) changes in the students' research interests or scholarly goals that would justify new faculty expertise and/or experience on the Committee.

e. Participation of non-MSU Faculty Members

It is understood that students' pursuit of their research interests may generated topics for dissertation research for which adequate expertise is not available in the EPET Program, CEPSE Department, or College of Education. In those cases, the student and the Permanent Advisor should seek expertise from elsewhere in the University's tenure-stream faculty, and if necessary, from other research universities. University approval of outside faculty is required. Their “presence” at dissertation oral defenses can be supported by speaker phone or videoconferencing; physical presence is desirable but not required. However, a student who invites a non-MSU faculty member onto his/her Guidance Committee must still satisfy the normal composition requirements for the Guidance Committee (Section V-b above) with four MSU faculty members.

VI. DISSERTATION DEFENSE AND FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION

The doctoral examination is the culmination of a student's graduate education and training and reflects not only on the accomplishments of the graduate student but also on the quality of the graduate program. An approved dissertation that is accepted by the graduate school becomes a single-author publication and contributes to the body of knowledge of the discipline.

Students are encourage to examine some dissertations by recent graduates of the EPET Program to better understand the kinds of scholarship and writing expected in a dissertation. Copies of dissertations are available in the MSU library and online. Most faculty have copies of dissertations by their students.

The Dissertation Defense

The doctoral student presents the results of his/her Dissertation in a seminar open to the community. Typically this presentation takes about 45 minutes, after which everyone except members of the Guidance Committee leave the room and the Guidance Committee continues to discuss the work with the student.

Upon completion of the oral defense, the committee votes on whether to approve the dissertation or call for major revisions.

The student is required to complete all requested revisions and obtain signatures of all members of the committee before submitting the dissertation. Details of this process are available at the Graduate School webpage: http://grad.msu.edu/

To ensure fairness in the examination procedure and maintenance of academic standards, the Dean of the College or the Chair of the Department may appoint an outside member to the examining committee. The outside member of the committee will read and critique the dissertation, will participate in the oral part of the exam, and will submit a report to the Dean and the Department Chair.

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VII. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The Guidance Committee will review at least once a year the graduate student's progress in his or her research or creative activity as well as plans for work in the coming year (see the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook, GSRR 2.4.8, www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife. The EPET program faculty will also meet once a year and review the progress of all students in the program.

The review of first year students is carried out by the program faculty as a whole at a meeting after the first year of study. At this meeting faculty discuss each student, identify strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations. The Temporary Advisor summarizes this feedback in writing and discusses the feedback with the student. The Advisor and student sign the written feedback, and a copy is given to the student and placed in the student's file.

After the first year review, subsequent reviews are the responsibility of the Permanent Advisor working with the Guidance Committee. The graduate student will provide their advisor and members of their Guidance Committee with an annual progress report, which may take the form of a portfolio of work accomplished. The faculty advisor and graduate student will meet to discuss the student's report, after which the faculty advisor and the graduate student will sign the completed annual progress report, will be placed into the graduate student's file. The annual evaluation by the advisor will usually be coordinated with the review of the student's progress by the Guidance Committee when it meets to approve the program plan, Practicum research, and dissertation proposal. Recommendations based on this review will be communicated in writing to the student by their advisor within two weeks of the meeting and that report will be placed in the graduate student's file.

Graduate students who wish to appeal any part of the faculty advisor's evaluation may do so in writing to the department chair. The Permanent Advisor or the graduate student may request a meeting of the Guidance Committee to address and attempt to resolve concerns raised by the evaluation of the annual review. A written report on such appeals will be filed together with the annual progress report in the students file.

The annual review will state whether the student currently has “acceptable academic standing” ( GSRR 2.3.3 ) with an average GPA in doctoral level courses of 3.5 or higher, with no more than one doctoral course with a grade lower than 3.0. "Satisfactory progress toward a degree" is defined as steady progress toward completing course, Practicum, and Comprehensive Examination requirements within the first five years, and completion of the dissertation within eight years from beginning the program. Failure to maintain acceptable academic standing or to maintain satisfactory progress toward a degree may result in dismissal from the program.

The annual review will also inform the students of the typical contents of a student's departmental file and inform the students of their right to access their educational records ( GSRR 3.2.3 ) and explain the procedures to follow to view those records. (Note that for teaching assistants a separate "personnel file" is prescribed by the GEU/MSU contract.)

The annual review will also reference the departmental policies for grading Comprehensive Examinations and the policy for any remediation in case the student fails the exam or part of the exam. The departmental policies provide explicit criteria for dismissal based on failed attempts to pass the Comprehensive Examination.

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VIII. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES: INTEGRITY AND SAFETY IN RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Integrity in research and creative activities is based on sound disciplinary practices as well as on a commitment to basic values such as fairness, equity, honesty and respect. The Program in Educational Psychology and Educational Technology expects all research and creative activities to be conducted with integrity.

EPET faculty provide education in research integrity via the following:

- Faculty conducting their research with integrity and “thinking aloud” about this with students apprenticing that research.
- Research ethics content is included in CEP 930, CEP 901A, and CEP 901B.
- Students are provided, through this Handbook, documents on research integrity, including:
  - Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities: http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/all/ris04.pdf
  - MSU policy related to the use of humans for research via the University Institutional Review Board: http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu/
  - The American Psychological Association's Publication Manual, which includes guidelines on plagiarism: http://www.apa.org/monitor/sep01/pubmanual.html
  - The Office of the Ombudsman's guidelines on plagiarism: http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/plagiarism.html

EPET students are expected to:

- Consult the documents above as needed and abide by all guidelines in the documents.
- Before beginning their Practicum research, complete the online tutorial at the IRB website: http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu/training/training_index.htm
- Obtain approval from the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to conducting any research involving humans.
- Abide by the All University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades: http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/RegsOrdsPolicies.html#Integrity, including guidelines on plagiarism.

Conduct of research without approval of IRB may result in dismissal from the program. Any incidence of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the program.

December 2007
Although research with animals and chemical or biological materials is rare in our program, students should be aware that strict guidelines exist for any such research:

- Office of Radiation, Chemical, and Biological Safety: http://www.orcbs.msu.edu/
- All University Committee on Animal Use and Care: http://www.aucauc.msu.edu/

IX. STUDENT CONDUCT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The EPET Program desires to resolve conflicts in a manner agreeable to all parties whenever possible. The Graduate School provides information on conflict resolution to aid such efforts: http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/conflict.htm.

Should a conflict arise, the student should first attempt to resolve the conflict with the party or parties directly involved. Students should consider seeking the advice and support of their advisor in seeking to resolve conflicts. Should informal attempts fail to resolve the situation, the student may appeal to the department chair. Should the efforts of the department chair fail to resolve the situation, the student may seek the assistance of the University Ombudsman (http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/). The University has established a judicial structure and process for hearing and adjudicating alleged violations of recognized graduate student rights and responsibilities (GSRR, Article 5).

In case of a conflict involving the faculty advisor, the student may request that the department provide a change of Advisor (see section IV of this Handbook).

Graduate students are expected to behave in a professional manner. Discussions of professional expectations including academic honesty, plagiarism, MSU policies can be found at the Office of the Ombudsman: http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html

X. WORK RELATED POLICIES

Graduate assistantships are an important part of students' programs, not only for the financial support they provide but also for the opportunities for professional development that they offer. The EPET Program tries to provide all students with graduate assistantships in their program (involving both research and teaching), and administers assistantships in a manner consistent with University policies.

