

**Doctorate of Education in  
Curriculum and Instruction:  
Specialization in Literacy Education  
Area of Bilingual Education/English as a Second  
Language  
Graduate Student Handbook**

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## **Introduction to the Handbook**

This handbook provides information about the Doctorate of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Literacy Education in the area of Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language. Please use this handbook as a tool to better understand application procedures, program expectations, and graduation requirements.

In addition to this handbook, you should obtain a copy of NIU's Graduate Catalog as well as familiarize yourself with the Graduate School website ([www.grad.niu.edu](http://www.grad.niu.edu)). *It is your responsibility to know and observe all policies and procedures related to this program as well as those of the Graduate School.*

After reading this handbook, if you have further questions about the program, please contact the department and/or your faculty program advisor. We hope that you find the information helpful and welcome any input or suggestions for improvement.

## **Description of the Doctorate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction**

The Ed.D. is a professional degree intended to prepare superior teachers, administrators, curriculum developers, service personnel, and scholars of education. In addition, the program prepares individuals for teaching at the college level. Preparation for research responsibilities both as producer and as consumer is an integral part of the program.

## **Applying to the Doctorate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction: Literacy Education Program**

### **Process, Deadlines, and Requirements for Degree-Seeking Students**

Students study literacy research, theory, and practice. A commitment to scholarship and research, as well as practice, is required of students so as to improve the status of literacy for all learners. Applicants for the Ed.D. program are expected to have a broad base of general education in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences and are required to present evidence of a minimum of three years of acceptable professional experience and/or demonstrated field leadership. In order to pursue the Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, one must apply and be admitted to the Graduate School, as well as be accepted for admission by the program area, in this case Curriculum and Instruction.

Applications are available online at <http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/apply/graduate.shtml>. Graduate School and program deadlines for the completion of one's application are also available:

<http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/apply/deadlines.shtml>. The purposes of the deadlines are to ensure that admissions officers have sufficient time to process materials and the department has ample time to consider all applications in an equitable manner. For any dates occurring on a Saturday, Sunday, or university holiday, the deadline becomes the next day on which university offices are open.

Decisions about admission to the Ed.D. program in the department are made on an ongoing basis. To be assured of consideration, completed applications containing all required documents (application forms, official transcripts, GRE or MAT scores, and three letters of recommendation) must be received by the Graduate School no later than March 1 for admission for the fall term, November 1 for admission for the spring term, and March 1 for admission for the summer session. The following areas are considered in admissions decisions:

- GPA in previous graduate work.
- submit scores on the General Test of the GRE or the Miller Analogies Test (MAT).
- three letters of recommendation from professors, employers, or supervisors which provide supportive evidence of an applicant's professional qualifications.

- satisfactory academic and professional progress as indicated by data included in the application for admission to the Graduate School.

Demonstration of writing competencies and participation in a preadmission interview is required of qualified applicants before a final admission decision is made. Final decisions regarding admissions are made by the Department Student Committee in consultation with program faculty. Appeals of a decision made by the program committee may be made to the department's Student Affairs Committee. Appeals to this committee must be submitted in writing to the department chair and must explain the basis for the appeal.

\*\* As per the Graduate School Catalog, applicants for admission to the Graduate School assume all responsibility for the completion of their admission files; the Graduate School assumes no obligation to inform applicants about erroneous or missing credentials.

### **Applying as a Student-At-Large**

If you are interested in taking a course(s) prior to being admitted to the Graduate School, you may enroll as a Student-at-Large (SAL). To enroll in a course(s) as an SAL, you will need to submit an SAL application electronically using the following Graduate School web site: (<http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/apply/atlarge.shtml>); after approximately four working days you will be able to enroll in courses. **NOTE:** You may take up to 15 semester hours of graduate credit as a SAL before officially applying to the program. Any courses selected while an SAL should be chosen in consultation with an academic advisor from the program area so that classes count towards the degree program, if seeking admission.

