



**Department of Education and Human  
Development**

**Ph.D. in Literacy, Language and Culture  
Program Handbook**

2022-2023

Updated October 25, 2021

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (COURSEWORK)</b>	<b>3</b>
An important perspective	3
Planning a course of study	3
Core courses	3
Cognate course options	4
Department Doctoral Seminar	5
Research and methodology course requirements and options	5
Teaching Internship	5
Doctoral Dissertation	6
Incompletes	6
Auditing courses	6
Grades	6
Transfer credit	6
Waiver or substitution of course requirements	6
<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT)</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (MAJOR PROFESSOR AND DOCTORAL COMMITTEE)</b>	<b>7</b>
Temporary advisor and major professor	7
Doctoral committee	8
<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS)</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (DISSERTATION)</b>	<b>8</b>
Selecting a dissertation topic/project	9
The dissertation proposal	9
The dissertation and dissertation defense	9
<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (TIME FRAME AND PROGRESS)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS</b>	<b>10</b>
Some perspective on assistantships	11
Course loads	11
<b>DEPARTMENTAL AFFILIATION AND RESOURCES</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>OTHER ISSUES AND QUESTIONS</b>	<b>12</b>

## THE LITERACY, LANGUAGE, AND CULTURE (LLC) DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Literacy, Language, and Culture (LLC) Ph.D. program is designed to provide an in-depth advanced education for students who have completed a master's degree in education and desire to pursue careers as scholars, researchers, university faculty, and educational leaders. The program is grounded in the belief that literacy skills, including reading, writing, and oral language, are integral to success in school and in the workplace, to enriching social lives, and to active and effective citizenship. Coursework provides a broad background in the relevant theoretical and research literature in the areas of literacy, language, and culture along with opportunities to conduct original studies exploring the nature of literacy in a variety of educational and community contexts. Students pursuing an LLC Ph.D. receive research training enabling them to address educational challenges associated with literacy development, pedagogy, and equity with particular focus on linguistically diverse individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds and from areas of high poverty.

This degree, offered in a hyflex course design model offers full or part time professional students the option of attending class face to face, online or both, requires a minimum of 54 credits beyond the master's degree including 12 credit hours of core coursework, 9 credit hours of cognate coursework, 13 credit hours of research methodology coursework, 2 credit hours of doctoral seminars, and a minimum of 18 credit hours of dissertation research. Your advisory committee will aid you in developing an individualized curriculum (to be outlined in the GS2 Plan of Study) which meets program requirements and provides appropriate training to meet your goals. In addition to completion of coursework and comprehensive examinations, the final basis for granting this degree is your grasp of the subject matter across a broad field of study and your competence in planning and conducting research culminating in dissertation research. Ultimately, only your advisory committee can certify that you have earned this degree. For more information see the [Graduate School Policies and Procedures](#) handbook or visit <https://www.clemson.edu/education/academics/doctoral/literacy-language-culture.html>

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (COURSEWORK)

### *Considerations*

Courses are important, but unlike other degrees, acquiring a doctoral degree is much more than satisfying course requirements followed by writing a dissertation (e.g., see requirements for professional development). At least as important is being exposed to the knowledge and expertise of LLC faculty and affiliated faculty through courses, independent studies, assistantships, writing collaborations, and making academic presentations. Therefore, students should always consult with their temporary or major professor before enrolling in courses.

### *Planning a course of study*

The first year in the program often focuses on required core courses and courses that satisfy research requirements as specified in this subsection. The temporary advisor/major professor should be consulted when planning the course of study and prior to registering for courses. It should be noted that LLC students will be expected to attend classes as decided by their form of participation with this decision expected prior to the start of the academic year per College of

Education policy. Once a student selects a doctoral committee, the committee, too, becomes formally involved in suggesting and approving a course of study including cognate courses, research methodology courses beyond those required, and teaching internship courses. When a course of study becomes finalized in consultation with the doctoral committee, a student must complete and file the GS-2 form with the Graduate School (see Graduate School forms at: <https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/forms.html>)

The following table summarizes the categories of course credit and required hours:

