

<p>M.Ed. Educational Psychology</p> <p>Instructions and Procedures for the</p> <p>Project and Comprehensive & Oral Examination</p>

Overview: The *Project* (ED-D 598) and the *Comprehensive Examination* (ED-D 597) represent the culmination of the M.Ed. candidate’s graduate education in the Learning and Development (LDIS) or Special Education (SPED) focus areas of Educational Psychology. Although these courses fall under separate course numbers, they are best understood as a single process. The goal of this process is to give students a final opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill as critical consumers of research and literature in either of the focus areas.

In order to complete this process, M.Ed. candidates will be given two weeks (14 days) to write 3 research critiques, then successfully complete an oral examination of the critiques and demonstrate a high level of achievement in the application of knowledge required in Educational Psychology related to Learning and Development or Special Education¹. Students may schedule their project and oral exam ahead of time, *with the understanding that the oral exam will not proceed unless the written project is passed.*

M.Ed. project committees will be comprised of a supervisor and one committee member who are both regular departmental faculty members from the Educational Psychology (LDIS or SPED) unit.

I. ED-D 598 Project (Research Critique)

1. Choice of Articles to be Critiqued:

Five (5) research articles from peer-reviewed journals representing the disciplines of Learning and Development or Special Education will be selected by the supervising committee and distributed to the student by the supervisor. *Two of the journal articles may be in a general area of interest that candidates identify to their supervisor.*

Together, the 5 journal articles will create opportunities for students to demonstrate and draw upon program competencies and preparation as follows:

LDIS	SPED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A selection of research methods • Both qualitative and quantitative analyses • Developmental psychology and instruction • Psychology of learning and instruction • Topics in Motivation or Self-regulated learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A selection of research methods • Both qualitative and quantitative analyses • Special education assessment and intervention across exceptionalities • Psychology of learning or development • Inclusive instructional approaches and practices & assistive technologies

¹ Consistent with Faculty of Graduate Studies requirements for Project-based Master’s Degrees

Writing the Research Critiques:

- a) **Candidate Selects Three of the Five Articles:** The supervisor will provide the candidate access to the journal articles and the candidate will then select three (3) articles on which to write the critiques.
- b) The supervisor will send an APA reference list of the 5 articles to the Graduate secretary to be kept on record for future reference.
- c) **Format, Time, and Submission Guidelines:**
 - It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate the use of the program-based learning to evaluate the merits and limitations of these samples of empirical research for theory, research and practice.
 - The *maximum* critique length is ten (10) pages double spaced, excluding references.
 - The critique will include: (a) a comprehensive summary that clearly and concisely describes each component of the study (an elaborated abstract of 2-3 pages maximum), and (b) a substantive critique (7-8 pages) drawing on program-based concepts and knowledge about research methods and analyses, research rigor/quality, conceptual issues, and contemporary theory and research.
 - Candidates have two (2) weeks from receipt of the journal articles to complete critiques.
 - Completed critiques will be submitted electronically to the supervisor and examining committee members.
 - Papers must represent independent and original work by the student without feedback or consultation from others (including the supervisor). Consistent with university academic integrity guidelines, the use of an editor is prohibited without written permission from the supervisor. Review by fellow students and tutoring services is prohibited.

2. Evaluation of Critiques:

- a) **Evaluation Criteria:** Successful project papers will demonstrate mastery of the following skills²:
 - Ability to comprehend the article content accurately.
 - Ability to situate the article content within a larger body of research and theory.
 - Ability to identify any unnamed assumptions relevant to the authors' hypotheses, methods, and or conclusions.
 - Ability to evaluate the soundness and appropriateness of the authors' choice of participants, measurement methods, study design, and basic analyses. Knowledge of advanced statistical procedures is not required.

² As per Faculty of Graduate Studies requirements for Project-based Master's degrees.

- Ability to evaluate the importance and generalizability of authors' findings and conclusions
 - Ability to identify potential applications to practice, policy, and future research.
- b) **Evaluation Procedure:**
- Each examining committee member will use the above evaluation criteria to evaluate the quality of the critiques. Each criterion will be judged as either *fail* or *pass*.
 - Committee members will share their evaluations, seeking consensus through discussion. If a majority view cannot be achieved, an additional faculty member will be asked to evaluate the critiques and cast the deciding vote.
 - Committee members will come to a consensus as to whether the student's comprehensive project (critiques) pass and can proceed to the oral defense.
- c) **If Passed:** If the critiques are deemed defensible, the supervisor will notify the student and ask the EPLS graduate program assistant to arrange an oral defense date.
- d) **If Not Passed:** Formative feedback from the committee will be provided only *after* the papers have been officially recorded as "Not Passed." Only one additional project attempt will be permitted and scheduled in consultation with the student, and supervisory committee. The second project attempt will include a new selection of 5 articles and 3 new critiques will be written.
- e) **If Not Passed after a second project attempt:** The student will be asked to withdraw from the program with unsatisfactory progress of the degree requirements. The degree will not be granted.

II. Comprehensive Oral Exam:

1. **Goal:** The goal of the M.Ed. Comprehensive oral exam is to allow students to demonstrate the research-informed understanding of human development and learning, or special education in a collegial environment.
2. **Prerequisite:** The comprehensive oral exam will only proceed if the research critique project is successful.
3. **Examining Faculty:** The comprehensive oral exam will be conducted by the student's committee, which includes the supervisor and one additional regular departmental faculty member from LDIS or SPED. Consistent with Graduate Studies Policies, an examination Chair from inside or outside the department will oversee the oral exam procedures.
4. **Scheduling:** The oral defense will normally be scheduled to take place within two (2) weeks of the student being notified that the project is passed. The graduate program assistant will coordinate scheduling and room booking.
5. **Length:** The oral defense typically takes one and a half hours; additional time may be needed for further clarification as the examination committee deems appropriate.

- 6. Meeting Structure:** The structure of the oral defense is as follows:
- a) A brief (15-20 min) summary by the student of the project papers and the written critiques.
 - b) An oral examination by committee members of the student's critiques, paying special attention to issues missed or poorly communicated in the written critiques.
 - c) Committee members may also ask questions regarding key principles of learning and development or special education as covered in the program area's core required courses.
 - d) Committee members will hold a brief *in-camera* meeting to adjudicate the oral examination. The committee will immediately report their decision to the student.
- 7. Outcome Reporting:** The supervisor and graduate program assistant will be responsible for reporting the outcomes of both *Project* (ED-D 598) and the *Comprehensive Oral Examination* (ED-D 597) to Graduate Studies. Grades assigned are Pass/Fail for each course.

<p>Evaluation of Criteria for the M.Ed. Educational Psychology Project and Comprehensive Examination</p>

Student Name:**Student Number: V00****Supervisor:****Committee Member:****Chair:****Date:****Evaluation Criteria**

The critiques demonstrate mastery of the following skills:

Criteria	Pass / Fail
Ability to comprehend the article content accurately.	
Ability to situate the article content within a larger body of research and theory.	
Ability to identify any unnamed assumptions relevant to the authors' hypotheses, methods, and or conclusions.	
Ability to evaluate the soundness and appropriateness of the authors' choice of participants, measurement methods, study design, and basic analyses. Knowledge of advanced statistical procedures is not required.	
Ability to evaluate the importance and generalizability of authors' findings and conclusions	
Ability to identify potential applications to practice, policy, and future research.	

Supervisor / Committee Member Comments: