



College of Education  
Leadership, Research,  
& Foundations

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
**COLORADO SPRINGS**

# PhD in Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy

## Student Handbook

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## PhD Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **COLORADO SPRINGS**

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations PhD program in Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy. This handbook has been created to serve as a resource of information, guidelines, and requirements to assist you toward successful completion. If at any time you require additional support or information, please feel free to contact the LRF Department Chair, Dr. Sylvia Mendez (719-255-3476 | [smendez@uccs.edu](mailto:smendez@uccs.edu)) and/or the PhD Program Coordinator, Dr. Andrea Bingham (719-255-4537 | [abingham@uccs.edu](mailto:abingham@uccs.edu)).

Other important campus contacts:

#### **Campus Map**

<https://map.uccs.edu/>

#### **Student Parking**

<https://pts.uccs.edu/parking/students.html>

#### **Student ID Cards**

<https://uccsid.uccs.edu/>

#### **Graduate School**

<https://www.uccs.edu/graduateschool/>

#### **Kraemer Family Library**

<https://www.uccs.edu/library/>

#### **Information Technology**

<https://oit.uccs.edu/getITdone>



PhD Educational Leadership,  
Research, and Policy

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## **Mission Statement**

The faculty of the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations (LRF) is committed to the development of leaders and researchers who:

- model integrity,
- demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of individuals within a diverse society,
- embrace and demonstrate ethical behaviors and democratic dispositions,
- promote effective instructional practices,
- challenge themselves and others toward continuous improvement of educational programs,
- display passionate commitment to ensure every student learns,
- create learning communities, and
- use research and analytic tools to address significant questions that influence effective educational policy and practice.

The faculty accepts the critical role of mentorship in adult learning and of co-constructing knowledge with students while challenging them to develop competencies and to broaden their intellectual horizons.



## Program Goals

The PhD in Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy prepares graduates to:

- engage in reflective practice that promotes equity and inclusion and scholarly inquiry as scholar-practitioners;
- synthesize multiple research perspectives to lead educational communities toward enhancing and refining policies and programs, enriching and strengthening instructional practices, and improving and enhancing student outcomes;
- lead practitioners and other citizens toward implementing research-based policy initiatives;
- synthesize and apply research from various sources to illuminate and resolve problems of practice;
- employ appropriate research tools, both quantitative and qualitative, to conduct research;
- interpret research data for practical application;
- communicate comprehensibly and effectively in both oral and written scholarly discourse;
- develop competency in the application of appropriate technological programs for analysis of data, communicate with a broad base of scholars and practitioners, and maintain research databases;
- direct educators in the continuous improvement of practice through the cycle of implementation and evaluation; and
- appropriately model cultural competence in research-based educational initiatives.

## PhD Program Faculty

### **Andrea Bingham, PhD, Assistant Professor and PhD Program Coordinator**

Dr. Bingham serves as Assistant Professor of Leadership, Research, and Foundations in the College of Education at UCCS. She is also the Ph.D. Program Coordinator. Dr. Bingham received her Ph.D. in Urban Education Policy, with a focus on research methods and sociological theory, from the University of Southern California. She is also a former high school English teacher. Her research focuses on applications of qualitative methodologies, policy implementation and instructional reform, and school change. Her recent work utilizes sociocultural learning theories, organizational theory, policy discourse analysis, and qualitative research methods—including interviews, focus groups, observations, document analysis, and digital and physical artifact analysis—to understand educational change and teacher pedagogy in innovative K–12 school models. Dr. Bingham’s work has been published in academic venues such as *Teachers College Record*, *Educational Policy*, and *Policy Futures in Education*, and has also been featured in Huffington Post and on NPR. Dr. Bingham teaches intermediate and advanced qualitative research methods in the Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy Ph.D. program, and also teaches research methods and statistics across COE programs.

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### **Dick Carpenter, PhD, Professor**

Dr. Carpenter has served on the Leadership, Research, and Foundations faculty since 2002. His prior experience includes work as a policy analyst, school principal, and high school teacher. His research at UCCS has covered a diverse range of topics and research epistemologies, including communications, executive leadership, charter schools, achievement gaps, state assessments, educational policy, and higher education instruction. More recent grant-related work also has included research outside the education field, reaching into the disciplines of economics and political science. To facilitate his research, Dr. Carpenter utilizes large national datasets, such as NELS, NAEP, ELS, and data produced by the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. His qualitative research has relied primarily on interview, focus group, observation, and content analysis procedures. Finally, Dr. Carpenter serves as a program evaluator for state agencies, local school districts, and various non- and for-profit companies.

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### **Valerie Martin Conley, PhD, Professor and Dean of the College of Education**

Dr. Conley is Dean of the College of Education at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. She is a tenured Professor in the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations. A TIAA-CREF Institute Research Fellow and an award-winning teacher, she has written extensively about faculty careers, retirement, and benefits. Dr. Conley has been the PI or Co-PI on several grants and contracts, including a \$500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation: Academic Career Success in Science and Engineering-Related Fields for Female Faculty at Public Two-Year Institutions. Her reputation as an exceptional scholar and teacher who is skilled at putting research into practice evolved from her career in institutional research and in private industry as a government contractor and consultant to the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Conley has provided leadership on several projects for the National Center for Education Statistics, including the 1994 Condition of Education; train-the-trainer initiatives for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System; and data collection, analysis, and dissemination of the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty.

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### **Sylvia Mendez, PhD, Professor and Department Chair**

Dr. Sylvia Mendez is a Professor and serves as the Chair of the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations in the College of Education at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. Her research centers on the educational attainment and school experiences of Mexican descent youth in the mid-20th century, student success in higher education, effective faculty mentoring practices, and broadening participation in higher education. Her research is currently funded by the National Science Foundation. Most recently, Dr. Mendez's work has been published in *The Qualitative Report*, *Journal of STEM Education Research*, and *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in foundations, leadership, and research methods. She received her PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Kansas, her MA in Student Affairs in Higher Education from Colorado State University, and her BA in Economics from Washington State University.  
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### **Robert Mitchell, PhD, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Mitchell is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations (LRF) at UCCS. He has a background in k-12 education as a classroom teacher at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, and has served as a governmental administrator in Massachusetts and with the Colorado Department of Higher Education. Dr. Mitchell received his Ph.D. in Global Education from The Ohio State University. At UCCS, he focuses on global rural education, and is active in research and the development of legislation in support of teacher recruitment and retention in remote locations. In addition to facilitating courses in the LRF department, he also teaches classes within the Department of Teaching and Learning's educator preparation program at UCCS and is a volunteer instructor at the Campo School District in extreme southeastern Colorado. He has presented at academic conferences in Australia, the United States, Morocco, Iran, Egypt, Brunei, and Bahrain, and continues to focus on challenges related to rural education across the globe. His recent work has been published in *The Rural Educator*, *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education*, *American School Board Journal*, and *Action in Teacher Education*.

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### **Phillip Morris, PhD, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Morris is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations at UCCS. Dr. Morris earned his Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Florida, with a minor in Research, Evaluation, and Methodology. Dr. Morris' research focuses on veteran and military student success, access to higher education, and advancing instructional outcomes. Dr. Morris has published in journals such as *Community College Review* and *Institutional Research Applications* and has been a reviewer for *The Journal of Higher Education*.

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### **Christopher Nelson, PhD, Stats Coach**

Christopher Nelson, PhD, is a part-time instructor for the Educational Leadership Ph.D. program. Dr. Nelson provides statistical coaching and synthesis project assistance for Ph.D. students. His teaching experience includes courses in multivariate statistics, research methods, psychometrics, data visualization, and data mining. Dr. Nelson received his BA in Computer Science from Boston University, MA in Economics from Old Dominion University, and PhD in Quantitative Research Methods from the University of Denver.

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### **Margaret Scott, EdD, Senior Instructor**

Dr. Scott is a senior instructor in the Leadership, Research, and Foundations Department in the College of Education at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. Dr. Scott joined the department after spending 30 years in K–12 public education in Arizona, where she most recently served as an elementary principal at a school in school improvement with a significant minority population with high mobility. Prior to that position, she was an assistant principal at a bilingual school and a teacher in grades K–3. She participated in district committees and facilitated a course for administrators on observing teachers in the area of mathematics. In addition to a doctorate in educational leadership, Dr. Scott has a master's in bilingual education and an undergraduate degree in education with an early childhood education emphasis. Dr. Scott's research interests include teacher observation, teacher evaluation, and the role of dialogue and inquiry in instructional and school improvement.