<b>Minimum Degree Requirements for the Ph.D. in the LLC</b>	
Core Courses	12 credit hours
Cognate Courses	9 credit hours
Department Doctoral Seminar	2 credit hours
Research Methods	13 credit hours
Dissertation	18 credit hours
<b>Total Hours of Coursework</b>	<b>54 credit hours</b>

### **Core courses**

The following core courses (12 credit hours) are required:

- EDLT 9000 - Sociocultural Theories of Learning
- EDLT 9100 - Theoretical Models of Reading and Writing
- EDLT 9110 – Academic Writing
- EDLT 9140 - Language Development, Diversity and Discourse

### **Cognate course options**

Students will take three additional courses (9 credit hours) that will constitute a cognate in one of the following four focus areas: *Language and Diversity*, *Digital and Disciplinary Literacies*, *Literacy Leadership* or *Early Literacy*. All students will take EDLT 9130 Critical Issues in Literacy, Language, and Culture and EDLT 9310 Literacy, Language and Culture Doctoral Selected Topics as two of the three cognate courses since both courses will differentiate content according to the chosen student cognate area. The third cognate course can be selected from doctoral courses in education or other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, English, and linguistics in consultation with the doctoral advisor and committee members. Some examples of cognate courses directly related to literacy that might be selected are listed below. Depending on the existing prior knowledge and/or experience of individual students, doctoral advisors and committee members will use the GS2 to request additional cognate coursework as needed. Please note cognate courses must be approved by the doctoral advisor and committee members.

- EDLT 9130 – Critical Issues in Literacy, Language and Culture
- EDLT 9170 – Disciplinary Literacies

EDLT 9200 – Language Policy in Educational Contexts  
EDLT 9210 – Home, Family and Community Literacy  
EDLT 9220 – Research in Early Literacy Development  
EDLT 9310 – Literacy, Language and Culture Doctoral Studies Selected Topics  
EDLT 9370 – Reading Recovery Theory I  
EDLT 9380 – Reading Recovery Theory II  
EDLT 9400 – Advanced Diagnosis and Remediation in Reading  
EDLT 9410 – Advanced Practicum in Reading  
EDLT 9420 – Teaching Reading Through a Literature Emphasis  
EDLT 9430 – The Reading-Writing Connection: An Integrated Approach  
EDLT 9450 – Special Problems in Reading Education  
EDSC 6850 – Composition and Language Studies for Teachers  
EDSC 8410 – Advanced Studies in the Teaching of Secondary School English  
EDSC 8460 – Current Literature in English Education

### ***Department Doctoral Seminar***

The following seminars (2 credit hours) are required:

ED 9030 – Introductory Doctoral Seminar I  
ED 9040 – Introductory Doctoral Seminar II

### ***Research and methodology course requirements and options***

The minimum requirement for research courses is 13 credit hours. Students must complete one foundational quantitative course with a lab, one foundational qualitative course, and two additional research courses of their choice. A major professor and doctoral committee may require additional coursework or exceptions to this requirement based on student knowledge of specific research methodological approaches aligned with dissertation research..

*The following three courses (7 hours) are required:*

EDF 9270 – Quantitative Research Designs and Statistics for Educational Contexts  
EDF 9271 – Quantitative Research Designs and Statistics for Educational Contexts Lab  
EDF 9790 – Qualitative Research in Education

*Two courses (6 hours) selected from the following are options:*

EDF 9080 – Educational Tests and Measurements  
EDF 9710 – Case Study and Ethnographic Research Methods and Design  
EDF 9720 – Phenomenology and Grounded Theory Research Methods and Design  
EDF 9730 – Narrative and Historical Research Methods and Design  
EDF 9750 – Mixed Methods Research  
EDF 9780 – Multivariate Educational Research  
EDF 9810 – Design-Based Research Methods  
EDSP 9360 – Single-Subject Research Design  
MATH 8070 – Applied Multivariate Analysis  
PSYC 8730 – Structural Equation Modeling in Applied Psychology

## ***Doctoral Dissertation***

The minimum requirement for the doctoral dissertation is 18 credit hours.

