



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

LAMAR UNIVERSITY

Deaf Studies & Deaf Education

EdD/MA Handbook

Deaf Studies and Deaf Education

Revised September 2026

Lamar University Beaumont, Texas

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Introduction

The doctoral dissertation and master's thesis handbook, graduate catalog, and official university

website provide information concerning policies and procedures for students in the Deaf Studies and Deaf Education doctoral and master's program. The student is responsible for reading all literature on the Deaf Studies and Deaf Education program, College of Graduate Studies, College of Fine Arts and Communications, and Lamar University policies and procedures.

The Deaf Studies and Deaf Education program was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as a 66-hour Doctor of Education (Ed. D.) degree program in 1993. The 66-hour program consists of 36 hours of core courses, 12 hours of cognate courses, 12 hours of statistic/research courses, and 6 hours of dissertation credits.

General admissions requirements can be found in the [graduate catalog](#) and on the university website. After the student has been accepted by the College of Graduate Studies, and the Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, the student meets with the Program Director (or a designated representative) for either the doctoral or master's program in which the student is admitted. The Director will assist the student and advise them on first semester courses and address the issue of who will be the student's faculty Academic Advisor. The Program Director will also provide an overview of the program and answer any questions the student has at that time. Assistance may include, but is not limited to: course selection, research topics, procedural and policy requirements, and doctoral program requirements and deadlines.

Acceptance

Once a doctoral/master's student formally enters the program, the Program Director will meet with the student and conduct the initial advising. This advising includes review of the student's program plan and recommendations for courses to take in the summer semesters.

Transfer Credits

Transfer credits must be submitted to the Director of the program in which the student is admitted and approved within the student's first semester of study. Approval is required from both the Director and Department Chair. Only six credits are allowed to be transferred. A copy of the transcript with course descriptions (if requested) must be submitted with this G-6 form found at <https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/forms/index.html>

Grading System on DSDE

The grading system at DSDE for graduate students is "A" (superior), "B" (good), "C" (marginal), "F" (fail), "I" (incomplete), "S" (satisfactory), "U" (unsatisfactory), Drop, and Withdrawal. Credits applicable to graduate degrees are given only for the grades A, B, C, and S. Although C grades earned at Lamar University may be counted toward the requirements for a graduate degree, **C grades are not considered acceptable graduate-level performance. Students are only allowed to receive a C grade in one course. If a second C grade is earned in any course, the student will be automatically placed on academic suspension.** In computing grade-point averages, an "A" is valued at four grade points, a "B" three, a "C" two, and an "F" zero. An overall grade point average (GPA) of "B" (3.0) is needed for graduation. Incomplete course work that is not finished during the next long semester (spring or fall) will be credited with an "F." With compelling justification, the graduate dean may grant an extension of the time limit for the completion of incomplete coursework. International students must receive an "NG" for courses (such as Graduate Projects) that have not been completed and should not receive an "I" in any course. course work.

Minimum Academic Performance, Probation, and Suspension

A graduate student with a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.0 or higher is in good standing. A student with a CGPA below 3.0 will be placed on probation, suspended, or expelled.

Probation. Students with full graduate admission status who fail to achieve and maintain a CGPA of 3.0 at the completion of nine semester hours of graduate enrollment will be placed on academic probation (P1). A P1 student who earns a grade point average (GA) of at least 3.25 on all graduate courses in the next enrolled semester and whose CGPA is below 3.0 will be placed on (P2) probation. Students on probation may enroll in courses but may not apply for admission to candidacy or for graduation. The probationary status applies whether the student receives a letter of notification from the Graduate Office.

Suspension. A P1 student who fails to earn a 3.25 GPA in the next enrolled semester and whose CGPA is less than 3.0 will be suspended. Furthermore, a graduate student who has been placed on (P2) probation and who fails to raise his/her CGPA to at least 3.0 in the next enrolled semester will be suspended. Suspended students may enroll in graduate courses in the summer and undergraduate courses during spring, fall, or summer semesters. However, students must receive a recommendation from their department chair, college dean, and approval from the graduate dean through appeal to enroll in graduate courses during spring and fall semesters. Undergraduate grades are not used in the computation of the graduate CGPA. Suspension for the fall semester may be removed if the student raises the graduate CGPA to at least 3.0 during the summer term. The first academic suspension (S1) shall be for one long semester (fall or spring). A graduate student who has been suspended (S1) and who fails to raise his/her CGPA to at least 3.0 in the next enrolled semester will be dismissed from the graduate program.

Academic Dishonesty in the DSDE Program

A student within DSDE found engaging in any type of academic dishonesty will be dismissed from the university. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to):

1. Copying from another individual's test paper, data listings, and/or research.
2. Plagiarizing: Copying more than three words in a row from any source including a paper of your own from a different course (regardless of whether the work is graded or a non-graded draft) without properly citing the original source.
3. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
4. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work, which is either graded or non-graded, assigned in a course.
5. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of an un-administered test.
6. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any person to substitute oneself for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted as an assignment for either academic credit or as a non-graded assignment.
7. Bribing another person to obtain an un-administered test or information about an un-administered test.
8. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work, research paper, or other written assignment that was prepared by another individual or firm. This includes copying from

library or other sources or the Internet/WWW or the use of AI without authorization or citations.

9. Any copying from library or other resources, including the Internet/WWW or use of AI, without the instructor's prior knowledge and approval, or without giving (clearly and conspicuously) the proper credit reference.

10. **AI is a tool, but it does not replace you doing your own work. Therefore, if an artificial intelligence (AI) checking system identifies that your work was written by AI you will be dismissed from the program. (If you want to try it as an editing system that is fine and there are other tools in BlackBoard that can help you with this polishing of your work. The writing center can also help with this final polish.)