## **Program Advising**

### **Faculty Program Advisor**

Every graduate student will be assigned a doctoral faculty program chair upon admission to the program. The faculty for the graduate program in Curriculum and Instruction, specialization in Literacy Education in the area of Bilingual/ESL include the following:

Dr. Chris Liska Carger, Professor  
 Dr. Mayra C. Daniel, Associate Professor  
 Dr. James Cohen, Assistant Professor  
 Dr. Richard Orem, Professor

Advisement is given regarding courses in and outside of the major, prerequisites, research proficiencies, candidacy exam, dissertation hours, proposal/defense meetings, and graduation deadlines. *Students are responsible for contacting their assigned faculty program advisor, making appointments, and communicating with him/her on a regular basis.* It is recommended that the student meet with his/her faculty program advisor at least once a semester.

### **Doctoral Advising Sheet**

The Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Literacy Education requires a minimum of 93 semester hours of graduate work beyond the baccalaureate degree. Your faculty program advisor will use the Doctoral Advising Sheet with you in planning your program of study. Please use the worksheet to ensure accurate completion of program requirements. As stated previously, ongoing contact with your faculty program advisor is important.

The doctoral program in curriculum and instruction with a specialization in literacy education requires the equivalent of at least three years of full-time academic work, or a minimum of 93 semester hours of graduate work beyond the baccalaureate degree including the following:

- Coursework constituting common requirements in research understandings and skills, learning and development theories, and sociocultural analyses of education (Minimum of 15)
- Coursework (excluding dissertation hours) included in the specialization (Minimum of 18 hours)
- A cognate component selected from outside the specialization to provide a broader base of knowledge, a supportive professional skill, or more sophisticated research competencies (No specific number of semester hours is required.)
- TLCI 703 - Design of Curriculum and Instruction (3 hours)
- TLCI 704 - Research Seminar in Curriculum and Instruction (3 hours)
- LTCY 799 - Doctoral Research and Dissertation (15-30 hours)

# DOCTORAL PROGRAM OF STUDY: LITERACY EDUCATION

**DOCTORAL PROGRAM OF COURSES  
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
LITERACY EDUCATION**

**Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction: Specialization in Literacy Education, Area of Bilingual Education and English  
as a Second Language**

**CATALOG YEAR:**

Student's Name:  
Address:

Date:

Home Number:  
Z-ID:

Work Number:

Major: Curriculum &  
Instruction

Specialization: Literacy Education

Committee Members:

**Courses Accepted from Master's Degree:**

<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>	<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>

Total Semester Equivalent Hours-Master's Degree (maximum 30 credits): \_\_\_\_\_

**Course Deficiencies:**

<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>	<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>

**Advanced Level Course Work**  
(Minimum of 63 hours beyond Master's Degree)

**Common Requirements:** (15 hrs min-Research, Learning & Development, Socio-Cultural Analyses)

<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>	<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>

Total Semester Hours-Common Requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

**Major Field of Study:** (Minimum of 18 semester hours, including TLCI 703, TLCI 704)

<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>	<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>

Total Semester Hours-Major Field: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cognate Components:**

<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>	<u>Dept &amp; Course #</u>	<u>Sem Hrs</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Semester Completed</u>

Total Semester Hours-Cognate Component: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dissertation Component:**

Total Semester Hours (15 hours minimum required): \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
Total Semester Hours Beyond Master's (63 minimum): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Semester Hours in Program of Courses (93 minimum): \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVALS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Chair Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chair Signature

<b>For Graduate School Use Only</b>	
Program approved provided graduation by _____	
_____ Graduate School Approval	_____ Date

## Doctoral Courses in Literacy Education

### **LTIC 700 (Seminar in Educating English Language Learners)**

Study of research on and theory of educating English language learners across the life span. May be repeated to a maximum of 9 semester hours when topic varies.

### **LTIC 701 (Supervision of Programs for English Language Learners)**

Procedures for developing a Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) K-12 curriculum and examination of the knowledge base required of educators to understand and improve instruction for Bilingual/English Language Learners (ELLs) in schools.

### **LTIC 720 (Review of Research in Teaching English Language Learners)**

Comprehensive study of research literature in teaching English language learners across the life span. Designed for advanced graduate students preparing literature reviews for the thesis or dissertation.

### **LTRE 701 (Supervisory Problems in Reading)**

Procedures for developing a K-12 curriculum in reading and the supervisory responsibilities of administrators and reading consultants in improving reading instruction in the schools.

