



College of Education  
Learning Design and Leadership

*Exam-Dissertation Sequence:  
An Introduction*

# Purpose of the EDS

**This six-step sequence includes a series of seminars and milestones that lead to four examinations and the design and writing of a traditionally, five-chapter dissertation, that is a rigorous, scholarly contribution to research in a field of interest.**



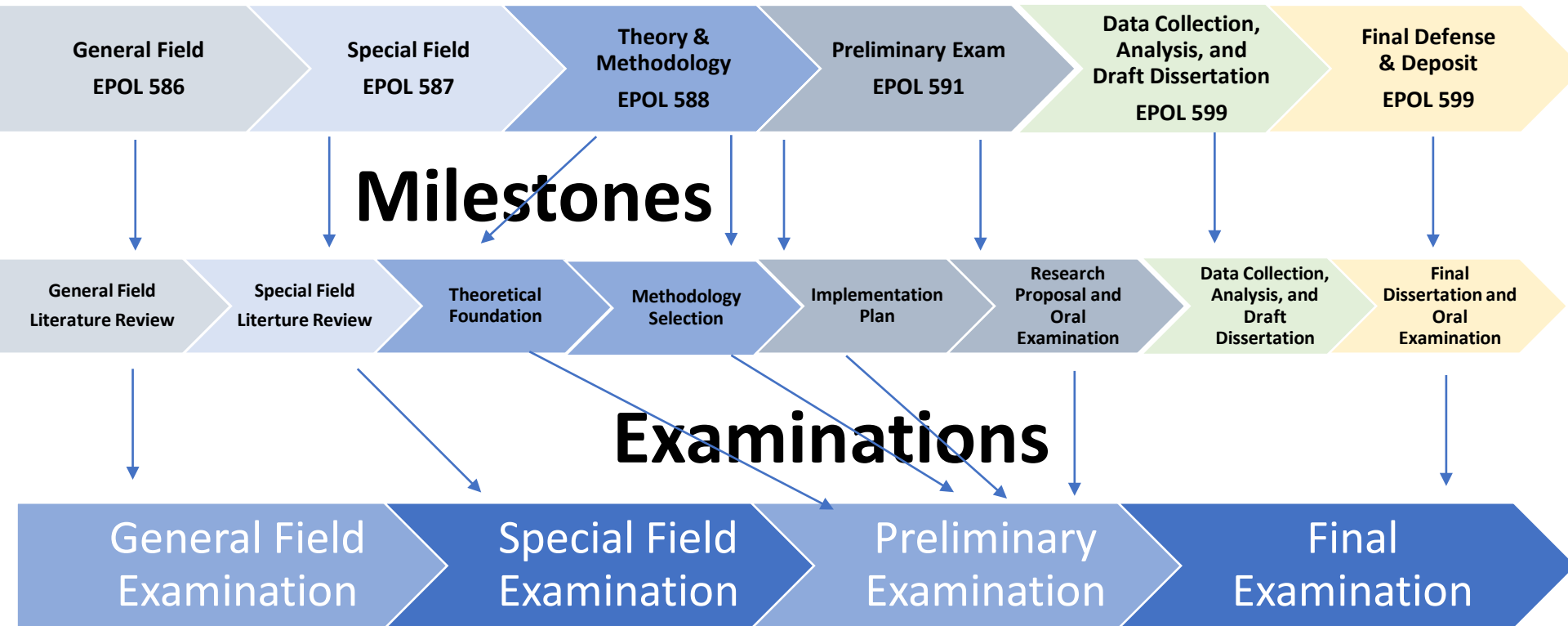
# In This Session

- **Sequence overview**
- **Review Cycles**
- **Learning Materials and Resources**
- **Support**
- **Logistics (Registration) and Process**
- **Pacing**