****Department AI Policy**

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The capabilities and applicability of AI are expanding with astonishing rapidity. Students may find AI to be a tempting entity for quickly completing various assignments during their academic journeys. However, AI is a tool, not a solution. As masters and doctoral students, you are expected to procure the knowledge and hone the skills reflective of aspiring professionals and academics. Relying on AI to complete one's work is both unprofessional and dishonest and will not be tolerated. If students are suspected of using AI in ways that violate the department's Academic Integrity Policy, the following steps will be taken:

A) The instructor initially suspicious of a work will present the material in question to the department chair for initial review. If the chair finds substantial reasoning to suspect the work in question is illegitimate, the instructor will be asked to assemble a departmental committee to review the work in question.

Note: The chair will not be included as a committee member.

B) A committee of at least three (3) faculty members (in addition to the initial instructor who presented the work in question) will be assembled to review the material. Before committee members are given the work to review, the student's name will be removed to promote anonymity and unbiased feedback. From the day they receive the materials in question, committee members will be allotted two (2) weeks for review.

i) Committee members will be asked to critically examine the material and identify any statements they suspect are illegitimate to the student. Members will also be asked to identify any conspicuous references including but not limited to: 1) citations of an edited volume rather than specific chapters within said work; 2) references that do not align with the student's overall investigative goal; 3) misinterpreted references; and 4) fictitious references.

ii) Committee members will formulate questions and comments relating to said statements and references.

C) Once all committee members have reviewed the materials in question, a date and time will be selected for a formal meeting between the committee and the student whose work is under investigation. This meeting may be held either in-person or virtually and will be recorded.

D) During the meeting, committee members will question the student regarding the legitimacy of their work. Members will take turns asking the student to explain any and all statements and references suspected of originating from AI. Committee members will note student responses in accordance with their individual questions.

E) At the conclusion of questioning, the student will be temporarily dismissed from the meeting. Committee members will then discuss their notes and determine if the student has demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the material in question, ultimately supporting the legitimacy of their work. Once a final determination has been made, the student will be asked to return to the meeting for the committee's official decision. A final report will be documented and saved for 3 years (if the student is to be removed from the program) or throughout the remainder of the student's enrollment at Lamar University.

Determination and Next Steps if AI Misuse is Suspected

If the student is believed to have used AI as a *primary* means for completing an assignment (see Academic Dishonesty in DSDE Program - 10), a written report with evidence will be submitted to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication for their review. The Dean, DSDE Department Chair, and faculty member who raised concern for AI misuse will reach a determination on how to proceed (e.g., removing the student from the program).

EdD. Program Plan

Ed.D Program Plan

First Year		
Summer (Full semester)	6309 - Doctoral Seminar	Core
Summer (Full semester)	Open Cognate	Cognate
Fall	6323 - Scholarly Writing	Core
Fall	6320 - Introduction to Qualitative Research	Research Design
Fall	6314 – Ethics	Core
Spring	6315 – Statistics	Research Design
Spring	6403 – ASL Literature	Deaf Studies
Spring	6324 – ASL/English Linguistics	Deaf Studies
Students take preliminary exams		

Second year		
Summer (Full summer)	Open Cognate	Cognate
Fall	6321 - Advanced Qualitative Research	Research Design
Fall	6322 - Critical Pedagogy	Core
Fall	6305 - Psycholinguistics	Core
Spring	6316 - Research Design and Statistics I	Research Design
Spring	6325 - Comparative Culture Studies	Deaf Studies
Spring	6302 - Law and Deaf Individuals	Cognate
Third Year		
Fall	6317 - Research Design and Statistics II	Research Design
Fall	6304 – Curriculum	Deaf Education
Fall	6311 – Bilingual Theories	Deaf Education
Spring	6308 - Cognition	Core
Spring	6312 - Assessment	Deaf Education
Spring	6313 - Proposal Writing	Core
Ongoing	6390 - Dissertation	
Ongoing	6391 - Dissertation	
Ongoing	6392 - Dissertation – 1 credit	

07/07/25

Core courses

6309 - Doctoral Seminar 6323 - Scholarly Writing
6314 - Ethics
6322 - Critical Pedagogy 6305 - Psycholinguistics
6308 - Cognition
6313 – Proposal Writing 6390 - Dissertation
6391 - Dissertation

Total core course hours: 27

Research Design Courses

6320 - Introduction to Qualitative Research 6315 - Statistics
6321 - Advanced Qualitative Research 6316 - Research
Design and Statistics I 6317 - Research Design and Statistics
II

Total research design course hours: 15

Deaf Education track 6311 - Bilingual
Theories 6304 - Curriculum

6312 - Assessment

Total deaf education course hours: 9

Deaf Studies track

6324 – ASL/English Linguistics 6325 - Comparative
Culture Studies 6303 - ASL Literature

Total deaf studies course hours: 9

Cognates

6330 - Research Internship
6302 - Law and Deaf Individuals 6318 - Research Seminar
Any DSDE 6350 or 6351
Any transfer approved by the department

Total cognate course hours: 15

Financial Aid at end of the degree

Dissertation is no longer considered full time—it will have an impact on your financial aid

- - <https://www.lamar.edu/financial-aid/resources/faqs-finaid-scholarships.html>
 - 7th Question: "How many hours do you need to enroll to receive financial aid?"
 - A minimum of six hours if an undergraduate or five hours if graduate for any Federal or State aid (Pell Grant is the only Federal Aid that can be awarded for students enrolled for less than six hours - if they qualify). Some awards may require full-time enrollment, please contact our office for more information.
- <https://www.lamar.edu/financial-aid/types-of-aid/undergraduate-students.html>

- Most of these items state the credit hour requirement for financial aid - 4.5 hours is considered half-time from the full 9 hours, however, we round up to 5 to be considered half-time enrollment.
- <https://www.lamar.edu/financial-aid/types-of-aid/graduate-students.html>
 - Most of these items state the credit hour requirement for financial aid - 4.5 hours is considered half-time from the full 9 hours, however, we round up to 5 to be considered half-time enrollment.
- <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/sfahandbooks/hb4-15.pdf>
 - This is FSA Partners (Federal Student Aid) sharing the undergraduate enrollment minimum hour requirement
- <https://www.lamar.edu/financial-aid/take-courses-that-count-in-your-program-of-study.html>

If you are just finishing proposal writing and planning on taking dissertation credits—take both 6390 and 6391. Then ask your diss chair to help you get a one-time permission to take 6 credits as full time for one semester

If you have already taken 6391—sign up for DSDE 6392—Dissertation --Continue 1 credit special topic.