This section governs employment for graduate students administered within the CEPSE Department and more generally within the College of Education. If students are employed in other University Departments or Units, the policies of that Department or Unit apply.

a. Types of Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are of two basic types: Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships. Teaching Assistantships involve teaching students, usually undergraduates but sometimes Masters students, under the supervision of a faculty member or in a direct co-teaching role with a faculty member. Research Assistantships involve the conduct of research, typically under the direction of a faculty member or members.
b. Finding and Applying for Assistantships

All graduate assistantships must be listed before they are filled. Complete listings of currently available assistantships in the College of Education can be found at http://www.educ.msu.edu/college/gradassistantships/

Graduate students should check these listings regularly in order to learn of assistantships for which they might wish to apply. Students should also be active in pursuing assistantship opportunities. First, they should make their interests and availability known to the Department Chair and to their Advisor. Second, they should inquire to faculty who might have or know of assistantships for which they might be appropriate. For Teaching Assistantships, inquiries should be made not only to the Department Chair of CEPSE but also to the Department Chair of Teacher Education and lead faculty in the teacher preparation program because most Teaching Assistantships in the College are in the undergraduate teacher preparation program. Third, they can increase their likelihood of being chosen for assistantships by performing well in courses, attending seminar talks and brown bag presentations and other sessions at which research and teaching projects may be discussed, by developing relationships with professors, and by volunteering their time for projects where funded work is not yet available.

c. Limits on Assistantships

Graduate students are generally permitted to work a maximum of 1/2-time (20 hours per week) to insure that they make sufficient progress in their program. 1/2-time positions may involve a single 1/2-time assistantship or a combination of two 1/4-time assistantships.

In order to maximize the equitable distribution of available graduate assistantships and to accelerate academic progress, it will be an exceptional case for a student to hold positions totaling more than 1/2-time or to hold positions beyond the fifth year. Students who seek Assistantships that total more than 1/2-time or extend beyond the fifth year in their doctoral programs will require written assurances of adequate academic progress. More information about these limits is available at http://www.educ.msu.edu/college/gradassistantships/info.htm

d. Rules for Conduct in Teaching Assistantships

Teaching assistantships are subject to a contract between Michigan State University and the Graduate Employees Union (GEU). That contract, which is renegotiated periodically, can be accessed at http://grad.msu.edu/geu/agree.pdf. This document also contains information about the monthly stipend and tuition payment associated with teaching assistantships.

e. Resources Related to Teaching Assistantships

Students should use every opportunity to improve their teaching. The University has many resources available including workshops, videotapes, and so on. The list below contains some examples of the kinds of resources students may draw upon.

- Center for Scholarship of Teaching in the College of Education: http://www.educ.msu.edu/cst/
- MSU Teaching Assistant Program: http://tap.msu.edu/

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XI. UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

The University offers many resources to support graduate students in their studies. The EPET program encourages students to take advantage of the full range of resources available at MSU. Some examples are listed below.

- MSU Library: http://www.lib.msu.edu/
  http://www.lib.msu.edu/events/classes/

- MSU Graduate School Resources: http://grad.msu.edu/current.htm - resources

- Writing Center: http://writing.msu.edu/
  http://writing.msu.edu/resources/online.php

- Office of International Students and Scholars: http://www.isp.msu.edu/OISS/

- English Language Center: http://www.elc.msu.edu/index.html

- College of Education Information for Students: http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/infostu/

- Learning Resources Center: http://lrc.msu.edu/

- Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement:
  http://www.servicelearning.msu.edu/

- Counseling Center: http://www.couns.msu.edu/

- Career Development Center: http://www.csp.msu.edu/


December 2007
Department of Counseling,
Educational Psychology and Special Education

Policies and Procedures for the Preliminary Examination

This set of questions and answers presents the policies and procedures for the Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education (CEPSE) Preliminary Examination (or "Prelim") developed by the Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC).

The questions are organized under four major headings: Nature of the Preliminary Exam, Examinees for the Preliminary Examination, Administration of the Exam, and Evaluation of Preliminary-Exam Performance. Questions about issues that relate to several topics may appear under more than one heading.

Nature of the Preliminary Examination

What is the general format of the exam?

Students answer questions about a published research article. The article is program specific, and is different for each administration of the exam. A common set of questions is asked of all CEPSE students. Answers are written as essays, in an in-class setting.

What competencies are tested by the Preliminary Examination?

The Preliminary Examination is designed to test the following competencies:

- Understanding of theoretical perspectives appropriate to the student's field of study,
- Knowledge of basic research design and data-analysis procedures,
- Ability to integrate knowledge of research methods and conceptual knowledge and apply them to a substantive issue in the field of study,
- Ability to appropriately interpret and generalize research results relevant to the field of study,
- Ability to assess and communicate the importance or significance of a study and its results and implications, and
- Proficiency in the skills of scholarly writing

Are test questions drawn from a larger pool of questions?

No. All examinees address a common set of questions. The questions are distributed to all CEPSE students who enter doctoral programs in Fall 1994 and thereafter at the beginning of their doctoral study.

The same questions are asked of all students to assure that the exam is fair and comparable across programs. While the SPRC does not believe that the Preliminary Examination questions cover all issues that students should be able to address, we believe that they tap a common core of scholarly issues, and should provide a means of assessing the competencies listed above, which we believe are appropriate for students from all programs in the department.
What is the nature of the questions?

Students will be asked to carefully analyze and critique a piece of published research.

Examinees for the Preliminary Examination

Who takes the Preliminary Examination?

Students who enter their doctoral program in Fall 1994 or thereafter are required to take the Preliminary Examination. Those students will later take the recently revised doctoral comprehensives exam offered by their program after completing 80% of their coursework.

When in the course of the doctoral program does a student take the Preliminary Examination?

The student takes the Preliminary Examination either:

a. At the beginning of the second year of fulltime study, during the week before the first semester of the second year of coursework, OR

b. After successfully completing the first two courses in the methodology sequence (CEP 930 and 932) and proseminar (or equivalent), if the student is part time.

One implication of this timeline is that students are strongly advised to enroll in the methodology sequence and proseminar (or equivalent) in their first year of study. Although students who have taken these courses cannot be guaranteed to do well on the Preliminary Examination, students who do not take them are at serious risk of not gaining the skills and competencies that will be tested on the Preliminary Examination.

Although there is no department-wide requirement that these courses be taken during the first year, the SPRC believes for the exam to function well (and as it was designed) the courses should be taken during the first year. Advisors should urge their students to enroll in these required courses in the first year.

Is every student required to take the Preliminary Examination as soon as he or she has reached this point in the program?

Yes. If students delay taking the exam when they have reached this point in the course of their study, they may put off the exam until they have invested inordinate amounts of time in the program. The Preliminary Exam is designed to provide an early warning sign of student weaknesses, or of the possibility that a student may be unable to complete the doctorate. With early feedback, remediation of weaknesses is more likely to be possible.

What if the student has completed the required classes but is still not perceived to be prepared?

All students are required to take the examination at the scheduled time in their course of study. If a student is not prepared, the examination will provide an opportunity to identify and assess areas of strength and weakness, and an inducement to design appropriate remediation for problems.

If a student does not take an exam at the specified time, the advisor and program faculty are notified. Not taking the examination constitutes a serious matter in itself.
When should students apply to take the exam?

Students should apply to take the exam by the end of spring semester. Many advisors are not available during summer, so advisors and students may wish to discuss study plans or exam-taking strategies before late spring, even though students are expected to make further preparations during the summer. A copy of the application form is available from the secretary to the SPRC. Students turn in a completed application and a signed statement of academic honesty and ethical principles the spring semester prior to exam administration.

What is the statement of academic honesty and ethical principles and practices?

This statement is a document that students review and sign prior to taking the preliminary exam to ensure the security and integrity of the examination process. It is expected that students and faculty will abide by the procedures this document. See attachment 1.

How many times may the student try the Preliminary Examination?

Students are allowed to attempt the Preliminary Examination twice. We expect that only a small number of students will receive a No Pass performance rating and be expected to repeat the exam. Therefore, two No Pass performances are a clear indication of serious academic deficiency.

