Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

EC – 12 Leadership | Higher Education Leadership | Business & Financial Leadership

Emphasizing Educational Leadership in Rural Settings

Candidate Handbook

Old Main, the oldest building at West Texas A&M University, remains as much an integral part of the campus scene as it was when it first opened in 1916.

Executive Summary

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership degree program at West Texas A&M University (WTAMU), a Member of the Texas A&M University (TAMU) System, is an online degree program emphasizing leadership in rural education at primary, secondary, post-secondary, and professional levels. The program operates on a cohort model, admitting one student cohort each year. Candidates may select to pursue one of three pathways of study that will advance their personal and professional goals. The pathways of study include EC-12 educational leadership, higher education leadership, and educational business and financial leadership. The curriculum for each pathway requires 60 semester credit hours (SCHs) of coursework, inclusive of 48 SCHs of content courses and 12 SCHs dedicated to writing and research. Options for specialized, advanced credentials are offered for those who elect to pursue them.

A scholarly delivery replaces a traditional dissertation in this doctoral program. The scholarly delivery is comprised of a qualifying exam (an extensive and exhaustive literature review) and two written scholarly deliverables that are publishable articles in professional journals in the field of educational leadership or a related field. The first scholarly deliverable is a pedagogical case study and the second scholarly deliverable is the product of the doctoral candidate's empirical research conducted under the direction of a doctoral scholarly delivery committee. Lastly, this doctoral program requires participation in an annual, on-campus immersion experience that provides collaborative, practical work application focused upon problems of practice and opportunities for innovative design. The immersion experience broadens the educational and cultural perspectives of candidates through extensive interactions among faculty members, candidates, and cohorts. The Ed.D. program degree requirements, inclusive of coursework and scholarly delivery requirements, can be completed in 3 years.

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Mission, Program Goals, and Learner Outcomes

Educational leaders face unique challenges and opportunities that require a commitment to continuous candidate improvement through building and understanding organizational culture, using educational systems, defining learning, and cultivating shared leadership. The WTAMU educational leadership doctoral program's unique focus on preparing leaders for rural education highlights the challenges that are unique to rural settings. The intent of the program is to prepare educational leaders to serve in executive and mid-management roles in primary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions of education, professorships, and directorships in state and federal educational agencies, and in organizations that represent educational interests at state and federal levels.

Mission

The WTAMU Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership program seeks to prepare leaders to serve in educational settings including rural contexts in the state, nation, and globally to ensure student success.

Table 1

Ed.D. Program Goals

Ed.D. Learning Goals	
The learning goals of the Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership are to prepare:	
1.	Visionary and effective educational leaders grounded in research who are equipped to meet specific challenges in rural educational settings.
2.	Leaders who are responsive to the cultural, sociopolitical, economic, and emergency management contexts of rural communities.
3.	Leaders who are capable of innovative solutions within areas of limited resources and access conditions.

Table 2
Ed.D. Candidate Learner Outcomes

	Doctoral Candidate Learner Outcomes
	Doctoral candidates will:
A.	Critically analyze the cultural, sociopolitical, and economic milieu affecting educational organizations within rural and small urban areas.
B.	Create settings that support accessible and equitable learning opportunities for all members.
C.	Engage in diverse, scholarly activities to evaluate current educational organizations, to inform decision-making, and to provide new directions for organizational improvement.
D.	Synthesize theory, research, and best practices from national and international perspectives to create innovative solutions to meet specific challenges in rural areas.

Program Design

The WTAMU Ed.D. program in educational leadership is a cohort-based program. Candidates may choose to pursue one of three pathways of study within the program that will most advance their professional and personal goals. The pathways of study include EC-12 leadership, higher education leadership, and educational business and financial leadership.

The **EC-12 leadership pathway** is designed to prepare leaders for key leadership positions in public and private primary and secondary schools, including those serving rural communities. Specific leadership skill development and enhancement for mid-management (principals, assistant principals, curriculum directors, and special programs directors) and executive leadership positions (superintendents and assistant superintendents) in EC-12 educational settings, and/or executive directors of state education agencies or professional organizations. As an option, Texas superintendent certification may also be earned in this pathway. Subject to institutional requirements, graduates are qualified to assume professorships in departments of education in colleges and universities.

The **higher education leadership pathway** is designed to prepare leaders for executive positions in higher education institutions, including those serving rural regions. Specific leadership skills for administrative positions at colleges, universities, educational organizations, non-profit entities, and/or instructional positions in higher education include upper (presidents and vice-presidents) and mid-management leadership (deans, department heads, directors, etc.) with a deep understanding of ethics, organizational theory, power, decision-making, academic research, and scholarly writing.

The **educational business/finance pathway** is designed to prepare leaders for financial leadership positions in educational institutions (primary, secondary, and post-secondary), including those serving rural regions. Specific leadership skills for business officers and those

seeking a specialization in business affairs within educational institutions, including an understanding of the legal/fiscal structures, constraints, and opportunities available to chief financial officers and their support teams. The program provides a deep understanding of ethics, organizational theory, power, decision-making, academic research, and scholarly writing.

Academic Policies and Procedures

The WTAMU Ed.D. program in educational leadership adheres to all TAMU System, University, College, and Graduate School rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

Admission to the Ed.D. Program

One cohort of candidates is admitted during each fall semester, with initial student enrollment in coursework beginning in January of the following spring semester (Year 1). Admitted applicants who do not enroll in courses for the spring semester following acceptance into the program must reapply to the University and must receive approval from the program for readmission. The number of candidates in each cohort is limited through a competitive selection process. Meeting minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the degree program. Specifics concerning the Graduate School and program application are detailed in the program website.

Applicants for the Ed.D. degree program must hold a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from an accredited institution with at least one degree in education or a closely related field. Candidates seeking the Texas superintendent certificate must hold a Texas principal certificate or provide evidence of current enrollment in a Texas principal preparation program. Certification information is codified in 19 TAC §242.20.

