

**Doctorate of Education in
Curriculum and Instruction:
Specialization in Literacy Education
Area of Reading
Graduate Student Handbook**

Department of Literacy Education

Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL

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Introduction to the Handbook

This handbook provides information about the Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Literacy Education in the area of Reading. 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 online at http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/audience/current_students.shtml as well as familiarize yourself with the Graduate School website at 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 adviser. 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 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 generally 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's specialization area, in this case Literacy Education. 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 aspects of an admissions application are considered in admissions decisions:

- GPA in previous graduate work.
- scores on the General Test of the GRE or the Miller Analogies Test (MAT).
- three letters of recommendation from professors, employers, or supervisors that provide supportive evidence of an applicant's professional qualifications.
- satisfactory academic and professional progress as indicated by documents included in the application for admission to the Graduate School.

Demonstration of writing competencies and participation in a preadmission interview are 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 the appropriate departmental program faculty. Appeals of a decision made by the Department Student Committee may be made to the Department Chair. 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 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 adviser from the program area so that classes count towards the degree program, if seeking admission.

Program Advising

Faculty Adviser/Doctoral Program Chair

Every graduate student will be assigned a Faculty Adviser upon admission to the program. *Students are responsible for contacting their assigned Faculty Adviser, making appointments, and communicating with him/her on a regular basis.* It is recommended that the student meet with his/her Faculty Adviser at least once each semester. The Faculty Advisers for the graduate program in Curriculum and Instruction, specialization in Literacy Education in the area of Reading, include the following:

Dr. Laurie Elish-Piper—Elementary and Adult Literacy
 Dr. Susan L'Allier—Elementary Literacy
 Dr. Sheryl Honig—Elementary Literacy
 Dr. Corrine Wickens, Middle and Secondary Literacy
 Dr. Michael Manderino, Middle and Secondary Literacy
 Dr. Sonya L. Armstrong, Postsecondary Literacy

Usually, but not always, the Faculty Adviser also serves as the Doctoral Program Chair. You and your Doctoral Program Chair will select the other members of your Doctoral Program Committee. Advisement from your Doctoral Program Committee is given regarding courses in and outside of the major, prerequisites, research proficiencies, and the candidacy exam.

Once you successfully complete your candidacy exam, your Doctoral Program Committee is dissolved, and you will need to select a Dissertation Director (who may or may not be your original Faculty Adviser or Doctoral Program Chair). In consultation with your Dissertation Director, you will select the other members of your dissertation committee. Your Dissertation Director will provide advisement related to all aspects of your dissertation work including dissertation hours, proposal/defense meetings, and graduation deadlines.

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 Doctoral Program Chair will use the following Doctoral Advising Sheet with you in planning your program of study. Please use the worksheet to ensure accurate completion of program requirements.

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 coursework, or a minimum of 93 semester hours of graduate coursework beyond the baccalaureate degree including the following.

- TLCI 703 - Design of Curriculum and Instruction (3 hours)
- TLCI 704 - Research Seminar in Curriculum and Instruction (3 hours)
- Coursework constituting common requirements in research understandings and skills, learning and development theories, and sociocultural analyses of education (min. 15 hours)
- Coursework (excluding dissertation hours) in the specialization (min. 12 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.)
- LTCY 799, Doctoral Research and Dissertation (15-30 hours)

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

Common Requirements: (15 hrs min-Research, Learning & Development, Sociocultural Analyses)

Dept & Course #	Sem Hrs	Institution	Semester Completed	Dept & Course #	Sem Hrs	Institution	Semester Completed

Total Semester Hours-Common Requirements: _____

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

Dept & Course #	Sem Hrs	Institution	Semester Completed	Dept & Course #	Sem Hrs	Institution	Semester Completed

Total Semester Hours-Major Field: _____

Cognate Components:

Dept & Course #	Sem Hrs	Institution	Semester Completed	Dept & Course #	Sem Hrs	Institution	Semester Completed

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 Program Chair Signature

Department Chair Signature

For Graduate School Use Only	
Program approved provided graduation by _____	
_____ Graduate School Approval	_____ Date

Northern Illinois University Doctoral Courses in Literacy Education

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.

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.

L TIC 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 the schools.

L TIC 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.

L TCY 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.

L TCY 797 (Independent Research in Literacy Education)

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

L TCY 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. A course on your program of study that has been transferred in from another institution and does not fall within the nine year period allowed for degree completion cannot be revalidated. If any courses in your program expire before your graduation date, please see your faculty academic adviser 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 adviser when you submit a leave of absence form.

Independent Study

If interested in taking an independent study, you must first contact a faculty member who has expertise with the focus/topic you aim to explore. You should ask this faculty member to supervise your independent study and request permission to enroll in that faculty member's specific section of the independent study.

Professional Expectations, Dispositions, and Academic Integrity

Professional Expectations and Dispositions Document

As per the “Professional Expectations and Dispositions” document on the next page, 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 required to read the dispositions information on the following page.

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.

Professional Expectations and Dispositions for **Graduate Programs in Curriculum & Instruction**

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. The professional expectations and dispositions are assessed during all classes, phone conversations, email/Internet transactions, and face-to-face meetings.

