

Chicago State University

College of Education

Department of Educational Leadership,
Curriculum and Foundations

Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in
Educational Leadership

Qualifying Examination Process



where PROMISE becomes POWER

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Qualifying Examination Process Ed.D. in Educational Leadership

Introduction and Purpose

The policies and procedures described below apply to all students applying to take the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Qualifying Examination.

The principal purpose of the qualifying examination is to determine the student's eligibility for admission to candidacy. The examination is a test of the student's comprehension of doctoral core course content, capacity to undertake independent research, and ability to think and express ideas clearly. The examination is designed to provide an opportunity for students to integrate and apply knowledge in problem-solving and policy analysis contexts.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to take the qualifying examination, students must have (a) completed all core courses in the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program with a GPA of 3.5 or higher, and (b) removed any grade of "Incomplete" on their record.

Application for Qualifying Exam

Students must return a completed ***Application Form for the Qualifying Examination*** (see Appendix A) to the Ed.D. office by the last official day of the summer semester prior to the fall semester in which they plan to take the qualifying examination.

Upon determination of eligibility, the office of the Director of the Ed.D. Program will notify the student's status by mail. This official letter will serve as their admission to the examination. The letter will contain specific information for the examination.

The Qualifying Examination Process

The qualifying examination is scheduled on two consecutive week-ends toward the end of Semester VII. On the first week-end, students write on two sections;

and on the following week-end, the remaining two sections (see below). Examination copies will be anonymously graded the following 3-5 weeks.

The exam questions are set by a four-member Doctoral Qualifying Examination Committee (DQEC) members all of whom are Ed.D. faculty. The DQEC will also serve as the examination evaluators. DQEC membership changes annually as appointed by the Director of the Ed.D. program.

Students will respond to a total of four (4) questions, one each from Sections A, B, C and D (see sample questions below). On the first week-end, students answer Section A question from 9:00AM to 11:30AM. They pause for 30 minutes, then answer Section B question from 12:00Noon to 2:30PM. On the second week-end, the students answer Section C from 9:00AM to 11:30AM and Section D question from 12:00PM to 2:30PM. Typically, students should expect to answer each question thoroughly (including all sub-questions, if applicable) in 150 minutes. The responses to each question must be (a) written in a separate book.

Qualifying Examination

For each question, state a central thesis and develop it with a logical argument. Questions often have multiple parts; be sure to answer each part of the question. Schedule your time carefully during the examination so that you can respond fully and adequately to each question. **Support and illustrate your answers with contextualized examples, theorists and theories** learned during the core coursework and beyond. Of greater importance is your ability to identify, analyze, compare, and evaluate the competing concepts and principles related to educational leadership.

Examination Protocols

The qualifying exam will be held on campus at a location specified in the acceptance letter.

The qualifying exam will be administered towards the end of Semester VII on two consecutive Saturdays from 9:00am-2:30pm with a 30 minute break from 11:30am-12:00pm. Students are to arrive by 8:30am to register and sign-in. **No one will be admitted into the examination room once the exam has begun.**

Students will need to present the following to be admitted into the examination room:

- Letter of acceptance
- Picture ID (driver's license, CSU ID card).

Students are to bring pens or pencils to record their answers. Examination books will be provided. Books, brief cases, large handbags, notes, notebooks, dictionaries or material of any kind are not allowed in the examination room. Bottled water is permitted during the examination. All students must adhere to all academic policies set forth by the university.

Sample Qualifying Examination Questions

Section A: Governance of Public Schools (ELCF 6200, ELCF 6300)

1. What frameworks are advanced to define public or policy problems related to public education? Which are most effective in providing for successful governance models?
2. Defend or refute: "Market dynamics and radical decentralization will advance direct accountability between the parent-consumer and [more responsive and diverse] schools."
3. It is commonly accepted that our public schools (both K-12 and postsecondary) reflect conditions in the general society. Yet Americans historically have expressed high hopes for the schools' ability to remedy a variety of social ills. We look to schools to strengthen our particular local communities or to advance our common aims. Compare and contrast views of Jefferson, Dewey, and Freire relative to the role of public schools (including postsecondary options) in addressing social ills.
4. Elaborate on each of the following responsibilities of a school leader by identifying a specific school setting and indicating how, as leader, you would introduce each area of responsibility to faculty and students:
 - a. applying the most up-to-date research on best practices in education when formulating school policy
 - b. formulating school policies that are fair and can be applied equally to all members of a diverse student body
 - c. balancing the varying interests of the large number of stakeholders who have a voice in formulating school policy
 - d. formulating school policies that help prepare students for playing active roles as citizens in U.S. society.

