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***Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.)***

**DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE**

**Student Guide**

***Updated April 13, 2020***

1. **Introduction**

The Dissertation in Practice is the culmination of the Ed.D. Program, a practice-oriented doctoral program (see UW’s definition [here](http://www.grad.washington.edu/policies/memoranda/memo06.shtml))[[1]](#footnote-1). Reflective of doctoral level study, it is a rigorous, intensive application of a field-based analysis and/or implementation of a structural change project related to educational leadership. The dissertation requires scholarly inquiry that reflects sustained thinking around a theoretical framework, literature-based problem, and related set of activities (e.g., program implementation) that are documented in the form of a comprehensive report, a publication-ready academic article or report, and professional presentation. Each student conducts the dissertation under the supervision of a supervisory committee which approves the completed dissertation, and with support of program faculty through a dissertation seminar. Graduation and conferral of the Educational Leadership doctorate is dependent upon approval by the supervisory committee.

1. **Overview**

In the final year of study, students complete a yearlong, practice-based dissertation, in which they address an actual problem of practice. The dissertation synthesizes coursework and practicum-based study into a comprehensive product to capture the work completed, and can be either a continuation of practicum efforts, or a new stand-alone project. The dissertation must be in addition to the student’s normal work expectations, which specifically demonstrates leadership at a higher level than that of their current professional context. Dissertations are required to be hands-on, problem-based, applied leadership endeavors preferably with an equity lens, that inform current practice or policy at a national or local level (i.e., with potential influence greater than the local institution).

Although there is latitude in the design of this project, all projects must address the following common elements: conceptual grounding in theory and literature, clearly articulated problem of practice, methods, and analysis. All projects should either clarify program improvement or other solution(s) to the problem, or clarify implementation of proposed solutions, including, if applicable, evaluation of the impacts.

The problem to be investigated will be complex; therefore, approved students may elect to conduct their dissertation with other doctoral students, forming a dissertation group (Reference to Group Dissertation in Practice Section Below).

Dissertations (including group projects) will be evaluated individually for their achievements by each student’s supervisory committee, in accordance with UW Graduate School requirements for the practice doctorate. This committee formally approves the dissertation proposal and final dissertation in practice. Each student will have a supervisory committee, which includes a committee chair, an additional University of Washington Tacoma faculty member, and a credentialed, highly experienced, professionally relevant third member.

The Dissertation in Practice committee will include an embedded chair who will teach the *TEDLD 585: Proposal Development* course and will remain the chair during each students third year and will teach the *TEDLD 802: Dissertation in Practice Seminar* course. The Ed.D. Program will support students who require additional guidance in identifying their 2nd and 3rd committee members. In selecting their 2nd committee members, students may consider a wide-range of relevant faculty members across the University of Washington Tacoma, with encouragement for students to consider faculty in the School of Education and School of Nursing and Healthcare Leadership. The 3rd committee member may include an outside expert with relevant knowledge, or a faculty member within the University of Washington system or another university. In consultation with the chair, students make recommendations for remaining members. Students will complete the Supervisory Committee Member forms (see Appendixes C & D) with the Director of the Ed.D. Program. The Ed.D. program advisor will notify the Graduate School of the final committee membership.

1. **Practice Doctoral Supervisory Committees (from** [Graduate School Memo 45](http://www.grad.washington.edu/policies/memoranda/memo45.shtml)**; see also** [Memo 12](https://www.grad.washington.edu/policies/memoranda/memo12.shtml))

The appointment of a practice doctoral supervisory committee indicates that the Graduate Faculty in the student's field finds his/her background and achievement a sufficient basis for progression in the doctoral program. A practice doctorate involves extensive coursework and a culminating project/dissertation that is in lieu of a traditional Ph.D. dissertation. This project/dissertation is not filed with the Graduate School but is archived for public access through UWT Library Digital Commons.