Transfer or Competency-Based Credit

The Ed.D. program faculty may accept up to 12 semester credit hours of transfer and/or competency-based credit toward the Ed.D. program requirements. The acceptance of transferred coursework is not guaranteed but is determined on a case-by-case basis. Program directors will review and evaluate requests to transfer coursework to determine if said coursework satisfies program degree requirements subject to final approval by the Graduate School. To be accepted for transfer credit, the candidate must have earned a grade of "A" or "B" (or equivalent) in the course for which transfer credit is sought. Grades awarded for coursework approved for transfer credit from institutions other than WTAMU will have no impact on a candidate's overall GPA.

In recognition of career-acquired experiences, candidates may seek and receive competency-based credit for specific program requirements based on their documented experience. The acceptance of career-acquired experiences in lieu of coursework is not guaranteed but is determined on a case-by-case basis. To confirm evidence of learning, a candidate seeking competency-based credit will provide a portfolio that contains (a) an official work record; (b) documented professional development, training, continuing education, or other experiences specifically related to the course for which competency-based credit is sought; and (c) a narrative

delineating how the candidate's career-based learning specifically correlates with the learner outcomes of the selected competency-based credit course and the learner outcomes of the Ed.D. program. The portfolio will be evaluated by a *Competency Credit Faculty Review Committee* to determine if competency-based credit will be granted. The committee will consist of three to five faulty members. Committee membership must include the professor teaching the selected competency credit course as a content authority.

Residency

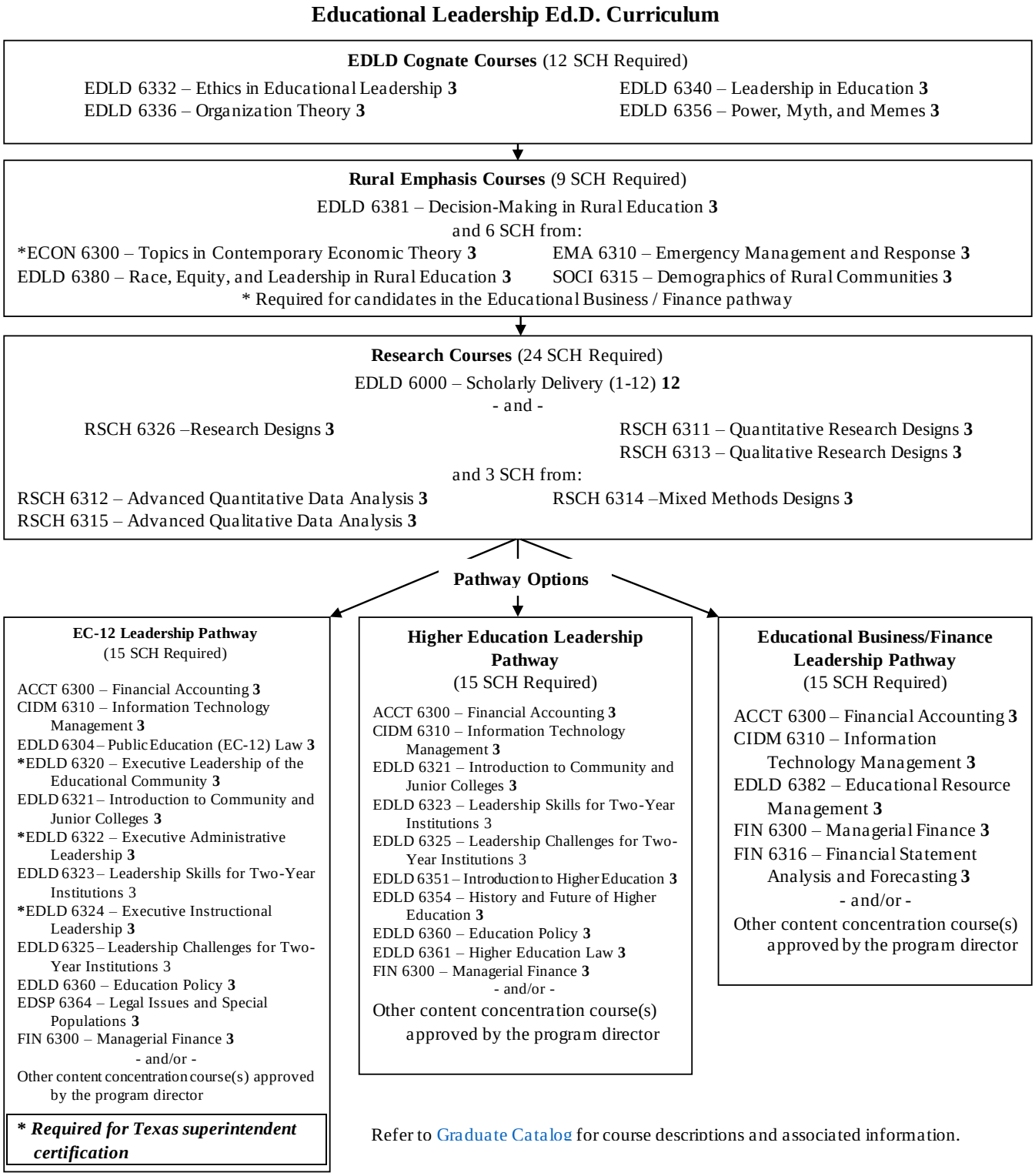
Residency credit is granted for all scheduled classes offered by the University for which tuition is paid. The residency requirement for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership program will be satisfied when candidates complete 48 SCHs of doctoral coursework at WTAMU. Up to 12 SCHs of transfer and/or competency-based credit may be accepted as partial fulfillment of the 48 SCH requirement. The program directors will review, evaluate, and approve or disapprove any coursework candidates submit for consideration for transfer credit. Competency-based credit supported by evidence of expertise may be granted for SCH credit to candidates in recognition of career-acquired experiences. Additionally, as a residency requirement, candidates will participate in at least one annual immersion experience on the WTAMU campus or at the WTAMU Harrington Academic Hall (Amarillo Center) for a weekend seminar, conference, guest speaker, or special learning engagement.