Section B: Management of Public Schools (ELCF 6010, ELCF 6400)

1. The leader of an educational institution wants to promote greater participation of community members in the process of school decision-making. Identify three strategies for how the leader might proceed. Rank order the selected strategies and identify specific strengths and weaknesses of each.
2. Peer coaching has emerged as a valuable method of staff development in educational institutions. First, identify the circumstances for which peer coaching would be the preferred staff development strategy. Secondly, discuss how a peer coaching program could be designed and implemented.

- Finally, review the concerns and challenges inherent in peer coaching programs for an educational institution of your choice.
3. When formulating policy for a school district, which of the following questions would be most important for district decision makers to consider? Rank order the questions and defend your ranking.
 - a. Do the proposed policies have the support of most stakeholders in the school community?
 - b. Can the proposed policies be implemented within the budget for the current fiscal year?
 - c. Do the proposed policies conform to all relevant state and federal laws and regulations?
 - d. Do the proposed policies reflect current views of educators regarding best practices in education?
 4. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA, 2001) requires that test scores be reported separately by students' race and ethnicity, disability status, English-speaking ability, and poverty level. Do you favor or oppose reporting test scores in this way? Defend your position with relevant citations.

Section C: Educational Planning (ELCF 6450, ELCF 6500)

1. Public/Private Partnership (PPP) is a delivery method that has traditionally been used on large infrastructure projects in developing nations, in order to allow more development for less public capital investment while maintaining the overall quality of construction. In recent years, PPP has gained acceptance in the United States as a means of public school finance and construction. Review the PPP method, its fundamental principles, and the various ways it can be employed in the delivery of educational facilities, as well as its advantages and disadvantages.
2. Critically evaluate the educational relevance of Charles Taylor's notion of a "politics of recognition" to the development of the ideal of democratic education as it relates to two of the following:
 - a. Multiculturalism
 - b. Anti-racist education
 - c. Gender differences in child development
 - d. Violence and conflict-resolution in schools
3. In recent years, the U.S. economy has steadily lost basic manufacturing jobs as multinational companies have relocated factories overseas to take advantage of lower labor costs. How might U.S. public schools and/or postsecondary institutions best respond to these changing economic conditions?
4. It is often claimed that curriculum should be organized around the knowledge most worth having. What might be meant by this claim? What is your view on this matter and what might be the implications for education at a clearly defined educational institution of your choice? Support your response with relevant references.

Section D: Research Methodology (ELCF 6350, ELCF 6650)

1. Research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer related questions. Compare and contrast qualitative and quantitative research. Include in your answer the following points of discussion: design, data collection, reading research and evaluating research.
2. Literature review serves as a critique of the status of the knowledge of a carefully defined topic. Discuss in detail the purpose of the literature review, the connection to the conceptual framework of the research, types of literature review searches, standards of adequacy, and the characteristics of a literature review for qualitative research and the characteristics for a literature review for quantitative research.
3. Discuss the following data collection techniques and their application for a research study: cognitive (validity, reliability and tests) and non cognitive (questioning, interviews and observation).
4. Ethical considerations play a role in all research. All researchers must be aware of and attend to ethical issues related to their studies. Discuss the key issues related to ethical principles and the safeguards addressed in a research study. Also discuss the various documents included in the research study to address ethical issues. The answer may include but are not limited to the following areas: National Research Act of 1974, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, deception and anonymity.

Qualifying Exam Results

Students will receive a letter approximately three (3) to five (5) weeks after completion indicating the results of the exam. When all four questions receive a grade of “pass” by a majority of the evaluators on the *Qualifying Examination Scoring Guide* (see Appendix C), the qualifying examination is considered a “pass.” Successful completion of the qualifying examination constitutes one of the criteria for admission to candidacy status (see below). In the case of a “no-pass,” all or part of the examination may be re-taken as follows:

1. Any student failing one or more questions will be required to retake only that part of the exam that was not passed. Different questions will be provided on the retake examination.
2. A student may not retake the examination until the following fall semester. The date for the retake will be provided.
3. Students have only one chance to retake any part of the exam. A second grade of “no pass” results in dismissal from the Ed.D. program. Students failing the Ed.D. Qualifying Examination should plan to review their academic options with the program director.
4. Exceptions to the retake policy may be granted by the Doctoral Qualifying Examination Committee (DQEC). Requests for exceptions to policy statements noted above will be considered if they are accompanied by an exceptionally strong justification. Requests (including a statement of

justification must be made in writing to the DQEC by the student. The Ed.D. Program Director must endorse the request certifying the need for additional consideration. The request must include a sound justification and specify the assistance and/or consideration for which approval is sought.