EDLT 9340 – Doctoral Dissertation Research in Literacy, Language and Culture

## ***Incompletes and Auditing Courses***

Incompletes should be avoided except in extreme circumstances and in consultation with the doctoral advisor and the instructor of record. Courses may be audited with the permission of the instructor of record leading the course.

## ***Grades***

In alignment with the University Graduate Handbook, all LLC students who fail to meet the minimum academic standards for graduate studies at Clemson University are placed on academic probation. These minimum standards include: a cumulative B average (3.0 grade point ratio) in all graduate-level courses (6000-level or above), a B average in all courses listed in the Plan of Study (Form GS2), and an overall cumulative B average in all courses (undergraduate and graduate) since admission to the Graduate School, excluding those taken on a pass/fail basis. Students who fail to meet these requirements become ineligible for graduation and remain on academic probation until nine additional semester hours of graduate credit have been earned and the new cumulative average reflects the required 3.0 grade point ratio or they qualify for graduation by earning the requisite 3.0 grade point ratio. LLC students on academic probation may be in jeopardy of having their teaching or research assistantship or fellowship terminated for failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress or to maintain the minimum 3.0 grade point ratio.

Graduate students placed on academic probation should meet with their major advisor and/or graduate program coordinator to ensure that the expectations for removal of the probationary status are clearly defined and understood. Students who fail to remove the probationary status as prescribed are subject to academic dismissal and will not be permitted to continue in the program without the recommendation of the program coordinator. Withdrawal from a course while on probation will not be allowed with any unauthorized withdrawal considered unsatisfactory academic performance.

## ***Transfer credit***

Coursework may be transferred into a program of study at the discretion of a student's doctoral advisor, doctoral committee, and program coordinator to the extent the transfer is permitted by the Policies and Procedures of Clemson's Graduate School. All course transfers and substitutions must be agreed upon prior to the submission of the student's GS2.

## ***Waiver or substitution of course requirements***

At the discretion of a student's doctoral advisor and doctoral committee (see subsequent section), and with input from the program coordinator, some course requirements may be waived or substituted. Factors considered include similar courses taken at other institutions,

relevant background experiences, unique professional goals, and particular research methods and orientations (e.g., historical analysis, discourse analysis, and survey research).

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

Students are expected to exercise initiative in seeking out and engaging in various professional activities during the LLC doctoral program (e.g., attending a featured lecture of a visiting scholar). Most specifically, they are expected to develop and submit manuscripts for publication and to submit proposals for and present at professional conferences for researchers and for practitioners. Papers and projects in coursework and collaborations with faculty in the context of assistantships or other activities are typically the stimulus for generating manuscripts and proposals. Although faculty look for opportunities for involving and supporting students, students are expected to create such opportunities, not wait for them to emerge.

There are escalating expectations related to this requirement. That is, a state conference or journal may be a good starting point early in the program, but later in the program, students should challenge themselves to compete for acceptance in presenting at national conferences and publishing in top-tier, peer-reviewed journals.

At minimum, before graduation, students are expected to have presented at 2 national conferences and published 1 article in a state journal, but preferably a national journal. Your department has been provided funds to support graduate student travel. Your doctoral advisor can provide you with the guidelines for graduate student travel grants. You may also visit <https://gsg.people.clemson.edu/GTGS.php> for information on Graduate Travel Grant Service.

If not already a member, students should become members of at least two of the following professional organizations, and perhaps another organization reflecting a specialty in the LLC area.

- Literacy Research Association: <http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/>
- International Literacy Association: <http://www.literacyworldwide.org/>
- National Council of Teachers of English: <http://www.ncte.org/>
- American Educational Research Association : <http://www.aera.net/>
- Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers: [www.aleroline.org](http://www.aleroline.org)
- American Reading Forum: <http://www.americanreadingforum.org/>

Some of these professional organizations have reduced membership fees for doctoral students, and they offer special activities and opportunities aimed specifically at the professional development of doctoral students.