Degree Planning and Coursework

Sixty SCHs of coursework are required for the Ed.D. degree, including 12 SCHs of educational leadership cognate courses, nine SCHs of rural emphasis courses, 24 SCHs of research courses, and 15 SCHs of pathway-specific course options. The required and optional courses for each pathway are delineated in Figure 1. The program operates in four semesters during each calendar year: Spring, Summer I, Summer II, and Fall according to the University Calendar. Some courses in the program extend across the traditional summer I and summer II sessions.

Figure 1

Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Curriculum



Academic Advising

The Ed.D. program directors initially serve as academic advisers for all doctoral students. As candidates progress through the program, advisement transfers to their scholarly delivery chairperson.

Registration and Enrollment

Registration and payment for classes is accomplished through Buff Advisor, the University's online registration system. To be eligible to register for courses, candidates must have been admitted to the University or attended the immediately preceding long semester at WTAMU, have been admitted to the Ed.D. program, have been approved for registration by their program advisor, and cleared their university record of any restrictions on registration.

WTClass

All coursework in the Ed.D. program is online and provided through the University's learning management system branded as WTClass. Students are advised to review the technical requirements for working successfully in WTClass.

Grades

Minimal Acceptable Grades and Grade Point Average Requirements

The candidate must have earned a grade of "B" or better (or equivalent) on any graduate-level course credited toward the Ed.D. program degree requirements. To remain in good academic standing in the program, Ed.D. candidates must maintain a minimum of a "B" (3.00) overall grade point average (GPA).

Grading System

Table 3 indicates grade symbols and their numerical equivalents for evaluating coursework.

Table 3
Grading System for the Ed.D. Program

Grade Symbol	Explanation	Grade Points
A	Excellent	4
B	Good	3
C	Average (unacceptable for Ed.D. candidates)	2
D	Failing (for graduate students)	0
F	Failing	0
I	Incomplete	-
X	Drop/withdraw after the official reporting date (12th class day	-
XF	Fall/spring and 4th class day summer (not calculated in GPA)	0
IP	In Progress	-

Incomplete Grades

A grade of "incomplete" (I) indicates that a portion of required coursework in a course has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen, but fully justified reasons (i.e., hospitalization, personal injury, etc.) and that there is still a possibility of earning credit in the course. It is the candidate's responsibility to bring pertinent information to the instructor and request the incomplete grade option. Approval of a grade of "I" is solely within the discretion of the course instructor. Candidates electing the incomplete grade option must normally complete the required coursework within the time designated by the instructor but not to exceed six months from the date that the grade of "I" is assigned. If a candidate fails to complete the required coursework within four months, the grade of "I" will be changed to a grade of "F." Once the instructor assigns a grade of "I," the candidate cannot drop the course. Candidates who are assigned an incomplete do not re-enroll in the class to complete the course. A candidate is not eligible to graduate until the grade of "I" is replaced with a final grade in the course (A, B, C, D, or F).

The Registrar's office will post the grade of "I" once a contract form has been completed and submitted by the course instructor. This should occur prior to the end of the semester in which the candidate first attempted the course. A grade of "I" may be assigned only when the following conditions are met:

- The instructor and candidate have a conversation concerning a grade of incomplete. Items to be considered when determining if an incomplete should be granted include:
    - Has the candidate completed a significant (60%) portion of a course, but still needs to complete a project, an assignment or two, take an exam, etc.)?
    - Is the candidate currently passing the course? If not, is a grade of incomplete a realistic option?

    - A grade of incomplete cannot be issued prior to the drop/withdrawal date for the semester.
    - An incomplete grade cannot be issued when a candidate will need to retake the entire course.
    - The department head must approve grades of incomplete.
    - Candidates will not be allowed to drop the course and may not receive a grade of X once an incomplete has been granted.
    - The contract allows WTClass access for course completion.
    - The candidate will have no more than six months to complete the contract.
    - The professor will notify the candidate that an incomplete contract will be submitted by the professor on behalf of the candidate. The candidate will receive an email notifying them the contract is available for candidate approval.
- The instructor will submit an incomplete contract via the Contract for Incomplete Form accessible from the Registrar's Office website. Staff from the Office of the Registrar will post the grade of incomplete that will expire within 14 days should the candidate not accept the terms of the contract.
- Candidates will review the terms of the contract. If they agree to the terms of the contract, they will submit their approval.
  NOTE: In cases where the candidate is not available to approve the contract, the instructor should work with the Registrar to develop a plan to assist the candidate.
- After the candidate agrees to the terms of the contract, the direct supervisor will receive a notice via email and will need to approve the incomplete contract.
- Direct supervisor approval sends the contract to the Registrar's Office, where the expiration date will be updated according to the terms of the contract.
- If the candidate needs access to WTClass, a copy of the contract will be sent to ITSC for granting access, and the candidate and professor will be notified when the course is available.
- Once the candidate completes the terms of the incomplete, the professor will submit a grade change form.
    - If a grade change is not submitted by the time the incomplete grade expires, the grade will convert to an F.

Dropping Courses

Courses may be removed (dropped) from a candidate's schedule on or before the official reporting date (12th class day for fall and spring semesters and 4th class day in summer courses). Note that *drop* means candidates will be enrolled in at least one course for the current semester after completing the drop process. If all courses are dropped, meaning a candidate no longer is enrolled in any courses for the current semester, the candidate is *withdrawn*. Withdrawals must be processed prior to the first class day to avoid payment. Drops and withdrawals processed after the official reporting date will result in grades of X or XF. Drops and withdrawals must abide by the policies for dropping and withdrawing as outlined on the Registrar's website.

Repeating Coursework

Candidates are responsible for knowing what courses they have received credit for and in making sure they do not unintentionally repeat a course. If a candidate repeats a course at WTAMU, the last grade earned is the one credited toward fulfillment of program requirements. To improve a grade, candidates may repeat a course at WTAMU, but may not repeat a course at another college or university. Approved transferred coursework will not affect candidates' GPAs on their WTAMU transcripts.

Grade Point Deficiency

A candidate whose WTAMU cumulative graduate GPA falls below the program requirements of "B" (3.0) for graduate students has a grade-point deficiency. This alone does not result in suspension from the University, but the deficiency must be removed in order for a candidate to fulfill degree requirements.