Other Resources

Although acquisition of assistance from resources beyond those directly found at CSU is permissible, the student is advised that assistance of any kind must be in support of the student's own work. Assistance from cohort colleagues or other professionals is not permitted. In no case should the work of the qualifying examination be done by persons or organizations other than the student. The student is referred to the CSU Code of Excellence related to academic honesty (CSU Code of Excellence, Graduate Catalog, 2008-2010, p. ii).

Candidacy and Course Loads

Upon successful completion of the qualifying examination, the student must submit the Ed.D. **Application for Candidacy** (see Appendix B) to the Office of the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program. The Application (see Appendix B) will confirm (a) that the Qualifying Examination has been completed successfully, and (b) that other candidacy related documents are on file. Once the "Admission to Doctoral Candidacy," has been conferred, the student must remain enrolled continuously in ELCF 6990 (Dissertation) for a minimum of 3 credits per semester until the dissertation is completed. Further, all students must (a) complete a minimum of 12 credit hours of ELCF 6990, and (b) be enrolled in 3 credit hours of ELCF 6990 during the semester of dissertation completion and sign-off.

Preparing for the Examination

Students are encouraged to begin preparing as early as possible.

Recommendations for study advice include the following:

- Review sample questions and qualifying examination scoring guide.
- Meet with your advisor and/ELCF faculty to review the format of the exam and develop a reading list.
- Developing a reading list with the aid of your professors helps to ensure that you are aware of the material to be covered in the exam.
- Be sure to clear your calendar and any other responsibilities for the entire week of the examination.

Suggestions for Taking an Essay Exam*

1. Set up a time schedule to answer each question and to review/edit all questions.

2. Read through the questions once and note if you have any choice in answering questions.

- Pay attention to how the question is phrased, or to the "directives", or words such as "compare", "contrast", "criticize", etc. Answers will come to mind immediately for some questions.

Write down their key words, listings, etc, as they are fresh in mind. Otherwise these ideas may be blocked (or be unavailable) when the time comes to write the later questions. This will reduce "clutching" or panic (anxiety, actually fear which disrupts thoughts).

3. Before attempting to answer a question, put it in your own words.

- Now compare your version with the original. Do they mean the same thing? If they don't, you've misread the question.

4. Think before you write.

Make a brief outline for each question.

Number the items in the order you will discuss them.

- **Get right to the point.**
State your main point in the first sentence
Use your first paragraph to provide an overview of your essay.
Use the rest of your essay to discuss these points in more detail.
Back up your points with specific information, examples, or quotations from your readings and notes
- Organize your answer for compactness, completeness and clarity.

5. Writing & Answering

Begin with a strong first sentence that states the main idea of your essay. Continue this first paragraph by presenting key points.

Develop your argument.

- **Begin each paragraph** with a key point from the introduction.
- **Develop each point** in a complete paragraph.
- **Use transitions,** or enumerate, to connect your points.
- **Hold to your time** allocation and organization.

6. Summarize in your last paragraph.

Restate your central idea and indicate why it is important.

7. Review

Complete questions left incomplete, but allow time to review all questions.
Review, edit, and correct your work.

Common Directives

"Directives" ask you to answer, or present information, in a particular way. Review these, and most of all note that there are different ways of answering a question.

Compare:

Examine qualities, or characteristics, to discover resemblances. "Compare" is usually stated as "compare with": you are to emphasize similarities, although differences may be mentioned.

Contrast:

Stress dissimilarities, differences, or unlikeness of things, qualities, events, or problems.

Criticize:

Express your judgment or correctness or merit. Discuss the limitations and good points or contributions of the plan or work in question.

Define:

Definitions call for concise, clear, authoritative meanings. Details are not required but limitations of the definition should be briefly cited. You must keep in mind the class to which a thing belongs and whatever differentiates the particular object from all others in the class.