This is cheaper to pay for a one credit course (even if it is out of state) than an instate 3-credit course.

You can graduate as long as you are registered and have completed all the coursework. So, new policy.

If you are getting an instate waiver than you must accept that in My Scholarship so do check that system. You will only get six semesters (summer, fall, spring) as instate tuition.

I

VR Payments

If your VR needs to pay for your tuition I have been told that this is the link
thirdpartybillin@lamar.edu

M.A. Program Plan

First Year		
Fall	5316 – Ethics	Core
Fall	5340 - Intro to Qualitative Research	Core
Fall	5323 - Scholarly Writing	Core
Spring	5303 - ASL Literature	Core
Spring	5324 - ASL/English Linguistics	Core
Spring	5315 – Statistics	Core

Second year		
Fall	5301 - Deaf History	Core
Fall	5305 - Psycholinguistics	Core
Fall	5390 - Thesis or **Elective	Thesis/Elective
Spring	5329 - Law & Deaf Education	Core
Spring	5346 - Comparative Cultural Studies	Core
Spring	5391 - Thesis or **5360 - Capstone	Thesis/Capstone

M.A. - Core courses

5301 - Deaf History
5303 - ASL Literature
5305 - Psycholinguistics
5313 - Statistics
5316 - Ethics
5323 - Scholarly Writing
5324 - ASL/English Linguistics
5329 - Law & Deaf Education
5340 - Introduction to Qualitative Research
5346 - Comparative Cultural Studies

Total core course hours: 30

Thesis Track: 6

5390 - Thesis
5391 - Thesis

****Capstone (Non-Thesis) Track: 6**

Additional Elective
5360 - Capstone

Total course hours: 36

Progress Through the Doctoral Program

Progress through the doctoral program is marked by several milestones: acceptance, preliminary examination, comprehensive examination, candidacy, dissertation stage, and graduation. Students are expected to accomplish Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) throughout all stages of their doctoral studies.

Program Learning Outcomes

Doctoral students' progress through the doctoral program will include accomplishing four PLOs. They include:

1. Apply the basic principles of inquiry and research design to educational research
2. Demonstrate "T" learning; the top of the T demonstrates breadth in knowledge about Deaf Studies and Deaf Education while the stem of the T demonstrates depth of knowledge in the cognate/dissertation area
3. Demonstrate an ability of ASL/English bilingual fluency in academic content
4. Publish peer-reviewed and translational articles

Program Plan

A program plan should be developed in consultation with the Program Director within your first two semesters of study. The plan will guide your coursework throughout the remainder of the program and assist in keeping you on track with all program requirements and expected PLOs. You are responsible to make any changes to your coursework, specify the cognate courses (course number, course title, credits), and insert your grades on the program plan for your records.

This information is also needed to complete **Course of Study**.

Preliminary Examinations

The preliminary examinations are designed to assess the student's capacity for critical analysis and synthesized integration of knowledge acquired during the course of study for the doctoral degree in Deaf Studies and Deaf Education. Satisfactory performance in coursework does not necessarily guarantee successful performance on the preliminary examination.

Reasonable accommodations will be made to allow students with disabilities to take the preliminary examination. The student should discuss individual needs with the Program Director to arrange accommodations as needed.

The Doctoral Program Director will create the Preliminary Examination Committee

The preliminary examinations typically occur after the second semester of program studies or when students have completed a minimum of 18 credits of doctoral-level course work. Students must work with the Doctoral Program Director during their first semester to develop a reading. Students should add to 2 or 3 articles related to their ideas, but the seminal article will be the basis for the prelims. The student and Program Director will meet to determine the best date to begin their preliminary exam. On that date, the student will be given their questions by the Doctoral Program Director and will have two weeks to complete the written paper.

Early Intervention Issues

- Lillo-Martin, D. C., Gale, E., & Chen Pichler, D. (2023). Family ASL: An early start to equitable education for deaf children. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 43(2), 156-166.
- Gale, E., Creamer, P., Pichler, D. C., & Lillo-Martin, D. (2024). Visual Strategies for Engaging Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children. *Odyssey: New Directions in Deaf Education*, 24, 54-60.
- Gale, E. (2026). Deaf adult roles: recommendations from family-centered early intervention. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, enag031.
- Gale, E., & Martin, A. (2024). Deaf gain: Visual communication for all young children. *Discover Education*, 3(1), 66.
- Porter, A., Sarkar, S., Russell, J., Brasov, C., Carneiro, J., Dauer, F., ... & Young, A. (2026). A coalition of parents of DHH children reframing involvement: From lived experience to global policy, research and practice. *Deafness & Education International*, 28(2), 127-145.
- Moeller, M. P., Gale, E., Szarkowski, A., Smith, T., Birdsey, B. C., Moodie, S. T., ... & Holzinger, D. (2024). Family-centered early intervention Deaf/Hard of Hearing (FCEI-DHH): Foundation principles. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 29(SI), SI53-SI63

Bimodal Bilinguals

- Goodwin, C., & Lillo-Martin, D. (2023). Deaf and Hearing American Sign Language–English Bilinguals: Typical Bilingual Language Development. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 28(4), 350-362.
- Casselli, N., Pyers, J., & Lieberman, A. M. (2021). Deaf children of hearing parents have age-level vocabulary growth when exposed to American Sign Language by 6 months of age. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 232, 229-236. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2021.01.029>
- Pontecorvo, E., Higgins, M., Mora, J., Lieberman, A. M., Pyers, J., & Caselli, N. K. (2023). Learning a sign language does not hinder acquisition of a spoken language. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 66(4), 1291-1308.
- Berger, L., Pyers, J., Lieberman, A., & Caselli, N. (2024). Parent American Sign Language skills correlate with child—but not toddler—ASL vocabulary size. *Language Acquisition*, 31(2), 85-99.