## **GRADUATE SCHOOL FORMS AND DEADLINES**

The Graduate School sets deadlines for the following items. The specific dates are determined according to the academic calendar for the semester in which you plan to graduate (<https://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/deadlines.html>).

Form	Description	Location	Notes
GS2	Committee Selection and Plan of Study (2 part form)	iRoar	Submit GS2 prior to the start of the third semester following matriculation.
GS5D	Results of the doctoral degree comprehensive examination	GS website	Submit GS5D to the Office of Enrolled Student Services within 3 weeks of completed examination.
Announcement of Dissertation Proposal	Student provides dissertation information to CoE Student Services	CoE website	Submit this form no less than 10 days prior to their proposal.
Thesis/Dissertation Research Approval	Advisory committee's approval of student's research proposal	GS website	Student brings form to proposal defense to be submitted when successful proposal defense has been verified.
Apply to Graduate	Student notifies Enrolled Student Services of their intent to graduate	iRoar	Submit the Diploma Application only if you are planning to apply for the next graduation date.
Announcement of Dissertation Defense	Student provides dissertation information to CoE Student Services	CoE website	Submit this form no less than 10 days prior to their defense.
Defense Schedule Notice	Official notification of student defense to the Graduate School	GS website	Submit this form no less than 10 days prior to their defense.
GS7D	Dissertation Defense and Approval Form	GS website	Committee must complete and return to the Office of Enrolled Student Services.
Dissertation Format Approval	Dissertation electronically submitted for format approval	Proquest	See Graduation Deadlines for exact deadline.
Final Dissertation Review	All revisions requested by the Manuscript Review	Proquest	See Graduation Deadlines for exact deadline.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (DOCTORAL ADVISOR AND DOCTORAL COMMITTEE)

### *Temporary Advisor and Doctoral Advisor*

If you have not entered the program specifically to study with an LLC faculty member who has already agreed to be your major professor, you will be assigned an LLC faculty member as a temporary advisor who may become your permanent doctoral advisor after your first year in the



program. A temporary advisor typically serves for the first year a student is in the program, and perhaps into a second year, depending on circumstances. During that time, students are encouraged to become familiar with all LLC faculty toward making a wise decision in selecting a major professor and mentor. That familiarity can be achieved through various means (e.g., coursework, meetings that students schedule with individual faculty to discuss interests and goals, attending faculty presentations, informally at social events arranged for LLC faculty and students, etc.). However, there is no expectation, formal or informal, that a temporary advisor will assume the role of your doctoral advisor although that may occur if mutually acceptable. The selection of your major professor is one of the most important decisions you will make as a doctoral student, and it should be approached with conscientious reflection and deliberation. Rarely, and only under atypical circumstances, is it justifiable to change doctoral advisors and then only when all the parties directly involved (existing advisor, future advisor, program chair and student) have been consulted.

**Note:** The primary role of LLC faculty in relation to doctoral students is mentoring toward achieving students' career goals as well as advising them about requirements necessary to complete a doctoral program. Doctoral students are responsible for investigating and following the requirements (e.g., deadlines) of the Graduate School and for completing and submitting necessary forms. All relevant information in that regard can be found at the websites listed under "Policies and Procedures" in the initial section of this handbook. Questions and issues related to or not covered by those policies and procedures, should be addressed to the LLC Program Coordinator. Faculty may be helpful in matters related to general policies and procedures, but it is not their responsibility to communicate them to students or to monitor conformance to them.

### ***Doctoral committee***

The doctoral committee must be composed of at least four faculty members. The chair of the doctoral committee must be a LLC faculty member or an affiliated LLC faculty member and at least two members of the committee must be composed of LLC faculty or affiliated faculty. External faculty members who hold faculty positions outside of the College of Education can not compose more than half of the committee. Before a student submits the grad school form request for an external member, they must first email a copy of the prospective external faculty member's current vita to the department chair for approval. It should be noted students are not to ask professors to serve as members of their doctoral committee without consulting their doctoral advisor first. For additional guidance related to the formation of the doctoral committee, please refer to the most current Graduate School Handbook.