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### **Nick Tapia-Fuselier, PhD, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Nick Tapia-Fuselier serves as an Assistant Professor of Student Affairs in Higher Education in the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations. He earned his Ph.D. in Higher Education and a Graduate Certificate in Community College Leadership from the University of North Texas, his M.Ed. in Student Affairs in Higher Education from Texas State University, and his Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of New Orleans. Prior to his current role as a faculty member, Nick worked as a student affairs professional in a variety of functional areas including first year experience, college access and student success programs, leadership development, service learning, and community engagement. His work as a professional was recognized by ACPA-College Student Educators International as he was honored as an Annuet Coeptis Emerging Professional awardee in 2017. Using qualitative methods of inquiry, and particularly interested in the community college context, Nick's primary research area investigates the ways in which colleges and universities build capacity to serve, support, and advocate for undocumented students. He also engages in other areas of research including critical perspectives on leadership education and critically examining individual positionality to the practice of student affairs. Nick has received research grants from the Center for the Study of Community Colleges and NASPA Region III. His work is published in a number of peer-reviewed journals including the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, the *Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs*, and the *Journal of Leadership Studies*. In 2019, Nick was elected to serve a three-year term on the Governing Board for ACPA-College Student Educators International as the Assembly Coordinator for Communities of Practice.

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**Joseph Taylor, PhD, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Joseph Taylor is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. Dr. Taylor's research centers on quantitative research methodology and knowledge accumulation considerations for education research. He teaches intermediate and advanced quantitative research methods in the Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy PhD Program.

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**Elisa Thompson, PhD, Writing and Qualitative Methods Coach**

Dr. Thompson is an instructor who serves as the Writing and Qualitative Methods Coach for first year doctoral students in the Leadership, Research, and Foundations Department. She supports both first- and second-year doctoral students as they complete their Portfolio Projects over the summer term. Dr. Thompson offers several workshops yearly on topics related to writing and dissertation completion. She teaches master's and undergraduate statistics and research methods. Dr. Thompson received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Arizona in 1998 with a specialization in Teaching, Learning, and Development. She earned a M.A. in educational psychology and her B.S. in psychology. Her research interests include self-regulation skills around dissertation completion and best practices around graduate student writing groups.

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**Patty Witkowsky, PhD, Assistant Professor and SAHE Coordinator**

Dr. Patty Witkowsky is an Assistant Professor and the Program Coordinator for the Student Affairs in Higher Education program at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. She received her Ph.D. in Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership with a minor in Applied Statistics and Research Methods from the University of Northern Colorado, her M.A. in College Student Personnel from the University of Maryland, and her B.A. in Sociology from Occidental College. She held administrative positions in higher education for 12 years prior to joining the faculty in areas such as new student orientation, student activities, student organizations, leadership programs, residence life and housing, career services, academic advising, and graduate student support. Dr. Witkowsky's research focuses on the experience of graduate students in student affairs graduate preparation programs, as well as student transitions and the experiences of student affairs professionals. She is involved in NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education as the co-Faculty Representative for the Orientation, Transition, and Retention Knowledge Community. Additionally, Dr. Witkowsky serves NODA: Association for Orientation, Transition, and Retention as an Associate Editor of the Journal of College Orientation, Transition, and Retention. At UCCS, Dr. Witkowsky serves on the Student Success Assessment Team and as a faculty affiliate for the Global Intercultural Research Center (GLINT). Dr. Witkowsky teaches leadership, college student development theory, research methods, internationalization, and supervised practicum courses in the M.A. in Leadership with a concentration in Student Affairs in Higher Education program and in the Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy Ph.D. program.

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## **Academic Policies and Procedures**

The PhD program in Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy adheres to all UCCS Graduate School policies and procedures. Please refer to the Graduate School website for specific university policies and below for specific program policies.

### **Grade and Quality of Work Requirements**

#### **Course of Study and Sequence**

The PhD program is a tracked cohort program; any deviation from the course of study and sequence requires a written request to the department chair.

#### **PhD Timeline and Graduation**

Students are allowed nine years from the beginning of coursework to complete all PhD degree requirements and to graduate. During the semester prior to graduation, candidates should set an appointment with their advisor to review their dissertation completion plan and to determine whether all program requirements have been met. Students must complete all Graduation Forms on the Graduate School website. Application for Candidacy is due **NO LATER** than the first week of classes in the semester a student expects to graduate. This will ensure that all records are in order, all classes have been completed, expected dissertation progress is being met, and pertinent information about graduation is communicated.

#### **Dissertation Credits**

Students must complete at least 30 dissertation credits (LEAD 8990: Doctoral Dissertation) to satisfy the dissertation credit requirements of the Graduate School for earning a PhD. During coursework, students will complete 10 dissertation credits under the guidance of their assigned advisor. Following coursework, students must be continuously enrolled with a minimum of one dissertation credit hour per semester (excluding summer) during completion of the dissertation under the direction of their dissertation chair. The student is responsible for creating a dissertation credit completion plan that meets the requirements of the Graduate School (a maximum of 10 dissertation credits are allowed during the fall and spring semester and seven in the summer). After successfully passing Portfolio II of the PhD program, a student must form a dissertation committee within one year; if the student has not done so, they may not enroll in any further dissertation credits until a committee is secured.

#### **Minimum Grade Point Averages**

To remain in good academic standing in the PhD program and the Graduate School and to receive a graduate degree, a student is required to maintain at least a B (3.00) graduate program grade point average.

### **Minimal Acceptable Grades**

Any graduate level course applied to a doctoral degree must have a grade of B minus or better. The PhD program does not allow for course forgiveness; if a student receives below a B minus in a course, the student will be subject to automatic dismissal from the program.

### **Transfer Credits**

No coursework can be transferred into the PhD program.

### **Incomplete Grades**

A grade of incomplete ("I") will convert to a "F" if the work is not completed within the one-year maximum period of time according to University policy. A grade of "I" may be given only when the following conditions are met:

1. The student requests an incomplete grade
2. Reasons for not completing course requirements are beyond the student's control
3. A majority of the coursework has been completed at a passing level by the student
4. The instructor sets the conditions whereby the coursework will be completed before the beginning of the next semester

Students are only allowed to receive one incomplete per academic year. Requests for a second incomplete will not be granted in the same academic year and the grade received during the course will be awarded. If the grade earned is below a B-, the student will be required to re-take the course to successfully complete the degree requirements.

### **In Progress Grades**

Students will obtain a grade of in progress ("IP") for all LEAD 8990: Doctoral Dissertation credits throughout their program; the IP grades will be changed to an "A" at the end of the semester in which the student successfully defends his or her dissertation.

### **Withdrawals**

Withdrawals will be granted only to students with a passing grade.

### **Leave of Absence**

A student in good academic standing can request a leave of absence from the PhD program from the department chair for up to one year. During a leave of absence, the nine-year clock remains active and the student will begin the program at the point at which they stopped out. The student will be ineligible to register for any coursework or receive financial aid during this time period. Any student who is on a leave of absence for more than one year must reapply to the PhD program and will be subject to any new program requirements adopted subsequent to original admittance.

### **Administrative Leave**

A student will be placed on an administrative leave if course and/or portfolio requirements are not completed in the tracked sequential plan. During an administrative leave, the nine-year clock remains active and the student will begin the program at the point at which they stopped out. The student will be ineligible to register for any coursework or receive financial aid during this time

period. Any student who is on an administrative leave for more than one year must reapply to the PhD program and will be subject to any new program requirements adopted subsequent to original admittance.

### **Academic Probation**

A student who has attempted nine or more semester hours and whose UCCS graduate program grade point average of awarded grades falls below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation until such time as the UCCS graduate program grade point average is raised to 3.00 or higher. The student will be allowed a maximum of one calendar year to be removed from probation, or the student may be dismissed from the Graduate School.

A student who received a “resubmit” outcome on PhD Portfolio I or II will be placed on academic probation. The student will be allowed a maximum of one semester to be removed from probation, or the student may be dismissed from the Graduate School.

### **Program Dismissal**

A student whose UCCS graduate program grade point average is below 3.00 after the one-year probationary period will be subject to automatic dismissal.

A student who does not earn a “pass” outcome in a resubmit of PhD Portfolio I or II after the one-semester probationary period will be subject to automatic dismissal.

A student who receives below a B minus in a course will be subject to automatic dismissal.

A student who plagiarizes may be subject to automatic dismissal. If a faculty member believes a student has plagiarized, the department will review the incident and determine appropriate sanctions.

If a student is to be dismissed from the PhD program, the department chair will notify the Dean of the College of Education and the Dean of the Graduate School and the student will be dismissed from the Graduate School. A dismissed student has the right to grieve dismissal decisions by appealing through the COE appeal/exception procedure. A dismissed student is eligible to reapply for admission after one year. Approval or rejection of this application rests with the department faculty. Validation of previous coursework may be required for students to complete the degree.

## **Ethics**

### **Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Students are expected to maintain high standards of ethical and professional conduct in order to be a successful member of the PhD program learning community. Professional behavior is required to complete the program successfully and often is a hallmark of educational and career success.

