

Directions for Writing Exam Essays:

General directions

Answer two exam questions from the list provided. Devote about equal time and space to each of the two essays. Do not repeat in your second essay content and analysis already provided in the first essay. Take care to address each component of the exam question. Draw appropriately from the scholarly literature. Make sure to provide references to original sources (e.g., book, chapter, or journal article) for any statement that refers to ideas, words, or research findings of another person. Use appropriate headings and subheadings throughout the paper. Write clear and grammatically correct sentences, and logical paragraphs.

Formatting

Each essay should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words. Do not exceed 2,500 words per essay.

Provide a bibliography of works cited.

Essay word count does NOT include the bibliography.

Use a standard 12-point font, double-spaced, numbered pages.

Final submission must be spell-checked.

Submitting your Essays

1. Submit your essays as e-mail attachments no later than 12.30 pm on Monday, August 26, 2013.
2. On a separate sheet, add the Honor Code Statement below followed by your name and date:

"The two comprehensive exam essays I submit are original, new work that I alone have authored. In writing these essays I have not consulted with or received help from others. I have taken care to provide proper citations for all ideas, statements, quotations, and facts presented that are not my own. I also have read the university's 'Standards of Academic Integrity' and confirm that I have adhered to them."

<Name>, <Date>

3. Submit a hardcopy of your exam postmarked the same or the next business day. When submitting the hardcopy of your exam, add the Honor Code Statement along with your signature.

Fall 2013 EAPS Doctoral Exam Questions

Pick TWO of the following four questions to answer following the directions on the previous page.

1. Diverse external leaders and education stakeholders increasingly advocate the implementation of external accountability mechanisms. Examples are teacher and principal evaluation systems in K-12 schools, and “value-added” and “growth” models that require measures of student learning and development in schools and in higher education. These accountability mechanisms and their rationale are informed by private sector logic and often curtail the autonomy of education leadership.

Rely on the social science literature, citing important references, as you analyze this important policy development. Specifically:

- a. Focus on P-12, higher education, or both—but make your choice clear at the beginning
- b. Discuss the tensions involved in achieving a balance between autonomy and accountability
- c. Identify and describe strategies for resolving these tensions and achieving a delicate balance
- d. Present and analyze two cases that support your analysis. These cases may be real or hypothetical. What matters is that each is a valid example of the tension between autonomy and accountability, and also that each provides you with the opportunity to indicate a resolution.

2. Select a contemporary issue pertaining to K-12 or postsecondary education. Write an essay that critically analyzes the issue.

Your essay should include the following components:

- a. An introductory summary of the issue that identifies the issue’s stakeholders and explains why the issue is significant.
- b. A systematic analysis of key aspects of the issue in which you apply concepts and insights from three social science disciplines. In this analysis, be sure to identify particular features of the issue that may be controversial and reasons for the controversy.
- c. Discuss what is likely to happen on this issue over the short-term and long-term and why.

3. The past fifty years have witnessed increases in the rates of participation and of attainment in postsecondary education in the US and other developed as well as in rapidly developing countries. Although specific targets differ, increases in participation and attainment at the postsecondary level continue to be advocated as a goal to be welcomed. Such a goal implicates a wide range of education policies.

For a country of your choosing, identify a current stated or public goal to expand participation in postsecondary education or to raise attainment or completion at the postsecondary level.

- a. Drawing on the scholarly literature, evaluate the goal. Elaborate the main reasons and requirements for its realization. Is the goal appropriate? Is it feasible? Be sure to define terms clearly and in detail and to apply research critically and carefully.
- b. Identify two policy approaches that hold promise, if pursued, to support strongly the realization of the goal. Support your choice of each approach with evidence and findings that show the approach will have such a strong impact. Contrast the two approaches in terms of cost, effectiveness, and likelihood of successful implementation.

4. "New Public Management" (NPM) is an umbrella term covering an assortment of management practices and policies aiming to treat organizations in the public sector, including schools, school districts and universities, as if they function in markets.

Drawing on extant literature, prepare an essay in which you explore the concept, its implications, and likely effects. In doing so, be sure to address the following:

- a. Describe and discuss the intellectual roots that give rise to the idea reflected in NPM
- b. Provide two examples of how the concept (whether identified as NPM or not) is applied in an educational setting of your choice
- c. Assess what is known about the results of applying the concept of NPM to educational organizations
- d. Provide a summary assessment as to the promises and/or pitfalls of applying the concept of NPM to educational organizations.