Academic Probation and Suspension

Candidates must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average for all coursework completed toward degree requirements. Courses with grades of "D," "F," "I" (incomplete), "IP" (scholarly delivery in progress), or "X" (drop or withdrawal) cannot be used to satisfy the requirements of the doctoral degree but will be used in determining a student's academic standing.

If a candidate's grade point average falls below 3.0, the candidate will be placed on academic probation. The Dean of the Graduate School will determine the length of the probationary period. Probationary standing may affect eligibility for waivers and thus total program cost. Candidates who do not improve their grade point average to at least 3.0 by the end of the probationary period will be dismissed from Graduate School and suspended from further work toward the doctoral degree at WTAMU. Candidates suspended from the Graduate School may request removal from suspension by seeking the approval of the Dean of the Rogers College of Education and Social Sciences and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Leaves of Absence and Withdrawals

Leaves of Absence

Candidates in good academic standing may request a leave of absence from the Ed.D. program for a period not to exceed 3 semesters. Requests for leave of absence are submitted to the candidate's program director. Candidates are expected to rejoin the program at the point in the program at which the candidate entered leave of absence status. Candidates whose leave of absence exceeds one academic year must consult with the program director concerning re-entry to the program. Re-entry may require reapplying to the program and entering subject to satisfying any new program requirements adopted after their original admittance date.

Withdrawal from the Program

A withdrawal from the program or University means the candidate will no longer be enrolled in any courses for the current semester after completing the withdrawal process. The University's official withdrawal process must be completed. Re-entry will require reapplying to the program and entering subject to any new program requirements adopted after their original admittance date.

Scholarly Delivery

To satisfy the program requirement for scholarly delivery, candidates must successfully complete a qualifying exam (QE) and produce two original scholarly works (scholarly deliverables) of a quality acceptable for publication in peer-reviewed professional journals; actual publication prior to graduation is not required. A candidate is encouraged to consult with their scholarly delivery committee regarding publication opportunities. Candidates are encouraged to present research findings at professional conferences or comparable professional venues.

Generally, a candidate's scholarly delivery will identify a problem of practice upon which the candidate will design and conduct research and scholarly writing. According to the *Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate* CPED (2016), a problem of practice is defined "as a persistent, contextualized, and specific issue embedded in the work of a professional practitioner, the addressing of which has the potential to result in improved understanding, experience, and outcomes." Candidates' identified problems of practice should be central to all of their scholarly delivery engagement and each scholarly deliverable must demonstrate the rigor associated with formal research. Refer to the *Scholarly Delivery Guide* for more information. Additionally, candidates enrolled in the program may access the Ed.D. program *Scholarly Tracking System* through WTClass for detailed information and annual performance milestones. The *Scholarly Tracking System* is the authoritative source for scholarly delivery requirements and timelines.

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: The Official Guide to APA Style* (7th ed.) is the standard guide for writing and formatting scholarly delivery in the Ed.D. program. All doctoral faculty require strict adherence to the style guidelines of the APA. Sample papers formatted in seventh edition APA style are available.

A candidate's scholarly delivery requirements are accomplished through continuous enrollment in *EDLD 6000 Scholarly Delivery*, as described more fully below.

Research Courses

The Research Courses (RSCH) should be completed according to the sequence in Table 4

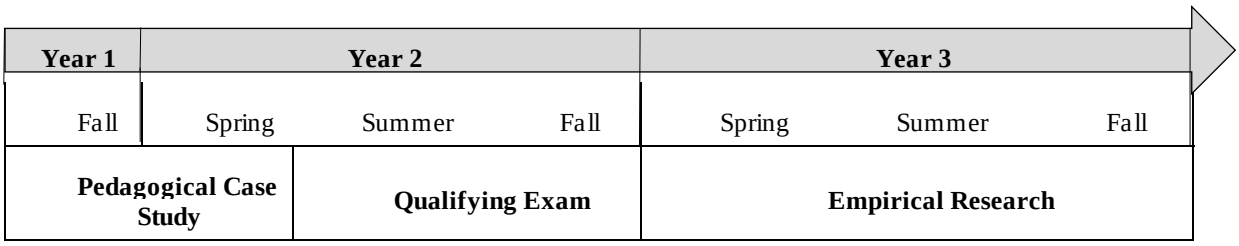
Table 4
Research Course (RSCH) Sequence

Sequence	Course	Course Title
Year 1 – Summer Prerequisite to Other RSCH Courses Award of Transfer Credit for RSCH 6326 Evaluated by RSCH Faculty	RSCH 6326	Research Designs
Year 1 - Fall	RSCH 6313	Qualitative Research Designs
Year 2 - Spring	RSCH 6311	Quantitative Research Designs
Year 2 - Summer		Student Determines Quantitative, Qualitative or Mixed Methods Designs for Empirical Study
Year 2 - Fall	RSCH 6312 or RSCH 6315	Advanced Quantitative Data Analysis or Advanced Qualitative Data Analysis
Year 3 – Spring (Faculty Consent)	RSCH 6314	Mixed Methods Research Designs

EDLD 6000

EDLD 6000 enrollment is reserved for (a) identifying the candidate's problem(s) of practice, (b) writing a pedagogical case study (scholarly deliverable #1), (c) writing a qualifying exam (QE), (d) conducting empirical research and writing a manuscript (scholarly deliverable #2), and (e) orally presenting the final scholarly deliverables as outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2
EDLD 6000 Enrollment Sequence



To accomplish scholarly delivery requirements, candidates must register for EDLD 6000 beginning in the fall semester of Year 1 of their program and in each subsequent semester for continuous enrollment in EDLD 6000 until the scholarly delivery requirements of the program

are fully satisfied. Candidates who require more than 3 years to complete the program will accrue additional tuition and fee expenses as they must remain continuously enrolled in at least one SCH of EDLD 6000 until they graduate. Failure to continuously enroll (unless granted leave of absence status) will result in termination from the program.