## **UCCS Student Code of Conduct**

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to maintain the general welfare of the university community. The university strives to make the campus community a place of study, work, and residence in which individuals are treated, and treat one another, with respect and courtesy:  
<http://www.uccs.edu/dos/student-conduct/student-code-of-conduct.html>

## **UCCS Student Rights and Responsibilities**

<http://catalog.uccs.edu/content.php?catoid=16&navoid=1240&hl=%22Student+Rights+and+Responsibilities%22&returnto=search>

## **Plagiarism\***

Plagiarism is not tolerated at UCCS. Plagiarism is defined in the **UCCS Bulletin** and in the **Schedule of Courses** as follows: Use of distinctive ideas or words belonging to another person, without adequately acknowledging that person's contribution. Thus defined, plagiarism includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1. Copying phrases and/or sentences from a source without placing the material in quotation marks and/or without adequate acknowledgment of the source;
2. Mosaic copying of phrases and/or sentences from a multiple source without placing the material in quotation marks and/or without adequate acknowledgment of the individual sources;
3. Using a source's ideas, opinions, or theories without adequate acknowledgment of the source;
4. Paraphrasing a source's words, ideas, opinions, or theories without adequate acknowledgment of the source;
5. Using a source's facts, statistics, or illustrative material without adequate acknowledgment of the source;
6. Submitting as one's own work material that is written or published by another author.

Plagiarism is sometimes thought by students to require a guilty mind, either an intent to plagiarize or attempting or meaning to plagiarize. Students also occasionally think that absence of such an intent or ignorance of plagiarism is sufficient to exonerate them. None of these beliefs are true. As defined, plagiarism is a crime of extension, not of intention: If there is sufficient evidence of copying, use without acknowledgment, or submission of another's work, plagiarism is committed, regardless of the student's intent or lack thereof and regardless of the student's knowledge or lack thereof. Plagiarizing is grounds for dismissal from the PhD program.

\*Adapted from UCCS College of Letters, Arts, and Science Plagiarism Policy:

[http://www.uccs.edu/~srehorst/labs/Modules/Plagiarism\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.uccs.edu/~srehorst/labs/Modules/Plagiarism_Guidelines.pdf)

## **Financial Aid and Veteran's Affairs Benefits**

Financial aid and veteran's affairs benefits, policies, and procedures must be adhered to throughout the course of study. Students who are suspected of willfully or unknowingly engaging in financial aid fraud and/or veteran's affairs benefits fraud will be turned over to the Executive Director of Financial Aid and the Director of the Office of Veteran and Military Student Affairs (if applicable).

## **Student Appeals**

Students may access the **College of Education Appeal/ Exception Procedures** at: <http://www.uccs.edu/Documents/coe/studentresources/AppealsForm2009.pdf>. This form is to be used for an appeal when a student is: (a) denied admission to professional education program; (b) denied permission to student teach or complete professional internship; (c) removed from a professional education program or internship; (d) denied permission to graduate due to missing requirements; (e) requesting an exception to specific policies, procedures, or requirements; and (f) requesting a grade change. This form is not to be used for requests to take classes out of sequence or to take a class without the proper prerequisites. Such requests should be initiated with the department chair.

## **University Requirements and Provisions**

### **Technology Competencies**

It is expected that students begin the program with foundational technology skills that include digital word processing, digital and online formats (e.g., Canvas), and online research databases. Knowledge of the use of technology-supported multimedia, such as PowerPoint and other audio/video resources, is expected. Students who need assistance with building technological skills should speak with their professor to learn about technology resources in the COE and at UCCS. A requirement of this program is that all students must use their UCCS email account and check it regularly (every day) so as not to miss announcements. If the UCCS email address is not a student's primary one, please have emails from UCCS rerouted to the one that is checked daily.

### **Diversity Statement**

The faculty of the College of Education is committed to preparing students to recognize, appreciate, and support diversity in all forms—including ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, economic, sexual orientation, and ability—while striving to provide fair and equitable treatment and consideration for all. Any student who believes that they have not been treated fairly or equitably for any reason should bring it to the attention of the instructor, department chair, or the dean of the College of Education.

### **Accommodations**

The College of Education wishes to fully include persons with disabilities. In compliance with section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), UCCS is committed to ensuring that *“no otherwise qualified individual with a disability ... shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity....”* For students with a disability who believe they will need accommodations, it is their responsibility to contact and register with the Disabilities Services Office and to provide them with documentation of the disability to determine the type of accommodations that are appropriate for the situation. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, the student should contact the Disability Services Office as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and disability accommodations cannot be provided until a “Faculty Accommodation Letter” from the Disability Services Office has been given to the professor by the student. Please contact Disability Services for more information about receiving accommodations at Main Hall, Room 105, 719-255-3354 or [dservice@uccs.edu](mailto:dservice@uccs.edu).

## **Military and Veterans Affairs**

Military students who have the potential to participate in military activities, including training and deployment, should consult with faculty prior to registration for any course, but no later than the end of the first week of classes. At this time, the student should provide the instructor with a schedule of planned absences, preferably signed by the student's commander, in order to allow the instructor to evaluate and advise the student on the possible impact of the absences. The instructor will consider absences due to participation in verified military activities to be excused absences. If, however, it appears that military obligations will prevent adequate attendance or performance, the instructor may advise the student to register for the course at another time, when s/he is more likely to be successful.

## **Title IX**

Students violating Title IX provisions will be given one verbal warning with the understanding that a second incident may, at the instructor's discretion, result in the student being dropped from the class (with the exception of harassment for which one incident is grounds for immediate action). If the disruptive student is dropped after the final drop date, the student will receive a grade of "F" in the course. In all courses, the decision to excuse an absence is solely at the discretion of the instructor. In addition, plagiarism or cheating of any manner will result in a failing grade for the class.

UCCS does not discriminate on the basis of sex in employment or in its education programs and activities and is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals can achieve their academic and professional aspirations free from sex discrimination. UCCS prohibits sex discrimination, including "sexual misconduct," as defined in CU policy. "Sexual misconduct" includes sexual assault, sexual exploitation, intimate partner abuse, gender/sex-based stalking, sexual harassment, and any related retaliation. UCCS does not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, or political philosophy in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. Faculty, staff, and students may report allegations of sexual misconduct, discrimination, or harassment to the UCCS Title IX Coordinator. Additional information can be found at [www.uccs.edu/equity](http://www.uccs.edu/equity).

Sexual misconduct, discrimination, and harassment reports may be made to: Julia Paris, Title IX Coordinator | Office of Institutional Equity, ACAD 106 | 719-255-4324 | [jparis5@uccs.edu](mailto:jparis5@uccs.edu)

Privacy Note: CU policy requires faculty to report to the Title IX Coordinator any personal disclosure regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, or harassment shared with the faculty by a student. Certain student disclosures to a faculty member, whether in person, via email, and/or in classroom papers or homework exercises, may be subject to this requirement. While faculty often are able to help students locate appropriate resources on campus, certain disclosures by the student to the faculty require that the faculty inform the Title IX Coordinator to ensure that the student's safety and welfare are being addressed, *even if the student requests that the disclosure be private*. Students seeking confidential resources on campus may contact (1) the UCCS Counseling Center, 719-255-3265, Main Hall 324; or (2) the UCCS Student Health Center, 719-255-4444, located in the Public Safety Building.



## Course of Study and Sequence

The PhD program in Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy is a tracked cohort program; any deviation from the course of study and sequence requires a written request to the department chair.

### **Fall 1 (6 credits)**

- LEAD 8300-3 Leadership Excellence in Complex Organizations
- LEAD 7100-3 Intermediate Quantitative Research and Statistics

### **Spring 1 (12 credits)**

- LEAD 8600-3 American and Comparative Foundations of Education (winterim, hybrid course)
- LEAD 7150-3 Methods of Qualitative Research
- LEAD 8200-3 Measurement and Assessment in Education
- LEAD 7600-3 Doctoral Research Laboratory in Leadership

### **Summer 1 (6 credits)**

- LEAD 7350-3 Leadership, Power, and Authority in Educational Policy and Governance
- LEAD 7600-3 Doctoral Research Laboratory in Leadership

### **Fall 2 (12 credits)**

- LEAD 8100-3 Advanced Quantitative Research and Statistics
- LEAD 8250-3 Policy Analysis and Evaluation
- LEAD 7600-3 Doctoral Research Laboratory in Leadership
- LEAD 8990-3 Doctoral Dissertation

### **Spring 2 (12 credits)**

- LEAD 8150-3 Advanced Qualitative Research
- LEAD 8350-3 The Economics of Education
- LEAD 7600-3 Doctoral Research Laboratory in Leadership
- LEAD 8990-3 Doctoral Dissertation

### **Summer 2 (7 credits)**

- LEAD 7300-3 Ethical Leadership and Democratic Values in a Multicultural Society
- LEAD 8990-4 Doctoral Dissertation

**Subsequent Semesters** – During coursework students will complete 10 dissertation credits under the guidance of their assigned advisor. Following coursework, students must be continuously enrolled with a minimum of one dissertation credit hour per semester (excluding summer) during completion of the dissertation under the direction of their dissertation chair. A total of 30 hours of dissertation credit are required for program completion.