Because serious remediation is required before a second attempt, a second poor performance indicates significant deficiencies that may not be remediable. Any requests for further retakes must be justified by an appeal to the SPRC. See also "What happens if a student gets a No Pass?" in the section entitled "Evaluation of Preliminary-Examination Performance" below.

Administration of the Exam

When is the Preliminary Examination administered?

The Preliminary Examination is administered annually the week before the beginning of fall semester. Students are notified of the exam date during the preceding academic year. Students must turn in their examination application before the end of the preceding spring semester. Applications to take the exam are not accepted during the summer.

Under exceptional circumstances, a student’s advisor may request a special spring administration of the Preliminary exam. This request should be a written petition to the SPRC to review and vote on. The decision will be communicated to the advisor.

Is the exam "in class" or "takehome"?

Students are given the examination in the morning and have the entire day to read, reflect on, and write about the article. The exam is given in an in-class format for several reasons. First, the exam is intended to tap each student's own abilities to think critically and independently. Students are not expected to have extensive depth and breadth of knowledge of existing research. Second, having a limited time frame ensures a high level of test security, since students complete the examination during one day, under supervised conditions. Third, the in-class setting provides for standardized conditions across doctoral programs. Because the exam takes all day, students are encouraged to take a lunch break.

Can computers be used?
Students will use computers in a University computer lab on the day of the exam. Only lab computers are to be used. Students with special needs who require accommodations should contact the SPRC coordinator with their request by the deadline to sign-up for the exam. Because food and drink are not allowed in the labs, students may not bring snacks or lunches into the exam room, but may eat outside the labs.

**Use of software**

Students may use only the basic productivity software available on the computers (word-processing, spreadsheets, calculators etc.). The use of Internet software (such as Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator) is not permitted. Students are not allowed to bring any notes into the lab nor are they allowed to access any information stored or available on networked servers (such as the AFS space).

**When are the questions given to students?**

The questions are included in this document, and the questions will be provided to each new doctoral student at the beginning of the doctoral program. A copy of the questions is also provided to each student on the day of the exam. If students have had the questions to be asked for the entire year; the questions should be well practiced for those students. We hope that eventually the kinds of analysis and consideration required on the Prelim will be very familiar to examinees.

**When is the article for the exam available?**

The article will be given to students on the day of the examination. Students arrive in the morning and are given the article and a copy of the questions, and a computer seat assignment. Students have the entire day to read the article, make notes on it, and finally respond to the questions with the article in mind. Students are not expected (or allowed) to interact about the article during the examination. Articles used in past administrations are available for students to copy.

**What materials can students bring?**

Students may bring lunches and snack foods which can be used outside of the computer lab. Any students requiring special accommodations must submit a request to SPRC in writing at the time of application.

**Are any other materials available or allowed?**

No. Students are NOT allowed to bring books, notes, or other personal items to the examination with them. No materials are provided in addition to the Preliminary Examination questions and the article to be used. In this way, again, we ensure standard conditions across programs and individuals.

**Who chooses the articles?**

The faculty in each program are responsible for selecting the article for the students in their program to analyze in the Preliminary Examination. The SPRC has developed guidelines for article selection.

These are included in the Appendix. It is the responsibility of the program coordinators to organize faculty for the selection of articles.
Evaluation of Preliminary Examination Performance

How is Preliminary Examination performance evaluated?

Preliminary Examinations are evaluated at the Department level. Three outcomes are possible:

a. Pass. The student receives a letter from the Department indicating satisfactory performance and providing feedback as suggested by the exam scores.

b. Conditional Pass. The student, his or her advisor, and the program's unit coordinator receive copies of a letter from the Department including feedback on the exam and identifying areas of strength and weakness suggested by exam performance. The student and advisor must meet to discuss the results of the Preliminary Examination and discuss its implications for further study and remediation. The student must report on any remediation efforts in his or her next annual review. The doctoral program faculty is responsible for monitoring the remediation. The student is not required to retake the exam.

c. No Pass. The student, his or her advisor, and the program's unit coordinator receive copies of a letter from the Department indicating his or her status is "in jeopardy," including feedback on the exam, and identifying areas of weakness suggested by exam performance. Both the advisor and other program faculty must be involved in decisions regarding remediation. Two avenues seem likely:

1. The student remediates with close monitoring, followed by a retake of the exam.

2. The student may be dropped from the program. This latter would only occur if other serious negative evidence about progress in the doctoral program exists.

What happens if a student gets a No Pass?

The student has the right to one retake that would take place the following fall. The student and his or her advisor must develop a remediation plan. The student must carry out the plan and report on any remediation efforts in his or her next annual review.

The student's advisor may petition for a spring administration of the Preliminary exam.

Who scores the exam?

Complete exams are scored by teams of three faculty, two from the student's program and one from outside of the program. The scorers are blind to the identity of each examinee, and are assigned by the SPRC, since the exam is a departmental exam. A set of scoring guidelines and performance criteria has been prepared by the SPRC to assist faculty in achieving consistent evaluation of student performance across scorers and across programs. The guidelines are included in the Appendix.

Additionally, faculty assigned to score the exams for each program meet prior to scoring the exams. These meetings provide a forum for discussion of the substantive problem examined in the particular article that students will have examined, the methodologies used, and ideas about interpretations of the research. This should help increase consistency in judgments across raters both between and within programs, since faculty may score exams of students from several programs, including programs other than their own.
**What is the nature of the feedback provided?**

Faculty scorers provide feedback about the specific questions asked on the exam, as well as more general feedback about students' writing skills and skills in analysis and communication. Students receive both numerical scores and detailed written feedback about their exam performance. To the extent that it is possible to suggest specific avenues of remediation or further study, faculty provide those in writing as well.

**How are overall Prelim scores obtained?**

Scorers evaluate the Prelim performance of each examinee on each of the three domains. Each scorer assigns three "domain scores" to each exam. These domain scores are then averaged across domains and scorers to produce an overall score (of Pass, Conditional Pass, or No Pass) according to the following scoring rules.

Domain scores are assigned numerical values

\[
\text{Very good} = 4, \quad \text{Adequate} = 3, \quad \text{Marginal} = 2, \quad \text{Unsatisfactory} = 1.
\]

These are combined to reach one of three overall scoring decisions: Pass, Conditional Pass, or No Pass. A Pass score is awarded to students whose combined averages are 3 or higher. A Conditional Pass will be assigned for mean scores between 2.0 and 3.0. Students with overall means of less than 2.0 will receive a No Pass. Again, see the scoring guidelines in the Appendix for further information.

In some cases discrepancies may arise in the overall scores or the domain scores assigned by the three different faculty scorers. In cases where overall score decisions differ, discrepancies are resolved by discussion or through the use of a fourth reader.

**What if I have additional questions?**

For additional information see your advisor or the member of the SPRC who represents your program area.
CEPSE Preliminary Exam Questions

A. Theoretical Perspective (about 3 pages)

1. Critique the author's conceptual framework.
2. Comment on the need for this study and its importance.
3. How effectively does the author tie the study to relevant theory and prior research?
4. Evaluate the clarity and appropriateness of the research questions or hypotheses.

B. Research Design and Analysis (about 4 pages)

5. Critique the appropriateness and adequacy of the study's design in relation to the research questions or hypotheses.
6. Critique the adequacy of the study's sampling methods (e.g., choice of participants) and their implications for generalizability.
7. Critique the adequacy of the study's procedures and materials (e.g., interventions, interview protocols, data collection procedures).
8. Critique the appropriateness and quality (e.g., reliability, validity) of the measures used.
9. Critique the adequacy of the study's data analyses. For example: Have important statistical assumptions been met? Are the analyses appropriate for the study's design? Are the analyses appropriate for the data collected?

