Ph.D. Student Handbook

Higher Education (HED)

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Program Overview
The course requirements for the Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Higher Education include a few specifically required core courses. The remainder of the coursework is intentionally flexible to allow students to build their own unique degree by selecting classes of their choosing from within or outside the program, department, and college. This flexible format allows students to explore a wider range of interests than is normally allowed in such programs so they can apply their distinct expertise to their understanding of Higher Education.

The minimum credit requirement to complete the Ph.D. is 63 units. The application deadline for the following Fall semester is **January 15th**.

**PRIMARY AREA OF STUDY (27 units)**
Students must take 27 units towards the primary area of study. Of those 27 units, the following courses are required:
- HED 601 Higher Education in the U.S.
- HED 609 Organization and Administration in Higher Education
- HED 636 College Access and Success
  - OR- HED 628 Theories of Inequality
  - OR- HED 619 Intro to International Higher Education
- HED 605/606 Qualitative Methods
- HED 611 Quantitative Methods
- HED 602 Research Design (taken in last year of coursework, only offered in Spring)

**Note: Students are strongly advised to take Quantitative Methods, Qualitative Methods, and Research Design from Higher Education faculty at UA, however, substitutions may be discussed and approved by an advisor.**

**MINOR (9 units)**
Doctoral students pursue a minor. The minor may be in higher education, in some other field (e.g. the student's area of master's work, in another department in the College of Education, or in another College at UA). The minor may be *formal* or *informal*. A *formal* minor will appear on the final transcript and diploma. An *informal* minor fulfills the Higher Education program requirements for the degree but does NOT appear on the diploma. However, the informal minor does indicate the specific sub area of expertise the student has acquired. If pursuing a formal minor, the student should consult with the department offering that minor to make sure they fulfill all minor requirements for that minor. If pursuing an informal minor, agreement simply needs to be made between the student and advisor on the appropriate classes, which can all be outside the Higher Education program or split between higher education and some other department.

**ELECTIVES (9 units)**

**DISSERTATION UNITS (18 units)**
It is highly recommended that all work related to the degree be completed within 10 years, with some latitude possible by petition to the graduate college. Dissertation units must be completed within 5 years of taking the oral exam.

**Ph.D. in Higher Education Template**

PRIMARY AREA OF STUDY (27 units)

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<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
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<td>02 HED 609 Organization and Administration in Higher Education</td>
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<td>03 HED 636 College Access and Success OR HED 628 Theories of Inequality OR HED 619 Intro to International Higher Ed</td>
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<td>04 <strong>HED 605/606 Qualitative Methods</strong></td>
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<td>05 <strong>HED 602 Research Design</strong></td>
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<td>06 <strong>HED 611 Quantitative Methods</strong></td>
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MINOR (9 units)

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ELECTIVES (9 units)

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DISSERTATION (18 units)
### NOTE

<table>
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<th>Allowable transfer units are as follows:</th>
<th>*There is a possibility to petition transfer for 3 additional credits with the approval of advisors and the department head.</th>
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<tr>
<td>HED MASTERS units - 12 max*</td>
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<td>NON DEGREE - 9 max*</td>
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<td>TRANSFER - 9 max</td>
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Students can review a general list of commonly offered classes here:

### Transfer Credits

**UA MASTERS:** 12 units can be transferred in for students who have completed an M.A. in Higher Education with UA, with the possibility for transferring in 3 additional units upon agreement by the student’s advisor and the department head.

**NON-UA MASTERS:** For students with an M.A. from other programs and universities, a total of 9 credits can be transferred in.

### Credit Transfer Procedure

Students planning to transfer credits into their Ph.D. program must complete the transfer before the end of their first year at UA. If you need assistance with the transfer, contact your advisor or the administrative associate in 321.

The transfer procedure must be completed through UAccess in GradPath. More information can be found on the [Catalog Policies](#) page.