Describe:

In a descriptive answer you should recount, characterize, sketch or relate in narrative form.

Diagram:

For a question which specifies a diagram you should present a drawing, chart, plan, or graphic representation in your answer. Generally you are expected to label the diagram and in some cases add a brief explanation or description.

Discuss:

The term discuss, which appears often in essay questions, directs you to examine, analyze carefully, and present considerations pro and con regarding the problems or items involved. This type of question calls for a complete and entailed answer.

Enumerate:

The word enumerate specifies a list or outline form of reply. In such questions you should recount, one by one, in concise form, the points required.

Evaluate:

In an evaluation question you are expected to present a careful appraisal of the problem stressing both advantages and limitations. Evaluation implies authoritative and, to a lesser degree, personal appraisal of both contributions and limitations.

Explain:

In explanatory answers it is imperative that you clarify and interpret the material you present. In such an answer it is best to state the "how or why," reconcile any differences in opinion or experimental results, and, where possible, state causes. The aim is to make plain the conditions which give rise to whatever you are examining.

Illustrate:

A question which asks you to illustrate usually requires you to explain or clarify your answer to the problem by presenting a figure, picture, diagram, or concrete example.

Interpret:

An interpretation question is similar to one requiring explanation. You are expected to translate, exemplify, solve, or comment upon the subject and usually to give your judgment or reaction to the problem.

Justify:

When you are instructed to justify your answer you must prove or show grounds for decisions. In such an answer, evidence should be presented in convincing form.

List:

Listing is similar to enumeration. You are expected in such questions to present an itemized series or tabulation. Such answers should always be given in

concise form.

Outline:

An outline answer is organized description. You should give main points and essential supplementary materials, omitting minor details, and present the information in a systematic arrangement or classification.

Prove:

A question which requires proof is one which demands confirmation or verification. In such discussions you should establish something with certainty by evaluating and citing experimental evidence or by logical reasoning.

Relate:

In a question which asks you to show the relationship or to relate, your answer should emphasize connections and associations in descriptive form.

Review:

A review specifies a critical examination. You should analyze and comment briefly in organized sequence upon the major points of the problem.

State:

In questions which direct you to specify, give, state, or present, you are called upon to express the high points in brief, clear narrative form. Details, and usually illustrations or examples, may be omitted.

Summarize:

When you are asked to summarize or present a summarization, you should give in condensed form the main points or facts. All details, illustrations and elaboration are to be omitted.

Trace:

When a question asks you to trace a course of events, you are to give a description of progress, historical sequence, or development from the point of origin. Such narratives may call for probing or for deduction

Modified and adapted from: **Communication Skills Development Center, Division of Student Affair, University of South Carolina as found at <http://www.history.ohio-state.edu/essayexm.htm> January 2002*

Registration for Semester VIII

The DQEC will do everything to ensure that results are communicated to students before the following spring semester (Semester VIII) begins. In the event that the results are not available, all students certified who will have taken the qualifying examination must register for ELCF 6990 (Dissertation) for Semester VIII. Should a re-take of the examination be necessary, the affected student(s) will be withdrawn administratively from ELCF 6990 and scheduled to

meet with the Ed.D. Program Director to review the retake options detailed above.

Qualifying Examination Instructions

Purpose

The principal purpose of the qualifying examination is to determine the student's eligibility for admission to doctoral candidacy. The examination is a test of the student's comprehension of doctoral core course content, capacity to undertake independent research, and ability to think and express ideas clearly. The examination is designed to provide an opportunity for students to integrate and apply knowledge in problem-solving and policy analysis contexts. The qualifying examination is subdivided into four core content sections: A, B, C and D.

Instructions

1. Students will respond to a total of four (4) questions, one each from Sections A, B, C and D.
 - a. Students answer two questions per examination session.
 - b. Students will sign in at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam.
2. Each student will receive a program envelope. In the upper left hand corner of the envelope, check the following:
 - a. Name
 - b. UID#
 - c. Program
3. Each student will answer only one question from each of the sections.
 - a. Answers can be written in pen or pencil.
 - b. Write the answer to each question in a separate blue book. If a second blue book is needed to complete the question, you must clip the two books together after finishing.
 - c. Put your UID# in the upper left hand corner of each blue book.
 - d. Do not write your name on the blue examination books.
 - e. Place the number of the question answered under your UID #.
 - f. Only answer **one** question from each section.
4. When you have completed the examination, check for the following:
 - a. UID # on each blue book.
 - b. Question # on each blue book.
5. After completing the examination, do the following:
 - a. Place the blue book containing your answers in the program envelope.
 - b. Place all question sheets in the program envelope.
 - c. Leave the program envelope with an examination proctor.