C. Interpretation and Implications of Results (about 3 pages)

10. Critique the author's discussion of the methodological and/or conceptual limitations of the results.
11. How consistent and comprehensive are the author's conclusions with the reported results?
12. How well did the author relate the results to the study's theoretical base?
13. In your view, what is the significance of the study, and what are its primary implications for theory, future research, and practice?
**CEPSE Preliminary Examination Article Selection Guidelines**

This document presents guidelines for faculty in CEPSE doctoral programs to follow when selecting an article for the CEPSE Preliminary Examination or "Prelim." Each doctoral program will select one article to be addressed by all examinees from their program.

1. The selected article should represent an empirically-based inquiry into a substantive area of knowledge in the students' major area of study.

2. The article should be relatively brief (preferably one that requires no more than 1 hour of actual reading time) and should be representative of the type of research article students are exposed to during their first year of coursework. However, the selected article should not have been the focus of prior class/seminar/proseminar discussion.

3. If at all possible, the selected article should have appeared in a "mainstream" journal in the students' discipline.

4. The methodology employed and described in the selected article should be basic enough to be accessible to beginning second-year students. Studies describing complex designs or analyses (e.g., structural equations, factor analysis) would be inappropriate.

5. The article should provide an introduction/rationale to the research questions under investigation that is accessible to students who may not have highly specialized prior knowledge about the particular topic.

6. The selected article does not need to be an exemplary piece of research. Rather, the article should be selected on the basis of its potential to stimulate critical student responses to each of the four domains assessed by the Prelim questions.

7. Once used in a preliminary exam, an article must not be reused for a subsequent preliminary exam.
Scoring Guidelines and General Performance Criteria for CEPSE Preliminary Exam Readers

Students taking the Preliminary Examination read a research article related to their area of study and then respond to a series of questions reflecting different domains of knowledge and critical thinking. These domains are (1) theoretical perspective, (2) research design and analysis, and (3) interpretation of and implications of results.

The students writing this Prelim have completed only their first year of doctoral work and are just beginning to develop the knowledge base and critical thinking skills necessary to function as competent professionals. The Prelim is not intended to be a test of knowledge of an experienced scholar or, for that matter, of an advanced doctoral student. Rather, it is an exercise designed to reveal first-year doctoral students' progress toward developing an understanding of the tools, language, and logic of scholarship, along with the critical thinking and writing skills that are requisite to becoming competent, experienced scholars. Thus, when we ask our students to read and critically appraise a research article from their field of study, we do so with the idea firmly in mind that these are beginning doctoral students who are "en route," not finished candidates who have arrived.

The basic objective of the Prelim is to evaluate how well students can use and integrate their knowledge about research methodology within the substantive context of their own area of study. When viewed in this way, the Prelim can be seen as a diagnostic assessment, designed to reflect students' potential for developing and refining their abilities to understand, appraise, and use research, to think analytically, and to clearly express their knowledge in writing. The Prelim experience is designed to be an early source of feedback to both students and faculty regarding a student's current status and potential needs for further development.

Each domain is evaluated according to one of four ratings: Very Good, Adequate, Marginal, or Unsatisfactory. The three domains and their respective questions are found on page 3. (Please note that students have been advised that they may address relevant issues in addition to those raised by the required Prelim questions in each domain.)

General performance criteria for each rating category are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>Responses are well-developed, thorough, accurate, and knowledgeable regarding the components of the domain. Student reflects depth and specificity in the understanding conveyed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>Responses demonstrate accurate, but more general, understanding about the components of the domain. Responses are defensible, and indicate an adequate level of mastery for this level of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>Responses reflect a fairly global understanding of the components related to this domain, but significant errors or omissions are noted. Evidence suggests that the writer could benefit from further study or remediation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Responses do not demonstrate a basic understanding of the components of this domain. The responses are generally inaccurate or incomplete, and convey an inadequate mastery of essential concepts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scoring Procedures

Each Prelim is evaluated by three scorers, two of whom are from the student's program and one outside the program. Using the performance criteria provided, each rater should assign a rating from 1 to 4 for each of the domains.

\[
\begin{align*}
4 & = \text{Very Good} \\
3 & = \text{Adequate} \\
2 & = \text{Marginal} \\
1 & = \text{Unsatisfactory}
\end{align*}
\]

The ratings of the three scorers are combined to reach one of three overall scoring decisions: Pass, Conditional Pass, or No Pass. You can get an idea of how final scoring decisions are made by considering the highest score possible if all three scorers were to give the same rating across all three domains. (This is unlikely, but illustrative.) These scores are:

\[
\begin{align*}
3 \text{ scorers} \times 3 \text{ domains} \times \text{scores of 4} & = 36 \text{ points} \\
3 \text{ scorers} \times 3 \text{ domains} \times \text{scores of 3} & = 27 \text{ points} \\
3 \text{ scorers} \times 3 \text{ domains} \times \text{scores of 2} & = 18 \text{ points} \\
3 \text{ scorers} \times 3 \text{ domains} \times \text{scores of 1} & = 9 \text{ points}
\end{align*}
\]

Thus, the final cutoffs are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Decision</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Range of Averaged Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>27-36</td>
<td>3.0 - 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Pass</td>
<td>18-26</td>
<td>2.0 - 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Pass</td>
<td>9-17</td>
<td>1.0 - 1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback To Students

Your written feedback to students is one of the most important parts of the student's Prelim experience. Comment as explicitly as you can about what you perceive as strengths and weaknesses. It will be especially helpful for those with lower scores to know both where they fell short and why.

The Scorers

Three scorers read each examination, two of whom are from the student's program. No attempt is made to assign, or to avoid assigning, the student's advisor as a scorer of his or her exam. The third scorer is from another program in the department. Individual faculty preferences for areas in which they feel comfortable serving as outside scorers will be honored.
Scoring Meetings

Before Prelim scoring commences, pre-scoring meetings are held by each program. The product of each of these meetings should be a set of explicit, written scoring criteria which aid faculty in using the four-point scale to assign scores on each domain in the test. These written criteria are given to the examinees when their examination results are returned with faculty feedback.

Guidelines for Providing Feedback on CEPSE Preliminary Examination Answers

This document presents guidelines for faculty in CEPSE doctoral programs to follow when providing written feedback on student responses to the CEPSE Preliminary Examination or "Prelim."

Beyond arriving at final judgments regarding students' Prelim exam answers (i.e., Pass, Conditional Pass, and No Pass), faculty raters of these exams must provide written feedback to students concerning the quality of their answers. It is imperative that students receiving a Conditional Pass or a No Pass from a rater receive such feedback so that they might better understand how their responses were deficient and how they should prepare for a retake of the Preliminary Exam. However, feedback should also be prepared for students receiving passing scores.

In providing feedback to students, raters should attend to the following guidelines:

1. Make sure that the evaluative comments are closely tied to the specific Prelim question(s) for which the student's answer was considered deficient.

2. Wherever possible, identify important omissions or misrepresentations that contributed to a less favorable evaluation.

3. Avoid global or non-specific feedback (e.g., "student's response was weak") and, instead, indicate how the response could have been strengthened (e.g., "student's response to question 6 did not note the serious limitations of the sampling method used in this study").

4. Comment on the quality of the student's writing, especially if poor writing contributed to a less favorable evaluation. If possible, suggest ways that the writing can be improved.

5. Keep in mind that the Prelim serves both assessment and developmental purposes. By providing specific, thoughtful feedback to our doctoral students you are contributing to their professional development.

Policy Adopted April 10, 1995
Revised February 4, 1998
Revised March 13, 2000
Revised February 15, 2002
Revised May 5, 2003
Revised February 12, 2007
CEPSE Preliminary Exam

Academic Honesty and Ethical Principles and Practices

The faculty recognizes its role in supporting the learning and professional development of each student and in doing everything legitimately possible to help the student pass the Preliminary Examination. In recognition of this responsibility, the faculty will make every effort to ensure that the examination questions, examination procedures, evaluation of responses, and reporting of results and recommendations for improvement will be done in a fair and timely manner.