EDLD 6000 is a variable semester credit hour course. Candidates have the flexibility to register for one, two, or three SCHs each semester. The student will be advised as to the specific section of EDLD 6000 in which to enroll, as section numbers are assigned to specific faculty members. In most cases, candidates are advised to enroll in only one SCH of EDLD 6000 for the first few semesters they are in the program, saving SCHs for later use as they approach graduation. If candidates need additional semesters beyond the prescribed 3 year timeframe to complete all program requirements, they can use unused SCHs to avoid the additional cost of adding hours to the minimum 12 SCHs required. However, candidates must manage EDLD 6000 hours carefully because the maximum EDLD 6000 SCHs that can be taken in any single semester is three. Occasionally, candidates need to enroll in two or three semester credit hours in some semesters early in their program to meet financial aid minimum SCH eligibility requirements. Each candidate's situation dictates the manner in which they manage these semester credit hours and the responsibility lies with the individual candidate to determine what is appropriate. Regardless, candidates must complete a minimum of 12 SCHs of EDLD 6000 for program completion.

EDLD 6000 Grades

Candidates will earn a grade of "In Progress" (IP) for all EDLD 6000 Scholarly Delivery courses undertaken throughout their program. The grades of IP will be changed to a letter grade at the end of the semester, in which the candidate successfully defends their scholarly delivery.

Pedagogical Case Study (Scholarly Deliverable #1)

In partial fulfillment of the scholarly delivery requirement, doctoral candidates must create a pedagogical case study article that culminates in a publish-worthy manuscript formatted for submission to the Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership (JCEL). The University Council for Education Administration (UCEA) sponsors the JCEL in an ongoing effort to improve administrative preparation. This journal is a Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) member. A pedagogical case study article embodies relevant and timely issues suitable for the preparation of educational leaders. Based upon the candidate's chosen problem of practice, the case study will include an abstract, a literature review, a case study narrative, a teaching note section, and a reference list.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the pedagogical case study is completed under the guidance of doctoral core faculty members while enrolled in two consecutive semesters of EDLD 6000, beginning in the fall semester of Year 1 and ending in the spring semester of Year 2. Candidates are required to defend their pedagogical case studies in their final oral defense during their last semester of enrollment in the Ed.D. program.

Qualifying Exam

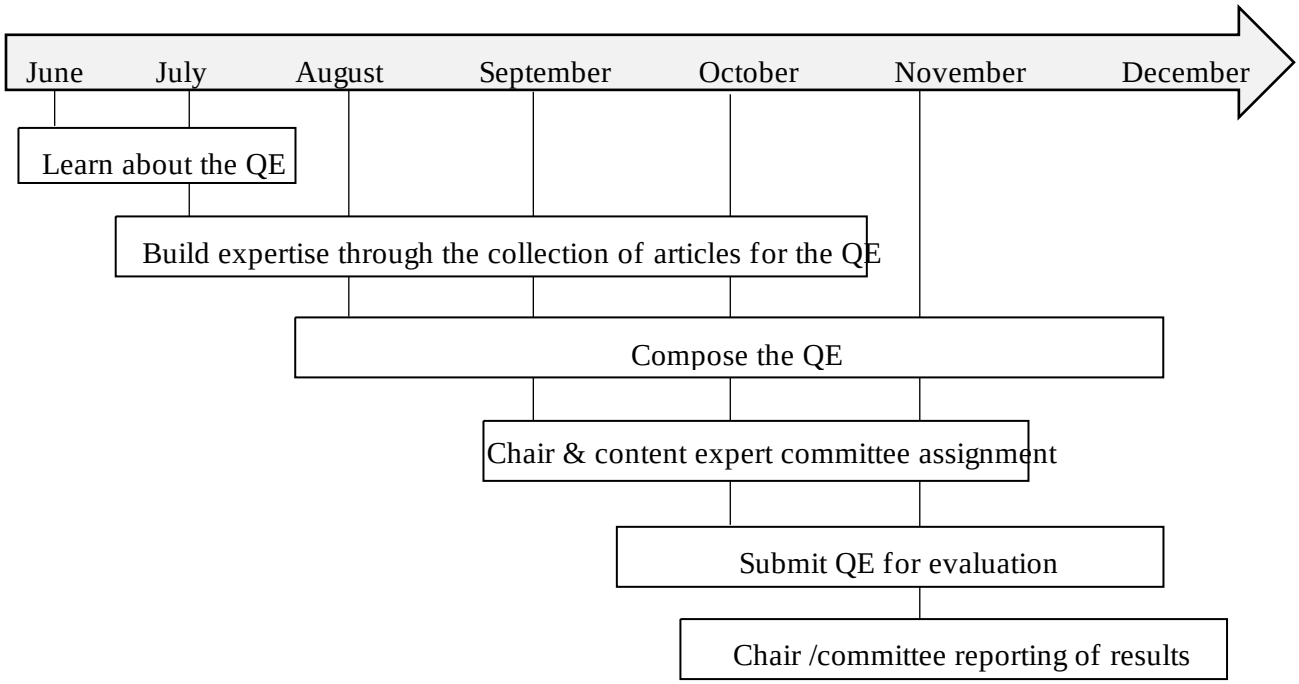
The comprehensive qualifying exam (QE) for the doctoral degree is an extensive literature review centered on a problem of practice. The qualifying exam is rigorously assessed by the chairperson and content expert member of the doctoral candidate's scholarly delivery committee. (See information concerning the scholarly delivery committee below). The QE is a high-stakes exam. As such, the QE must be the result of a doctoral candidate's individual efforts. Collaboration between the candidate and others completing the QE is prohibited. Since the QE is an exam, committee chairs and members, faculty, cohort members, and others are prohibited from assisting candidates in the content, structure, or organization of the QE. Candidates may third-party editing limited to proofreading (checking for things like grammatical errors, punctuation errors, spelling, and issues related to documentation) or copy-editing for readability and clarity only. Candidates may use third party editing limited to proofreading or copy-editing for readability and clarity only. Plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty on the QE will not be tolerated. Candidates may be dismissed from the program for any form of academic dishonesty and/or ethics violations, including, but not limited to plagiarism.