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (COURSEWORK TIMELINE)**

The typical time frame for completing a doctorate in LLC is 3-4 years for full-time students often with a half-time assistantship and 4-5 years for part-time students. Following the [LLC PhD course sequence](#), full time students will complete course work in two years and part time students will complete course work in three years with both groups being offered a hyflex model of course delivery. All students are required to complete 36 hours of coursework (12 hours of core courses, 9 hours of cognate courses, 13 hours of research methodology courses, and 2 hours of doctoral seminars) prior to the dissertation proposal and 18 hours of dissertation research during the completion of dissertation research. The standard course load for a

full-time LLC doctoral student with a half-time assistantship (20 hours/week) is 9 credit hours (3 courses) per semester. The standard course load for a part time LLC doctoral student is 6 credit hours (2 courses) per semester. Students can only deviate from the course sequence in consultation with their temporary advisor or doctoral advisor.

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS)**

Separate written and/or oral comprehensive exams are required after coursework is completed. These exams aim to provide evidence a student has mastered the depth and breadth of knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of an advanced doctoral student and novice scholar in the field. When these exams are passed, a student is considered a candidate for the doctoral degree and moves to the dissertation phase of the program.

A student's doctoral committee develops, administers, and evaluates these exams. The doctoral advisor in consultation with the other members of the committee decides on the format, content, structure, and expectations for these exams, all of which may vary across students and committees. For example, the written exam may entail writing responses to questions submitted by members of the doctoral committee, which may require a student to write independently for several hours on multiple occasions. Or, it might entail writing drafts of manuscripts on specified topics. An oral exam, which involves all members of the doctoral committee, may be an extension of the written exam or, alternatively, an opportunity for members of the committee to ask any question for which they would expect an advanced doctoral student in the field to provide a reasonably informed response. The oral exam also provides an opportunity for the committee to be convinced that a doctoral candidate processes the necessary professional poise and demeanor expected in various professional contexts.

Any member of the doctoral committee may ask a student to revise and resubmit a part of the written exam before deciding whether a student has passed or failed. To pass either the written and/or the oral exam, a simple majority of a doctoral committee must agree that a student has passed each question. To fail, at least 2 committee members must agree that a student has failed the same question. If the written and/or oral exam is failed, they may be retaken once. A second failure on either exam will result in dismissal from the program.

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (DISSERTATION)**

The dissertation is the culmination of the doctoral program, providing evidence that a candidate for the degree can independently formulate a research question or problem and can rigorously address it using a recognized methodological approach for research and scholarship in the field. It also provides evidence a candidate can write a coherent and well-articulated research report representing the highest standards of academic writing in a scholarly genre. Another expectation is that the dissertation will make an original contribution to the scholarly literature, and as such, will eventually lead to publication.

### ***Selecting a dissertation topic/project***

It is not uncommon for doctoral students to struggle in choosing a topic for their dissertation. Several preliminary ideas may be considered and then discarded before arriving at a viable and important topic or project. There is a temptation to cling to the security of the first topic that emerges or to resist modifying original plans for a project, but many students have lived to regret having succumbed to that temptation.

It is never too early in the doctoral program to begin thinking about ideas for a dissertation, although without feeling undue pressure to select and settle on a final topic. Most students do not have the necessary knowledge and perspective to choose a good dissertation topic early in their programs of study. Thus, an early idea may be seen later, after further study and reflection, as naïve. Deep reading of the literature in a particular area is one of the best ways to arrive at a good topic. There is also a temptation for doctoral students to take on topics or projects that are too broad in scope, too complicated, or that address multiple dimensions of a topic or issue. Your major professor and your committee will help you resist that temptation and to focus your project, if you are having difficulty reining in your ambitions. Few dissertations, like most published work in the field, are seminal. But, each adds incrementally to the field's knowledge and perspectives. A modest project carried out with depth and rigor is preferable to an ambitious one that necessitates less depth and compromises rigor.