### **LTRE 711 (Seminar in Research Studies in the Field of Reading)**

Designed for advanced students interested in the study of research in education, psychology, linguistics, and other disciplines which have a bearing on reading research and instruction.

### **LTRE 712 (Correlates of Effective Reading)**

An examination of the models of the reading process and correlates which influence that process (e.g., linguistic, cultural, and motivation variables).

### **LTRE 713 (Seminar in Comparative Reading)**

Comparison of reading methods and related variables in different national and cultural groups.

### **LTRE 714 (Seminar in Reading)**

Identification and analysis of issues and problems in reading at all levels. May be repeated to a maximum of 9 semester hours when topic varies.

### **LTRE 718 (Adult Education)**

Emphasis on the teaching of reading to adults; strategies applicable to meet the needs of the adult learner; functional alternatives for instruction; preparation of volunteers and the role of the reading teacher with adults.

### **LTRE 719 (Principles and Methods of Teaching Postsecondary Reading)**

Emphasis on research, theoretical foundations, and philosophical models relevant to postsecondary reading instruction methods.



**LTLA 733 (Children’s Literature Research in Elementary Education)**

Examination of selected research in children’s literature and implications for instruction and curricular needs. Emphasis on writing and publishing for children.

**LTLA 760 (Advanced Seminar in Elementary Education: Language Arts)**

Identification and analysis of problems and current issues in elementary education. May be repeated to a maximum of 9 semester hours when topic varies.

**LTCY 786 (Internship in Literacy Education)**

Work individually or in small groups in a practical situation under guidance of a staff member of that setting and a university supervisor.

**LTCY 797 (Independent Research in Literacy Education)**

Independent research at post-master’s degree level under faculty supervision.

**LTCY 799 (Doctoral Research and Dissertation)**

Student must accumulate a minimum of 15 semester hours of dissertation credit hours prior to graduation.

***Degree Time Limit***

Doctoral degree programs must be completed within nine years. For additional information, please consult the Graduate School Catalog, under the Requirements for Degree section (Limitations of Time).

***Revalidation of Courses***

If you take any NIU courses that do not fall within the nine-year period allowed for degree completion, the department may require that you retake the course for credit or demonstrate current knowledge of the subject matter. If any courses in your program expire before your graduation date, please see your doctoral program chair for assistance.

***Leave of Absence***

As a graduate student you may take a leave of absence from coursework for up to one year. To do so, please go to the Graduate School website and fill out the Leave of Absence form: <http://www.niu.edu/its/asp2/OnBaseForms/gradschool/RcGrLeave.aspx>. If you take more than a year of absence, the Graduate School requires that you re-apply to the program for admission. Please notify your faculty program advisor when you submit a leave of absence form.

**LTCY 797 Independent Research in Literacy Education**

If interested in taking an independent study, the candidate secures permission from a faculty member who will supervise the project.

**LTCY 786 Internship in Literacy Education**

If interested in engaging in an internship in a school setting, the candidate secures permission from a faculty member who will supervise the project.

## **Professional Expectations, Dispositions, and Academic Integrity**

### **Professional Expectations and Dispositions Document**

As per the “Professional Expectations and Dispositions” document, all doctoral students are expected to act professionally, show respect for the learning process, and possess appropriate dispositions throughout their degree program.

### **Dispositions for Teaching**

Dispositions for teaching are assessed and monitored throughout all classes in order to intervene with support as needed. All students are to familiarize themselves with dispositional expectations.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is expected of all students. The attempt by any student to present as his/her own work which he/she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration of NIU as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they turn in an assignment written in whole or in part by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy from books, magazines, Internet, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Professional Expectations and Dispositions</b> for <b>Doctoral Program in Curriculum &amp; Instruction</b></p>
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Professional expectations and dispositions are attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as graduate students interact with faculty, staff, and colleagues. These positive behaviors support effective classroom teaching, professional interactions, and learning. Professional expectations and dispositions are assessed during all classes, phone conversations, email/Internet transactions, and face-to-face meetings.

A doctoral student consistently:

1. values and works to create positive learning environments, respects the learning process and is a reflective learner.
2. demonstrates trust, respect for others, and mutual responsibility in whole class, group work, written products, and presentations.
3. demonstrates ethical decision making by maintaining confidentiality in all situations and displaying academic integrity.
4. shows respect for the learning process by being engaged, on-task, prepared, and responsive.