Candidates are required to compose and pass the QE to continue the doctoral program and conduct the empirical research required to fulfill the scholarly delivery requirements of the degree. Candidates are limited to two opportunities to pass their QEs. Candidates who do not pass on their second attempt will be subject to automatic dismissal from the program. Composing a highly organized, expertly constructed, thorough, and appropriately supported and cited literature review, the QE is the doctoral candidate's way of demonstrating their command of the knowledge base in their selected areas of study at a level that demonstrates expertise in that area and readiness to conduct empirical research in the field to reveal and create new knowledge. Upon notification of passing the QE and the approval of research topic(s), candidates are permitted to begin constructing research proposals for engagement in their empirical research.

Doctoral candidates are expected to begin the composition of their QEs in the summer of the Year 2 in the program and submit their completed QE during the subsequent Year 2 fall semester, as diagrammatically depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3

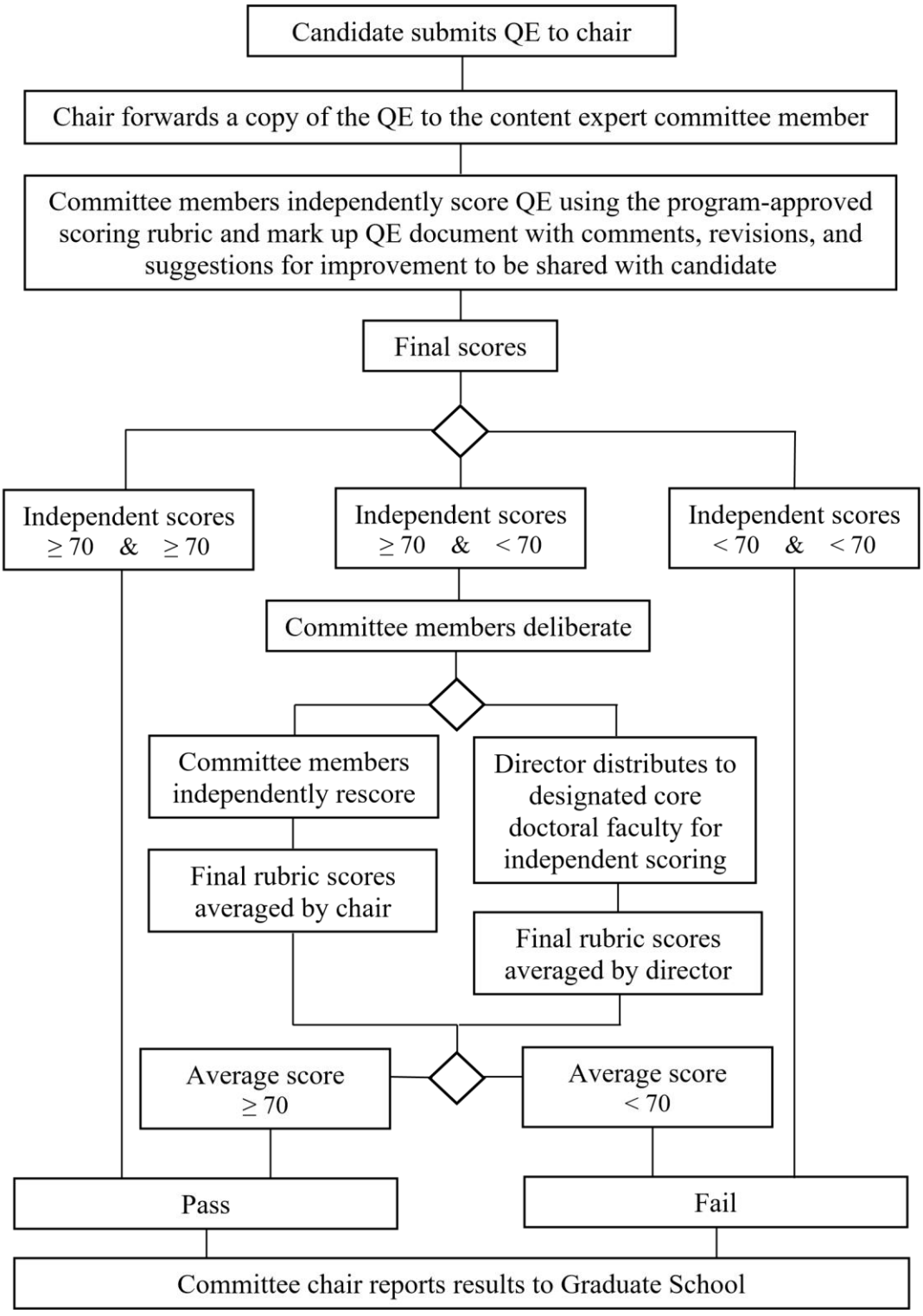
Recommended Timeline for Completing the Qualifying Exam During Year 2



Evaluation of QE and Scoring Procedures

Qualifying Exams are independently evaluated by the doctoral candidate's committee chairperson and content expert committee member using a program-approved scoring rubric. Although the QE is a pass/fail examination, a mean score ≥ 70 is required to pass the QE. In the event that one committee member's score is ≥ 70 and the other is < 70, the committee members will deliberate and decide on the next course of action. The courses of action from which to choose are to either (a) rescore the exam upon which the chair averages the scores or (b) notify the appropriate program director, who will distribute the exam to designated core doctoral faculty members (chosen at the discretion of the director) for independent scoring. The independent scores will be averaged by the director. In either instance, the average score by the chair or the director will stand as the final score used to determine the passing or failing status of the exam. The procedure is depicted in the flow chart in Figure 4.

Figure 4
Qualifying Exam Scoring Procedures



Empirical Study (Scholarly Deliverable #2)

In partial fulfillment of the scholarly delivery requirement and under the guidance and direction of their scholarly delivery committees, doctoral candidates must engage in empirical research that culminates in a publish-worthy manuscript formatted for submission to the Educational Administration Quarterly (EAQ). The EAQ is a noted and respected journal of the UCEA that publishes prominent empirical and conceptual articles focused on timely and critical leadership and policy issues of educational organizations.