6. If you have any questions before, during, or after the examination, please raise your hand.
7. You will be informed of the examination outcome by mail within 3-5 weeks.

APPENDIX

Appendix C



Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program
Qualifying Examination Scoring Guide

Date: _____

Exam Code: _____

Semester: Fall Year: _____

Component	Unacceptable		Acceptable		Target		Score
<p>Knowledge of major concepts, assumptions, debates, principles, and theories that is central to the question.</p> <p>ELCC Standards 1.0-6.0</p>	<p>Lacks knowledge or displays misunderstandings of major concepts, assumptions, debates, principles, and/or theories central to the question.</p>	1	<p>Demonstrates an understanding of major concepts, assumptions, debates, principles, and/or theories central to some parts of the question.</p>	2	<p>Displays a deep understanding of major concepts, assumptions, debates, principles, and/or theories central to the question. Refutes, applies or combines them in new ways.</p>	3	
<p>Knowledge and usage of processes of inquiry central to the question.</p> <p>ELCC Standards 1.0-6.0</p>	<p>Lacks or misuses the processes of inquiry central to educational leadership. Does not analyze major issues raised by the question.</p>	1	<p>Uses processes of inquiry central to educational leadership to address the question. Provides an adequate, but not fully developed, analysis of major issues raised by the question</p>	2	<p>Uses a process of inquiry central to educational leadership to address the question. Evaluates and applies content knowledge to frame the response. Provides an insightful, in-depth analysis of major issues raised by the question.</p>	3	
<p>Knowledge of the relationship of content areas to other content and real life applications.</p> <p>ELCC Standards 1.0-6.0</p>	<p>Does not connect educational leadership to other content areas and real life applications. Does not provide a synthesis of concepts and/or their application to theory and practice.</p>	1	<p>Connects educational leadership to other content areas and real life applications. Provides an adequate, but not fully developed, synthesis of concepts and their application to theory and practice.</p>	2	<p>Clearly and insightfully connects educational leadership to other content areas and real life applications. Provides a highly developed synthesis of concepts and their application to theory and practice.</p>	3	
<p>Knowledge of the content as it relates to diverse populations and contexts.</p> <p>ELCC Standards 1.0-6.0</p>	<p>Presents educational leadership as a one-dimensional object and people as holding one perspective.</p>	1	<p>Relates educational leadership to people with diverse perspectives, backgrounds, contextualized needs, and assets.</p>	2	<p>Relates educational leadership to diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, perspectives, life experiences, contextualized needs, and assets.</p>	3	

<p>Knowledge of how specific researchers' work, resources and materials are selected for their accuracy, comprehensiveness, and usefulness for representing ideas.</p> <p>ELCC Standards 1.0-6.0</p>	<p>Selected researchers, resources or materials within the response are inaccurate, insufficient, or not useful in demonstrating content knowledge, skills and dispositions.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Selected researchers, resources or materials within the candidate's response are accurate, represent the field of knowledge, and useful in demonstrating content, knowledge, skills, and dispositions.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Selected researchers, resources or materials within the candidate's response are accurate, comprehensive, and useful in demonstrating content knowledge, skills, and dispositions.</p>	<p>3</p>	
<p>Knowledge of content specialized vocabulary and communicating the theories and ideas using standard written English and employing APA format skills.</p> <p>ELCC Standards 1.0-6.0</p>	<p>Improper or lack of content specific vocabulary and/or standard written English and/or APA standards severely interferes with the student's ability to demonstrate content knowledge, skills, or dispositions.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>The student uses content specific vocabulary, standard written English, and APA formatting to demonstrate content knowledge, skills, and dispositions.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>The skillful use of content specific vocabulary, standard written English, and APA skills enhances the candidate's demonstration of content knowledge, skills, and dispositions.</p>	<p>3</p>	

Unacceptable (no pass): Less than 12 points

Acceptable (pass): 12-18 points

Comments:

January, 2008