### Enrollment

During the fall and spring semesters, for students with Graduate Assistant/Associate appointments, full-time status consists of a minimum enrollment in 6 units of graduate credit. A graduate student working on a thesis or dissertation who is only enrolled in 900-level units and not employed as a Graduate Assistant/Associate must be enrolled in 3 units. A student who has completed all coursework, the thesis/dissertation unit requirements, has advanced to candidacy, is working on the thesis/dissertation, and is not employed as a Graduate Assistant/Associate may apply for [advanced status](#), which allows 1 unit of 900-level credit for full-time status. In all other cases, including those employed by UA and receiving QTR benefits, full-time status consists of a minimum enrollment in 9 units of graduate credit.

### Leave of Absence & Continued Enrollment Policies

If a leave of absence is necessary, for any reason, the proper steps must be taken to avoid being dropped from the program and having to reapply.

If a student needs to take a leave of absence, the student should first take a look at the [Graduate College Leave of Absence](#) page. For further questions, consult the Graduate College in person, as well as your department head and advisor. Students will also need to consult Financial Aid to understand how their leave may affect any financial aid they have or are going to receive.
For further policies, students should consult their department for details and also consult the Enrollment Policies page.

**International Applicants**

For requirements, policies, and procedures for international applicants, please visit the Graduate College webpage. The web page will detail requirements for general admissions, TOEFL requirements and policies & procedures for the Graduate College and the program.

[International Applicants Policies and Procedures](#)

**Discrimination & Sexual Harassment**

It is our goal to create an inclusive and safe environment for all of our students. If you believe you have been discriminated against or sexually harassed, it is important to report it. Contact the Office of Institutional Equity to be paired with an expert who can assist you with advice on the situation or in filing a complaint.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**

The [Disability Resources Center (link is external)](#) leads the campus in the creation of inclusive learning and working environments and facilitates access through innovative services, programs, and partnerships. Disability is an aspect of diversity that is integral to our society and to the University of Arizona campus community. The DRC collaborates with students, faculty, and staff to create a campus environment that is usable, equitable, sustainable and inclusive of all members of the university community.

**UAccess**

UAccess is the system students will use for selecting and enrolling in courses, checking any holds they may have, viewing their charges, paying charges, viewing financial aid, etc. It is crucial to make sure you frequently monitor your account to keep up with tuition payments and miscellaneous fees (CatCard, printing, etc.) you charge to your account.

[https://uaccess.arizona.edu/](https://uaccess.arizona.edu/)

**Desire 2 Learn (D2L)**

D2L is the system students use to access all course content (syllabi, readings, assignments, etc.) for their classes. Students’ D2L login is the same as their UAccess.

[D2L Help Page](#)

**CatCard**
The CatCard is students’ form of identification. Students can use their CatCard for meal plans, campus purchases, printing charges, admission to some university events, building accesses, and more. It is important to get your CatCard as soon as possible. The cost is $25 for the first card (employees receive their first card free). The CatCard office can be found in the lower level of the Student Union across from Wells Fargo. 
https://catcard.arizona.edu/

GradPath
GradPath is the paperless degree audit process the Graduate College uses for students to help navigate the forms and procedures necessary to move forward within one’s chosen program on the way to degree attainment. GradPath should be filled out during your third semester in the program. GradPath is located within UAccess, Student Center, in the dropdown menu under the Academics section. Or you can follow the GradPath Link for specific information. Instructional videos are also available.

Student Community
The UA offers many opportunities for new and continuing students to integrate themselves into the community. Diverse opportunities offer multiple micro-communities on campus for students to connect with their peers in areas that interest them. We also encourage EPSP students to become involved with the Higher Education Students Organization (HESO) to plan social and academic events for students.

The center has an active Facebook page. Please join us at Center for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Arizona to learn more about students, faculty, alumni, and events. Facebook - Center for Study of Higher Ed

UA’s Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) advocates for graduate students on campus and supports community building.

Tucson, outside of UA campus, also offers some incredible event opportunities. Many events can be found in Facebook search. The following is a sample list:
Tucson Downtown
Tucson Festival of Books
Creative Tucson
Tucson Meet Yourself
City of Tucson, AZ

Health and Wellness
It is important for students to maintain good physical and mental health. Managing personal life issues and school can be challenging. The university offers many great programs to assist students and promote their health and wellness. The Health and Wellness page has a list of offered programs that students can take advantage of on campus.