The practice doctoral supervisory committee consists of a minimum of three members. At least two committee members, including the Chair, must be members of the UWT Graduate Faculty with an endorsement to chair doctoral committees, and at least half of the total number must be members of the Graduate Faculty. The following applies to all practice doctoral supervisory committees:

* Any committee members who are not Graduate Faculty must be identified by the student's appointing department or program as productive scholars or practitioners in the student's major field and/or subfields.
* The Chair of a committee must be able and willing to assume principal responsibility for advising the student. In addition, the Chair should have adequate time available for this work and should expect to be accessible to the student.
* A Graduate School Representative (GSR) is not required.

Responsibilities of the committee include approval and oversight of the student’s project proposal and approval of the completed project.

After the practice doctoral supervisory committee has evaluated the final project/dissertation, if a majority of the supervisory committee members agree that the evaluation is positive, the recommendation is made to The Graduate School (via the warrant) that the degree be awarded. If members of the practice doctoral supervisory committee do not agree with the majority recommendation, the minority report portion of the warrant must be used.

**For Nursing and Healthcare Leadership Students**

For these students the EdD program will work with the students who focus in this area to meet the necessary requirements to have the designated course transcriptions and coursework that is needed to graduate to fit the NHL requirements. In cases, where there are few students in the specific cohort the EdD program will make necessary arrangements to partner with the NHL school to fulfill the needs of the students.

**Meetings**

At a minimum, the committee will meet to formally approve the final plan for implementation of the proposal and again to formally approve the final products. Meetings may be conducted digitally if needed. It is up to the student, with support of the chair, to arrange these meetings.

**Role of Committee members**

The **Supervisory Committee Chair** leads the support and evaluation efforts, helping to ensure the student makes satisfactory progress toward completion of the dissertation. The chair will be identified before spring quarter of Year 2 of the program via who the course instructor is for the *TEDLD 585: Proposal Development* class, and will consult with the student during the development phase of the dissertation proposal. Though the chair may work directly with students in developing their proposal, official duties begin with the acceptance of the proposal and continue until approval of the dissertation. In exceptional cases, if the dissertation is not completed within the projected timeline, duties will continue through additional quarters. The chair will, in consultation with other members, determine roles and responsibilities regarding reading, editing, and providing guidance on the applied project, project report, and article. The chair will submit a grade (Credit/No Credit) for the student each quarter as part of *TEDLD/TEDNUR 801: Dissertation in Practice*.

Additional committee members support the student throughout the project and collaborate with the chair as needed.

1. **Related Coursework**

**TEDLD 585: Proposal Development**

Towards the end of the second year, students enroll in *TEDLD/ TEDNUR 585: Proposal Development* the last course in the five-course research sequence. This class focuses on the full proposal of the dissertation as a structured inquiry process. At the end of the class, successful students will have completed a draft of their dissertation proposal having worked with their committee chair and committee members. The supervisory committee chair, in consultation with other committee members, will determine final approval of the proposal and permission to begin the dissertation. This might include modifications of the proposal designed in the course as requested by the chair. The students will have started the IRB application process but will not have submitted it until the chair is selected and the proposal has been approved by the committee.

**TEDLD/TEDNUR 801: Dissertation in Practice**

Beginning as soon as committee formation is approved, students enroll in *TEDLD/TEDNUR 801: Dissertation in Practice*. Students work on dissertations, including project application, inquiry, and writing are encompassed in this course, with credits gradually increasing through Spring quarter. Instructors of this course will be the Committee chairs (and have taught TEDLD 585 in the spring of the 2nd year) and are responsible for submitting Credit/No Credit grades at the end of each quarter.

**TEDLD 802: Dissertation in Practice Seminar**

During the academic year, students enroll in a one-credit course to support the dissertation process. This course includes peer coaching, process support, peer review of drafts, and general advice in relation to completion of dissertation efforts.The instructor for this course is also the chair of the Committee and will be done in a cohort model by specialization/interest area.