5. shows respect for the learning process by attending class sessions, arriving at class and returning from breaks on time, staying until the end of class sessions, and punctual submission of assignments.
6. demonstrates an overall work ethic (e.g., initiative, self-direction, diligence, responsibility, fairness, commitment to quality, dependability, compliance with required procedures, honesty).
7. demonstrates appropriate interpersonal, listening, and communication skills.
8. shows the ability to respect others' opinions, is receptive to new ideas and multiple perspectives.
9. appreciates course content, including details related to writing mechanics, content, and reflection.
10. encourages creative and critical thinking among others by sharing new ideas and generating possibilities.
11. seeks lifelong learning and scholarship, investing significant effort in learning.
12. interacts respectfully with diverse colleagues, faculty, staff, and other individuals.

## **Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate students are occasionally hired to provide assistance to the department in several areas: teaching assistants, non-instructional teaching assistants, research assistants and staff assistants. Positions are typically filled in the spring/summer for the following fall. Contact the department or your faculty academic advisor for information regarding openings.

The university also hires graduate students to assist in roles other than teaching or research, such as residence hall advisors, counselors, administrative assistants or library assistants. NIU's Human Resources Services posts job openings.

## **Candidacy Exam**

### **Process**

The candidacy exam may be taken after completion of all course work or during the last semester the student is enrolled in non-dissertation hours. The candidate must be enrolled in the term in which the candidacy examination is taken. Most individuals take "1" hour of independent study (e.g., LTCY 797), if they are not enrolled concurrently in another course when completing their candidacy exam.

### **Candidacy Exam Committee**

Although doctoral students are either assigned or choose a doctoral program chair upon admission to the program, it is the student's responsibility to select a chair for the candidacy exam committee.

In consultation with the candidacy chair, the student selects a minimum of three faculty to serve on the candidacy exam committee. Any faculty member at NIU can serve on the committee, not just those in the Curriculum and Instruction program area, the Department, or the College of Education. The majority of faculty on a committee must be senior graduate faculty in the student's program area. When you are ready to take your candidacy exam and once your committee is chosen, a candidacy exam meeting lasting approximately one hour is held. The committee members collectively write three questions that focus on the student's dissertation topic (e.g., conceptual/theoretical framework, methodology). Please come prepared to take notes during the meeting about the questions that you will be asked to answer. With your committee you will decide the date your committee chair will send you your questions. You will have two weeks after you receive your questions to write your answers. If you choose, you may also take your exam at the university over a two-day period.

Your committee will ask you to return your candidacy exam responses electronically and/or in hard copy. Once your responses are submitted for review, the committee will take no longer than two weeks to read and render a decision: *pass*, *re-write before rendering a decision*, or *fail*. In the case of a *re-write before rendering a decision*, the student is given one week in which to re-submit his/her exam for final review. The chairperson will contact you to share the outcome of the committee's decision, and a letter will be sent by the department confirming that outcome.

### **Candidacy Exam Tips**

Below are helpful "candidacy exam" tips:

1. Schedule your exam when you will be able to devote your full attention to the candidacy exam.
2. Please write the candidacy question at the beginning of each response, followed by the name of the faculty member who will review.
3. Most candidacy exam questions have multiple components, thus, re-read the questions often and answer all elements.
4. Remember to use APA citations correctly.
5. Use headings and subheadings as you write and include transitions.
6. Consider adding a "summary" at the end of long sections.
7. Ask another advanced doctoral student to read your candidacy exam responses before you submit them.
8. Pace yourself! Be sure to spend adequate time on each question.
9. You may ask your committee members for clarification about the exam questions, however, they cannot read or edit your writing prior to the exam deadline.

### **Candidacy Exam Adjudication**

Candidacy exam responses are graded holistically. Your committee members read your exam response(s), provide written feedback, and render a decision as to the quality of the response. All written feedback is collected and shared with you by the committee chair. Below are common criteria used in rendering a committee's decision:

- Is the content of the student's answer correct?
- Did the student answer the entire question?
- Is the student's writing clear or illogical, confusing, and/or contradictory?
- Did the student demonstrate an acceptable grasp of the literature or topic of his/her study?