**Funding Your Degree**
The program does not provide any guaranteed funding, however, there are a variety of resources to help fund your degree. While your funding and awards are contingent on what you apply for and are accepted for, the department and students have created a comprehensive list of resources they have benefitted from and find the most helpful. We do recommend applying first for the Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) at [https://fafsa.ed.gov/](https://fafsa.ed.gov/). A breakdown of federal aid eligibility and aid types can be found at [https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/).

**Internships**
The department does not directly offer internships, though it does have resources for students to find internships and fully supports students in acquiring internships. Advisors and professors can serve as references and provide letters of recommendations upon request.

**Graduate Assistantships**
Graduate Assistantship (GA) positions are not required nor guaranteed by the Higher Education department, but are encouraged for those students who are not already working and need funding resources. Students can apply to any department with open assistantship positions. It is recommended to search [Handshake](https://www.handshake.com/) or speak to the department directly to see what openings are available and ask about their application processes.

GA assignments offer an in-state tuition benefit rate as well as professional experience. Please consult the department for which you are applying to for their pay rate.

**Qualified Tuition Reduction (QTR)**
Employees of the University receive tuition reduction (QTR). Please visit the Employee Educational Benefits page or the [Bursar webpage](https://bursar.ac.uk/), or to get more information about QTR and its benefits.

**Summer Session**
Students are welcome to take summer courses at any time. Summer session courses are not covered under the tuition remission package associated with a GA position. QTR is applicable to use with summer courses and does count towards the taxable exemption amount allowed.

Students will need to consult the Office of Financial Aid to verify what their financial resources will cover.

**Grade Appeals**

If you feel that you have received a grade that does not accurately reflect the work you did in a specific course, it is advised that you first address the matter with the professor that taught the class. If you feel action needs to be taken beyond discussing the matter with the professor, consult an advisor and read over the Grade Appeals page in the Catalog. Follow the steps and procedures to properly appeal your grade.

**Research**

Research is a key component to the doctoral program. Students will learn how to conduct research through a variety of methods. Conducting research requires responsibility. The following are two important forms that doctoral students should consult and complete.

1. Responsible Conduct of Research Form
   [https://rgw.arizona.edu/compliance/home](https://rgw.arizona.edu/compliance/home)

2. IRB - When working with human subjects, students need to complete the IRB forms. Follow the link below for further information and forms:
   [https://rgw.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/HSPP-forms](https://rgw.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program/HSPP-forms)

**Comprehensive Exams & Dissertation**

**Comprehensive Exams**

Through this written examination, the student is expected to demonstrate a deep understanding of foundational and contemporary higher education literature, models and theories. To register for the Comprehensive Exams and receive sample questions, please go to:
[http://www.coe.arizona.edu/epsp/gradresources](http://www.coe.arizona.edu/epsp/gradresources)

**Format**

The Comprehensive Exam format changed in 2017. The following section and link provides a detailed description of the new guidelines and expectations for the exams:

[Comprehensive Exam Format](https://rgw.arizona.edu/compliance/home)

The comprehensive exam is a two part take home exam consisting of two parts.

**Part I**
Methods analysis of an article (5-7 pages double spaced). The focus of the methods analysis of an article is on the research methods used in the article. Students choose whether they want to critique an article that uses qualitative or quantitative methods. The faculty will choose the particular article. The students will write their responses, concentrating on the methods used. An analysis does not mean simple criticizing the weakness of the methods, it should also speak to the strengths of the methods employed in the research.