Finton, E., Hall, W. C., Berke, M., Bye, R., Ikeda, S., & Caselli, N. (2024). Age-Expected Language and Academic Outcomes for Deaf Children with Hearing Caregivers. *The Journal of Special Education*, 00224669241257699.

Here are non-deaf papers that show that the environment impacts development in various ways

Hutchins, E. (2010). Cognitive ecology. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 2(4), 705-715. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-8765.2010.01089.x>

These next two show that the brain is the same in both structure and function IF it has access to early language

Lynne Nielson, S., & Mayberry, R. I. (2025). Production of real signs but not pseudosigns affected by age of acquisition in American Sign Language. *Memory & Cognition*, 1-24.

Mayberry, R. I., Hatrak, M., Ilbasaran, D., Cheng, Q., Huang, Y., & Hall, M. L. (2024). Impoverished language in early childhood affects the development of complex sentence structure. *Developmental Science*, 27(1), e13416.

The preliminary examination paper can be no more than 15 pages, which does not include the cover page and references (fewer pages may not be enough to effectively answer the question). It must follow current departmental APA guidelines. Students may not collaborate or consult with others while taking their preliminary examination.

There are four possible conclusions to a preliminary examination:

1. The student may pass without revisions.
2. The student may pass with revisions that do not need to be returned to the Committee for approval, only to the Program Director.
3. The candidate may fail but be allowed to do revisions that the Committee must approve;
or
4. The candidate may fail the preliminary examination.

If a student fails the preliminary examination and is not given the opportunity to do revisions, they will be recommended for expulsion.

Note, the examination may only be retaken one time. If granted a retake, the student must meet individually with each committee member within seven business days. The retake must be completed within one month of the results of original exam (e.g., if student was given a failing score on 1/1, student must complete their redo by 2/1).

Should the student also fail their revisions, they will be recommended for expulsion. In both cases, the student has the right to appeal their expulsion according to the [Academic Policies section of the Lamar University Student Handbook](#). As stated in the handbook, students must submit an initial written appeal to the department chair within five days. The Department Chair has the right to uphold or overturn the decision to expel the student. If the Department Chair elects to uphold the decision of expulsion, and the student does not accept this decision, the student may then submit a written appeal to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communications (CoFAC) within five days of receiving the Chair's decision. The Dean also has the right to uphold or overturn the decision to expel the student. If the Dean elects to uphold the decision of expulsion, and the student does not accept this decision, the student may then submit a written appeal to the Provost within five days. The Provost's decision to either uphold or overturn expulsion will be made with a committee and will be final.

Comprehensive Examinations

The Comprehensive Examination will take place once the student has completed all courses in their program plan and has completed Chapter 1 in Proposal Writing. The Dissertation Committee will be responsible for implementing and evaluating the Comprehensive Examination process.

The Deaf Studies and Deaf Education doctoral comprehensive examination format will utilize an electronic portfolio approach that requires students to document and demonstrate their knowledge and skills in Deaf Studies and Deaf Education that have been attained from coursework and their academic experiences during their doctoral studies. Students may use any web designing sites that they prefer, such as Google Sites, Wix, Weebly, etc. Portfolios will be evaluated to determine if students can evaluate, synthesize, and apply the knowledge obtained in their studies. Therefore, students will provide evidence of accomplishing Program Learning Outcomes. Additionally, Chapter 1 of the dissertation proposal will be submitted to determine if the student can conduct independent research prior to beginning the dissertation process.

Developing a Portfolio

To pass the comprehensive examination, students must provide the required evidence demonstrating that they have developed the skills to do independent research. The portfolio must include:

1. Professional goal statement
2. Curriculum vitae
3. Official program of study
4. Evidence of scholarly productivity through course work (e.g., literature review, synthesis paper, peer-reviewed publication, translational piece)
5. Reflections on the impact of their coursework and time in the program on their professional development
6. Evidence of research abilities as evidenced by Chapter I
7. At least one peer-reviewed publication and one conference presentation completed during their time in the program.

To be successful the PLOs need to be document so much of this work should reflect a bilingual ASL/English approach.

Review of Portfolio Documents

The in-department Comprehensive Examination Committee will evaluate the portfolio documents and Chapter 1 of the dissertation proposal by using two rubrics. The **“Assessment for the Doctoral Comprehensive Candidacy Portfolio Review”** and **“Rubric for Evaluating Doctoral Comprehensive Candidacy Chapter 1 of the Dissertation Proposal”** will be completed by each member of the committee and collated by the Dissertation Committee Chair. If the rubrics determine that the candidate has achieved a “pass” as evidenced by an average score of 2.5 or above, the student will move forward with their Dissertation. The committee will complete **“Form D-7: Results of Comprehensive Written and/or Oral Examinations.”**

If a student fails, the student will be given one opportunity to re-submit the portfolio within one month of the first attempt. If the student fails during the second attempt, the student will be expelled from the doctoral program.

Doctoral Candidate

To be called a ‘doctoral candidate,’ the student must be in good standing in the program, successfully complete all the required courses (including Chapters 1-3 in Proposal Writing) and pass their comprehensive exam. At this point, the program has deemed the student to be ready to begin a dissertation study. The dissertation is the last requirement for the doctoral degree. Students in this stage are also referred to as being “All But Dissertation” or ABD to reflect the fact they have completed all program requirements except the dissertation itself.