In a community of scholarship and practice, students share the responsibility for ensuring the quality of the examination. Students are therefore expected to prepare thoroughly for the examination and to follow established procedures for registering for the examination, taking the examination, and seeking results of the examination. At all times throughout this process, students, as well as faculty, are expected to conduct themselves with the highest character and integrity.

The preliminary exam is based on an honor system. The completed exam represents the work, understandings, and knowledge of the student, without assistance from other individuals to complete the exam. Completion of the exam means that the student agrees to comply with these policies and represents the work solely as their own.

To ensure the security and integrity of the examination process, it is expected that:

- No faculty or staff member shall give any student information about the exam that would give the student an unfair advantage over other students.

- Any faculty or staff member having knowledge of any student or students receiving information about the content of any exam that gives that student an unfair advantage over others, must report that knowledge to the Department Chairperson and/or SPRC Chairperson.

- No student shall accept exam information if it is suspected that the information is about the content of the exam.

- Students shall report to the Department Chairperson any knowledge they have of other students or faculty giving or receiving information about the content of any examination.

Source: Comprehensive Examinations for Doctoral Students in Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education (9/15/97)
Academic Honesty, Michigan State University

Academic honesty is central to the educational process and acts of academic dishonesty are serious offenses within the University community. Suspension from the University could be the consequence for acts of academic dishonesty. (Spartan Information and Services, p. 78)

General Student Regulations

1.00 Protection of Scholarship and Grades,

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

1.01 claim or submit the academic work of another as one’s own.

1.02 procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.

1.03 complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.

1.04 allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.

1.05 alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.

Source: MSU, General Student Regulations, 1989, p. 79

Integrity of Scholarships and Grades

1. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles and in so doing protect the validity of University grades. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. Instructors, for their part, will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged.

2. If any instance academic dishonesty is discovered by an instructor, it is his or her responsibility to take appropriate action. Depending on his or her judgment of the particular case, he or she may give a failing grade to the student on the assignment or for the course.

(All-University Policy, November 18, 1969, revised July, 1990, 1993)

Violation of these ethical principles and policies may result in automatically failing the exam.
I have read, understand and agree to abide by the ethical principles and honor code described above. I understand that the work on the exam must represent my own work without the assistance of others.

________________________________________
Student’s Name (print)

________________________________________
Student’s Signature
Date________________________

Source: Comprehensive Examinations for Doctoral Students in Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education (9/15/97)
RESEARCH APPRENTICESHIP POLICY
Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education

I. Goal of the Research Apprenticeship

The Research Apprenticeship is an integral part of the doctoral student experience and ultimately of the careers of our students. It is partly responsible for linking course work and research experiences (in particular the dissertation) by introducing students to the process of conducting research, yet still with the support of a mentor and a community of scholars. Further, the apprenticeship will help the student identify areas of research which are of particular interest to the student, and which the student can pursue through and after graduate school.

II. Process

During the apprenticeship the student should be engaged in the process of conducting research and participating in a community of scholars. The process of conducting research involves activities associated with each of the components of the final product. Further, during the apprenticeship the student should cycle among the research activities as theory, research questions, data collection, analysis and interpretation inform each other.

Because of the timing and nature of the Apprenticeship, members of the Guidance Committee will participate in overseeing the apprenticeship process, and the student may satisfy some or all of the procedural components of the apprenticeship process during Guidance Committee meetings.

Below are the formal requirements of the apprenticeship process.

1. Apprenticeship Chair

At the time the student is ready to formally initiate the apprenticeship process the student should find a faculty member who will serve as the chair/advisor for the apprenticeship. This decision should be based on the chair’s interests and skills related to the proposed apprenticeship topic and methodology (e.g., design, data collection & analysis procedures). The student may consult with his or her current advisor in order to choose a chair for the apprenticeship.

2. Timing

Students will complete the Research Apprenticeship project after they have successfully completed the Preliminary Examination and before they register to take the Comprehensive Examination. The CEPSE Research Apprenticeship Form is to be submitted to the SPRC Administrator with the Comprehensive Exam application.

3. Course Credit

According to the policy of the college, as part of the apprenticeship process, students register for one-three credits in CEP 995.
Regardless of the number of CEP 995 credits the student registers for, all expectations of the apprenticeship apply. Upon completion of the Research Apprenticeship project, grade is assigned for the CEP 995 course by the Apprenticeship Chairperson.

4. Community of Scholars

The apprenticeship should be viewed as a project conducted with the assistance and support of a community of scholars, including the mentor. This community includes some members of the Guidance Committee, and may include members of a research team, classmates in a course that satisfies the apprenticeship requirement, faculty members who are not on the Guidance Committee, or other collaborators. Programs may describe specific and typical ways in which their students have identified communities of scholars.

5. Forum for Proposal

The apprenticeship process is designed, in part, to provide experiences that will facilitate and enhance the dissertation experience. Hence, students are encouraged to hold an open forum for their proposal development.

6. Presentation of the Research Apprenticeship Paper

In keeping with the concept of participation in a community of scholars, students must present the final apprenticeship paper to a group of interested students and professors in an open forum, which may be conducted at a professional conference, at an organized event within the College of Education, or at a college event designated exclusively for the presentation of the paper. This practice is intended to help students develop their presentation skills as well as to provide others an opportunity to learn about the student’s research.

7. Certification of Fulfillment

There are two parts to the Research Apprenticeship Form. Part A must be filled out and approved only by the advisor prior to sitting for the Comprehensive Exam. Upon completion or at the presentation of the apprenticeship paper, the Apprenticeship Chairperson and one other member of the Guidance Committee must indicate that the apprenticeship product is acceptable by signing Part B of the Apprenticeship Form. If applicable, a student mentor also signs Part B of the form. Students are strongly encouraged to submit their research for presentation at a professional conference or for publication in a professional journal.

III. The Written Document

The general requirement for the written document is that it includes the components of a research paper appropriate for the particular program as determined by the student’s Apprenticeship Chairperson, in consultation with the student’s advisor and one other member of the student’s Guidance Committee. In recognition of the collaborative nature of many research projects, only two of the four components of a research project listed below must represent original work by the student. For example, if a student is part of a research team, the student may base one or two of the components of the final product on the work of other members of the team. The student must indicate the...
components which were based on original work and which components were based on the work of others, and the components must be integrated coherently.

The components of the written document are similar to the questions used for the preliminary exam. The components are intended to be applicable across all programs and the students should be at a level to appreciate the import of each area.

**A. Theoretical perspective**

The student must establish a conceptual framework for the study to which each part of the paper should be linked. The student should describe the basis for the conceptual framework in the existing literature as well as establish the need and importance of the study given the existing literature. The student must develop research questions linked to the conceptual framework.

**B. Research design**

The student should describe the relevant components of the design of the study. This description might include sources of information, how participants were chosen, instrumentation, and methods of data collection. The student should provide a rationale for his or her choice of data sources and comment on the extent to which the choices are consistent with theoretical arguments.

**C. Analysis**

The student should describe the way in which the data were analyzed. This includes the procedures used to obtain simplifications, reductions, and representations of the data. The student should describe the findings of the research, and the assumptions on which the findings are based.

**D. Interpretation and implication of results**

The student should interpret the results relative to the state of current knowledge as defined in the existing literature and within the scope of the study’s limitations. In addition, the student should develop the relevant implications of the findings with recognition of the limitations of the study, and indicate directions for further research.