**Typical Course and Credit Timeline**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Quarters During Year Three** | **801****Project Credits** | **802 Seminar Credits**  |
| Autumn | 4 | 1 |
| Winter | 6 | 1 |
| Spring | 7 | 1 |
| **Total Credits** | **17** | **3** |

1. **Group Dissertation in Practice**

In the UWT Ed.D. program, it is permissible to conduct dissertation as part of a group. Each student must specify a unique part of the project, with unique guiding questions. In a group project, there may be one overarching question, and each member could have unique sub-questions, or students may have related, but different questions about a similar project. Each student will produce a final report, as per requirement of the dissertation. It is recognized that there will be overlap in the final reports, but the focus must be unique.

Each student will participate in writing a publishable manuscript, but this product may be written as co-authors. It would be more beneficial to the student to have each member of the group write a manuscript from his/her perspective, type of inquiry, and focus, thus yielding multiple articles with joint authorship. However, one article with shared authorship may be written if so desired. Negotiation of order of authorship must be conducted early and follow norms of suggested publication.

Group dissertations will be evaluated individually for their achievements by each student’s supervisory committee, in accordance with the Ed.D. Program and UW Graduate School requirements for the practice doctorate. The supervisory committee chair(s) will also advise students on degree of overlap and uniqueness for each part of the report and manuscript.

Permission for group dissertation is granted by the Director of the Ed.D. Program at the same time as committee formation. Students working in groups may choose to request the same committee members, if appropriate. The Director will consult with the potential committee chair(s) and students. The approval form is found at the end of this document.

1. **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

All research that involves human subjects must follow appropriate UW Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies and procedures. Prior to conducting any research related to the dissertation, students must have received human subjects’ approval by UW’s Human Subjects Division. Most students’ research will fall into one of two categories: Exempt from IRB review or Expedited/Minimal Risk. Both categories require form submission to the IRB. For more information, including application procedures: <https://www.washington.edu/research/hsd>.

1. **Dissertation in Practice Proposal**

The dissertation should be an applied leadership activity (or set of leadership activities) that align around a central educational leadership issue of concern. This issue should be a multifaceted, large-scale, and comprehensive problem relevant to a specific professional context, as well as a tangible issue about which the student can address and/or undertake practical study. When possible and appropriate, the project should be approached through an equity lens. The proposal should clearly document how the issue has been addressed within the research literature, and this problem should directly impact (or be impacted by) educational leadership. The goal is to convey a timely, professionally relevant, academically rigorous project that entails action-oriented efforts that can be conducted within the dissertation timeframe.

1. **Comprehensive Report**

At the culmination of the dissertation, the student will submit a comprehensive report that details the dissertation. The dissertation must provide a conceptual grounding in theory and literature, clearly articulated problem of practice, data collection, and analysis. All projects should either clarify program improvement or other solution(s) to the problem, or clarify implementation of proposed solutions, including, if applicable, evaluation of the impacts. This report should also be shared with appropriate leadership within the professional context under which it was written. This report is in addition to the publishable manuscript.

All written and oral reports must include modification of any identifiable names of persons or institutions by pseudonyms.

1. **Final Manuscript**

At the culmination of the dissertation, students complete a polished draft of a manuscript written for an identified academic or professional journal or report. This manuscript should be publication submission ready for the specific journal and should address the norms and conventions of the journal and field, including standard length, appropriate style of writing, and detailed findings and/or outcomes of the practicum project. If applicable, the manuscript should also be shared with relevant leadership within the professional context under which it was written. (See section above for Group Dissertations).

1. **Committee Review Process**

Once the final comprehensive report is completed, a draft should be submitted to the committee chair. When the committee chair determines the final draft to be sufficient, the student may then submit the final draft to the full committee. Once approval is granted, the student and the committee chair is responsible for ensuring the final report adheres to both Graduate School and library archival policies. A final presentation of the project through a meeting of the student and committee members, as well as other interested parties will be conducted. Assuming that all other graduation requirements are met, approval of the dissertation (through the warrant, or signature page), formally signifies completion of the Ed.D.

1. **Library Archive**

All final manuscripts and reports as accepted for fulfillment of the Dissertation in Practice will be uploaded and digitally archived through the UWT Library Digital Commons. UW Tacoma Libraries will provide support for this process. This shou.ld also be in alignment with what is acceptable to share via the students committee and the community/organizations approval of what is being made available.