Dissertation/Thesis Committee

The successful completion of a dissertation/thesis is emphasized as only one of the doctoral/master’s program requirements; however, it is a crucial and necessary step for earning a doctoral/master’s degree. It is the student’s responsibility to understand and satisfy all the requirements of their individual approved program plan and any college or university degree and/or graduation requirements. For **doctoral students**, while it may feel a bit early in the process to begin thinking about dissertation committees, it is a necessary step before beginning comprehensive examinations. Prior to registering for Proposal Writing, you should have already determined your Dissertation Committee Chair and worked with them to develop your committee. Your Dissertation Committee will be responsible for your Comprehensive Examination process, hence why the selection process takes place before then.

Selecting a Dissertation/Thesis Committee

Working together, the student and Dissertation/Thesis Committee Chair will decide on the Dissertation/Thesis Committee. The Dissertation/Thesis Committee consists of a minimum of four graduate faculty members, including a minimum of three Lamar University Deaf Studies and Deaf Education faculty members. The remaining graduate faculty members (a minimum of one and a maximum of two) must either be members of the Lamar University graduate faculty outside the Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education or come from outside the university. They should be chosen for their expertise in research design or content area. It should be noted that there are minimum requirements for selecting outside committee members and that the Dissertation/Thesis Chair can reject a student’s selection.

Outside committee members must satisfy the following requirements:

- Possess a doctorate degree,
- Have publications within the field that the student is studying, and
- Be current faculty members at a college/university in a tenure-track or tenured position or be recognized as professor emeritus.

As is the case with choosing the Dissertation/Thesis Committee Chair, *all members must agree to be on the committee.*

Outside members of the committee **Form G-4: Nomination for Appointment of Special Membership to the Graduate Faculty** in order to be eligible to serve on the student's committee.

The Dissertation/Thesis Committee:

- (in-department only) approves the components of the comprehensive examinations.
- (in-department only) has the final decision regarding pass/fail of the comprehensive examinations.
- approves the dissertation proposal.
- works with the student and Dissertation Chair in advising, encouraging, and approving the dissertation research.
- attends the proposal presentation.
- approves the scheduling of the final oral examination.
- has the final decision regarding pass/fail of the oral dissertation defense; and
- has the final decision regarding the acceptance of the dissertation

Doctoral/Master's candidates are also expected to initiate dialogue with committee members, follow recommended timetables, and plan committee meetings in accordance with the recommendations of the Dissertation/Thesis Committee Chair. In the development of working relationships with committee members, the candidate should be mindful that members have many other professional responsibilities.

Doctoral/Thesis candidates must maintain matriculation at the university until completion of their degree. Even when a student has completed all other requirements of the program except for the dissertation, they must continue to register each semester until completion of the dissertation.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

The dissertation proposal consists of Chapters 1-3 (i.e., Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology) of the overall dissertation. The Dissertation Committee Chair, after giving approval that the dissertation proposal is ready to be defended, submits the proposal to all members of the Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee has two weeks to review and provide feedback to the doctoral candidate in preparation of the proposal defense. The candidate should work with their dissertation chair and the Deaf Studies and Deaf Education Administrative Assistant to schedule a room for the defense, as well as any required accommodations such as interpreters. All defenses, whether proposal or dissertation, are face-to-face.

The dissertation must be a minimum of 6 course credit hours. Students will not be awarded a master's degree or other certification if they leave the program after completing the coursework but

prior to successfully defending the dissertation. As such, students must register for both DSDE 6390 and DSDE 6391 before graduating. In certain situations, the program director may allow early registration for 6390 if and only if the student shows that **they have successfully developed a well-fleshed draft of chapters 1, 2, and 3 prior to taking Proposal Writing.**

Components of the Research Proposal and Dissertation

After the Dissertation Committee Chair approves the research concept, work on the formal research proposal can begin. The dissertation document should follow the steps of the research process in sequence. In general, dissertations at Lamar University should comply with the stylistic guidelines traditionally used for creating documents by members of the academic field of the department. For most departments at Lamar University, that means abiding by the writing style described in the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, henceforth referred to in this handbook as the APA Manual.

In a dissertation, these elements should be incorporated by the student into the appropriate location in the document. Similarly, running heads, appropriate for journal copy, are inappropriate in dissertations. Please find examples of dissertations in your departmental collection or in the Lamar University Library to see how page layout is typically handled in bound dissertations at Lamar University.

In the dissertation proposal, the student's project is typically described in future tense because the work at this stage has not yet been done. Conversely, the *purpose of the study* should be explained in the present tense in the proposal. The study's purpose includes information that will form the basis of the first three chapters of the dissertation, which also includes title, table of contents, references, and appendices. The proposal should be similar to the dissertation in style and format, except that the proposal is written in copy style as opposed to final style (an explanation of this distinction can be found in the APA Manual). The proposal includes Chapter I (i.e., Introduction), Chapter II (i.e., Literature Review), and Chapter III (i.e., Methodology).

In the final dissertation, much of this prose can be revised through appropriate tense changes (past tense) to reflect that the work is now completed. It includes all the information from the proposal, as well as the signature page, copyright, acknowledgements, list of tables and illustrations, chapters 4 and 5.

Proposal/Dissertation/Thesis Sequence of Components

Title. The title of the proposal/dissertation/thesis should be a succinct summary of the topic and generally should not exceed 15 words. Unnecessary words, such as "A Study of ...," should always be avoided. The title should include key terms that readily identify the scope and nature of the study and should be typed using all capital letters. A manuscript page header and a short title may appear in the proposal title page (following APA "copy" manuscript style) but not in the final dissertation.

Abstract. The proposal abstract is a summary of no more than 350 words (2450 characters) that reflects the dissertation project's area of investigation and expected course. It should reflect familiarity with current issues in the field and raise research questions or hypotheses suggested by findings in the current literature. In the abstract, the investigator should briefly describe proposed methods and expected conclusions.