### ***The dissertation proposal***

Students develop a proposal for the dissertation project and formally present it to the doctoral committee at a scheduled proposal defense. Informal consultations with your major professor, individual members of the doctoral committee, and/or fellow doctoral students may be helpful in formulating an initial dissertation idea. Before and during the proposal defense, it is typical for the committee to make constructive suggestions for improving the project. The committee will approve the dissertation project only when convinced that it is viable and makes a contribution to the field. The proposal itself is typically 5000-7500 words (20-30 pages), excluding references, and includes (a) a specification of the problem, question, or issue; (b) a brief review of the most relevant literature; (c) a detailed specification of the proposed methods, including data collection and analysis; and (d) a timeline for the major events associated with completion of the project. However, a student's major professor and doctoral committee may decide to deviate somewhat from this standard outline.

### ***The dissertation and dissertation defense***

Completing the dissertation is an independent research or other scholarly project. However, during the project, students may seek advice and feedback, as needed, from their major professor and members of the doctoral committee. Occasionally, fellow doctoral students may also play a role (e.g., scoring protocols to determine inter-rater reliability).

The dissertation must conform to specifications set by the Graduate School (see:

<http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/theses-and-dissertations/index.html>

When the doctoral advisor determines that the dissertation is ready for defense, they will schedule a defense that accommodates the schedules of the other members of the doctoral committee. The defense must be scheduled far enough in advance to allow members of the committee at least 2 weeks to review the dissertation. At least 10 days before the defense, the Graduate School must be notified of the date, time, and location. That information will be publicized, because dissertation defenses are open to students, faculty, and other interested parties who may wish to attend.

*Note. When candidates schedule the dissertation defense, they should have already reviewed the Graduate School's requirements and deadlines for graduation.*

The format of a defense is at the discretion of the doctoral committee, but typically includes a 10-15-minute presentation by the doctoral candidate summarizing the dissertation project, followed by 1-1.5 hours of open questions and discussion. The Committee may excuse the candidate and guests briefly at the beginning and end of the defense to meet in private session.

At the defense, candidates should distribute a copy of their professional vitae. A copy should also be provided to the program coordinator, who will use the information provided as documentation for accreditation requirements.

At the end of the defense, each committee member will be asked to vote as follows: (a) pass, (b) pass with recommended revisions (i.e., with suggested revisions that do not require committee approval, but may be supervised by the major professor), (c) pass contingent on revision (i.e., pass only after a committee member so voting reviews and approves revisions), or (d) fail. To pass the defense, a majority of the committee members must vote with option *a* or *b*. A contingent pass for the dissertation defense will be achieved, pending approved revisions, if more than one committee member votes option *c*. The defense will be failed if more than one committee member votes option *d*. At the discretion of the committee a failed defense may be retaken once.

When all contingent conditions, as described in the previous paragraph, have been satisfied resulting in a "pass," the student must obtain appropriate signatures on form GS7D (see: <http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/files/pdfs/GS7D.pdf>) and submit it to the Graduate School along with any appropriate information and forms for graduation.

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (TIME FRAME AND PROGRESS)**

The typical time frame for completing a doctorate in LLC is 3 years for full-time students often with a half-time assistantship and 4 years for part-time students. Generally, during year one students work with their temporary advisors. Before year two students should select a doctoral advisor and form a committee. Consult the [LLC PhD course sequence](#) for the outline of course work for full time and part time students. Comprehensive exams should take place around the middle to end of year two with the dissertation proposal meeting occurring at the end of year two for full time students or during year three for part time students. The dissertation and dissertation writing then takes place during year three for full time students and year four for part time students.

In alignment with the University Graduate Handbook, a leave of absence can be granted for compelling personal, family, medical, or professional reasons requiring the student to suspend

graduate study and to be absent from the University for a period of time. During a leave of absence, students are expected to be focused on these non-academic priorities and may not make progress toward their degree requirements while on leave (e.g., taking comprehensive or qualifying exams, completing incomplete grades, submitting or defending a thesis or dissertation, etc.). A student in good academic standing (who meets the minimum 3.0 GPA and has successfully met other program requirements) may request a leave of absence from graduate study. A leave of absence may be granted for 12 months, with a possible renewal of one additional 12-month period. A student not in good standing (who has a GPA lower than 3.0 or who has failed critical program or Graduate School requirements; e.g., comprehensive or qualifying exams) may also request a leave of absence. If the program coordinator, in consultation with program faculty, approves the leave of absence, the student will return to the same academic status as prior to the leave. Any LLC student considering a leave of absence from the LLC program should first discuss it with their major advisor and program coordinator well in advance of the intended leave.

