Curriculum Studies
Evaluating Ph.D. Students in Curriculum Studies

New Ph.D. Students

Each Spring and Fall semesters, all new Ph.D. students in the Curriculum Studies area will attend an announced meeting with area faculty members. This meeting typically will be held at the end of the first full week of classes for the semester. The purpose of this meeting is to become acquainted, to understand students’ aspirations and career goals, and to explain the various steps, procedures, and expectations of the Ph.D. program.

First Year Review

A. Purpose

1. To monitor and evaluate the student’s progress in the doctoral program; and
2. To advise the student on plans for his/her program of study.

B. Scheduling and Procedures

1. Submit for Review

At the conclusion of approximately 18 semester hours of course work at UT Austin, or not later than 12 months after initial enrollment in the program, the student will submit to the Curriculum Studies Program Adviser the following evidence:

- Program of Work Form (obtained from the C & I Graduate Coordinator),
- Program Review form.

2. Criteria to be employed in this review include:

a. completion of approximately 18 semester hours;
b. no “credit/no credit” courses taken during the first 18 hours;
c. acceptable grade point average: any course grade lower than a B will be subject to further review by the First Year Review Panel, and the instructor of the course in question. (A GPA below 3.0 could lead to dismissal from the program);
d. a definite plan for engagement in an acceptable research project/activity (e.g., as a course requirement, independent project, collaboration w/professor and/or graduate student colleague);
e. at least one course in research methodology;
f.- a minimum of 9 of the first 18 hours of course work to have been taken in the Curriculum Studies program area.

C. Decisions and Reporting Procedure

The Faculty Panel recommend a plan for each student reviewed and will circulate that recommendation to all members of the Curriculum Studies faculty.

This will be communicated to the student promptly by email and will be maintained in the student's file.

Mid-Program Review:

After the completion of 36 hours of coursework, students will submit a portfolio consisting of completed program of work form, program review form, a one page summary of research interests and direction, and a copy of a publishable research paper. The Curriculum Studies Faculty Panel (in conjunction with course instructors, if necessary) will meet with the student and provide specific feedback for continuing success. The Curriculum Studies Faculty Panel’s decision will be communicated to the student promptly by email and this will be maintained in the student's file.

Qualifying Examination and Review

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Review is to determine the acceptability of Ph.D. students to be advanced to candidacy. Candidacy status enables students to enroll for dissertation research and writing.

B. Qualifying Examination Committee Constituency

The Qualifying Examination Committee will consist of five faculty members. At least two members will be Curriculum Studies faculty members. The student will select the chairperson (potential dissertation chair) from the Curriculum Studies faculty. The student must also select at least one faculty member from outside the department to serve on this committee.

C. Components of the Qualifying Examination Review

The Qualifying Examination consists of two parts:

1. Written: Each member of the Qualifying Examination Committee will submit one question to the designated chair of the student’s committee. The questions will reflect the core areas of the program, the research sequence and will relate specifically to the student’s areas of expertise, interest, and research. The student will respond to four of the five questions during the allotted
time (4 day weekend). The question not addressed by the student will also be discussed during the Oral Defense.

2. Oral Defense: A two-hour oral examination conducted by the student’s Qualifying Examination Committee and open to any additional readers of the examination who have interest in the student’s performance. It is expected that the entire written examination serve as the basis for the oral defense.

D. Scheduling/Procedures

When a student has completed nearly all of his/her coursework (or during the semester prior to the completion of all course work), the student is ready to schedule the Qualifying Examination. Paperwork and procedures discussed below should be completed early in the semester.

Step 1: When students are ready to begin their Qualifying Examination, they should choose the Qualifying Examination Committee which will supervise them through the two parts of the exam.

Step 2: When students have secured agreement of five faculty members to serve on the Qualifying Examination Committee, they pick up from the Graduate Coordinator in SZB 406 the following two forms: 1) Intent to Take C&I Doctoral Qualifying Exam, and 2) Program of Work. The Intent form asks for a listing of the names of the Qualifying Examination Committee members. The Program of Work form is to be completed by typing or word processing. Both the Intent and Program of Work form should be returned to the Graduate Coordinator before qualifying exams.

Step 3: The C&I Graduate Coordinator will forward the Procedure Memo for Qualifying Exams to the committee. It is the responsibility of the Qualifying Examination Committee chair to gather the examination questions one week before the written exam date and forward them to the C&I Graduate Coordinator. The C&I Graduate Coordinator will forward the exam questions to the graduate student, collect the responses from the graduate student, and distribute the Oral Qualifying Examination Memo, the qualifying exam questions, and the graduate student’s responses to all committee members.

E. Decision

During this Review, faculty members will discuss and assess the quality of the student’s work on the Written and Oral Defense; review the student’s coursework and research papers; offer suggestions, answer questions, and make recommendations. The overall purpose of the Review is to determine the student’s suitability to advance to candidacy and to begin dissertation work. At the close of the review, the Committee will inform the student of its decision:

a) advance to candidacy;

b) advance to candidacy with conditions;

c) continue in program without advancement; or
d) **drop from program.**

An Advance to Candidacy decision means that the Committee will recommend that the student be advanced to candidacy immediately. A decision to Advance to Candidacy with Conditions means that the Curriculum Studies faculty will recommend that the student be advanced to candidacy, but will require that the student meet certain conditions. A decision to Continue in Program without Advancement prevents students from advancing to candidacy until students meet specified conditions. In both these decisions, the imposition of conditions intends to help the student strengthen areas of concern to the faculty. Conditions may take several forms (e.g., additional course work, additional involvement in research projects, additional courses in other departments). The Qualifying Exam Review Committee chair will monitor student work and the conditions set and will report to the Curriculum and Instruction Graduate Coordinator when the student has met the conditions. A decision to Drop from the Program will carry the recommendation that the student be dropped from the program or that the student retake the Written and Oral Defense. In case of a recommendation to retake the Written and Oral Defense, the Committee will make specific suggestions to the student about how to strengthen areas of weakness. Graduate Studies Committee policy permits students one retake.

The Candidacy Review Committee Chair reports results of the Written and Oral Defense deliberations to the C&I Graduate Adviser. Subsequently, the C&I Graduate Studies Committee votes on the recommendation to advance to candidacy. The C&I Graduate Coordinator then will notify the student of the results and guide the preparation and submission of candidacy papers.