The dissertation abstract is a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the dissertation. Generally written after the dissertation is complete but building on the framework set forth in the proposal abstract, the dissertation abstract provides a summary of the dissertation's research question, methods, results, and conclusions. The abstract should be coherent, well-organized, concise, and self-contained because the abstract is often printed separately.

Table of Contents. The table of contents for the proposal/dissertation should list in order of appearance all components of the project, including all headings and subheadings, with the correct corresponding page numbers on the right margin, following a row of dots (a “dot leader”). Subheads should be indented below the inclusive heading above them to clarify how they fit into the document's organization. The table of contents should be double-spaced between entries; entries longer than one line should be single-spaced. The page numbers for materials preceding Chapter I (i.e., Introduction) should be in lower-case roman numerals, while all subsequent materials should be listed with standard Arabic numerals.

Signature page. On the signature page, the following should appear, in order: the title of the proposal/dissertation, the author's name, the words “Approved by,” and blank underlines, below which should appear the names of the dissertation committee members, followed by their degrees. Committee members (beginning with the chair) sign their names on these lines and indicate the dates of approval (dissertation only).

Copyright. The copyright page should follow the signature page in your document. The fee for copyrighting the dissertation is covered by the standard dissertation fee. To secure copyright, you must include this page in your dissertation, fill out a UMI Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form authorizing UMI to file your claim for copyright, and pay your dissertation fee (dissertation only).

Acknowledgments. Acknowledgments give credit for external support received throughout the dissertation process and recognize generally the contributions of committee members and others who made important contributions. Acknowledgments also express gratitude for the use of copyrighted or otherwise restricted materials, as appropriate. A doctoral candidate may choose to dedicate the dissertation to a person or persons who have had a significant impact on the author's work. This dedication, when included, should be brief and is best placed at the end of the acknowledgments section or on a separate page preceding the acknowledgments (dissertation only).

List of tables and illustrations. Separate lists should be made for tables and illustrations in the document's text. Illustrations appropriate for use in dissertations include figures, maps, diagrams, photos, and plates. These lists should include the number and full name of each table or illustration, listed in order of appearance in the text, followed by the number of the page on which the table or illustration appears. Tables and illustrations are usually numbered sequentially in Arabic numerals, the first digit representing the chapter, followed by a decimal and the table or illustration's number within that chapter (e.g., 4.12; the twelfth table or illustration in chapter 4). The list of tables and the list of illustrations should be double-spaced (dissertation only).

Chapter I. Introduction, or Statement of the Problem¹. In the proposal/dissertation, the introduction presents (at greater length than in the abstract) the problem to be addressed by the dissertation research. The introduction should describe an unresolved issue in a field of investigation and explain the importance of conducting a study to help resolve that issue. Terms likely to be used throughout the proposal should be defined in this chapter.

In the proposal/dissertation, the subject of the investigation is described in such a way that readers will gain a general understanding of current research conclusions on the topic, as well as some theoretical implications associated with the results of previous research on the subject. The introduction should describe the nature and purpose of the study and explain the significance of and justification for conducting the investigation. Terms likely to be used throughout the proposal/dissertation should be defined in this chapter. The research question or hypothesis should be included in Chapter I along with a summary of the method to be used or already used in the study. A summary of the introduction may appear at the end of the chapter. Summaries may also be used to conclude the subsequent chapters.

Chapter II. Review of the Literature and Research Questions. In the proposal/dissertation, a review of literature concerning the topic under investigation places the dissertation in the context of previous research. As stated in the APA (American Psychological Association) Manual, a “scholarly review of earlier work provides an appropriate history and recognizes the priority of the work of others. Citation of and specific credit to relevant earlier works is part of the author’s scientific and scholarly responsibility.” The review should focus only on literature and conclusions directly pertinent to the subject and the problem addressed in the dissertation. Any pilot work done should be described in this chapter.

Chapter III. Methodology. In the proposal, the methodology section describes in detail how the study will be conducted. This chapter is typically divided into labeled subsections. Often, a subsection describing participants or subjects is followed by subsections describing testing or other measurement procedures to be undertaken with the participants. Lastly, a subsection describing how the resulting measurements will be analyzed to help resolve the problems stated in the introduction should also be included.

In the dissertation, the methodology section should be built on the description of methods outlined in the proposal. Labeled subsections like those in the proposal should be included. These may include a section describing participants or subjects, a section describing testing or other measurement procedures undertaken with the participants, and a section discussing limitations of the methodology (The descriptions of the analyses which appeared in the proposal are usually incorporated in the results section of the final dissertation).

Chapter IV. Results. The results section summarizes the data collected and details the analysis of that data. After a brief statement of the main results or findings of the study, the data are reported in sufficient detail to justify the conclusions. Tables and illustrations (e.g., figures et al.) may be used to report data when these methods are seen to present the data more clearly and economically. All tables and illustrations used should be mentioned in the text, with appropriate titles or captions, and enough explanation to make them readily identifiable (dissertation only).

Chapter V. Discussion. In the discussion section, the results are summarized, evaluated, and interpreted with respect to the original research questions and hypotheses. In this section, the investigator is free to examine, interpret, and qualify the results, and draw inferences from them. Theoretical and practical consequences of the results and the validity of conclusions may appropriately be discussed in this section. The limitations of the study and suggestions for future work may also be included (dissertation only).

References. The reference list at the end of the proposal/dissertation should list all works cited in the manuscript. Likewise, all items listed as references must also be cited in the manuscript text. Special attention should be given to ensure appropriate citations of less common sources, such

as unpublished manuscripts. Again, the APA Manual can provide guidance for ensuring accuracy in these details.

*Appendices*². Appendices of the proposal/dissertation should include data-collection tools, such as IRB materials, consent forms, letters of introduction to subjects, questionnaires, survey forms, and the like. Materials that document important components of the dissertation research process that would be too lengthy, awkward, or distracting to include within the text should be included as appendices in the final document. The appendices section should begin with its own cover page, followed by its own table of contents page. Each appendix may have its own cover page. The word “APPENDIX” should appear in all capital letters.

