



College of EDUCATION

**Department of Education and Human
Development**

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

2020-2021

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

For a description of the LLC doctoral program, how to apply, opportunities for financial assistance, and contact information, see:

<http://www.clemson.edu/education/academics/doctoral-programs/phd-doctorate-literacy-language-culture/index.html>

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (COURSEWORK)

An important perspective

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). However, at least as important is being exposed to the knowledge and expertise of individual LLC faculty through courses, independent studies, assistantships, collaborations on writing manuscripts, 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. When planning the course of study and prior to registering for courses, the temporary advisor/major professor should be consulted. It should be noted that LLC students will be expected to attend classes in person. Once a student selects a doctoral committee, the committee, too, becomes formally involved in suggesting and approving a course of study. 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 the number of hours required in the program:

Minimum Degree Requirements for the Ph.D. in the LLC	
Core Courses	15 credit hours
Cognate Courses	12 credit hours
Department Doctoral Seminar	2 credit hours
Research Methods	16 credit hours
Teaching Internship	3 credit hours
Dissertation	18 credit hours
Total hours of course work	66 credit hours

Core courses

The following core courses (15 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

EDLT 9440 – Reading Research: Review and Critique of the Literature

Cognate course options

Students select four additional courses (12 credit hours) that will constitute a cognate. Please note that the cognate courses should be approved by the committee. Examples of cognates include areas of study such as dual language learners, disciplinary literacy, reading and writing instruction, early literacy, children’s literature, and digital literacies. The cognate courses can be selected from those offered in the College of Education or outside the College in other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, English, and linguistics. The following are examples of courses directly related directly to literacy that might be included in a cognate:

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 16 credit hours. Students must complete two quantitative courses, two qualitative courses, and one additional research course of their choice. A major professor and doctoral committee may approve exceptions to this requirement.

The following three courses (10 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 9770 – Multiple Regression/General Linear Model in Educational Research

EDF 9790 – Qualitative Research in Education

Two courses (6 hours) selected from the following list 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

Teaching Internship

EDLT 9290 – College-Level Teaching in Literacy, Language, and Culture

Note: The teaching internship is aimed at providing experience in university teaching and may be satisfied in multiple ways. Internships must be presented to LLC faculty for approval; faculty will determine whether students need a 1-3 credit observation/shadowing experience prior to the teaching internship. In the event that students teach the shadowed course, they are expected to design the syllabus in close consultation with their advising professor. The internship may involve co-teaching or scaffolded teaching experiences. Consult with your major professor.

Doctoral Dissertation

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

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

Incompletes

Incompletes should be avoided except in extreme circumstances.

Auditing courses

Courses may be audited with the permission of the professor leading the course.

Grades

LLC doctoral students are expected, at minimum, to maintain a B (3.0) average. Students who do not meet this minimal standard may be dismissed from the program.

Transfer credit

Coursework may be transferred into a program of study at the discretion of a student's doctoral committee, to the extent that the transfer is permitted by the Policies and Procedures of Clemson's Graduate School.

Waiver or substitution of course requirements

At the discretion of a student's major professor 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 prominent 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 in such efforts, 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 acceptances 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 committee chair 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 (GTGS).

If not already a member, students should become members of at least 2 or 3 of the following professional organizations, and perhaps another organization reflecting a specialty in the LLC area.

- Literacy Research Association (research oriented): <http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/>
- International Literacy Association (practitioner orientation): <http://www.literacyworldwide.org/>
- National Council of Teachers of English (practitioner orientation): <http://www.ncte.org/>
- American Educational Research Association (for all education researchers): <http://www.aera.net/>
- Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers (research oriented): www.aleroline.org
- American Reading Forum (research oriented): <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.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (MAJOR PROFESSOR AND DOCTORAL COMMITTEE)

Temporary advisor and major professor

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. A temporary advisor may become a major professor. However, there is no expectation, formal or informal, that a temporary advisor will assume the role of major professor, although that may occur if mutually acceptable. 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.). 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 major professors and then only when all the parties directly involved with such a change are in agreement.

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

It should be noted that students are not to ask professors to serve as members of their doctoral committee without consulting with their major advisors first. For additional guidance related to the formation of the doctoral committee, please refer to the most current Graduate School Guidebook.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS)

Separate written and/or oral comprehensive exams are required after coursework is completed. These exams aim to provide evidence that a student has mastered the depth and breadth of knowledge and the 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 major professor 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. To fail, at least 2 committee members must agree that a student has failed. 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 that a candidate can write a coherent and well-articulated research report that represents the highest standards of refinement of 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 major professor determines that the dissertation is ready for defense, he or she 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 4 years for full-time students, often with a half-time assistantship. Generally, during year one students work with their temporary advisors. At the beginning of—or midway through year two—students should select a major advisor and form a committee by the end of year two. Comprehensive exams should take place around the beginning of year three with the dissertation proposal meeting occurring at the end of year three—or at the beginning of year four. The dissertation writing then takes place during year four. Part-time students may occasionally require a year or two longer. Individual circumstances will be considered, but students who are not making adequate progress may be dismissed from the program. Students who have a graduate assistantship, but who are not making adequate progress in completing their degree, may lose their assistantship. Course credit may also be lost after a period of time specified by the Graduate School.

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. **Thus, 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 your major professor.**

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.

Course loads

The standard course load for an LLC doctoral student with a half-time assistantship (20 hours/week) is 9 credit hours (3 courses) per semester, although an additional hour is typical in those semesters when a student is enrolled in a required doctoral seminar. Students should carefully consider a course load that deviates from this standard in consultation with their temporary advisor or major professor.

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@clermson.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.