

**Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Comprehensive Examination
Ed.S. Policy and Procedure Statement**

Educational Specialist Program

General Description

Each Educational Specialist Degree student must pass a comprehensive examination as part of his/her program of studies in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. The examination will consist of questions related to the courses they have taken in Educational Leadership and be focused on their specialty area (e.g., principal or superintendent licensure, post-secondary education). The intent of the comprehensive examination is to assess the student's overall knowledge in educational leadership, ability to synthesize and apply that knowledge to cogent discussion of leadership problems or the resolution of significant educational issues, and skill in organizing and expressing ideas in a logical, coherent, literate, and convincing fashion.

The form of the exam is negotiated with the student's Ed.S program advisor and committee member. The examination is typically a written, sit-down or take home essay exam, although other formats may also be appropriate. The question(s) may pose educational issues calling for resolution, leadership problems requiring solutions, situational problems requiring analysis, and/or abstract questions calling for the application of appropriate competence.

Eligibility and Scheduling of the Examination

In order to take the examination, a student must: (1) have been granted regular admission to the degree program; (2) have filed an approved plan of study; (3) have completed 20 semester hours of work applicable toward the degree, not including the practicum; (4) have formed an Ed.S. Committee consisting of two ELPS faculty members; (5) have maintained a grade average of at least 3.00 in his/her graduate degree program; and (6) obtained approvals from both her/his advisor and have eligibility verified.

Once the student has fulfilled all the eligibility requirements to take the exam, the exam is scheduled by the student's Ed.S. Program Advisor and may be taken at any time that is agreed upon by the student and the advisor. The format and the date for the examination are determined between the student and the Ed.S. Program Advisor.

The “Permit to Take Written Comprehensive Examination” from the ELPS Division Office must be received by the secretary in the ELPS Office three weeks before the exams have been scheduled. Therefore, you must plan ahead to take the exam. A copy of the Policy and Procedure Statement will be given or mailed to each student when he/she sign up for the exam.

Examination Expectation: Written Format

The following conditions shall govern the administration of the comprehensive examination:

1. Students may choose to either handwrite the exam or use their own personal computer and printer. For those using a personal computer, one hard copy must be turned into the exam monitor at the completion of the exam. The student is on his/her honor to destroy all electronic storage of exam responses.
2. Dictionaries brought by the students are allowed during the exam.
3. Students are permitted to leave the examination room for a short period of time during the exam but are not permitted to discuss the examination questions with anyone other than the proctor.
4. Paper and ball point pens will be provided. Pencils shall not be used.
5. If there are more than one student writing responses to the exam, students are identified by the examination number which is used only in identifying examination materials.
6. Use of unauthorized materials will result in a decision that the exam has been failed. Plagiarism may result in the filing of charges leading to program and expulsion from the University. termination

General Criteria on Which the Examinations Are Judged

The responses to the examination questions will be judged by the following general criteria:

1. The response must be well organized, concisely, and precisely written.
2. The response must present a clear formulation of the topic.
3. The response must clearly address all the parts and the parameters of the question.
4. The response must demonstrate an acceptable level of content knowledge in the student's program of studies.
5. The response must be well grounded in the literature, and appropriate citations provided.

Assessment and Evaluation of the Written Examination

The examination will be read and evaluated by the student's Ed.S. committee, which consists of two members of the ELPS faculty. Where the two faculty members disagree about the results, a third will be asked to judge the exam, again independent of the first two reviewers. The following grading system will be used:

Honors Pass--The student has responded to all questions on the examination in an outstanding manner.

Pass--The student has responded to all questions on the examination in an acceptable manner.

Fail--The student has failed to respond in an acceptable manner to one or more of the questions asked.

Examination Retake

A student who fails the comprehensive examination may be allowed one retake of the exam. He/she will be notified by the Program Coordinator and/or his/her advisor if a retake is permitted. This retake can not be done until the next semester and will consist of a new exam. A second permit is required for the retake. If a student fails the retake of the examination, his/her degree program will be terminated.

Notification of Successful Completion of the Examination

The Program Coordinator will notify the student in writing if he/she has successfully completed the exam and what the grade for the exam was. This will generally be done within a three week period of completing the exam. The Chair will also notify the Graduate School. Please note that in order to graduate in the same semester the exam is taken, the results of the exam must be to the Graduate School by the published date.