Part II
Framing a problem (15-20 pages double spaced), selected by the student in consultation with their advisor. The focus of the paper is fourfold:

a) An integrative literature review on a problem that identifies the key schools/traditions in the literature, key authors within those schools/traditions, and gaps in the literature (what we don’t know), specifying the contribution you are going to make;

b) Working out of that literature review, develop a conceptual framework, coming out of the theories that you’ve addressed in your integrative literature review. Having identified the gap, you need to synthesize literature you’ve reviewed to challenge, confirm, disrupt, or extend the theories and concepts in that literature. So, your conceptual framework should be aligned with the lit review, and elaborate on the idea of the contribution you are going to make to the literature and the theories on your chosen topic area;

c) Develop some research questions, and then frame working propositions or hypotheses around them that utilize the concepts in your conceptual framework. Again, make sure you have “alignment” between your integrative lit review, your conceptual framework and your research question;

d) In a couple of pages, discuss the methods you will utilize to address and answer these questions. Again, be sure to think about alignment of each part of this paper.

Fees
When you pass your oral comprehensive examination and all coursework on your Plan of Study is complete, you advance to doctoral candidacy. At that time, your bursar's account will be billed the candidacy fees of $35.00. These are one-time fees and you will not be billed again if you change your anticipated graduation date.

Dissertation
One of the first stages of the dissertation is student’s selection of their dissertation committee. The Graduate College requires a minimum of three members, all of whom must be current UA faculty members that are tenured, tenure-track, or approved as tenure equivalent.

- Students identify a Higher Education (HED) faculty member to be their dissertation chair and ask them if they would be willing to serve in this capacity.
  - It is not necessary that the student’s current Ph.D. advisor serve as the dissertation chair. It is common for students to switch advisors.
  - Exceptions can be made to select a Chair from the Educational Leadership (EDL) program in the EPSP department.
- Students should consult with their dissertation chair and together identify two other dissertation committee members from within or outside the EPSP department. The student can then ask if those faculty would be willing to serve on the committee as well. Although the norm is for students to choose committee members from within HED or within EPSP, we are an interdisciplinary program that encourages students to take classes outside the program and department. Therefore, it makes sense to have students, in consultation with their advisor, decide if there might be faculty from outside the program, department, or college whose expertise is more closely aligned with the dissertation topic and/or methods.
  - Students can add a fourth member (or more) if they wish -- tenured or tenure-track, or approved special members. (Special members must be pre-approved by the Dean of the Graduate College).
  - All dissertation committee members are expected to attend the proposal meeting/defense and the entire final dissertation defense.

*Dissertation Proposal (meeting)*

Students need to turn in their proposal at least 3 weeks before they plan to defend. Proposal length should be roughly 35-45 pages double spaced.

*Dissertation defense*

A total of 18 dissertation units are required for completion of the program. Students should plan to defend their dissertation proposal after comprehensive exams have been taken and prior to enrolling in their dissertation units. Dissertation units are to be completed as students work on their dissertation.

SEE FINAL CHECKLIST GUIDE BELOW
FINAL CHECKLIST GUIDE

1st Semester
- Meet faculty advisor
- Submit approved credits for transfer in GradPath
- Take 601 Intro to Higher Education (recommended)
- General Coursework

2nd Semester
- Complete Plan of Study in GradPath
- General Coursework

3rd Semester
- General Coursework

Last Semester of Coursework (this will vary based on students’ enrollment status)
- Take HED 602 (offered only in spring semester)
- Decide on dissertation committee (at least 3 tenure or tenure-track members and 1 minor member)
- Complete written comprehensive exam (Immediately following completion of coursework)
- Write dissertation proposal (same time as written exam)
- Schedule and sit for Oral Comprehensive Exam; bring results of Oral Comprehensive Exam for Doctoral Candidacy form (3 major members, 1 minor member)
- Schedule dissertation proposal review: Bring Dissertation Proposal Approval Form

Data Collection and Dissertation Writing
- Take Human Subjects Certification/Submit Human Subjects Forms (Must be completed prior to data collection)
- Collect Data
- Write Dissertation
- Schedule Final Oral Exam (Submit exam form at least 4 weeks prior to exam date)
- Submit copy of dissertation to committee members (At least 2 weeks prior to Final Oral Exam)
- Submit copy of completed and approved dissertation to advisor
- Complete Final Oral Exam

Timeline