- Did the student make gross errors in the use of APA?
- Did the student provide too short of an answer (e.g., less than 10 pages)?
- Is there an inadequate number of references appropriate for answering the question?
- Was the response in some way plagiarized?

The candidacy exam committee may allow a student who fails a candidacy examination to repeat in a subsequent semester. A student who fails a candidacy exam a second time, or is not granted permission for a second attempt, will not be permitted to continue his/her work toward the doctorate, and admission to the doctoral program will be terminated.

### **Dissertation Hours LTCY 799/Milestones/Progress Toward Degree Completion**

After successful completion of the candidacy exam and course work, you may register for LTCY 799 Dissertation hours. You should register for LTCY 799 hours with your advisor/ the chair of your dissertation committee. Usually the person you select as your candidacy exam chair will be the person you wish to ask to be your dissertation chair, but that is your decision. Please work closely with your dissertation chair to establish expectations for this work. Once you begin LTCY dissertation hours, you must continue to register each subsequent semester until the dissertation is submitted and formally approved by the Graduate School.

A minimum of 15 hours of LTCY 799 credits must be earned while working on the dissertation. The student is expected to take 3 credits each fall and spring and at least 1 credit every summer. You may take more than 3 credits, but you should discuss any unusual circumstances with your dissertation chair for approval. After reaching a total of 15 LTCY dissertation hours, the student is expected to continue enrollment in at least one dissertation hour each semester. LTCY 799 provides the student an open format for developing the dissertation proposal and writing the thesis.

Continual progress and communication with your dissertation chair is critical and expected. LTCY 799 hours are to be used in completing the following:

- Proposal Meeting (Chapters 1, 2, 3, references, and appendices)
- Institutional Review Board Approval (completed after proposal meeting)
- Data Collection/Analysis (Chapters 4 and 5)
- Pre-Defense Meeting (Initial review by committee of Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, references and appendices)
- Defense Meeting (Final review by committee and external reviewer assigned by the Graduate School)
- Final Editing of Dissertation

**NOTE:** As a doctoral student you are responsible for adhering to all expectations and deadlines established by the Department and Graduate School. Please be aware that the six milestones listed above take time and dedication. Thus, it is important to set short- and long-term deadlines for yourself.

## **Graduation Requirements & Procedures**

Students planning to graduate should familiarize themselves with the dates relating to application for graduation and other Graduate School deadlines.

[http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/audience/pdf/Graduation\\_Deadlines11-12.pdf](http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/audience/pdf/Graduation_Deadlines11-12.pdf)

Whether or not you plan to attend the commencement ceremonies, it is important that you apply for graduation by the specified deadline in order to graduate in a particular term. Deadlines should be discussed with your dissertation chair. To apply for graduation, log-in to your MY NIU account and look under *Degree Progress/Graduation* and complete the required field.

### **Step-by-Step Checklist to Program Completion**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Apply to Graduate School using appropriate code for specialization in Literacy Education in the area of Reading
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make initial appointment to meet with assigned faculty advisor to plan coursework and begin organizing a program of study committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Continue to meet regularly with your faculty academic advisor to seek input about coursework
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meet with your program committee once your program of study is complete and get feedback from all members on your course of study
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take classes that prepare you for your dissertation topic and develop your research skills beyond ETR 521 and 525
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete all courses listed on your program of studies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meet with your doctoral program chair to discuss candidacy exam options and strategies for planning and completing the exam.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule your candidacy exam planning meeting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Write your candidacy exam responses
- \_\_\_\_\_ After completing all course work and passing your candidacy exam, register for LTCY 799 hours every semester until dissertation is completed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Work closely with your dissertation chair to complete your “proposal” (Chapters 1, 2, 3, references, and appendices)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule your “proposal” meeting after your dissertation director agrees your proposal is ready to defend
- \_\_\_\_\_ After passing your “proposal” meeting, complete the IRB application, if you are doing human subject research

- \_\_\_\_\_ After successful completion of the candidacy exam, register for LTCY 700 hours every semester until the dissertation is completed (e.g. fall semester-3 credit hours; spring semester-3 credit hours; summer-1 credit hour).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Work closely with your chair to complete your dissertation in a timely manner, including pre-defense and defense meetings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Apply for graduation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend graduation ceremony