1. **Dissertation Timeline**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quarter** | **Student** | **Faculty** | **Program** |
| **Winter Year 2** | * Develops topic, research questions and literature review (TEDLD 583)
* Identify committee chair via instructor for TEDLD 585 specified section for student by specialization/area of interest (TEDLD 584)
* Develops methodology and approach to applied leadership activity (or set of leadership activities) that align around a central educational leadership issue of concern (TEDLD 584)
 | * TEDLD 583 professor supports development of topic, research questions and literature review.
* TEDLD 584 professor supports development of methodology (and any remaining work on literature review)
 |  |
| **Spring Year 2** | * Develop proposal
* Prepare IRB application materials
* Identify the 2nd and 3rd committee members.
 | * Director of the EdD program approve chair and committee members.
* TEDLD/TEDNUR 583 professor (chair) supports development of proposal
* Committee approves proposal
* IRB paperwork submitted
 | * Add approved student committee to MyGrad
 |
| **Summer Year 2**  | * Finalize committee (if not finalized)
* Begin dissertation work (if committee approved and all paperwork completed)
 | * Committee approves proposal (if not yet approved)
 | * Add approved student committee to MyGrad
 |
| **Fall Year 3**  | * Begin dissertation
* Continue dissertation (if already approved)
 | * Committee approval
* Reflective seminar faculty (chairs) meet with students
* Meet with student(s) & committee (outside of seminar as needed)
 |  |
| **Winter Year 3** | * Continue dissertation work
 | * Meet with student(s) & committee
* Reflective seminar faculty (chairs) meet with students (outside of seminar as needed)
 |  |
| **Spring Year 3**  | * Dissertation public presentation
* Comprehensive report
* Final publishable manuscript
* Graduation (if approved)
 | * Final approval by committee
* For those not meeting approval, continued enrollment in TEDLD/TEDNUR 801/802 until completion
 | * Digital archiving
* Submit student degree request to Graduate School via MyGrad
 |

**Dissertation Checklist**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **STEPS** | **KEY COMPONENTS OF DISSERTATION** | * **CHECK**
 |
| **1** | Develop dissertation proposal (TEDLD/TEDNUR 585) |  |
| **2** | Create dissertation committee  |  |
| **3** | Approval of dissertation proposal by committee |  |
| **4** | Approval by IRB. |  |
| **5** | Conduct dissertation |  |
| **6** | Draft comprehensive report and manuscript |  |
| **7** | Informal approval by chair to share report and manuscript  |  |
| **8** | Committee feedback on report and manuscript |  |
| **9** | Finalize report and manuscript  |  |
| **10** | Committee approval of report and manuscript |  |
| **11** | Public presentation |  |
| **12** | Submission and digital archiving of dissertation report and manuscript |  |
| **13** | Complete graduation coursework  |  |

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**DISSERTATION SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE FORM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Student Name** |  |
| **Student ID** |  |
| **Working Project Title** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Formation of Supervisory Committee**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Printed Name of Chair \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Chair Signature Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Printed Name of Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Signature Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Printed Name of 3rd Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Email Address of 3rd Committee Member\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Employer/Organization of 3rd Committee Member\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Signature Date | **Revision of Supervisory Committee**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in place of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Please list entire revised Supervisory Committee *(Signatures required only of new supervisory committee members.)*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Printed Name of Chair \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Chair Signature Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Printed Name of Committee Member\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Signature Date |
| Director of the Ed.D. Program Approval \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

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**Permission Request and Guidelines for Group Dissertations**

In the UWT Ed.D. program, it is permissible to conduct dissertation as part of a group. Each student must specify a unique part of the project, with unique guiding questions. In a group project, there may be one overarching question, and each member could have unique sub-questions, or students may have related, but different questions about a similar project. Each student will produce a final report, as per requirement of the dissertation. It is recognized that there will be overlap in the final reports, but the focus must be unique. Each student will produce a publishable manuscript. In this case, each member of the group will write a manuscript from his/her perspective, type of inquiry, and focus, but authorship may be shared if so desired. It is suggested that the student doing primary work becomes first author, and the others may be listed as additional authors as per the suggested publication’s norms.