Empirical research is research that answers questions on the basis of systematic and verifiable observation or cataloging of experience, and not on the basis of belief, conjecture, or published opinion. Under the guidance of their scholarly delivery committee, each candidate determines what research method and study design is best suited to answer their approved research question(s). Candidates will determine what observations are required to answer their research question(s), and what tool(s) they will use to collect their data, for example, an interview protocol, survey or questionnaire, a classroom observation checklist, or a psychological test. Candidates may also use "secondary data," such as publicly available data obtained from a state or federal education agency and reputable peer-reviewed datasets hosted at sites recommended by tier-one and tier-two publishers, to answer their research question(s). Written empirical research reports include: specific research questions, careful definition of who or what will be studied, how research participants or cases are selected for inclusion in the study, specification of what data will be collected and how it will be collected, and how data will be analyzed and presented (for example, "thematic analysis" for transcribed interviews of rural educators, or a "time series analysis" for examination of changes in academic achievement of students from low-income families over time). On the basis of data analysis, research questions are answered, and the significance of the findings are discussed in relation to existing literature and theory, as appropriate.

As delineated in Figure 2, the empirical research requirement is completed during Year 3 in the program while the candidate is enrolled in three consecutive semesters of EDLD 6000 under the guidance of the candidate's scholarly delivery committee. Candidates are required to write and defend their research proposals and obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, if required; collect and analyze data during the summer semesters; complete the writing of their final manuscript; and pass an oral defense before their scholarly delivery committees during their last semester of enrollment in the Ed.D. program.

Scholarly Delivery Committee

Every doctoral candidate will formulate a scholarly delivery committee comprised of three voting faculty experts tasked with supporting the candidate in their research, writing, and completion of the scholarly delivery requirements in the Ed.D. program. Committees are comprised of a chairperson, content expert, and methodologist. The committee guides the candidate in fulfilling their scholarly delivery requirements and ensures the academic quality and integrity of the candidate's work. The chairperson serves as the leader of the committee, the content expert provides subject matter expertise, and the methodologist ensures that sound research methodology is employed in the candidate's empirical study.

Committee Chairperson Assignments

During the fall semester of Year 2 in the program that coincides with the semester in which the QE is required to be completed and submitted, a call for chair preferences will be issued by the program directors. When the call is issued, each candidate will be asked to rank-order their first, second, and third choices of eligible faculty to serve as chair of their scholarly delivery committees. Although every effort will be made to accommodate each candidate's request, the program does not guarantee the appointment of every candidate's first preference.

Content Expert Committee Member Assignments

Once chairpersons have been assigned, each candidate will meet with their assigned chair to discuss appropriate nominees to fulfill the content expert committee member role on their committee. While chairs have full discretion to guide this process, the best practice would be to establish and rank two or more contenders for the position. The candidate then assumes the responsibility for inviting the agreed-upon members to serve in the pre-determined order. Whether or not to serve is the prerogative of the faculty member; not all faculty members are eligible to serve.

Methodologist Committee Member Assignments

At the chair's discretion, the methodologist may be selected before or after the grading of the QE. While chairs have full discretion to guide this process, best practice would be to discuss with the candidate the anticipated methodological approach that is most appropriate for the forthcoming empirical research, discuss the strengths of each methodologist, and establish and rank order two or more contenders for the position. The candidate then assumes the responsibility for inviting the agreed upon methodologist in the pre-determined order to serve. The candidate will continue down the list until a nominee agrees to serve. Whether or not to serve is the prerogative of the faculty member; not all faculty members are eligible to serve.

Research Compliance

Academic and Research Environmental Health and Safety

The Academic and Research Environmental Health and Safety (AR-EHS) program provides the necessary programmatic and activity-specific guidance to address applicable environmental protection, promote student, faculty, and staff safety and health requirements, and advance best management practices.

The AR-EHS program requires that each faculty and staff member (including paid graduate teaching and research assistants), complete the basic AR-EHS orientation, and appropriate activity-specific training. Supervisors and employees are encouraged to identify needed training and to request and complete the training.

The overall goal of the AR-EHS program is to support academic and research staff in providing a safe educational and research environment for Candidates and staff, and to conduct all activities in accordance with all environmental regulations and laws. The cooperation and support of the AR faculty and staff are essential to the success of the program.

Responsible Conduct of Research

The America COMPETES Act, signed into law in 2007, mandates training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) (Section 7009). To meet these requirements, WTAMU uses the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program to provide training. New researchers should discuss this training requirement with their research supervisors before proceeding. All candidates awarded and accepting internal grants or research support funding from WTAMU (including Killgore Research Grants and President's Summer Undergraduate Research Grants) must complete responsible conduct of research training. A review of the required materials and completion of the quizzes will take about 30-35 minutes per topic. Trainees do not have to complete the course all in one session. A minimum aggregate score of 80% is required to pass the RCR course. Once successfully completed, a refresher course is required annually.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

The IRB is charged with the protection of human subjects used in research at the University by complying with regulations specified by the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) that operates under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and with other ethical and professional standards. All individuals conducting or participating in human subjects research are required to submit proposals to the IRB for review and approval before engaging in any level or recruitment of data collection.

WTAMU requires all individuals conducting or participating in research projects (including faculty, staff, and candidates) that involve human subjects (or serving on the IRB committee) to complete training for the Protection of Human Subjects. This requirement is met by the successful completion of the online training module from the CITI website.

All individuals engaged in research involving human subjects must complete the CITI training modules and quizzes with a minimum score of 80%. Successful completion of the course is required, and the course may be repeated as necessary to achieve the 80% score. At the time of completion, a certificate can be printed by the trainee and must be submitted with each IRB submission. Electronic notification is also sent to the Office of Academic and Research Environmental Health and Safety (AR-EHS).

Individuals may exit and resume the training at any time. Once successfully completed, a refresher course is required every 3 years. Researchers may return to the training modules to print a certificate at any time. Successful completion of the CITI modules is required before submission of an IRB proposal for the Protection of Human Subjects. Proposals will be reviewed only after the researcher has completed the CITI training.