**PhD Timeline** – Students have nine years from the beginning of coursework to complete all degree requirements and graduate.





## Course Descriptions

### Leadership Core

#### **LEAD 7300 – 3 Ethical Leadership and Democratic Values in a Multicultural Society**

Examine critical elements of the development and maintenance of ethical behavior in organizations and institutions. Analyze the policies and practices of various organizations and institutions and critique alignment of declared corporate values with decisions and behaviors. Develop institutional and individual codes of ethics that align with professed democratic values.

#### **LEAD 7350 - 3 Leadership, Power, and Authority in Education Policy and Governance**

Examine the process of developing policy from perceived need and analyze current educational issues from a policy perspective. Analyze the political relationships among P-16 educational systems, the communities they serve, and governmental entities representing a larger democratic society. Assess the motivation of various political groups for affecting change in public policy. Develop a tool to evaluate policies relative to organizational goals and needs.

#### **LEAD 8300 - 3 Leadership Excellence in Complex Organizations**

Analyzes organizational metaphors and their application to educational organizations. Examines various theories on organizations and the role of process, structure, and communication in organizational effectiveness. Investigates the relationship between and among various systems. Students apply knowledge of adult human development and systems theory to organizational development and strategic planning.

### Research Core

#### **LEAD 7100 - 3 Intermediate Quantitative Research and Statistics**

Students learn and apply advanced methods of analyzing data with an emphasis on the use and interpretation of descriptive and inferential techniques. Topics covered include repeated measures ANOVA, power, multiple correlation, and regression, ANCOVA, MANCOVA, Factor Analysis, and selected packaged statistical programs. Prerequisite: Introduction to Statistics or equivalent.

### **LEAD 7150 - 3 Methods of Qualitative Research**

Students learn the characteristics of various qualitative research traditions, including case study, phenomenology, narrative inquiry, ethnography, and grounded theory. They also gain an introductory understanding of theoretical frameworks and their use in research. They apply tools of qualitative inquiry in the design and implementation of research studies, including the processes of human subjects research and IRB procedures, qualitative data collection, basic data analysis procedures, and strategies of reporting and discussing the findings of a qualitative project. Prerequisite: Introduction to Statistics or equivalent.

### **LEAD 7600 - 12 Doctoral Research Laboratory in Leadership**

Students participate in laboratories organized by professors to engage students in ongoing research projects, being challenged to extend and apply knowledge and skills developed in coursework as they partner with professors as researchers. Laboratories enable students to demonstrate required skills and knowledge, achieve program goals, and demonstrate progress toward candidacy.

### **LEAD 8100 - 3 Advanced Quantitative Research and Statistics**

Students learn and apply advanced methods of developing and analyzing complex data sets through the application of appropriate statistical measures, including time series analysis, SEM, and HLM; and develop skills to conduct and submit critical analyses of published research studies. Students also design, implement, and conduct research projects followed by the completion of professional-level research reports. Prerequisite: LEAD 7100, Intermediate Quantitative Research and Statistics or equivalent.

### **LEAD 8150 - 3 Advanced Qualitative Research**

Students apply advanced tools of qualitative inquiry in the design and implementation of a research study and data analysis. They design a research project, collect data using various techniques, and demonstrate proficiency in analysis of those data. They explore and apply appropriate advanced techniques of qualitative data analysis. Prerequisite: LEAD 7150, Methods of Qualitative Research or equivalent.

### **LEAD 8990 - 30 Doctoral Dissertation**

During coursework students will complete 10 dissertation credits. After coursework students must be continuously enrolled with a minimum of 1 dissertation credit per semester during completion of the dissertation. A total of 30 hours of dissertation credit are required for program completion.

## **Policy Core**

### **LEAD 8200 - 3 Measurement and Assessment in Education**

Students investigate and apply methods of policy and program evaluation. They analyze the role of evaluation in policy and program development and implementation. The students also investigate appropriate methods of needs assessment as a function of policy development, program development, and the evaluation of their effectiveness. Prerequisite: LEAD 7100, Intermediate Quantitative Research and Statistics or equivalent.

### **LEAD 8250 - 3 Policy Analysis and Evaluation**

Students investigate and apply methods of policy and program evaluation. They analyze the role of evaluation in policy and program development and implementation. They also investigate appropriate methods of needs assessment as a function of policy development, program development, and the evaluation of their effectiveness. Prerequisite: LEAD 7100, Intermediate Quantitative Research and Statistics or equivalent.

### **LEAD 8350 - 3 The Economics of Education**

Examines theories of economic models related to the relationship between human capital and education. Investigates and analyzes economic state and national policy affecting P-16 education and undertakes international comparisons of education and economic policy.

### **LEAD 8600 - 3 American and Comparative Foundations of Education**

Examines the origin, evolution, and role of the American education system. Prospects for reform and the future of the P-20 American education system will be explored in light of international comparisons. The transformative capacities of education will be examined.



## **Doctoral Research Laboratory Examples**

Students participate in research laboratories organized by professors to engage students in research. In the context of these labs, students are challenged to extend and apply knowledge and skills they develop in coursework. Students collaborate with professors and other students in these lab experiences as they learn to develop all phases of research. Additionally, the labs enable students to address some portfolio requirements. Examples of research lab projects include:

### **Lab One**

Lab one conducted an evaluation of the online principal licensure and master's degree programs to determine whether the online program is as effective as the campus-based program and the cohort/district partnership programs. The evaluation analyzed outcome data, such as GPA, PLACE scores, practicum grades, and portfolio ratings. Survey and interview data were collected from students, professors, and practicum supervisors. Results were used for in-house program development; additionally, a conference presentation and journal article was generated.

### **Lab Two**

Lab two developed and validated a survey instrument based on a systematic review of the current empirical and theoretical literature on organizational learning, the learning organization, and knowledge management. This survey instrument was used to study the state of organizational learning in school districts and to examine relationships between the degree of organizational learning in school districts and various organizational structures and policies.

### **Lab Three**

Lab three used a case study research design to investigate the experiences, challenges, and opportunities that occurred as a result of Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Coast school districts of Mississippi. Interviews were conducted with 75% of the superintendents in the area. Lab concluded with a national conference presentation and a journal publication.

### **Lab Four**

Lab four included two research projects. The first measured school efficiency with a particular focus on comparing charter schools to non-charter public schools. This project used a statewide database to measure efficiency at the school level. One conference presentation and journal article was completed as a result of this lab project. The second project was a mixed-methods study of political rhetoric on education. It focused specifically on gubernatorial rhetoric about the purposes of education and examined differences in that rhetoric based on an index of quantitative indicators. This research concluded with one research conference presentation and a journal article.



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## **Conducting Research**

This section provides information, forms, and policies on conducting research. Professors guide students through this information to ensure they comply with university policy in all projects. Class projects do not carry the same requirements for application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for permission to conduct research. However, if a student is using a class project to gather data intended for inclusion in synthesis projects, dissertation, or a publication, IRB approval is required. In any case, students should consult with faculty before beginning any research project.

### **UCCS Office of Research**

<https://www.uccs.edu/research/>

### **Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Integrity**

<https://osp.uccs.edu/>

### **Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB)**

<https://osp.uccs.edu/research-compliance/research-involving-human-subject-irb>



## The PhD Portfolio

The PhD portfolio serves as the qualifying exam in year one and comprehensive exam in year two—faculty will not preview, review, or provide substantive feedback until the formal presentation of the portfolio. The portfolio is a selective collection of a student’s experience as a student/scholar, which includes course and professional artifacts coupled with narrative reflection. The purpose of the portfolio is to promote and represent a student’s knowledge base and skills as applied to scholarly oral and written communication in educational leadership, research, and policy. The portfolio provides evidence of a student’s professional development and progress toward independent scholarly work on complex problems of educational practice. The portfolio represents the learning that occurs as a student works with other students and professors and as s/he applies new skills and knowledge to professional work projects. The products within the portfolio are developed throughout the two years of program coursework. The narrative reflections create a context for the selected artifacts and tie them to the student’s experiences, knowledge, and skills.

The portfolio provides students and faculty with the structure to assess each student’s progress. The artifacts demonstrate that which a student has produced, and the narrative reflections explicate their relationship to the goals of the program. The primary goal of the first portfolio review is to ensure that the student demonstrates competency in research, a robust knowledge base in educational leadership and policy, and skill in professional writing. The review is conducted by a committee of faculty members that recommend whether the student continues in the program for a second year or is dismissed from the program. The second portfolio review is structured in the same manner as the first review with an expectation that the student demonstrates a higher level of competency in research, a more robust knowledge base in educational leadership and policy, and more highly developed skills in professional writing. This is the point at which the committee will recommend the student to a PhD candidate who can now move into the dissertation phase of the PhD program. If the committee finds the student to be deficient in these requirements, the committee will recommend that the student be dismissed from the program. Once the student has successfully demonstrated competency in the portfolio criteria, s/he can proceed with the dissertation proposal.