**IV. Policy Regarding Work Prior to Entering the Department**

Many students enter the department with substantial research experience including Master’s theses and published articles. Under exceptional circumstances, a student and Guidance Committee may agree that the student will use prior work to satisfy the apprenticeship. If they do make such an agreement, the work must still meet the criteria specified in section III. The student may satisfy requirement 3 in section II by registering for, and receiving, at least one credit which can be applied to the apprenticeship. Further, the student must satisfy requirements 6 and 7 in section II, and the student must participate in a community of scholars during the student’s enrollment in CEPSE.
V. Students Who Seek a Waiver from the Apprenticeship Requirement

Students and advisors may seek a waiver from the Research Apprenticeship requirement by submitting a written request to the Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC). The appeal should include arguments indicating how the student satisfied the apprenticeship requirements. If the student’s product does not include the components described in section III, the advisor and student should include publications which exemplify the criteria being satisfied by the student’s apprenticeship product.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN
COUNSELING, EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

University regulations require that all doctoral candidates take Comprehensive Examinations. The Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education faculty believe that it is essential that students receiving Ph.D. degrees from the Department have an understanding of their field beyond that gained in separate courses. The comprehensive exams give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to integrate and use information acquired from various readings or courses, as well as to demonstrate their ability to clearly communicate ideas in an acceptable writing style, which reflects good grammar, organization, and composition.

The exams are not meant to measure all of the many qualities that are important requisites of an educator, researcher, or psychologist. The exam is an assessment of each candidate’s understanding of areas of knowledge thought to be important for doctoral level scholarship.

I. GENERAL POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Policies and Procedures

1. Comprehensive Examinations are required of all doctoral students after eighty percent of the prescribed coursework has been completed, but within five years from the date the student was admitted to the program.

2. The examinations may not be taken until the candidate’s academic program has been approved and filed with the Student Affairs Office. Failure to do so renders the exam invalid.

3. Students planning to take the Comprehensive Examination(s) must apply in writing before the end of the registration period. Both new candidates and those retaking part or all of the examination must file the Application for Comprehensive Examination with the Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC) Administrator.

4. Candidates may count courses taken during the term immediately preceding the examination as meeting the requirements that 80% of coursework be completed before taking the exam(s).

5. All examinees are required to attempt all designated exams on the first attempt.

6. All examinees must have submitted the Research Apprenticeship (Practicum) paper to their committee before taking the Comprehensive Examinations. Advisor approval of the submission must be received by the SPRC Administrator by August 1 prior to the fall comprehensive exam date; or by December 1 prior to the Spring Comprehensive exam date.
7. Students must be registered for classes the semester of the exam. Fall registration is required for the August exam and spring registration for the January exam.

II. COMPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Content Areas and Length

Content areas and length of exams are determined at the program level.

B. Examination Procedure

Examinations in each area are written and evaluated by the faculty of the interest area. When there are few regular faculty available or an unusually large number of candidates to be examined, one or more qualified faculty from other areas may be added to the area faculty.

The Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC) and the coordinators of each area will review all questions.

The preparation of final copies of examination questions and the administration of the examination will be coordinated by the SPRC Chairperson, appointed by the Department Chairperson.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Scheduling of Examinations

Fall comprehensive exams are given during the week before classes begin. Spring comprehensive exams are given during the week in which classes begin.

B. Procedures for On-Site Exams

If the student comes into the examination room and receives a copy of the examination and then leaves without answering the exam question, he/she will be considered to have failed that part of the examination, and this attempt will be recorded and counted.

Once students enter the designated exam room, they will only be permitted to leave for lavatory needs, until the exam session has been completed. Students must consult the room proctor for other needs/arrangements.

Foreign-language dictionaries are permitted. Unless special arrangements have been made in advance and in writing with the SPRC chair at the time of application, no other books, notes, resources or personal effects are permitted. Consult your individual program comprehensive exam policy for additional regulations.

The purpose of this procedure is to minimize distractions in the testing room. The proctor has the authorization to request the removal of any items.

Students with special needs requiring special arrangements should see the SPRC Chair at the time of application for the exam.
IV. STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

To ensure the security and integrity of the examination process, it is expected that students and faculty will abide by the procedures in Attachment 1: Academic Honesty and Ethical Principles and Practices.

V. SCORING AND EVALUATION

A. Scoring

Scoring procedures are set at the program level.

B. Reporting and Interpreting Results

The SPRC Chairperson reports examination results to a meeting of the faculty, following which results are available from the advisor. It is the responsibility of the advisor to go over student responses and the raters’ comments with students requesting such a review.

Comprehensive results will be reported not later than 30 days following the last day of the examination period.

C. Retakes

A student who fails the Comprehensive Examination or part of the examination, must develop a written plan of study that details the steps to be taken to prepare for the retake of the comprehensive exam. This plan must be approved by the advisor and the student’s Guidance Committee in consultation with faculty who represent the failed areas of the examination. Such a plan might include additional coursework, guided readings, tutoring, practice in writing answers to previous exams, and must include a timeline for completion. The plan must then be filed with SPRC. Successful execution of the approved Study Plan is a matter of shared responsibility between the student, the advisor, and the Guidance Committee. The Guidance Committee must attest to the completion of the Study Plan three weeks prior to the retake attempt (see Study Plan Chronology below). No more than two retakes will be allowed unless the retake and the plan of study are authorized by a vote of 80% of the faculty present and voting at a CEPSE Department meeting.

Study Plan Chronology

Weeks Prior To Intended

Retake Examination Date  Action

11 weeks  Study plan developed with and approved by Guidance Committee

3 weeks  Guidance Committee reviews and endorses study plan completion and sends a copy to SPRC
VI. STUDY AIDS

A. Reading Lists

Reading lists are developed and distributed at the program level. The reading lists are not prescriptive, but the books and articles listed represent, in the faculty’s judgment, the breadth and content of the area.

B. Coursework

Questions on the exam are not limited to the content of particular courses. The student’s understanding of an examination area is expected to be greater in breadth and depth than that generally required of a particular course in that area.

C. Sample Questions

Copies of old comprehensive exam questions may be borrowed from the SPRC Secretary.

D. Individual Preparation

The coursework and reading throughout the doctoral program provide general preparation for Comprehensive Examinations. It is also expected that students will reduce their coursework prior to and during comprehensives, allowing three to six months for more intensive, critical study.

E. Study Groups

Informal study groups, arranged by the candidates themselves, are considered to be the most efficient and pleasurable means of preparation. The methods of these groups vary, but critical discussion of concepts, methods, applications, and issues encountered in reading is often profitable. Posing questions to one another to be answered in writing and critically reviewing the answers is another technique that some groups have found useful in preparation for comprehensive exams. The SPRC Secretary maintains a list of students who have expressed an interest in forming a study group.

F. Writing Hints

There are no infallible guides to good writing; however, students taking Comprehensive Examinations are expected to demonstrate sufficient mastery of language and writing skills to communicate intelligently and effectively with other professionals. Answers to the Comprehensive Examination questions should model the organization, directness, clarity of expression, and quality of analysis that one typically expects from an educated and disciplined person.

Students may want to review the following five suggestions before taking comprehensive exams.

1. Answer the question that is asked. It is crucial that one carefully reads the verb in the instruction.
Students under stress will sometimes try to write down everything they know in a general subject area rather than addressing themselves directly to the specific question asked in the examination. While evaluators are concerned with assessing the extent of a student's knowledge in a particular content area, they are more concerned with the student's capacity to use, focus, and manipulate that knowledge to respond directly to the specific question asked.

2. Work from a suitable design.

**Timing**: Since students taking comprehensive exams are subject to time limitations in devising their answers, students should attempt to plan for the most effective utilization of the time available. Such planning requires that the students make some assessment of the task before them, break the task down into its component parts, and make appropriate time allocations for each component.

**Structure, Organization, and Strategy**: If the student is writing an essay, it should have a clear beginning, middle and end. In order to give answers coherence, students should advance some single dominant strategy or organizational pattern and stick to it.

3. Support your ideas with the best possible evidence, but avoid unnecessary repetition.

   Students should develop their ideas and demonstrate the depth of their understanding of a content area by providing supporting data, details, examples, other evidence, and by citing expert opinion; however, students should be alert to the danger of adding words without adding meaning.