Moving Towards Dissertation/Thesis Defense

Dissertation/Thesis Workshop

Prior to the defense, the candidate must attend the MANDATORY Thesis/Dissertation workshop offered by the Graduate School. If the candidate is not able to attend the mandatory workshop in person, there is an available recorded video of the workshop that can be requested from the Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education. The Thesis/Dissertation workshop video will suffice as a substitution for the mandatory workshop requirement.

The candidate must follow the guidelines posted on the Graduate School website at <https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/thesis-dissertation-info/index.html>. These guidelines are also available in the Graduate Studies office, Room 219, Wimberly Building. Although the APA Manual uses the spelling “Appendixes” for the plural of Appendix, the preferred spelling for Lamar University dissertations is “Appendices.”

Preliminary Submission to Graduate Editor.

A preliminary electronic copy of your dissertation (in Microsoft Word format) is submitted via email attachment to lugradstudies@lamar.edu by the designated deadline in the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to determine when that deadline is. It should be complete and must comply with the style manual accepted by the student’s department. It should have no grammatical, spelling, or typographical errors. Rough drafts will not be accepted. If a student is unable to meet the preliminary submission deadline, they must contact the Graduate Editor **prior to the due date** to discuss alternatives.

Next are rubrics and other forms from the graduate school that are electronic. They can be found at <https://www.lamar.edu/graduate-studies/forms/index.html>

Preliminary Examination Rubric

	FAIL		PASS	
	UNACCEPTABLE	INCOMPLETE 2	ACCEPTABLE	EXEMPLARY 4
PURPOSE	The purpose or argument is generally unclear.	The central purpose or argument is not consistently clear throughout the paper.	The writing has a clear purpose or argument but may sometimes digress from it.	The writer's central purpose or argument is readily apparent to the reader.
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE	Inaccurate or misinterpreted information, concepts or terminologies. Most of the information is not relevant to the question. Question not answered.	Some of the information is inaccurate or misinterpreted information, concepts or terminologies. Some of the information is not relevant to the question. Question not adequately responded as expected. unanswered; improper use of terminology and citations; misinterpretation of content.	Most of the information presented is accurate and relevant to the question. Demonstrated understanding and use of appropriate terminologies and concepts. Includes limited citations of the information sources.	Reflectively presents information that is accurate and relevant to the question. question is answered fully; proper use of terminology and citations; insightful interpretation of the content.
CRITICAL THOUGHT	Invalid judgments based on evidence provided; indefensible conclusions.	Merely recalls information; lists and defines, but fails to synthesize, analyze, evaluate the knowledge, detect patterns, or apply knowledge in responding to the question.	Nearly all judgments are valid and based on evidence; conflicting positions interpreted reasonably well; examples and literature support arguments; content synthesized well for the most part; ideas tend to flow logically; analysis of material is accurate, and conclusions are defensible; exhibits clear thinking and conceptualization. Response is reflective and evaluative.	Valid judgments based on evidence; precise interpretation of conflicting positions; exemplary use of examples and literature to support arguments; <i>synthesis</i> of content is clearly evident; logical flow of ideas; analysis of material is insightful, and conclusions are fully defensible; convincing; exhibits advanced thinking and conceptualization; response is deeply <i>reflective</i> and evaluative.
MECHANICS & STRUCTURE	Organization unclear or confusing; few or no key points; examples fail to support the response adequately; generally off point and unfocused. Spelling, grammar and usage clearly interfere with meaning; difficulty maintaining style; difficulty with sentence structure; no sense of audience; writing is unacceptable for doctoral level.	Response is partially organized; Some key points are identified, but often unsupported by data; limited use of examples; some segments of response are off point and disrupt focus. Spelling, grammar, and usage errors detract from credibility of response; simplistic sentence structure and style; difficulty with maintaining scholarly tone; limited sense of audience; writing inappropriate for doctoral level.	Organization is logical and reasonably clear; most key points are identified, but not always supported by data or properly emphasized; examples are used to support themes generally; some statements/examples are not properly referenced. Embraces conventions and mechanics of writing; writing style is competent, and sentence structure is sound; generally appropriate for audience; clear and largely complete with a somewhat scholarly tone; writing generally appropriate for doctoral level.	Organization is fully logical and readily apparent; all key points supported by data; examples and arguments properly referenced; key points are highlighted; appropriate use of examples; balance between experience examples and content. Fully embraces the conventions and mechanics of writing; sophisticated writing style and advanced sentence structure; appropriate for audience; exceedingly clear, thorough, and scholarly tone; writing unmistakably appropriate for doctoral level.
CITATIONS/ REFERENCES: APA FORMAT	No citation provided in most of the work.	Both in-text citations and references did not follow APA format and was missing essential information	Both in-text citations and references did follow APA format; however, a few (2) errors in essential information were evident	Both in-text citations and references for the article did follow APA format. Essential information was accurate and complete

Lamar University
Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education Doctoral Program in Deaf
Studies and Deaf Education (Ed. D.)
Course of Study

Date: _____

Doctoral Student's Name: _____ LU#: _____

COURSES COMPLETED

Course Number	Course Title	Grade	Semester	*Designatio n

*Designation Code: **C** = Core, **CG** = Cognate, **R** = Research/Stats, **D** = Dissertation

COURSES PLANNED

Course Number	Course Title	Grade	Semester	*Designation

*Designation Code: **C** = Core, **CG** = Cognate, **R** = Research/Stats, **D** = Dissertation

Signatures:

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dissertation Committee Chair's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Department Chair: _____ Date: _____

Dean of Fine Arts and Communication: _____ Date: _____

Dean of Graduate Studies: _____ Date: _____

Comprehensive Examination Rubric 1: Assessment for the Doctoral Comprehensive Candidacy Portfolio Review

At a minimum, submit: (1) a curriculum vitae; (2) Chapter 1 from proposal writing; (3) critical reflections; and (4) goals. In choosing additional artifacts, focus on quality rather than quantity. Any given artifact can be submitted as evidence for more than one learning outcome. Additional artifacts include but are not limited to: (a) videos and other artifacts documenting presentations; (b) papers—written, submitted, in press, or published; (c) research or grant proposals; and (d) letters of support from faculty and/or research mentors. The student is responsible for making explicit how the artifacts provide evidence of having met program learning outcomes.