### Portfolio Contents

The descriptions below detail the contents required in each student’s portfolio, the ways in which the portfolio will be evaluated, and the possible outcomes.

#### Synthesis Projects

This project represents the capstone artifact for the portfolio in years one and two. In this project, students demonstrate advanced skill and knowledge in educational leadership, research, and policy relevant to the topics, issues, and domains covered in the coursework prior to each

portfolio review. The project requires students to synthesize and apply skills and knowledge from educational leadership, research, and policy to a topic of their choosing in both years. The format of the project will take that of a professional manuscript eligible for submission to a journal or conference, including an introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, conclusion, references, and any relevant tables or figures. The page limit of the year one synthesis project is 30-60 pages (inclusive of all pages of the project). The page limit of the year two synthesis project is 35 pages all inclusive (inclusive of all pages of the project). Synthesis projects must conform to program standards related to quality of products, APA, and standard conventions of academic writing, grammar, and professional presentation. The written documents will be evaluated, and students also will be evaluated in their presentation and defense of the projects.

### **Year One Synthesis Project**

The year one synthesis project must address a problem of practice. A problem of practice study describes a challenge in professional practice, seeks empirically to investigate the challenge and/or test solution(s) to address the challenge, and generates actionable implications. The context can be the student's professional workplace or some other organization or setting that facilitates an applied synthesis focusing on a problem of practice.

Examples:

- Policymakers and P-16 educational institutions have crafted policies and implemented transition programs in order to increase success of students moving from one educational level or setting to another. Are such programs effective? Do they meet the expectations of the leaders who proposed or championed them? How do effective programs work in practice?
- School disciplinary practices are largely crafted in the paradigm of punishment for undesirable behavior (detention, suspension, expulsion, etc.). Are such practices effective in changing behavior? What is the relationship between the leadership ethos in a school or school district and its disciplinary practices?
- New leaders in an organization typically institute a strategic planning process designed to realize their vision for that group. Such processes commonly produce new policies and procedures to facilitate and institutionalize the change necessary to achieve that vision. Yet, all too often the process fails to produce the necessary change, and the vision is never attained. What organizational and leadership factors contribute to the success or failure of that process?

The project in year one must take a mixed-methods approach. The data should be specific to the context under study, but it need not be original; i.e., schools routinely gather a myriad of data. The project can use such data in its analysis. However, these data should be analyzed originally as part of the project. That is, using quantitative data as the example, they must be analyzed directly by the student using conventional quantitative procedures addressed in the methods courses in this program. In other words, presenting the results of others' analyses is not acceptable. The page limit for synthesis I is 30-60 pages all inclusive. Any data collected directly from human subjects must be approved by the IRB. All IRB applications must be submitted to faculty advisors by March 1.

## **Year Two Synthesis Project**

The year two synthesis project is a policy analysis on a topic of the student's choosing. The policy analysis should identify a policy, describe the context of the policy (including definition of the policy problem, policy goals, description of how the policy came about, discussion of implementation and outcomes of the policy, etc.), and analyze/evaluate the policy using appropriate research methods. The policy context must be greater in scope than a single organization. The policy scope must be at the city, county, region, state, country, or international level. The policy may be one already in effect, or students may choose a policy proposed or under consideration by a deliberative body. Alternatively, students may elect to analyze the effect of a policy change, such as the reauthorization of a law (which typically includes changes to existing policy) or when a court strikes down an existing law in part or in total.

Examples:

- In 2003, The U.S. Supreme Court considered affirmative action in higher education and ruled that race can be one of many factors considered by colleges when selecting their students but struck down the more formulaic approach of the University of Michigan's undergraduate admissions program, which used a point system that rated students and awarded additional points to minorities. What has been the effect of this ruling?
- In 2006, the Georgia legislature adopted a voucher program for students with special needs. What fiscal impact will this have on public schools in Georgia?
- The Colorado state legislature has considered a bill to increase graduation standards for math and science. The chair of the House Education Committee opposes the bill because he believes it will harm arts programs. What might be the impact of this bill on arts programs?

Students may choose either research approach, quantitative or qualitative, or both. The analysis must include original analysis of data, although, as in synthesis project year one above, students do not need to gather original data. The page limit for synthesis II is 35 pages all inclusive. Any data collected directly from human subjects must be approved by the IRB. All IRB applications must be submitted to faculty advisors by March 1.

## **Coursework and Professional Work Artifacts**

Students' portfolios also will contain artifacts from program courses and, if they so choose, their professional work. All artifacts will be chosen by the student as a representation of her/his proficiency in the skill and knowledge represented by the specific courses in the educational leadership, research, and policy domains. The artifacts per se will not be evaluated (or re-evaluated, in the case of course products), but the student's presentation and defense of these artifacts will be evaluated.

The artifacts, particularly their presentation and defense, will be used to judge the student's knowledge and skill in educational leadership, research, and policy both as discrete domains and in the synthesis of all three domains. This part of the portfolio will not be evaluated by its "weight," i.e., more is not better. Rather, the artifacts, and the presentation and defense of those artifacts, should demonstrate at a minimum proficiency in knowledge and skill in the domains and a coherency across the domains.



### **Annotated Bibliography**

The portfolio must include an annotated bibliography containing the *non-required* literature the student has read up to the submission of the portfolio in years one and two. It must conform to standard APA and bibliographic conventions and will be evaluated on those. In addition, faculty will be evaluating students' annotated bibliographies for volume; balance in readings across the program domains of leadership, research, and policy; and facility in identifying readings that are foundational to their academic work. Students will also be evaluated in their defense of the annotated bibliography. The annotated bibliography should contain a balance of empirical and theoretical papers. In year two only, students must identify which of the included annotations in each domain they consider to be "foundational" to their dissertation interests. This can be denoted by an asterisk. Students will be expected to be knowledgeable about and conversant in the ideas, theories, arguments, methods, and findings represented by the works included. For that reason, students are advised not to "pad" the bibliography with sources they did not read and about which they know little.

The bibliography must be organized by program domain (Leadership, Research, and Policy), and should contain only *non-required* readings in each domain (i.e., all reading completed that was not required for a course, which can include those read for your synthesis project, those read for the completion of a paper assigned in a course, works read in consideration for a dissertation topic, references accessed as part of doctoral labs, etc.). Each section must follow the APA heading system. Using some form of bibliographic software (EndNote, RefWorks, Zotero, etc.) is strongly recommended.

### **Narrative on Student Growth**

At years one and two, the portfolio must include a narrative describing the way in which the student's thinking, knowledge, skill, and application of educational leadership, research, and policy have changed from the beginning of the program to year one and then to year two. This narrative is designed as a self-reflective piece in which students examine their own assumptions, strengths, weaknesses, evolution, direction, and desires. It is neither a forum for discussing others, nor is it the place for students to write that which they think professors want to hear. It also is not a therapeutic exercise. For that reason, this artifact is limited to 1,500 words. It also must conform to program standards related to quality of products, APA, and standard conventions of academic writing, grammar, and professional presentation.

### **Dissertation Topic Abstract (Year Two Only)**

In no more than 600 words, students will discuss the dissertation topic(s) they are considering at the time of the second portfolio review. This is not a formal document (such as a dissertation proposal) from which dissertation topics are approved or rejected by faculty. It is designed to represent the student's current thinking about a dissertation topic(s) and will provide an opportunity for faculty to provide feedback to the student on her/his ideas. The abstract can be structured in such a way that the student deems best (i.e., one topic or multiple topics). However, it must conform to standard conventions of academic writing and grammar.

All artifacts from the year one review (the initial review) must remain in the portfolio for the year two review (the comprehensive review).

## **Portfolio Presentation and Defense**

In presenting and defending their portfolio, students are expected to demonstrate a minimum proficiency in their knowledge of and skill in the three domains represented in the program: educational leadership, research, and policy. The presentation is a formal, planned phase of the portfolio review during which students have the opportunity to substantiate their skills and knowledge. During the presentation, students should expound on the interrelationships of all portfolio components as they represent their skills and knowledge in the program's three domains. This should not be a detailed discussion of each component but a review of the way subsets of artifacts demonstrate proficiency in educational leadership, research, and policy. The majority of the presentation time must be devoted to the synthesis project presentation.

The defense is an unstructured phase of the review during which committee members will engage the student in a free-form discussion about all portfolio components. Students are expected to be able to effectively discuss all portfolio content. Students also must be able to defend the reason and the way in which portfolio components represent their skills and knowledge in the program domains separately and synergistically. Therefore, careful thought should be given to the components that are included in the portfolio.

