New Program Requirements for the Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction

In effect for students who began their studies in the fall semester of 2012 or after.

Milestones in the Ph.D. program have been revised to provide students more timely feedback on their progress, as well as to be sure they are well-prepared for the challenges of the dissertation process. The new milestones include 1) A Gateway Review after completing the first 12 credits of doctoral study; 2) a course-based inquiry tool requirement; and 3) a doctoral comprehensive exam structured around a pilot study to be carried out by each student, presented in journal article format and defended orally.

Doctoral Gateway Review

**Purpose:** A review of students’ writing skill, scholarly thinking ability, and understanding of research, as well as a sense of students’ strengths and where more work is needed (a formative assessment).

**Overview:** This review requires the student to submit a 10- to 12-page paper (double-spaced excluding references) that demonstrates the student’s developing understanding of research in a specific area of inquiry. This is a take-home exam. There is no letter grade assigned to the paper and it is to be completed only one time.

- The paper can be started at any time but must be completed within the first semester in which the student completes the first 12 credits at the University at Albany. The student may apply for an extension at the discretion of the advisor.

- The student cannot be certified to have completed the Inquiry Course requirements until the Gateway Review is completed.

**Components of the Gateway Review Paper:**

1. Problem statement in a specified area of inquiry

This statement *may* include research questions, but it must include a problem statement. This statement *must* also include discussion of why this area of inquiry is important and how it relates to other important areas of inquiry in education.

2. Preliminary review of the literature as related to the problem statement in the area of inquiry

This review should include attention to the “big ideas” that characterize this area of inquiry and should reflect an adequate knowledge of the key concepts, questions, research, and scholars that define the field.

3. Possible directions for future research

This section should reflect the student’s understanding of the field and interest in specific questions or problems that might be explored in future research.

**Gateway Review Procedures:**

1. The student has the responsibility of submitting the Gateway Review paper to the department secretary within the first semester following that in which the student completed the first 12 credits
in the Ph.D. program.

2. Once the paper is submitted to the department, the secretary informs the faculty of the submission. The faculty has six weeks to review the paper.

3. A discussion of the paper by the full faculty is scheduled for a faculty meeting no later than six weeks after submission. At that meeting, faculty members discuss their assessment of the paper and make recommendations to the student. The student’s advisor keeps a record of the recommendations made at that meeting.

4. Following the meeting, the advisor drafts a document summarizing the faculty review discussion. This document is distributed to the faculty for comment. The final version must be endorsed by a majority of the faculty.

5. The student receives the final review document, which is also placed in the student’s file. This document serves as one piece of evidence of the student’s progress in the program. Students will meet with the advisor to discuss recommendations and make plans for areas in need of improvement.

**Gateway Review Rubric**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>1 (Improvement Needed)</th>
<th>2 (Competent)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>Shows need for improvement in articulating ideas with clarity and coherence</td>
<td>Shows ability to articulate ideas with clarity and coherence</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scholarly Thinking Ability</strong></td>
<td>Shows need for improvement in ability to use evidence; to consider diverse perspectives and base analysis on an informed position</td>
<td>Shows ability to use evidence; Shows ability to consider diverse perspectives and based on careful analysis takes an informed position</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding of Research</strong></td>
<td>Shows need for improvement in ability to explain and interpret research; ability to identify major concepts, theories, and major methodological paradigms</td>
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