A graduate 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 submitting assignments punctually.
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, research assistants, and staff assistants. Positions are typically filled in the spring/summer for the following fall. Contact the department or your Faculty Adviser or Doctoral Program Chair for information regarding openings.

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

Candidacy Exam

Process

The candidacy exam may be taken during/after TLCI 704. You 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. Prior to applying to take the candidacy exam, you should send a list of courses completed and the major projects undertaken in those courses to all members of your Program Committee.

Development of Candidacy Exam Questions

There are several options for developing the questions for a candidacy exam. You will need to discuss all of these options with your Program Committee Chair.

First, you can decide whether you prefer being involved in the development of the questions or, instead, prefer that your committee develop the questions themselves.

In addition, there are two options for completing the exam. The first scenario takes place on campus over a two-day period (roughly 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., with a 30-minute lunch break). In this scenario, you would write two questions each day. This is a closed-book/notes/Web option, but you are expected to cite relevant references to the best of your memory.

The second scenario is a take-home exam, which would allow you an extended period of time (seven days in this scenario) and access to books/notes/Web. Because of the extended time and access to resources, the expectations for providing full reference lists and extensive citing are higher.

Candidacy Exam Adjudication

Your Program 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 generally take no longer than two weeks to read and render a decision: *pass*, *re-write one or more sections before rendering a decision*, or *fail*. Candidacy exam responses are graded holistically. In the case of a *re-write one or more sections before rendering a decision*, the student generally meets with the Program Committee Chair to discuss any problematic responses, and is then given one week in

which to resubmit the exam for final review. The Program Committee Chair will contact you to share the outcome of the committee's decision, and a letter will be sent by the department confirming that outcome.

A student who fails a candidacy examination on first attempt may attempt a different version of the exam in a subsequent semester. A student who fails a candidacy exam a second time will not be permitted to continue his/her work toward the doctorate, and admission to the doctoral program will be terminated.

799 Hours/Milestones/Progress toward Degree Completion

After successful completion of the candidacy exam and coursework, you may register for 799 hours. You should register for 799 hours with the faculty member you select to be your Dissertation Director. Usually the person you select as your Program Committee Chair will be the person you wish to ask to be your Dissertation Director, but that is your decision. Please work closely with your Dissertation Director as to how and when to register. Once you begin 799 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 799 credits must be earned while working on your dissertation. You are 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.

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

- Concept Paper Meeting (if recommended by your Dissertation Director)
- Proposal Meeting (Chapters 1, 2, 3, references, and appendices)
- Institutional Review Board Approval (completed after proposal meeting)
- Data Collection/Analysis (Chapters 4 and 5)
- Dissertation Review Meetings (On-going review by Dissertation Committee of Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, references and appendices)
- Pre-Defense Meeting (Session to prepare for the defense and review of entire dissertation)
- Defense Meeting (Final review by Dissertation 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 dissertation 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

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 Director. To apply for graduation, log-in to your MyNIU account and look under *Degree Progress/Graduation* and complete the required fields.

Step-by-Step Checklist to Doctoral Program Completion

- _____ Apply to Graduate School using appropriate code for specialization in Literacy Education in the area of Reading
- _____ Meet any Departmental application requirements (interview, writing sample, etc.)
- _____ Receive an official letter of acceptance to the program from the Department of Literacy Education (this letter will include the name of the faculty member assigned to serve as your adviser)
- _____ Make an initial appointment to meet with the Faculty Adviser assigned to you to plan coursework and begin organizing a Program Committee (usually your Faculty Adviser will also serve as your Program Committee Chair)
- _____ Continue to meet regularly with your Program Committee Chair to seek input about coursework
- _____ In collaboration with your Program Committee Chair, compile a Program Committee comprised of three faculty members who can help steer your coursework toward your intended dissertation and career goals
- _____ Work with your Program Committee Chair to prepare an initial draft of your program of study
- _____ Meet with your Program Committee once your program of study is complete and get feedback from all members on your course of study
- _____ Submit a finalized program of study to the Department Graduate Student Secretary to be submitted to the Graduate School (within the first year of the program)
- _____ Take classes that prepare you for your dissertation topic and develop your research skills beyond ETR 521 and 525
- _____ Meet with your Program Committee Chair about candidacy exam options and strategies for planning and completing the exam (NOTE: The exam can be completed during or after TLCI 704)
- _____ Complete your candidacy exam
- _____ After successful completion of your candidacy exam, ask a faculty member in the Department of Literacy Education to be your Dissertation Director as well as confirm the remaining members of your dissertation committee
- _____ After completing all coursework and passing your candidacy exam, register for LTCY 799 hours every semester until dissertation is completed (i.e., fall semester – 3 credit hours; spring semester – 3 credit hours; summer – 1 credit hour)

- _____ Work closely with your Dissertation Director 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
- _____ Complete the IRB application, if you are doing human subjects research
- _____ Work closely with your Dissertation Director to complete your dissertation in a timely manner, including pre-defense and defense meetings
- _____ Apply for graduation
- _____ Attend commencement ceremony (recommended, but not required)