### **Outcome\***

Committee members will deliberate on the portfolio outcome and codify the decision with feedback. The portfolio review process will result in one of the following outcomes:

### **Year One**

1. Pass with Distinction—The student is advanced to year two unencumbered; the student demonstrated advanced knowledge and skills in and across program domains.
2. Pass—The student is advanced to year two unencumbered; the student demonstrated proficient knowledge and skills in and across program domains.
3. Pass with Revisions—The student is advanced to year two with identified areas of improvement; the student demonstrated low proficiency in and across program domains.
4. Resubmit—The student is placed on probation and must revise and resubmit the portfolio for re-review and/or re-presentation; student demonstrated up to and including only basic knowledge and skills in and across the program domains.
5. Fail—The student is dismissed from the program, as the portfolio review is declared unsatisfactory; the student demonstrated up to and including only basic knowledge and skills in and across the program domains.

### **Year Two**

1. Pass with Distinction—The student is advanced to candidacy and is eligible to begin the dissertation stage of the program; the student demonstrated advanced knowledge and skills in and across program domains.

2. Pass— The student is advanced to candidacy and is eligible to begin the dissertation stage of the program; the student demonstrated proficient knowledge and skills in and across program domains.
3. Pass with Revisions—The student is advanced to candidacy with identified areas of improvement that must be remedied before being advanced to candidacy and beginning the dissertation stage of the program; the student demonstrated low proficiency in and across program domains.
4. Resubmit—The student is placed on probation and must revise and resubmit the portfolio for re-review and/or re-presentation before being advanced to candidacy and beginning the dissertation stage of the program; student demonstrated up to and including only basic knowledge and skills in and across the program domains.
5. Fail—The student is dismissed from the program, as the portfolio review is declared unsatisfactory; the student demonstrated up to and including only basic knowledge and skills in and across the program domains.

\*Only students who pass or pass with distinction at the initial presentation will be recommended for a Graduate School Doctoral Mentored Fellowship.

## Portfolio Instructions and Rubrics

Students will load their portfolio content onto Canvas. All instructions on how to build the portfolio can be found on Canvas. A general portfolio checklist, as well as rubrics for the synthesis projects and portfolio presentation can be found below.

### Portfolio Checklist

#### Coursework and Professional Work Artifacts

Student has included at least one artifact in each leadership, research, and policy course that demonstrates the student's proficiency.

No: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes: \_\_\_\_\_

If no, which class(es) is the student missing? \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Annotated Bibliography

Student has completed an annotated bibliography that is comprised of three sections: 1). Leadership; 2). Research; and 3). Policy

No: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes: \_\_\_\_\_

The annotated bibliography adheres to APA format.

Rarely: \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes: \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly: \_\_\_\_\_ Always: \_\_\_\_\_

The annotated bibliography is comprehensive and includes significant coverage of sources central to leadership, research, and policy.

Rarely: \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes: \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly: \_\_\_\_\_ Always: \_\_\_\_\_

The annotations reflect students' full understanding of the works in the bibliography and include a summary of the work and insightful commentary on the sources.

Rarely: \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes: \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly: \_\_\_\_\_ Always: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Year 2 only:** Student has identified which of the included readings in each domain they consider to be "foundational" to their dissertation topics.

Rarely: \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes: \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly: \_\_\_\_\_ Always: \_\_\_\_\_

### Narrative on Student Growth

Student has completed a Narrative on Student Growth describing how the student’s thinking, knowledge, skill, and application of educational leadership, research, and policy have changed from the beginning of the program through year one, or from year one through year two.

Rarely: \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes: \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly: \_\_\_\_\_ Always: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### Dissertation Topic Abstract (Year 2 Only)

Student has included a Dissertation Topic Abstract.

No: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Synthesis Project Rubric** - A rubric score of one or two in any area will require a resubmit of that element of the synthesis project.

Point Value → Criteria ↓	<b>1 (Beginning or No Attempt)</b>	<b>2 (Developing)</b>	<b>3 (Proficient)</b>	<b>4 (Sophisticated)</b>
<b>Problem of Practice (Year 1)</b>  <b>Or</b> <b>Policy Analysis (Year 2)</b>	The project does not address a problem of practice (Year 1)  The project does not analyze a current or proposed policy (Year 2)	The project somewhat addresses a problem of practice (Year 1)  The project somewhat analyzes a current or proposed policy (Year 2)	The project mostly addresses a problem of practice (Year 1)  The project mostly analyzes a current or proposed policy (Year 2)	The project clearly addresses a problem of practice (Year 1)  The project clearly analyzes a current or proposed policy (Year 2)
<b>Project Scope</b>	The project is not focused on the organizational level (Year 1)  The project is not focused beyond an organizational level (Year 2)	The project is somewhat focused on the organizational level (Year 1)  The project is somewhat focused on the city, county, region, state, country, or international level (Year 2)	The project is mostly focused on the organizational level (Year 1)  The project is mostly focused on the city, county, region, state, country, or international level (Year 2)	The project is clearly focused on the organizational level (Year 1)  The project is clearly focused on the city, county, region, state, country, or international level (Year 2)

<p><b>Mixed Methods (Year 1)</b></p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p><b>Policy Analysis (Year 2)</b></p>	<p>The project overwhelmingly uses one approach (Year 1)</p> <p>The project does not adhere to the standard and accepted practices of policy analysis (Year 2)</p>	<p>The project uses a mixed methods approach, but one is predominant (Year 1)</p> <p>The project rarely adheres to the standard and accepted practices of policy analysis (Year 2)</p>	<p>The project uses a mixed methods approach, but one is more prevalent (Year 1)</p> <p>The project mostly adheres to the standard and accepted practices of policy analysis (Year 2)</p>	<p>The project uses a balanced mixed methods approach (Year 1)</p> <p>The project clearly adheres to standard and accepted practices of policy analysis (Year 2)</p>
<p><b>Introduction</b></p>	<p>The introduction is missing one or more components.</p>	<p>The introduction does not fully introduce the topic, justify the need for the study, and/or explain the study purpose. A problem statement may not be included or does not support the study. Research questions may be unclear.</p>	<p>The introduction introduces the topic, somewhat justifies the need for the study, and mostly identifies the study purpose. A problem statement is included that identifies the problem and mostly supports the need for the study. Research questions are identified.</p>	<p>The introduction clearly introduces the topic, justifies the need for the study, and identifies the study purpose. A problem statement is included that clearly identifies the problem and supports the need for the study. Research questions are clearly identified.</p>
<p><b>Literature Review</b></p> <p>(Page limits: Year 1: 8 pgs +/- 2 Year 2: 5 pgs +/- 2)</p>	<p>The literature review minimally addresses relevant literature. The literature review does not support the study.</p>	<p>Some relevant literature is explained, but may not be synthesized or explicitly connected to the study. The literature somewhat justifies the need for the study.</p>	<p>Relevant literature is mostly explained and synthesized. Its connection to the current study is mostly explicated. The literature review mostly justifies the need for the study.</p>	<p>Relevant literature is comprehensive, clearly explained, and synthesized. Its connection to the current study is explicated. The literature review clearly justifies the need for the study.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theoretical Framing*</b></p> <p>A theoretical framework is required for most qualitative and mixed methods studies, and should be used as needed for fully quantitative studies. Grounded theory studies <i>may</i> not require a theoretical framework, but must include a discussion of the researchers' paradigm and a justification for not including a theoretical framework that is based in grounded theory scholarship. A grounded theory study <i>must</i> generate a theory.</p>				
<p><b>Theoretical Framework</b></p>	<p>The decision whether to use a theoretical framework is not appropriate.</p>	<p>The decision whether to use a theoretical framework may not be appropriate and/or is not justified in the text.</p>	<p>The decision whether to use a theoretical framework is appropriate and is somewhat justified in the text.</p>	<p>The decision whether to use a theoretical framework is appropriate and is fully justified in the text, using relevant scholarship.</p>