Ethics and Academic Integrity

Candidates and faculty bear the responsibility of maintaining academic integrity by refusing to participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty or any behavior that prevents University representatives or candidates from effectively furthering the mission of the university. Any act of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to improper acquisition or provision of information, plagiarism, conspiracy, fabrication of information, violation of program, departmental, college, graduate school, or university rules, and inappropriate multiple submissions of the same work as described in the Code of Student Life and WTAMU Rule 15.99.03.W1 Ethics in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work: Research Misconduct, will be dealt with seriously, and in accordance with the applicable rules, codes, and regulations.

Program Immersion Experiences

As a program requirement, each candidate entering the program in January 2024 or thereafter is required to participate in an annual on-campus conference. The conference is generally offered during the summer and extends over 2 to 3 days in Amarillo and/or Canyon, Texas. Candidates are responsible for all travel costs. In addition to organized learning experiences relevant to candidates, time on campus allows for collaborative interactions between and among faculty, candidates, and cohorts. The dates for the annual on-campus conference are announced in the early spring semester. Candidates, who due to extraordinary circumstances cannot attend the summer conference, may apply to the Program Directors for approval to attend an alternative on-campus experience. Candidates entering the program before January 2024 are strongly encouraged to attend the summer conference.

Timelines and Graduation

Candidates may complete all coursework and scholarly delivery degree requirements in 3 years, beginning coursework in the spring semester of Year 1 and graduating at the conclusion of the fall semester in Year 3. For those who may wish to progress at a slower pace, it is permissible to do so up to a maximum of 10 years in accordance with WTAMU Graduate School guidelines. Progress at a faster pace requires program approval.

Candidates must apply for graduation by the deadlines listed on the Graduation page of the Graduate School website.

Table 5 provides a general overview of program milestones across the arc of the program. Detailed information concerning scholarly delivery milestones and requirements is available to enrolled candidates within the Ed.D. *Scholarly Delivery Tracking System*.

Table 5

Program Milestones Across Arc of Program

Program Year and Semester	Milestone
September 15	Application to Program Due
November 1	Applicants Notified of Admission Decision
December 1	Requests for Transfer Course Credit or Competency-Based Course Credit Submitted and Approved
December	Individual Plan of Study Formulated
Year 1 - January	Initial Enrollment in Coursework
Year 1 - Summer	Problem of Practice Formulated & Approved
Year 1 – Fall	First EDLD 6000 Enrollment Begin Pedagogical Case Study Scholarly Delivery #1
Year 1 – Fall	Complete IRB Training
Year 2 - Spring	Submit Pedagogical Case Study for Approval
Year 2 - Summer	Begin Composing Qualifying Exam (QE)
Year 2 – November 1	Submit QE and Pass QE
Year 2 - Fall	Select Scholarly Delivery Committee Chair and Content Expert Committee Member
Year 3 - January	Select Committee Methodologist
Year 4 - Spring	Submit Proposal for Empirical Study Scholarly Deliverable #2
Year 3 - Spring	Obtain IRB Approval of Proposal (if necessary)
Year 3 - Summer	Collect and Analyze Data
Year 3 - Fall	Submit Final Empirical Study Manuscript
Year 3 - Fall	Successfully Defend Scholarly Deliverables #1 & #2
Year 3 - Fall	Submit Final Scholarly Deliverable to Graduate School
Year 3 – December	Graduate with Doctor of Education Degree

Program Completion

The Ed.D. program is completed when the following criteria are met:

1. Successful completion of all coursework requirements, inclusive of 48 SCHs of coursework + 12 SCHs of EDLD 6000 for a total of 60 SCHs,
2. Completion of required on-campus immersion experiences,
3. Successful completion of a written qualifying exam,
4. IRB approval for research (if required),
5. Successful defense of two scholarly deliverables to the scholarly delivery committee in the final semester of the candidate's program,

6. Acceptance of two scholarly deliverable articles conforming to the guidelines for scholarly delivery (refer to the scholarly delivery guide) by the Graduate School, and
7. Graduate School approved scholarly deliverables provided to the Cornette Library via VIREO upload (refer to the scholarly delivery guide).

Program Dismissal

Candidates may be dismissed from the program for the following reasons:

- Overall GPA is below 3.00 after the probationary period,
- Qualifying exam does not earn a passing score after two attempts,
- Candidate engages in any form of academic dishonesty,
- Candidate is unable to satisfy scholarly delivery requirements, or
- Other serious violation(s) of relevant policies, procedures, or applicable law.

Resources and Support

ADA Student Support/Disabilities Services

WTAMU seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required, affording equal educational opportunity. It is the candidate's responsibility to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) and to contact faculty members in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. Contact Information: Student Success Center, CC 106, phone (806) 651-2335. Visit the Office of Student Accessibility for more information.

Diversity

Diversity is one of the assets of WTAMU. Our perspective of academic excellence specifically includes multiple aspects of diversity. Academic excellence results in part from opportunities to create, interact, and benefit from association with others. For further information, visit the WTAMU Office of Engaged Citizenship.

Military and Veteran Services

There are various educational benefits programs for service members and their dependents, and with our commitment to excellence, the aim is to continue to provide a quality education and improve the relationships we have with area veterans, active military, and dependents.

Title IX

WTAMU is committed to providing a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free of sexual misconduct and discrimination. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the accountability and support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. Harassment is not acceptable. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources here:

- WTAMU Title IX Coordinator – Old Sub 108, **or** call 806.651.3199
- WTAMU Counseling Services – Classroom Center 116, or call 806.651.2340
- WTAMU Police Department – 806.651.2300, or dial 911
- 24-hour Crisis Hotline – 800.273.8255, or 806.359.6699, or 800.692.4039

For more information, see the WTAMU Code of Student Life.

Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals

In most instances, if issues arise, candidates are encouraged to seek the lowest level of administrative resolution. When such resolution cannot be arrived at the program level (professor or director), consult the Code of Student Life for the appropriate routes for filing complaints, grievances, or appeals.