<i>Program Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Unmet*</i>	<i>Met</i>	<i>Exceeded</i>
Apply the basic principles of inquiry and research design to educational research				
Demonstrate “T” learning; the top of the T demonstrates breadth in knowledge about Deaf Studies and Deaf Education while the stem of the T demonstrates depth of knowledge in the cognate/dissertation area				
Demonstrate ability of ASL/English bilingual fluency in academic content				

Publish peer-reviewed and translational articles				
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Comments:

Comprehensive Examination Rubric 2: Rubric for Evaluating Doctoral Comprehensive Candidacy Chapter 1 of the Dissertation

The student will submit Chapter 1 of the dissertation, as a concept paper, promoting the plan for her/his dissertation study. The concept paper will include at a minimum: (a) a clear description of the research topic; (b) a brief synthesis of what is known about this topic; (c) theoretical framework(s) underlying the study; (d) research question(s) connected to the theoretical framework and the previous literature about the topic; (e) a description of the research plan—that is, data collection and analysis; (f) statements of significance—that is, why is it worth the student's time and energy to approach this study, and limitations and delimitation; and (g) references.

Fail (0) Pass (3) High Pass (5)

<i>Description of the proposed study</i>	Demonstrates inadequate or minimally adequate knowledge of the topic and/or reveals insufficient information that is relevant to introduce/describe the proposed study.	Presents a logical description and rationale for the proposed study; demonstrates knowledge of the topic and information that is relevant to introduce the study.	Presents a clear, concise, and logical description and rationale for the proposed study; demonstrates a high level of knowledge and mastery of the topic and information that is relevant to the proposed study.
<i>Significance and Limitations</i>	Weak statements of significance and limitation.	Provides statements of significance and limitations that are justifiable.	Presents reasoned statements of significance and limitations grounded in theory and previous research.

<i>Synthesis of the literature</i>	Ideas are underdeveloped; shows inadequate evidence of analysis, reflection, insight, and synthesis of ideas to argue for the proposed study.	Ideas demonstrate depth and complexity, with elaborated, relevant details; shows well developed analyses, syntheses, reflection, insight, critical thinking, and synthesis of ideas to argue for the proposed study.	Follows Chapter I for the dissertation guidelines in constructing a meaningful synthesis of ideas to argue for the proposed study; ideas demonstrate depth and complexity, and include engaging and pertinent details; demonstrates strong analyses, syntheses, reflection, and critical thinking.
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<i>Theoretical Framework and Methodology</i>	Reveals a weakness in providing theoretical frameworks to support the proposed study and/or of how critical theory connects to the study.	Provides a theoretical framework to support the proposed study; reveals an understanding of how critical theory connects to the proposed study.	Addresses theoretical frameworks that underlie the study; reveals a thorough understanding of how critical theory connects to the proposed study; theoretical frameworks and methodology meet the basic standards of ethical inquiry.
<i>Research Questions</i>	Research questions are unclear, unjustified or unsupported by theory and previous research.	Research questions are generally clear and justified through theoretical frameworks and previous research.	Research questions are clear and concise and are justified through the theoretical framework and previous research.

<i>Methodology</i>	Methodology is unclear or inadequate.	Research methodology is adequate to address the proposed research questions.	Describes and justifies methodology as appropriate for a concept paper that is appropriate for the questions posed.
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<i>Support</i>	Reveals significant gaps in relevant knowledge and literature; focuses primarily on secondary sources for support; use of support does not follow logically; positions are not supported by reasoning or appropriate references.	Reveals a good use of relevant literature, most of which are primary sources; positions are supported by reasoning and appropriate references.	References are substantial and carefully chosen to support claims and arguments, with a strong use of primary sources, and reflect current and historical knowledge and understanding of relevant literature.
<i>Organization</i>	There are lapses in (or a lack of) planning, organization and/or logical flow of ideas and material that affect the general quality of the response.	Generally well planned and organized; demonstrates logical flow from point to point; meaning is generally clear and concise.	Careful planning, organization, and flow of ideas are obvious throughout the proposal; organization contributes positively to effectiveness of argument for the proposed study.

<i>Quality of Scholarly Discourse</i>	Use of language compromises clear and effective conveyance of meaning, thus, limiting understanding of the proposal; may reveal simplistic, imprecise, or substandard technical aspects of writing seriously undermine the quality and impact of the answer; APA guidelines may not be followed.	Conveys meaning clearly and effectively, and contributes positively to understanding; generally guides the audience in the logic for the proposed study; generally follows APA guidelines.	Precise and distinctive language significantly enhances the quality of the proposal, and explicitly guides the audience in the logic of the argument for the proposed study; careful and accurate use of APA guidelines.
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Lamar University
Department of Deaf Studies And Deaf Education
Doctoral Program in Deaf Studies and Deaf Education (Ed. D.)

Date of Review: _____

Candidate's Name: _____ LU#: _____

Name of Chair of Doctoral Committee: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

Recommendations Made by Doctoral Committee Following Dissertation Defense (e.g., pass, fail, rewrite specific sections, collect more data, redo, statistics):

Signatures/Approvals:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Printed Name/Signature</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Not Approved</u>
Committee Chair	_____	☐	☐

Committee Member	_____	☐	☐

Committee Member	_____	☐	☐

Committee Member	_____	☐	☐

Committee Member	_____	☐	☐

 Department Chair Date: _____

 Dean of Fine Arts and Communications Date: _____

 Dean of Graduate Studies Date: _____