<p><b>Theoretical Framework Description and Application</b> (*if applicable – see above)</p>	<p>There is no theoretical framework.</p>	<p>The theoretical framework is somewhat described and may or may not be applied. The theoretical framework somewhat justifies the need for the study.</p>	<p>The theoretical framework is described and somewhat applied to shape the study and/or make sense of the findings. The theoretical framework mostly justifies the need for the study.</p>	<p>The theoretical framework is clearly described and utilized to shape the study and make sense of the findings. The theoretical framework clearly justifies the need for the study.</p>
<p><b>Research Design/ Methods</b> (including, but not limited to, study purpose design, methodology, data collection, sample, variables, data analysis, procedures, validity, limitations)</p>	<p>Research design may not be clearly explained and/or does not include most of the relevant information needed to describe how the study was conducted. Rationale is not provided for design choices. Design is not tied to research questions.</p>	<p>Research design is somewhat explained and includes some of the relevant information needed to describe how the study was conducted. Rationale may not be provided for design choices. Design is somewhat tied to research questions.</p>	<p>Research design is explained and includes most of the relevant information needed to describe how the study was conducted. Some rationale is provided for design choices. Design is tied to research questions.</p>	<p>Research design is thoroughly explained and includes all relevant information needed to describe how the study was conducted. Rationale is provided for design choices. Design is clearly tied to research questions.</p>
<p><b>Appropriate Methods</b></p>	<p>The project does not use appropriate research methods to answer the research questions.</p>	<p>The project sometimes uses appropriate research methods to answer the research questions.</p>	<p>The project mostly uses appropriate research methods to answer the research questions.</p>	<p>The project clearly uses appropriate research methods to answer the research questions.</p>
<p><b>Original Data Analysis</b></p>	<p>None of the data analyses in the project are original.</p>	<p>Some of the data analyses in the project are original.</p>	<p>Most of the data analyses in the project are original.</p>	<p>All of the data analyses in the project are original.</p>
<p><b>Findings</b></p>	<p>Findings section does not answer research question(s) or explain what was learned about the phenomenon under study. The findings section is not clear or well-organized. The findings themselves are not supported by the data. The findings are not presented in a</p>	<p>Findings section somewhat answers research question(s) and explains what was learned about the phenomenon under study. The findings section is not very clear or well-organized. The findings themselves may not be fully supported by the data.</p>	<p>Findings section answers research question(s) and explains what was learned about the phenomenon under study. The findings section is mostly clear and well-organized. The findings themselves are supported by the data. The findings are</p>	<p>Findings section answers research question(s) in a rich, descriptive manner with emphasis on what was learned about the phenomenon under study. The findings section is clear and well-organized. The findings themselves are supported by the</p>

	way that aligns with the norms and requirements of the study's methodology.	The findings may or may not be presented in a way that aligns with the norms and requirements of the study's methodology.	presented in a way that mostly aligns with the norms and requirements of the study's methodology.	data. The findings are presented in a way that clearly aligns with the norms and requirements of the study's methodology.
<b>Discussion</b>	The discussion section transcends the data. Discussion does not connect findings to the prior research or to the theoretical framework.	The discussion section somewhat transcends the data and/or rarely connects the findings to prior research or to the theoretical framework.	The discussion is related to the research questions, and mostly supported by the data outlined in the findings section. Discussion mostly connects findings to prior research and the theoretical framing.	The discussion is clearly related to the research questions, and fully supported by the data outlined in the findings section. The discussion clearly connects to prior research and the theoretical framing.
<b>Implications and Conclusion</b>	The implications and conclusions are missing/there are no recommendations.	The implications/conclusions are somewhat explained, but may be unrelated to the research questions, or not supported by the data outlined in the findings section. There may or may not be recommendations for practice, policy, and/or future research.	The implications/conclusions are explained, related to the research questions, and mostly supported by the data outlined in the findings section. There are recommendations for practice, policy, and/or future research.	The implications/conclusions are clearly explained, related to the research questions, and supported by the data outlined in the findings section. There are clear recommendations for practice, policy, and/or future research.
<b>APA Format</b>	APA format is not used.	There are many formatting errors.	There are a few formatting errors.	APA style is used correctly throughout.
<b>Writing Conventions</b>	The writing is not clear and organized. The project may not adhere to standard conventions of grammar, academic writing, and/or professional presentation.	The writing is somewhat clear and organized. The project sometimes adheres to standard conventions of grammar, academic writing, and professional presentation.	The writing is mostly clear and organized. The project mostly adheres to standard conventions of grammar, academic writing, and professional presentation.	The writing is clear, organized, and adheres to standard conventions of grammar, academic writing, and professional presentation.
<b>UCCS IRB Approval (If Applicable)</b>	The project has not been approved by the IRB.			The project has been approved by the IRB.



## Portfolio Presentation Rubric

Point Value → Criteria ↓	1 (Beginning or No Attempt)	2 (Developing)	3 (Proficient)	4 (Sophisticated)
<b>Effective Communication of Ideas</b>	The presentation does not demonstrate effective communication of ideas. Presentation is mostly unclear and/or confusing.	The presentation demonstrates somewhat effective communication of ideas. Presentation is somewhat clear, but there are several sections that are unclear or confusing.	The presentation demonstrates mostly effective communication of ideas. Presentation is mostly clear, but there may be sections that are unclear or confusing.	The presentation demonstrates effective communication of ideas. Presentation is clear.
<b>Academic/ Professional Presentation Skills</b>	The presentation does not demonstrate effective academic/ professional presentation skills.	The presentation demonstrates somewhat effective academic/ professional presentation skills. The presenter primarily reads slides. The presenter may or may not be professional in her or his presentation style or dress.	The presentation demonstrates mostly effective academic/ professional presentation skills. The presenter may be slightly uncomfortable, but the presentation is mostly clear, and the presenter does not only read the slides verbatim. The presenter is mostly professional in her or his style or dress.	The presentation demonstrates effective academic/ professional presentation skills. The presenter is comfortable, has clearly practiced their presentation, and does not read from their slides. The presenter is professionally dressed, and uses an appropriate presentation style.
<b>Accurate Information and Characterization of Key Issues and Concepts</b>	The presentation contains little or no accurate information and characterization of key issues and concepts. Resources are inappropriate.	The presentation contains some accurate information and characterization of key issues and concepts. Some resources may be inappropriate.	The presentation contains mostly accurate information and characterization of key issues and concepts. Resources are mostly appropriate.	The presentation contains fully accurate information and characterization of key issues and concepts. Resources are appropriate and varied.
<b>Proficiency in Leadership</b>	The presentation does not demonstrate proficiency in leadership.	The presentation demonstrates some proficiency in leadership.	The presentation demonstrates proficiency in leadership.	The presentation demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of leadership.

<p><b>Proficiency in Research</b></p>	<p>The presentation does not demonstrate proficiency in research.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates some proficiency in research.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates proficiency in research.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of research.</p>
<p><b>Proficiency in Policy</b></p>	<p>The presentation does not demonstrate proficiency in policy.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates some proficiency in policy.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates proficiency in policy.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of policy.</p>
<p><b>An Understanding of the Relationship between Leadership, Research, and Policy</b></p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates little or no understanding of the relationship between the domains.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates some understanding of the relationship between the domains.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates a proficient understanding of the relationship between the domains.</p>	<p>The presentation demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between the domains.</p>



## Dissertation

The dissertation is a piece of original, scholarly research that advances knowledge in the academic fields of educational leadership, research, and/or policy. The dissertation may employ any methodology that is appropriate for the research question(s) and approved by the dissertation chair of the committee, such as quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods designs. The culmination of the dissertation is an oral defense of the written dissertation. The student is responsible for completing the dissertation and ensuring it meets departmental guidelines found in the PhD Student Handbook and the university guidelines found in the UCCS Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Manual. The proposal hearing may not occur in the same semester as the dissertation defense except under unusual circumstances with the approval of the dissertation chair.

### Process for Dissertation Chair and Committee Selection

Upon successful completion of the PhD Portfolio II, students can begin forming their dissertation committee. Any tenured or tenure-track faculty member from the LRF Department may serve as the chair of the dissertation committee. The selection is the responsibility of the student; every faculty member reserves the right to agree or decline to serve as the chair of the committee. Students must identify a chair prior to beginning formal work on their dissertation. Adhering to the guidelines set by the Graduate School, the student and chair will determine the dissertation structure and timeline for completion. The formation of the dissertation committee must be determined in consultation with the chair. The committee is comprised of five members who possess expertise in the dissertation topic and/or methodological area—one chair, one methodologist, and three additional committee members. In addition to the dissertation chair, each committee must include at least two other LRF faculty members. One of the additional two members must be from an allied department, one may be from outside of the university. Once the chair approves all committee members, the student must ask each to serve; every potential member reserves the right to agree or decline to serve on the committee. Any committee member who does not hold regular graduate faculty membership must obtain a special appointment through the Graduate School to serve on the committee. It is the responsibility of the student to coordinate with the COE Faculty Liaison to ensure all members are approved by the Graduate School prior to the dissertation proposal hearing. Once the committee is formed, the student is responsible for completing and submitting the **Dissertation Committee Membership Form** to the department chair.

### Dissertation Credits

Students must complete at least 30 dissertation credits (LEAD 8990: Doctoral Dissertation) to satisfy the dissertation credit requirements of the Graduate School for earning a PhD. During coursework, students will complete 10 dissertation credits under the guidance of their assigned advisor. Following coursework, students must be continuously enrolled with a minimum of one

credit hour of dissertation credit per semester (excluding summer) during completion of the dissertation under the direction of their dissertation chair. It is the responsibility of the student to create a dissertation credit completion plan that meets the requirements of the Graduate School (a maximum of 10 dissertation credits during the fall and spring semester and seven in the summer). After successfully passing Portfolio II of the PhD program, a student must form a dissertation committee within one year; if the student has not done so, he or she may not enroll in any further dissertation credits until a committee is secured.