## **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Graduate assistantships, when available, are intended to provide financial support to meritorious students and to provide services and support to the program, to the department, or to faculty. Graduate assistantships may be dedicated to teaching courses, supporting faculty research, and engaging in various other tasks directly related to programmatic needs and to furthering faculty productivity. Ideally, these assistantships also further students' professional development, as noted in the previous section on the requirements for professional development. In that sense, assistantships are more than a source of income, and should not inhibit normal progress through the program.

Unless approved by the majority of the LLC faculty, students will not be assigned, nor compensated for, an assistantship for more than the equivalent of 20 hours per week (half time). It is also expected that students who are supported with a half-time assistantship will not be otherwise employed inside or outside the university. For exceptions, consult with the EHD Department Chair.

Students may lose an assistantship if they do not satisfactorily perform the duties of their assistantship, or if they fail to make reasonable progress in completing their degree. Faculty, in turn, are expected to have reasonable expectations for assigned tasks related to assistantships, to provide appropriate scholarly recognition of graduate assistants who add substantively to research projects and their products, and to be sensitive to demands placed on graduate assistants' time and efforts relative to compensation and weekly hours.

### ***Some perspective on assistantships***

The boundaries between tasks related to assistantships and other tasks such as independent studies/research, course requirements, preparing a manuscript for submission to a journal or a presentation at a conference are sometimes blurred. Likewise, the time and demands required to fulfill the responsibilities of a graduate assistantship may vary from week, as will the specificity of responsibilities from semester to semester. For example, the parameters of teaching a course for an assistantship are usually well defined in terms of tasks and time and may not involve regular involvement of a faculty member. On the other hand, assisting a faculty member in collecting and analyzing data is likely to be more fluid and require more flexibility and direct accountability for completing tasks. Especially in the latter instances, good communication

and explicit understandings between faculty and their graduate assistants is vital. Any issues related to misunderstandings or dissatisfactions, either on the part of a graduate assistant or a faculty member, should be resolved, if possible, between the relevant individuals directly involved. However, if necessary, the LLC program coordinator, the relevant department chair, and others may need to be consulted and perhaps involved. Mutual respect and explicit communication between a graduate assistant and a faculty member who supervises her or his work is the key to minimizing difficulties, conflicts, and misunderstandings.

## **DEPARTMENTAL AFFILIATION AND RESOURCES**

The LLC doctoral program is officially housed in the Department of Education and Human Development (EHD), although some of the program's faculty are affiliated with other departments. Thus, various official matters affecting LLC faculty and students are under the auspices of the EHD Department and its chair. For example, EHD plays a predominant role in allocating assistantships to the LLC program, in assigning office space (typically shared space) for LLC doctoral students, and in providing the help of an administrative assistant for courses offered by departmental faculty (and graduate teaching assistants). There are also departmental policies affecting the availability and use of resources such as the departmental copy machine, phones, mailing, and so forth. Doctoral students who have questions about departmental policies and procedures or who have problems or issues with the availability of departmental assistance or oversight, should consult with their temporary advisor or major professor. The EHD administrative assistant may also be able to advise doctoral students on such matters. Here is his contact information:

Suzanne Lusk

209 Old Main  
864-656-7645

[lusk6@clemson.edu](mailto:lusk6@clemson.edu)

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

International students may find that there are additional challenges to pursuing a graduate education in a new place far from family and the other supports local students may have. However, there are a number of resources for international students available across campus. For assistance, please contact the Office of International Services at <https://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/international/>.

## **OTHER ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

For issues and questions not covered in this handbook or the general resources cited at the outset of this document, consult with your temporary advisor/major professor, the LLC doctoral program coordinator, and/or the College of Education's graduate coordinator.