Group dissertations will be evaluated individually for their achievements by each student’s supervisory committee[[2]](#footnote-2), in accordance with the Ed.D. Program and UW Graduate School requirements for the practice doctorate. The supervisory committee chair(s) will also advise students on degree of overlap and uniqueness for each part of the report and manuscript.

Permission for group dissertation is granted by the Director of the Ed.D. Program at the same time as committee formation. Students working in groups may choose to request the same committee members, if appropriate. The Director will consult with the potential committee chair(s) and students.

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Student: ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­ Date:

List Additional Group Members:

Topic:

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Chair Approval: Date:

Permission granted: Date:

 Robin Minthorn, Ph.D.

Permission denied: Date:

 Robin Minthorn, Ph.D.

Director Comments:

DoctorAL Program in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.)

**DISSERTATION PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM**

Name: Date:

Title of Dissertation in Practice:

Directions: Ed.D. students must obtain approval for this dissertation proposal from the dissertation supervisory committee **prior to enrolling in TEDLD/TEDNUR 801**. The student and supervisory committee member signatures on this fully completed form indicate an approved plan. For group projects, each student must submit a plan.

1. Please check appropriate boxes:

 Individual effort  Group effort \*

\*If a group effort, others involved:

1. Dissertation in Practice Proposal: The dissertation is the culmination of the Ed.D. Program. Reflective of doctoral level study, it is a rigorous, intensive application of a problem of practice-based analysis and/or implementation of a project related to educational leadership that informs current practice or policy. The dissertation requires scholarly inquiry that reflects sustained thinking around a theoretical framework, literature-based approach to a problem, and related set of activities (e.g. program implementation) that are documented in the form of a comprehensive report and a publication-ready manuscript. The proposal reflects these requirements and is to be completed within the projected timeframe.

1. Expectations of Faculty:
2. Faculty will review student progress quarterly and provide guidance as needed.
3. Faculty will provide timely, critical, relevant feedback within (3) weeks of receiving papers (except during quarter breaks).
4. Expectations of the graduate student:
5. Student will keep supervisory committee chair and members updated on progress, proposed changes to project plan, and timeline changes.
6. Student engaged in dissertation will remain continuously enrolled in credits for these activities.
7. Signatures:

Student: Date

Committee Chair: Date

Committee Member: Date

Committee Member: Date

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**DISSERTATION COMPLETION APPROVAL FORM**

(To be filed with UWT Ed.D. Program and the UW Graduate School)

**Student Information**

Student Instructions:

* Complete all fields on this form. Names must match what is on your title page and the name under which you are enrolled.
* Obtain original (ink) signatures – no faxes, scans, stamps, emails.
* Your signed form may be delivered in person, or by campus or postal mail, and must be received by 5:00 p.m. PST on the last day of the quarter.

UWT Ed.D. Program

WCG 328

1900 Commerce Street

Tacoma, WA 98402

* If your form is incomplete (missing information and/or signatures) or if the Graduate Enrollment Management Services (GEMS) receives it after 5:00 p.m. PST on the last day of the quarter, you will be required to register the following quarter or pay the $250 Graduate Registration Waiver Fee: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/policies/general/regwaiver.shtml>

Student Name: Student ID #:

Quarter/Year Graduation: UW Email Account:

Name of Degree: Ed.D. Program: Educational Leadership Program

**Student Agreement**

I certify that I have presented my supervisory committee with the final copy of my dissertation for examination and approval.

Signature of Student: Date:

**Dissertation Supervisory Committee Agreement**

I certify that I have examined the final copy of the above student’s doctoral dissertation and have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects, and that any and all revisions required by the final examining committee have been made.

Signature of Supervisory Committee Chair: Date:

Print name below signature line: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Committee Member: Date:

Print name below signature line: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Committee Member: Date:

Print name below signature line: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. For more information about practice doctorates, see the [Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate](http://cpedinitiative.org/). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Student Dissertation Guidelines document for rules on committees. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)