4. Be as clear and concise as possible, and use standard English.

   Evaluators of answers to Comprehensive Examinations cannot help but be influenced by the writer's communication skills; therefore, students should make every effort to conform to the standard conventions of good writing: parallel structure, appropriate punctuation, fully developed paragraphs, complete sentences, transition between paragraphs, etc.

5. Use orthodox spelling. If the answer contains many misspelled words, these words will distract the readers' attention, exhaust their patience and eventually create a general negative bias against the writer.

6. The demonstration of good writing skills (grammar, spelling, organization of answers) is considered essential for passing the comprehensive exams, and evidence of poor writing is a basis for failing the exams. You are encouraged to proofread, and may make the necessary grammatical and typographical corrections in pen or pencil.

Approved Revision 2/4/04
CompExamPolicies/SPRCpolicy&proc
VII. FURTHER INFORMATION

The SPRC Chairperson is available to advise students who have procedural questions about the examination.

Adopted September 15, 1997


Revisions March 25, 2002
Academic Honesty and Ethical Principles and Practices

The faculty recognizes its role in supporting the learning and professional development of each student and in doing everything legitimately possible to help the student pass the Comprehensive Examinations. In recognition of this responsibility, the faculty will make every effort to ensure that the examination questions, examination procedures, evaluation of responses, and reporting of results and recommendations for improvement will be done in a fair and timely manner.

In a community of scholarship and practice, students share the responsibility for ensuring the quality of the Comprehensive Examination. Students are therefore expected to prepare thoroughly for the examination and to follow established procedures for registering for the examination, taking the examination, and seeking results of the examination. At all times throughout this process, students, as well as faculty, are expected to conduct themselves with the highest character and integrity.

The comprehensive exam is based on an honor system. The completed exam represents the work, understandings, and knowledge of the student, without assistance from other individuals to complete the exam. Completion of the exam means that the student agrees to comply with these policies and represents the work solely as their own.

To ensure the security and integrity of the examination process, it is expected that:

- No faculty or staff member shall give any student information about the comprehensive exams that would give the student an unfair advantage over other students.

- Any faculty or staff member having knowledge of any student or students receiving information about the content of any exam that gives that student an unfair advantage over others, must report that knowledge to the Department Chairperson and/or SPRC Chairperson.

- No student shall accept exam information if it is suspected that the information is about the content of the comprehensive exam.

- Students shall report to the Department Chairperson any knowledge they have of other students or faculty giving or receiving information about the content of any examination.

Source: Comprehensive Examinations for Doctoral Students in Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education (9/15/97)

**Academic Honesty, Michigan State University**
Academic honesty is central to the educational process and acts of academic dishonesty are serious offenses within the University community. Suspension from the University could be the consequence for acts of academic dishonesty. (Spartan Information and Services, p. 78)

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1.02 procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.

1.03 complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.

1.04 allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.

1.05 alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.

Source: MSU, General Student Regulations, 1989, p. 79

Integrity of Scholarships and Grades

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2. If any instance academic dishonesty is discovered by an instructor, it is his or her responsibility to take appropriate action. Depending on his or her judgment of the particular case, he or she may give a failing grade to the student on the assignment or for the course.

(All-University Policy, November 18, 1969, revised July, 1990, 1993)

Violation of these ethical principles and policies may result in automatically failing the exam.
I have read, understand and agree to abide by the ethical principles and honor code described above. I understand that the work on the exam must represent my own work without the assistance of others.

______________________________
Student’s Name (print)

______________________________
Student’s Signature
Date__________________________

Source: Comprehensive Examinations for Doctoral Students in Counseling, Educational Psychology and Special Education (9/15/97)
EPET Comprehensive Examination Policy
Revised September 10, 2001; Revised October, 2007

The University requires that doctoral students take a written comprehensive examination after completing 80% of their coursework (typically during the third year of doctoral study). The Educational Psychology faculty believes that the experience of preparing for and taking the comprehensive examination should:

- provide the student with an integrative learning experience--an opportunity to engage in reading, thinking, and writing that is unlikely to occur in other settings (e.g., individual courses, conducting a research project, teaching)

- encourage learning activities (individual and collaborative) prior to the examination that are unlikely to take place otherwise. (i.e., preparing for the examination should be a site for productive reading and thinking with others); and

- provide an opportunity for faculty to ensure that the student is adequately conversant with or knowledgeable about issues deemed essential for being an educational psychologist.

In order to meet these goals, the comprehensive examination for the Educational Psychology and Educational Technology program provides two options: Option I is a written examination in which students respond over a two-day (32-hour) period to questions written by program faculty and the students' guidance committees. Option II requires submission of two papers followed by an oral examination as outlined in Appendix C-1 below.

Option I.

The examination has the following features:

**Questions.** Students write responses to three questions. Two of these are selected by the student from a set of four common questions written by educational psychology program faculty. The third question, focusing on the student's area of specialization, is written by the student's guidance committee and approved by the program faculty.

**Common Questions.** Each of the four common questions focuses on one or more of the central themes for the Educational Psychology program, around which students have constructed reading lists. The questions should encourage the student to draw upon his or her more specialized knowledge in responding. Thus, in responding to a question focusing on issues of transfer or the situatedness of learning, one student might draw on more specific research literature on literacy learning and teaching whereas another student might draw on issues of learning through technology in schools, and another might deal with issues of connections between learning in school and in the workplace. The intent is for the student to deal with the broader issue by drawing on his or her more specialized knowledge.
Specialization Question. The question written for the individual student by his or her guidance committee focuses on the student's specialization, but with the expectation that the student will draw on various general themes or issues relevant to educational psychology in answering the question. Thus, whereas the common questions begins with the general theme and has the student draw on his or her specialization, the specialization question begins with the student's research focus and has the student draw on general issues or themes.

Format of Responses. All responses must be typed, double-spaced, with margins of at least 1 inch and at least 10-point font (or 12-pitch type). Typically, the response to each common question is limited to 10 pages, each specialization question to 12 pages. These limits may be adjusted for particular questions by the faculty writing the examination questions.

Setting for the Examination. The examination is administered as a three-day take-home examination. Students pick up questions from the examination administrator at 9:00 on the first day. Responses are returned to the examination administrator at 5:00 on the second day. Students may use whatever resources they wish (e.g., books, journal articles, notes from classes, libraries, personal journals and notes). Students are not, however, permitted to discuss questions or their responses with anyone during the two-day examination. Students may work in the setting of their choice. Some students may wish to arrange to work in a private room on campus (e.g., a faculty office) to minimize distractions. The student and his or her advisor are responsible for making such arrangements.

Scoring. Each student's examination will be read and scored in its entirety by an Educational Psychology faculty member who is on the student's guidance committee but not the student's academic advisor. (Reading all of the student's responses will enable this reader to make judgments across the entire set of items, which might not be possible when reading responses to individual questions.) Each response will also be read and scored by two other faculty members (who may or may not be on the student's guidance committee).

Each reader will make substantive comments on the student's response and rate each responses according to the following scale:

5 Outstanding (Pass)
4 Good (Pass)
3 Marginal (Pass with revision)
2 Weak (No Pass)
1 Poor (No Pass)

The Educational Psychology Comprehensives Coordinator will compile the scores, averaging the scores for each item. In the case of scoring disagreements of 2 points or more (e.g., 4, 4, 2 or 2, 3, 4), scoring faculty will discuss their evaluations and
may revise their scores. (Faculty are not required to revise their scores to reach consensus.)

**Feedback.** In addition to substantive feedback, faculty readers must provide specific directions to the student when assigning a PASS WITH REVISION score on any question. These directions would typically suggest that the student read or review specific readings and/or rewrite specific sections of his or her text to address issues raised in the substantive comments. When a NO PASS score is given, the reader must identify a list of central issues that the student has failed to master and, whenever possible, identify a more extensive body of literature addressing those issues.