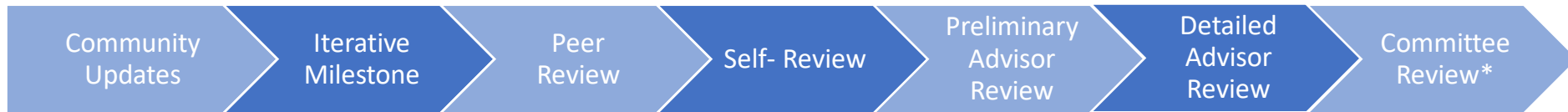
# Seminars, Milestones, and Examinations

## Seminars

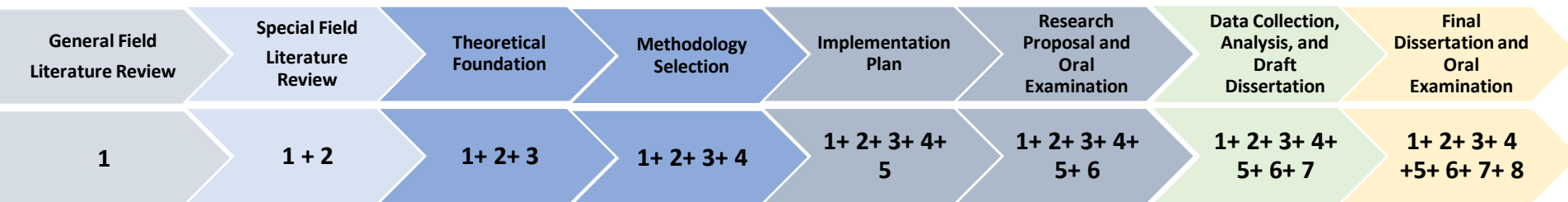


# Iterative and Cumulative

*Iterative: Revise after each review cycle, maintain detailed change notes*



*Cumulative: After each revision, add the next milestone to maintain a cumulative work*



See full [EDS Process PDF](#) on our web site

# Learning Materials and Job Aids

**\*\*\*\*[Navigating the Exam-Dissertation Sequence](#)\*\*\*\***  
***Review this page as you work on each step in the EDS***

## Process

- [Dissertation section of the LDL Web site](#)
- [Weekly Emails from the Dissertation Advisor](#)
- [Happening Now page with the latest events](#)
- [EDS Process PDF](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Before you start the EDS](#)
- [Work Submission Guidelines](#)
- [Google Tracker](#)

## Content

- [EDS Learning Module](#)
- [LDL Exam-Dissertation Sequence Community](#)
- [Literature Review Guidance](#)
- [Alumni's preliminary exam and final deposit manuscripts and presentation slides](#)
- [Rubric](#) for each milestone
- [Dissertation Structure](#)

# Support

# Exam-Dissertation Sequence Advisors

## Dissertation Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Mary Kalantzis

- Dr. Mary Kalantzis for all LDL students
- Provides guidance during group and individual advising sessions
- Fourth Committee Member
- Provides detailed feedback on examination milestones\*
- Approves to proceed to each examination

## Dissertation Advisor: Dr. Kara Francis

- First point of contact for anything related to the EDS
- Responsible for all logistics, including seminar request forms
- Maintains frequent communication with EDS students
- Provides guidance during workshops & individual advising sessions
- Provides preliminary advisor review on all milestones

## Faculty Advisor

*Dr. Bill Cope, Dr. Mary Kalantzis, or other  
College of Education faculty member*

Serves as:

- Examiner\*
- Committee Chair
- Research Supervisor for IRB forms
- Signs most forms, *(co-advisor can sign LOA and some forms)*
- Approves final dissertation for deposit




# Examiners and Committee Members

## Examiners

*Examiners and committee members are determined in time for examination and posted on the roster in our Google tracker*

1. Dr. Bill Cope
2. Assigned by the department (*faculty advisor if advisor is not Dr. Cope or Dr. Kalantzis*)
3. Identified by the student or assigned by the department



*If you have a request for a committee member, please share that with the Dissertation Advisor.*

