

Doctoral Candidacy

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All Ph.D. students in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction are required to complete a dissertation in their area of study. The topic for the dissertation study will need to be approved before a student can officially advance to candidacy. Students are required to continuously register for dissertation credits (the EDC/STE -99 courses) once they have advanced to candidacy. Curriculum and Instruction students are required to register for 6 hours of dissertation credit in each long semester until they defend their dissertation and graduate.

Advancement to Candidacy

While completing the required coursework for the doctoral degree, students should begin thinking about their dissertation topic. All of the required coursework must be completed before a student can advance to candidacy.

First-Year and Mid-Program Reviews

Program reviews are scheduled twice a year, early in the fall and spring semesters. The first review is typically scheduled after 18 hours of coursework. The Mid-Program review is scheduled after completing 27-36 semester hours. The purpose of these reviews is to both monitor the student's progress to that point and to advise them on planning their remaining program of study.

Qualifying Exams

(For more detailed information on how to schedule a qualifying exam, how to choose an exam committee, how to schedule the oral examination, etc., please see the Qualifying Exam Guide specific to your area of study on the [Doctoral Program Forms & Documents](#) page.)

[Bilingual/Bicultural Education](#)

Qualifying exam consists of two parts: The first part is a three-day take-home written exam and the second part is an oral defense based on the written exam.

[Cultural Studies in Education](#)

Qualifying exam consists of three parts: The first part is a prospectus, the second is a two-week take-home written exam, and the third is an oral defense based on the written exam.

[Early Childhood Education](#)

Qualifying exam consists of two parts: The first part is a two-week take-home written exam and the second part is an oral defense based on the written exam.

[Language & Literacy Studies](#)

Qualifying exam consists of two parts: The first part is a one-week take-home written exam and the second part is an oral defense based on the written exam.

[Learning Technologies](#)

Qualifying exam consists of two parts: The first part is a four-hour timed exam, and the second part is an oral defense based on the written exam.

[Physical Education Teacher Education](#)

Qualifying exam consists of two parts: The first part is a one-week take-home written exam and the second part is an oral defense based on the written exam.

[Social Studies Education](#)

Qualifying exam consists of two parts: The first part is a four-day take-home written exam and the second part is an oral defense based on the written exam.

Qualifying Exam Decisions

The qualifying exam committee submits to the Graduate Adviser one of the following recommendations:

- advance to candidacy (with or without conditions)
- do not advance to candidacy until listed conditions are met
- terminate student's program

Program of Work (POW) Approval

Submit a final copy of your POW to the Graduate Coordinator for review by the department's Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). This must be done after qualifying exams but before you can advance to candidacy. The POW form specific to your area of study can be found on the [Doctoral Program Forms & Documents](#) page.

Note: You must continue to register each Fall and Spring semester until graduation per [Graduate School policy](#).

Applying for Candidacy

Once a student has both officially completed the Qualifying Exam process and had their POW approved, they are eligible to apply for candidacy. However, prior to applying the student must have formed their dissertation committee and prepared a dissertation abstract. The dissertation committee is formed in consultation with the student's supervisor and is very often the same as the Qualifying Exam committee. The dissertation committee must consist of at least four members, including the supervisor, at least three faculty members from the student's home department GSC (Graduate Studies Committee) and at least one outside member. The outside member is defined as either a UT-Austin faculty member not included in the student's home department GSC or as a faculty member from a different institution.

The [online candidacy application](#) can be found on the [Office of Graduate Studies](#) website. Once the application is submitted it has to be approved by the student's supervisor, Graduate Adviser and GSC Chair and by the Graduate Studies Dean.

Once the student has received all the necessary approvals and officially advanced, the C&I graduate coordinator will assist in changing the student's registration to dissertation credits.