**Revision/Retakes.** A student receiving a PASS WITH REVISION on a question will be required to revise the response to that question, typically within a two- or three-week period. (Some discretion will be given to the Program Coordinator in setting the deadline for revisions, based on his or her judgment of the work involved.) The revised response is read by the faculty who originally scored them. The revised response can be given any of the 5 scores in the scale. A student may be asked to revise the response a second time. If, after the second revision, the response still receives a composite score of 3 or less, the response is considered a NO PASS.

Students receiving a NO PASS on either common question must retake that part of their Comprehensive Examination at the next administration (i.e., they must answer two new common questions in the same format). Students receiving a NO PASS on their specialization question must retake that part of their Comprehensive Examination also at the next administration (i.e., they must answer a new specialization question in the same format). In both cases, it is the responsibility of the advisor to develop with the student a plan of study that addresses the weaknesses identified by the readers.
Option II

Adopted October, 2007. Subject to review and revision after two administrations.

Introduction

As has been recently the case for other COE doctoral programs, EPET program faculty have been frustrated by the limitations of our current Comprehensive Examinations process, primarily in terms of the products that our students generate in the Examination. These limitations are many, but chiefly include shallow thinking and argument reflecting the short time that students have to prepare their responses, thinking and writing that has weak to no future beyond the Exam itself, and the mismatch between the current Exam and the kind of scholarly work that we want our students to learn to do (e.g., extended over time, multiple authored, etc.). With these concerns in mind and after extensive deliberation and discussion, we have developed a proposed alternative to our current Examination. We intend to offer our students a choice between Option I (the current Examination) and Option II (the alternative proposed below), beginning with the January 2008 administration.

Sunset Clause: Evaluation After Two Administrations

In our extended discussions of the goals and design of Option II, we have recognized that any serious alternative to the current EPET Comprehensive Examination involves numerous conjectures about how our students will receive and work in the alternative and how our designed procedures will work. While we have worked long and hard to develop and mentally test this alternative, we think it is prudent to evaluate Option II after the first two administrations, when we have some process and outcome “data” to examine and discuss. Based on our evaluation, we may adjust aspects of the proposed plan to solve observed problems and/or better achieve our stated goals.

Option II: The Basics

Option II of the EPET Comprehensive Examination will consist of three components: one paper from each student, the student’s written introduction to his/her paper, and an oral examination of the student that centers on and grows out of the content of the paper. In addition, each student must also submit a proposal in advance that describes the work that he/she intends to submit (see below).

The students’ papers will be of “submission quality,” competitive for publication in a scholarly journal. The range of acceptable genres include (1) empirical research reports, (2) reviews of research literature, (3) conceptual/theoretical analyses, and (4) secondary analyses of previously published data. Papers that fall outside these four types may be accepted, but only if the student can make the case for that paper type as a potential submission to a scholarly journal (see below). Book reviews, responses to published articles, and Research Practicum papers (even if significantly revised) will not be accepted. The submitting student must either be the sole author or the first author of their paper, though others (students or faculty) may contribute as secondary authors.
Two important purposes of the student’s introduction to his/her paper are to (1) substantiate that he/she is the rightful first author and (2) acknowledge and describe the contributions of others to the submitted paper (see below).

The Proposal

The purpose of this requirement is to support communication between the student and his/her Committee and among the student, Committee, and Program about the paper that the student intends to submit for Option II, before the paper has been completed. The proposal will include the following elements: (1) a preliminary title, (2) the type of paper, (3) the journal or journals for which the paper would be directed, if it were submitted, (4) a preliminary abstract, (5) a description of the genesis of the paper, (6) a list of those who contributed to the paper (intellectual contributions and writing contributions) and a description of the nature of their contribution, and (7) a timeline to complete and submit the paper. The student will sign and submit the proposal to their Advisor; the Advisor will seek the counsel of the other members of the Guidance Committee on the plan; and the Advisor will sign off, if and when he/she is satisfied that the proposed paper is an appropriate Comps. Paper and the timeline to complete the work is feasible. The form of this proposal has been informed by the content of the Artifact Explanation form that the Department of Teacher Education uses for its paper-based Comprehensive Examination option (also called “Option II”).

The Student’s Introduction to the Paper

The purpose of the student’s introduction is to describe the nature and genesis of the paper, in its submitted form, to the faculty who will evaluate it. The introduction will include the same 7 elements as the proposal, but revised to make each current and to describe accurately the progress of the paper since it was proposed. As above, the student will sign their introduction to indicate its completeness and accuracy. In addition, the student’s Advisor will sign to indicate that, to the best of his/her knowledge, the student’s characterization is complete and accurate.

Faculty Evaluation

The evaluation plan balances the role of faculty who have worked closely with the student with faculty who have not. Three EPET program faculty will evaluate each student’s paper and his/her performance on the oral examination. (Each student standing for Comps. in this Option will be evaluated by three faculty members. Depending on the number of students in any administration, these three-member groups may or may not be all different for each Option II students in a given administration.) One faculty member will be a member of the student’s Guidance Committee (the Advisor or the Advisor’s designee); the other two will be randomly assigned members of the EPET Comprehensives Committee, which will serve for the first two administrations of Option II.

Faculty Evaluation of the Paper

The three evaluating faculty members will read and assess the quality of the paper prior to the oral examination. Their assessment of the paper will be that it is or is not of submissible quality for the journal(s) proposed. The oral examination will proceed independent of the evaluating faculty members’ assessment of the paper.
The Oral Examination

The oral examination will assess two aspects of the student’s competence: (1) his/her ability to respond knowledgeably and effectively to faculty questions on issues raised in the paper, and (2) his/her ability to respond to faculty questions about how the content of the papers relate to other issues and perspectives in the field. Focus (1) will assess the student’s ability to think “on his/her feet,” as a complement to the ability to express himself/herself in writing. Focus (2) directly addresses the breadth of knowledge aspect expected of Comprehensive Examinations.

Scoring the Examination as Whole

The three evaluating faculty will deliberate immediately following the oral examination until they are able to reach a consensus score for the Comprehensive Examination as a whole (paper + performance on the oral examination). Only two scores are possible: Pass and No Pass. A Pass score will indicate that the paper is of submissible quality and the student’s performance on the oral examination indicates their readiness to complete their program (i.e., to undertake a dissertation). A No Pass will indicate that either the paper is judged not to be of submissible quality, or that student has not shown sufficient competence on the oral examination (to indicate their readiness to complete their program), or both. All three versions of No Pass will count as a Comprehensive Examination failure. As in the current version, the Option II will have three attempts to pass the Examination. No Pass students who pass one component (paper or oral examination) but fail the other will be assigned the same three evaluating faculty on the subsequent attempt. No Pass students who fail both components (paper and oral examination) will be assigned a new set of three faculty members on their subsequent attempt. The details of these outcome possibilities are summarized in the table below.

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<th>Paper Outcome</th>
<th>Oral Exam Outcome</th>
<th>Overall Outcome</th>
<th>Next Faculty Evaluators</th>
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In either case (overall Pass or No Pass), the overall outcome will be communicated in writing to the student and to the Advisor. It will consist of the overall result (Pass/No Pass) and a written summary, prepared by one of the evaluating faculty, that lays out the main points of consensus of the faculty’s evaluation of the paper and the examination performance. The reasons for failure on either component will be provided, in sufficient detail to provide direction for improvement. Suggestions for further improvement of the paper will be included, even when the student has passed the Examination. If a consensus evaluation cannot be reached after a protracted deliberation, the evaluation will include both majority (n = 2) and minority (n = 1) views.
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Permanent Advisor:

Guidance Committee Members:

Dissertation Committee Chair:

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