## Committee Members

1. Dr. Bill Cope
2. Examiner #2 (*faculty advisor if advisor is not Dr. Cope or Dr. Kalantzis*)
3. Examiner #3 (*occasional exceptions where this may not be one of the examiners*)
4. Dr. Mary Kalantzis



*You are encouraged to reach out to that faculty member to request their involvement*

*One external committee is permitted, but must be approved by the Graduate College*

# Individual and Group Advising

- Pre Exam-Dissertation Sequence Individual 15-minute Advising Session with Dissertation Advisor (*required at least one term prior to starting the EDS*) and send link to a previous literature review)
- Weekly Monday Night (US CT) Group Sessions
  - 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. CT: Rotating Workshop Topics, Peer Presentations, etc. *Sign up on the Google Tracker to present, ask questions, etc.*
  - 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. CT: Self-directed Breakout Rooms by Stage
  - 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. CT: Group Advising discussions with Dr. Kalantzis, Dr. Cope, and peers
- Tuesday Alternate Group Sessions
  - 8 a.m. CT – rotates between workshops, group advising, committee presentations, etc.
- Individual Advising Sessions, as needed
  - Individual advising sessions with Dr. Kalantzis are scheduled as ZOOM sessions on Tuesdays *Coordinate with Dr. Francis if you need to meet with Dr. Kalantzis*
  - Individual advising sessions with Dr. Francis can be scheduled in advance or short notice

# Other Support and Resources

- Peer mentoring, collaborative learning, and reflective practices integrated into all processes; *don't limit yourself on who you connect with.*
- Workshops and Writing Retreats  *Writing retreat attendees receive immediate feedback on anything submitting during the retreat*
- Web site and learning materials  *The admin updates have several links – please review them*
- Target timelines proposed to assist with progress
- Sequence tracker and regular asynchronous check-ins
- Library Resources
  - View the videos and reach out to Nancy O'Brien, the Education librarian
- Thesis Office Resources
- Writer's Workshops

# Process

# Differences between the Regular Courses and the EDS

## Exam-Dissertation Seq.

- Very self-directed, with support and scaffolding
- Start and End dates are set by each student
- Weekly Group Advising Sessions (similar)
- Single Learning Module for all 6 “courses”
- Learning Module has all updates already posted
- Students initiate their own works in Scholar
- Curated and Open Peer Reviews
- Peer Review Assignments may come at any time
- Works must be revised until approved; detailed feedback
- Focus is on quality, not quantity; Analytics aren’t used
- Pass/Fail grades

## Regular Courses

- Combination of flipped classroom and self-directed
- Start and end dates are set by the University
- Weekly “student update” synchronous sessions
- One Learning Module per course
- Learning Modules have “weekly updates”
- Students are sent a Work Request with a deadline
- Randomized and Anonymous Peer Reviews
- Peer Reviews are at the same time for all students
- Works may be sent back; minor feedback provided
- Analytics are used
- Letter grades

# Timing

## ***Pace yourself, work ahead if you can – start reading***

- You do not need to be registered in order to participate in the EDS
- You can start attending the group advising sessions anytime
- Be sure to complete the Admin Updates with a prefix of 0 before the term starts
- Be prepared for certain milestones to take more than 8 weeks
- Be prepared for revisions after you submit for advisor review; this is all meant to be a process and not “one and done”
- Refer to the [Suggested Timelines PDF](#)
- You can receive an incomplete if you are unable to complete it in 8 weeks; once you finish the work, we will change your grade

# FORMS FORMS FORMS

- Forms are the student's responsibility
- Follow the Forms page and the Overview PDF
  - Ensure you fill out the right form at the right time
  - Seminars ~~≠~~ Examinations (these are two different forms)
- You can only register for one EDS course at a time to avoid multiple incompletes
  - If you need to be registered for 6 credits due to financial aid, contact the Dissertation Advisor
- Complete an LOA if not registering in the Spring and Fall; not required for summer
- Avoid last minute issues: Check with the Dissertation advisor if you have questions

