

EUGENE T. MOORE  
School of Education

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Leadership, Counselor Education, Human, and  
Organizational Development (LCH)

Spring 2009

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ

About Clemson's PhD program in Educational Leadership (P12 – Major Code 322)

These FAQs include the following topics:

- Degrees & Credentials
- Course Delivery
- Application Requirements: GRE
- Application Requirements: References
- Application Requirements: 2-page Statement

*Degrees and Credentials*

Q: Do I have to be a superintendent if I get the PhD?

Q: Will I get superintendent certification with the PhD?

Q: Will I get Masters +30 in this program?

A: First, recognize the differences between academic degrees and professional certificates. In South Carolina, degree programs are approved by the Commission on Higher Education, and educational licenses/certification programs are approved by the South Carolina Department of Education. Clemson's Educational Leadership faculty members have worked very hard to make the PhD program include options for professional certification including the principal certification as well as the superintendent. By combining a certification with the PhD degree, students obtain credentials, a professional certificate and an academic degree, from two SC agencies that give them more options in their careers and their futures.

Q: Will I be able to teach teachers at a college or university with this degree?

The PhD, a terminal degree, is a requirement to be professor. However, depending on the size of the college or university and its accrediting requirements, the PhD in Educational Leadership may not be the appropriate credential for teacher preparation. Clemson has a PhD program in Curriculum & Instruction which provides such credentials. For that program, contact Dr. David Fleming ([dflemin@clemson.edu](mailto:dflemin@clemson.edu)).

*Program Course Delivery*

Q: Can I keep my job and still do this program?

Q: Is this program on-line?

Q: Will all the classes be on campus?

Q: Are the classes at the University Center in Greenville?

Q: Will all the classes be at [school district site]?

A: Today's educational leaders need to administer, manage, and understand the multiple learning environments available in real time, face-to-face, asynchronously, and virtually; therefore, Clemson's program provides all of these formats and students experience the full variety throughout the course of their program of study. All courses will be scheduled for the convenience of doctoral students taking into account their school calendars and work schedules. Courses are offered nights and weekends.

Courses are only one set of requirements in any terminal degree program. In other words, the PhD includes out-of-course requirements such as the preliminary exam, the comprehensive/qualifying exam, the proposal defense, the dissertation, and the dissertation defense. A variety of delivery and communication formats can be used for any of the degree requirements including courses, exams, and defenses, but many students choose real-time, on campus for most of the non-course requirements such as exams and defenses. At the dissertation research and writing stages, work with the Major Advisor and other members of the Doctoral Advising Committee may take place anywhere agreed upon by the Committee and the student. Phone and web video conferencing also may be used in any part of the program. This program prepares educational leaders, not just for today's learning environments, but for the future as well

#### *Application Requirements: GRE*

Q: Must I have a recent GRE?

Q: Since I have other graduate degrees, why do I have to have a recent GRE?

Q: I'm National Board Certified and I've been a [teacher, principal, Director of Federal Programs] for more than [10, 20, 30] years. What will a GRE tell you about my qualifications?

Q: I took [another] exam in the last five years, why can't I substitute those scores?

A: The Educational Testing Service (ETS), the GRE's parent company, guides the use of GREs in applications. GRE is nationally recognized as one admissions criteria into graduate programs in Educational Leadership. ETS defines a recent score as less than 5 years old, and it neither archives nor sends to Clemson, or any other university, older scores. ETS has kept records of those taking the GRE and to what programs they apply for its set of national statistics on scores. Visit the ETS web site ([www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)) to see what those applying to the field of Educational Administration/Leadership have scored nationally and internationally.

Even after you review ETS's statistics, remember that Clemson's application requirements include multiple other criteria besides the GRE. All of the requirements in combination with one another provide the PhD admissions committee insight into the fit between a potential doctoral and Clemson's PhD program and faculty scholarship. No single part of the application is useful by itself, including the GRE. The GRE scores, Quantitative, Verbal, and Writing, along with transcripts from previous degrees, the two-page purpose/goals statement, and the three references (one of which should be a former or current professor) give the admissions committee data that suggests how successful an applicant might be in the initial coursework. The résumé/vita along with the professional references and transcripts can indicate accomplishments and be suggestive

of the candidate's potential for persistence and resilience in finishing the degree requirements as well as signaling whether or not Clemson's scholarship include appropriate faculty advisors. Note that each of these examples combine the materials for a holistic analysis of trends established in the data from more than one set of required application materials

*Application Requirements: References*

Q: Whom should I ask to provide a reference?

Q: Is my pastor a good reference?

A: Remember that you need individuals whose credentials help you establish your potential both academically for the degree, and professionally for the certification. Select people who have strong credentials themselves either as a professor or as a school leader. Do not ask people that you supervise to write you a reference; that represents a serious conflict of interest. Friends and community members who cannot assess your potential as a doctoral student are not good choices either. Your application is for a program that furthers your career professionally and your intellectual growth academically. The best references are people who are accomplished in the career field you aspire to as well as those who have achieved the academic goals you wish to gain.

*Application Requirements: 2-page Statement*

Q: What should I say in this statement?

Q: The on-line admissions form has two constructed-responses, essay questions. Are these the same as the required 2-page statement?

A: Along with the other admissions requirements, Clemson's Leadership PhD Admissions Committee seeks information for a good "fit" with an applicant's goals/research interests and the Clemson faculty's research agenda and mentoring/advising capacity. While the questions on the Graduate School's form seem similar to the 2-page statement, the purposes for those questions are not what the Educational Leadership Faculty need in admissions decisions. The Clemson Graduate School collects data from the two questions on the application form and uses those data for planning, reporting and accountability purposes, not for admissions criteria. At the PhD level, the advising process becomes more and more individualized as the program progresses. Therefore, successful students are those whose interests align with their advising faculty. Visit the School of Education's web pages to see Clemson's Educational Leadership faculty's research interests and publications. [http://www.hehd.clemson.edu/schoolofed/dir\\_fac.php](http://www.hehd.clemson.edu/schoolofed/dir_fac.php) Scroll down the page to Educational Leadership. Click on the faculty member's name to find a web page with basic information about that faculty member.

**For more information please contact**

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