### **Dissertation Proposal Hearing**

The dissertation proposal must include an introduction, literature review, and methodology chapter. The specific structure and format of the proposal will be determined by the student and dissertation chair, while adhering to the parameters set forth by the Graduate School in the Thesis and Dissertation Manual. Beyond the Manual guidelines, the proposal must adhere to APA formatting and be free of grammatical errors.

The student is required to have three of the five committee members present for the dissertation proposal hearing (the chair and at least one other LRF faculty member), but the entire committee must be invited to participate. Once the chair signs off that the proposal is ready to be presented to the committee, the student is responsible for coordinating with committee members regarding date and time. Location can be determined by contacting the COE Faculty Liaison. Students must submit the proposal to the committee at least two weeks in advance of the proposal hearing; students who do not adhere to this timeline could have their proposal hearing delayed. The proposal hearing is a private meeting in which the student formally proposes the dissertation research and the committee members ask questions about the research and provide specific recommendations for proposal revisions. After the presentation and question and answer period, the student will leave the room for the committee to deliberate on the result of the dissertation proposal hearing.

### **Three Possible Outcomes of the Dissertation Proposal Hearing**

1. Approved;
2. Approved with minor revisions (follow up will occur with the dissertation chair and/or methodologist); or
3. Reject (student must resubmit a new proposal for a new hearing).

If approved (or approved with minor revisions), the **Dissertation Proposal Approval Form** must be signed by all committee members present and submitted to the department chair. After the dissertation proposal is approved, the student can move forward with seeking Institutional Review Board approval (if applicable).

### **Dissertation Defense**

The final dissertation must include an introduction, literature review, methodology, findings/results, and discussion/conclusion chapter. The specific structure and format of the final dissertation will be determined by the student and dissertation chair, while adhering to the parameters set forth by the Graduate School in the Thesis and Dissertation Manual. Beyond the

Manual guidelines, the final dissertation must adhere to APA formatting and be free of grammatical errors.

The student is required to have all committee members present for the dissertation defense. Once the chair signs off that the final dissertation is ready to be defended, the student is responsible for coordinating with committee members regarding date and time. Location can be determined by contacting the COE Faculty Liaison. Students must submit the final dissertation to the committee at least two weeks in advance of the defense; students who do not adhere to this timeline could have their defense delayed. The defense is a public meeting in which the student formally presents the dissertation research, with specific attention to the findings/results and discussion/conclusion chapters. At the defense, the committee members will ask questions about the research and provide specific recommendations for final revisions. After the presentation and question and answer period, the student and all guests will leave the room for the committee to deliberate on the result of the dissertation defense.

#### **Four Possible Outcomes of the Dissertation Defense**

1. Approved;
2. Approved with minor revisions (follow up will occur with the dissertation chair and/or methodologist);
3. Major revisions required (the committee will reconvene for approval); or
4. Reject (student must resubmit a new dissertation for a new defense).

If approved (or approved with minor revisions), the **Graduate School Exam Report** and **Kramer Family Library Electronic Dissertation Signature and Agreement Form** must be signed by all committee members. The exam report must be submitted to the department chair, and the electronic dissertation signature and agreement form must be submitted to the Graduate School, along with the final dissertation with all revisions completed within 30 days of the defense date. All dissertation submission procedures and forms can be found on [the Graduate School website](#).

Note: No gifts will be accepted by committee members (please see Amendment 41 of the Colorado State Constitution) nor should any food/drinks be provided at the proposal hearing or dissertation defense.

### **Dissertation Responsibilities**

#### **Student Dissertation Responsibilities**

As the author of the dissertation, the student is responsible for the design and execution of the dissertation through all phases, including the completion of the final product that has been properly edited and follows all of the expected guidelines outlined in the Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Manual. In addition to the responsibilities outlined above, students are expected to:

1. Identify and secure a dissertation chair and committee within one year of successfully completing Portfolio II. Once that is completed, the student must submit the Dissertation Committee Membership Form to the department chair.

2. Engage with the dissertation chair as the central point of contact for the development of ideas, timeline for completion, recommendations on appropriate committee members, development of drafts, and the approval point for submission of dissertation materials to the committee.
3. Adhere to agreed upon timelines and deadlines and be responsive to feedback from the chair and committee members in a timely manner.
4. Understand, design, and execute the appropriate research design and analysis needed to answer the research questions.
5. Communicate regularly with the dissertation chair regarding progress (or lack thereof) and ensure all committee members receive revised and realistic timelines.
6. Submit one's own original work and properly cite the works of others. Students must be familiar with policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism.
7. Submit the proposal draft to the dissertation chair in a timely manner for review and revision prior to submission to the committee.
8. Once the proposal is approved by the dissertation chair, submit the proposal to the committee at least two weeks prior to the intended dissertation proposal hearing.
9. Conduct an oral presentation of the proposed dissertation work at the proposal hearing.
10. Obtain and maintain human subjects research certification and complete IRB approval processes (as needed).
11. Submit the final draft to the dissertation chair in a timely manner for review and revision prior to submission to the committee.
12. Once the dissertation is approved by the dissertation chair, submit the final product to the dissertation committee at least two weeks prior to the intended dissertation defense date.
13. Conduct an oral presentation of the dissertation work at the defense.
14. Submit the final dissertation to the Graduate School.

Note: Students who feel they cannot sustain a collaborative working relationship with any committee member, including the dissertation chair, should consult with the department chair or a LRF faculty member not on the committee to determine appropriate actions.

### **Chair Responsibilities**

The dissertation chair is responsible for guiding the student through the process of the successful completion of a dissertation, which fulfills the requirements of the Department and Graduate School. In addition to the responsibilities outlined above, chairs are expected to:

1. Assess the student's ability to execute all parts of the proposed dissertation and, if gaps are identified, advise the student on gaining the necessary skills for dissertation completion. This includes, but is not limited to, performing appropriate research and statistical techniques and demonstrating scholarly writing.
2. Provide timely and thorough feedback on the timeline, planning, and execution of the dissertation; recommend appropriate members to serve on the committee; and approve the point at which a student is ready for the proposal hearing and defense.
3. Maintain human subject research certification and submit student IRB applications (as needed).
4. Guide the student on the required revisions for the proposal hearing, defense, and final product.

5. Negotiate with committee members the extensiveness of their dissertation roles. Mediate if conflict arises between the student and committee members and between committee members. The chair has the final decision on all dissertation matters.
6. Notify the Graduate School of a scheduled dissertation defense at least two weeks prior to the defense.
7. Respect the power differential that exists between the student and the dissertation chair (and other committee members) and not abuse the trust placed in them.

Note: Chairs who feel they cannot sustain a collaborative working relationship with the student and/or other committee members should consult with the department chair or a LRF faculty member not on the committee to determine appropriate actions.

### **Committee Member Responsibilities**

1. Assess the student's ability to execute all parts of the proposed dissertation and, if gaps are identified, advise the student on gaining the skills necessary for dissertation completion. This includes, but is not limited to, performing appropriate research and statistical techniques and demonstrating scholarly writing.
2. In collaboration with the chair, provide timely and thorough feedback on the timeline, planning, and execution of the dissertation.
3. The methodologist will carry the primary responsibility for guiding the student through the proposed and executed methods of the dissertation, as well as the analysis and interpretation of the findings.
4. Read the proposal and final dissertation and provide comments to the dissertation chair and student.
5. Meet with the student as necessary.
6. Respect the power differential that exists between the student and committee members and not abuse the trust placed in them.

Note: Committee members who feel they cannot sustain a collaborative working relationship with the student and/or other committee members should consult with the department chair or a LRF faculty member not on the committee to determine appropriate actions.



**Dissertation Committee Membership\***

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Working Dissertation Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dissertation Chair Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Methodologist Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

Approved by LRF Department Chair \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*It is the responsibility of the student to confirm that all dissertation committee members hold graduate faculty status by the UCCS Graduate School. Please coordinate with the COE Faculty Liaison prior to the Dissertation Proposal Hearing to ensure all members are approved to serve. If a committee member does not hold graduate faculty status, a current curriculum vitae and this completed form is needed for the approval.





### Dissertation Proposal Approval

The dissertation proposal entitled,

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

submitted by, \_\_\_\_\_, has been approved. The student is given permission to proceed with the work as described in the above proposal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dissertation Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Methodologist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approved by LRF Department Chair \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*The dissertation chair must verify with the student that all dissertation committee members hold graduate faculty status by the UCCS Graduate School. If not, the student must coordinate with the COE Faculty Liaison to ensure all members are approved to serve.