You don't need to wait until you are registered or the first day of the term to begin participating

*Consider registering once you are close to completing a milestone*

# Admin Updates and Milestones

## Follow the EDS Process PDF

Community Updates

Iterative Milestone

Peer Review

Self-Review

Preliminary Advisor Review

Detailed Advisor Review

Committee Review\*

See full [EDS Process PDF](#) on our web site

\*Create milestones in CGScholar for peer review

\*Create milestones in Word for advisor and committee review

**Learning Design and Leadership Exam-Dissertation Sequence: An Iterative Approach Leading to your Final Dissertation**

Six Course Exam-Dissertation Sequence Milestones

General Field EPOL 586 | Special Field EPOL 587 | Theory & Methodology 588 | Prelim Exam EPOL 591 | Data Collection & Analysis 599 | Final Dissertation EPOL 599 (2)

**Iterative and Cumulative Contributions and Review Process**

Focus on one step at a time; one update at a time. Each step in the sequence follows a similar process →

Community Updates | Cumulative Milestone | Preliminary Review | Peer Review | Advisor Review | Committee Review\*

**Detailed Process**

Seminar Elements	Work Creation and Review Process	Committee Feedback
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Submit the Research Seminar Registration Request Form</li> <li>2. Add your registration plan to the Google Tracker</li> <li>3. Respond to Admin Updates in the Community with the relevant prefix</li> <li>4. Complete Projects for the current seminar course</li> <li>5. Present at least once per seminar course (ask questions, seek feedback, share your ideas, share your progress, etc.) – Sign up on the Google Tracker</li> </ol> <p>Note: You may be assigned peer reviews for any type of work at any time</p> <p>Note: CGScholar Analytics are updated at the end of each seminar or exam</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create your First or Subsequence milestone Draft work in CGScholar; all future works will use the "duplicate" feature</li> <li>2. Request to connect the work to the LDL Doctoral Dissertation Sequence Publisher</li> <li>3. Preliminary Review prior to peer review; revise if required</li> <li>4. EDS Team assigns peer reviews</li> <li>5. Start seeking feedback after about a week as reviewers submit; target review deadline is within two weeks (do not submit your work until all reviews have been received)</li> <li>6. Revise and submit in CGScholar and complete a Self-Review indicating how you applied your peer feedback</li> <li>7. Submit a Word version with your CGScholar link at the top to Dr. Kalantzis and copy Dr. Francis</li> <li>8. Revise based on Dr. Kalantzis' feedback</li> <li>9. Proceed to examination upon Dr. Kalantzis' approval</li> <li>10. What to do when you wait for each review cycle to finish</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin working on the admin updates in the next step</li> <li>2. Gather literature for the next step</li> <li>3. Complete a peer review for someone else</li> <li>4. Prepare your PPT slides for your prelim or final defense</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fill out department form to request the exam (qualifying, prelim, final)</li> <li>2. Receive notification from the department with exam question or scheduling confirmation within a few days</li> <li>3. Submit work to Committee via the online form as a Word document with a link to CGScholar embedded at the top</li> <li>4. Receive committee feedback within three to four weeks</li> <li>5. Revise work based on committee feedback (even if not required to resubmit)</li> <li>6. Duplicate the finalized version to create the start of the next work (about this work – versions – Select the "Duplicate" icon next to the version you want to copy). Rename the work and re-add the icon. Do not create a new work and do not try to re-submit your previous work again, as a single work cannot be routed for peer review more than once.</li> </ol>

**Learning Design and Leadership Exam-Dissertation Sequence: An Iterative Approach Leading to your Final Dissertation**

Six Course Exam-Dissertation Sequence Milestones

General Field Literature Review | Special Field Literature Review | Theoretical Foundation | Methodology Selection | Implementation Plan | Research Proposal and Oral Examination | Data Collection & Analysis | Final Dissertation and Oral Examination

**Preparing your Research Proposal**

General Field Research Seminar and Examination	Special Field Research Seminar and Examination	Methodology Seminar	Research Proposal Seminar and Examination
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Admin Updates with a prefix of 0 and 1</li> <li>2. Add entries to the Shared Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>3. Temporary Chapter 2 Part 1: General Field Literature Review</li> <li>4. Examination</li> </ol> <p><b>Forms</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Online EdD EPOL Qualifying Exam Seminar Registration Form</li> <li>2. Qualifying Exam Request Form (from our web site and not the Grad Forms page)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Admin Updates with a prefix of 2</li> <li>2. Add entries to the Shared Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>3. Temporary Chapter 2 Part 2: Special Field Literature Review</li> <li>4. Examination</li> </ol> <p><b>Forms</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Online EdD EPOL Qualifying Exam Seminar Registration Form</li> <li>2. Qualifying Exam Request Form (from our web site and not the Grad Forms page)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Admin Updates with a prefix of 3</li> <li>2. Add entries to the Shared Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>3. Chapter 3 Part 1: Theory</li> <li>4. Chapter 3 Part 2: Methodology Design</li> <li>5. IRB Documentation and Approval</li> </ol> <p><b>Forms</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Online EdD EPOL Qualifying Exam Seminar Request Form</li> <li>2. IRB Protocol Form</li> <li>3. IRB Research Team Form</li> <li>4. Other IRB Forms as necessary</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chapter 3 Part 3: Methodology Implementation or Appendices</li> <li>2. Admin Updates with a Prefix of 4</li> <li>3. Fully streamlined Chapter 2</li> <li>4. Chapter 1: Introduction</li> <li>5. Chapters 1 to 3 signed with the Graduate College's approved format submitted to your committee for examination</li> <li>6. Coordinate with the Dr. Francis to schedule your preliminary exam</li> <li>7. Prepare a 15-minute oral presentation and submit slides for advisor review</li> <li>8. 15-minute Oral Presentation Examination to your committee (60-minute session)</li> </ol> <p>Refer to the Preliminary Exam Outline document for additional guidance</p> <p><b>Exam note:</b> you must be enrolled in the term you plan to present</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Online EdD EPOL Prelim/381 Request Form</li> <li>2. Request for Appointment of Thesis/Dissertation Committee Form</li> </ol>

1. Complete assigned peer reviews

2. Present at least once per seminar course (ask questions, seek feedback, share your ideas, share your progress, etc.) – Sign up on the Google Tracker

**Important:** The form to register for a Seminar/Course is different than completing the form for an exam

Each work should be a cumulative version of the previously completed milestones



# Small Group Peer Communities

*Three reviewers who stay with the author for the duration of their dissertation\**

## Peer Stage

*A reviewer who is at a similar stage*

## Peer Topic

*A reviewer who has a similar research topic from any stage*

## Peer Advisor

*A reviewer who is further along in the sequence or an alumni*

## Extended Peer Learning Community

*Additional collaboration with all peers from the exam-dissertation sequence*

# Small Group Peer Communities

- Review the same work as it evolves; saves time
- Not focused on a specific volume of reviews, but rather the usefulness of the review based on stage or topic (but the target is 3 reviews per milestone)
- The Peer Topic reviewer may be ahead or behind in the sequence, or maybe has not even started the sequence
- The focus of the review will differ based on the purpose or person reviewing
- Feedback may be content, structure, or process related depending on the role of the reviewer
- Each type of reviewer provides connection either through similar stage, similar topic, or advanced progress

# Getting Started

# EDS Prework – you can do this now

- **Getting Started page on our web site**

<https://ldlprogram.web.illinois.edu/dissertation/planning>

- **EDS Prework page on our web site**

<https://ldlprogram.web.illinois.edu/dissertation/courses/prework/>

- **Our Google Tracker and EDS Progress Report**

- Be sure to follow the instructions to link your Illinois account

- **General Field Onboarding & Literature Review Workshops**

- Refer to the Happening Now page for upcoming dates

You don't need to wait until you are registered or the first day of the term to begin participating