



HIGHER EDUCATION DOCTORAL PROGRAM

STUDENT HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2019 – 2020

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

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**STUDENT HANDBOOK
HIGHER EDUCATION DOCTORAL PROGRAM
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Section 1 Academic Calendar (2019-2020)

June Session 2019

Friday, May 31	Registration deadline for June session
Friday, May 31	Registration deadline for fall semester
Monday, June 3	Higher Education June session begins
Thursday, June 20	Final Higher Education class for June session
Thursday, June 20	Stunning Starts and Exciting Exits Event

Fall Semester 2019

Friday, September 6	Higher Education classes begin
Friday, September 6	Qualifying Paper Proposals (QPPs) are due for third-year students
Tuesday, September 10	Add/Drop deadline
Monday, November 4	Spring semester registration begins
Thursday, November 21	Course withdrawal deadline
Friday, November 29	No classes, Thanksgiving holiday
Friday, December 13	Final Higher Education class for the semester
Tuesday, December 31	Registration deadline for the spring semester

Spring Semester 2020

Friday, January 3	Qualifying Papers (QPs) are due
Friday, January 10	All-Cohort Retreat
Friday, January 31	Higher Education classes begin
Monday, February 3	Add/Drop deadline

Sunday, March 15 – Sunday, March 22

No classes, spring vacation

Monday, April 6

June session registration begins

Monday, April 6

Fall semester registration begins

Thursday, April 23

Course withdrawal deadline

Friday, May 8

Final Higher Education class for the semester

Thursday, May 28

Graduate Commencement

Dates in the academic calendar are subject to change. The most recent version of the academic calendar can be found on the university's website.

http://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_calendar/

Section 2

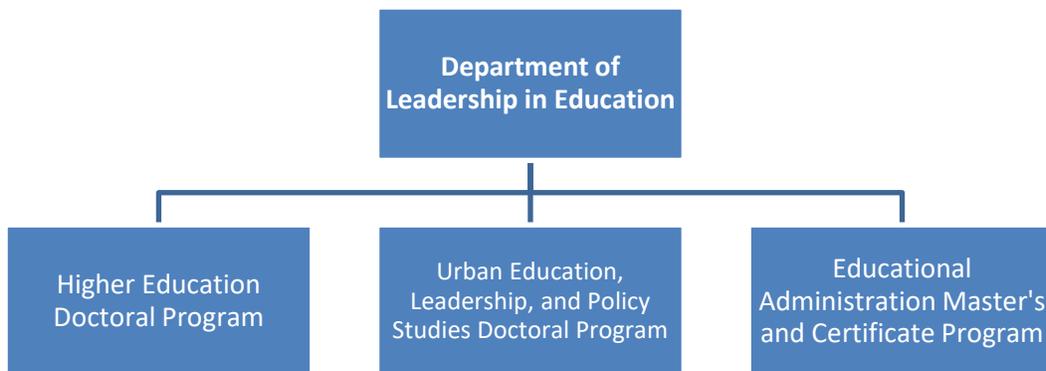
About the Higher Education Doctoral Program

Structural Overview

The Department of Leadership in Education consists of: 1) the Higher Education Doctoral Program, 2) the Urban Education, Leadership, and Policy Studies Doctoral Program, and 3) the Educational Administration master's and certificate program (see Figure 1). Both doctoral programs admit cohorts of 10 to 12 students each year, and each doctoral program has a total enrollment of 60 to 70 students. The Educational Administration master's and certificate program has a total enrollment of approximately 100 students.

There are 14 full-time faculty members in the Department, and each program is served by adjunct faculty members who have significant practical and scholarly expertise. Each program has a faculty member who serves as the program director, and the Department as a whole is led by the department chair. The Department is served by only one full-time staff person, the Graduate Program Administrator. The Department office is located in Wheatley Hall, first floor, room 77-AA.

Figure 1
Structure of the Department of Leadership in Education



The Department of Leadership in Education is one of three academic departments in the College of Education and Human Development (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
College of Education and Human Development



Mission of the Higher Education Doctoral Program

Founded in 1993, the Higher Education Doctoral Program at UMass Boston prepares scholar-practitioners for research and leadership positions in the field of higher education. The mission of the program is to develop scholar-practitioners who can, through their research and leadership practice, bring about changes in colleges and universities that advance equity and social justice. The program is distinguished by six defining characteristics:

1. The program is designed to serve **working professionals** who are committed to strengthening and expanding their capacities for leadership and for advancing social justice in higher education institutions.
2. The program seeks to **diversify the leadership of higher education institutions** by serving as a means through which more individuals from underrepresented groups, including women and people of color, can become higher education leaders.
3. The curriculum is delivered through a **cohort model**, in which students who enter the program at the same time take a series of courses together; the knowledge contributed and developed by cohort members serves as an important learning resource, as students move forward through the coursework.
4. The program is committed to fostering **organizational change** and to preparing administrators and educational leaders who can make significant improvements in colleges and universities.
5. The program focuses on the opportunities and challenges associated with **urban higher education**, including the provision of access and equitable opportunities for underrepresented populations and the development of reciprocal relationships between higher education institutions and their surrounding communities.

6. The program emphasizes the development of **scholar-practitioners** who can apply research and theory to issues of policy and practice, as well as contribute new knowledge to the field of higher education through their own research.

The Higher Education Doctoral Program focuses on issues of concern to leaders in all types of higher education institutions, including community colleges and four-year institutions both public and private. The curriculum covers topics such as organization and leadership, teaching and learning, college student development, diversity, public policy, institutional change, college access, and community engagement. Students also develop a strong foundation in both quantitative and qualitative research methods, as well as an understanding of the social and historical foundations of higher education.

Program Governance

Policy-making authority for the Higher Education Doctoral Program resides with the program committee, which consists of all faculty members with full- or half-time appointments in the program, as well as individuals teaching in the program who have been designated as members by the Program Director. The program is also obligated to uphold policies established by the Office of Graduate Studies, which sets general academic regulations for the University. Students should familiarize themselves with the policies described on the Graduate Studies web site:

<http://catalog.umb.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=1766>

Advisement sheet (EdD)

Required courses	Semester in which students typically take the course	Semester and year in which I took the course
HighEd 601: Educational leadership skills	First year, June	
HighEd 610: Administration and governance	First year, June	
HighEd 630: History of higher education	First year, fall	
HighEd 611: Access and equity in higher education	First year, fall	
HighEd 632: Organizational analysis of higher education	First year, spring	
HighEd 634: Public policy in higher education	First year, spring	
HighEd 612: Impact of college on students	Second year, June	
HighEd 620: Teaching, learning, and curriculum	Second year, fall	
HighEd 751: Research methods: Quantitative analysis	Second year, fall	
HighEd 752: Research methods: Qualitative analysis	Second year, spring	
HighEd 692: Capstone in higher education	Third year, June	
HighEd 793: Research seminar	Third year, June	
HighEd 891: Dissertation seminar I	Third year, fall	
HighEd 892: Dissertation seminar II	Third year, spring	
HighEd 753: Research design in higher education	Third year, spring	
HighEd 899: Dissertation research [students must enroll three times in HighEd 899 to earn a total of 9 credit hours]	Any semester following the acceptance of the Qualifying Paper	

Elective courses (total of two courses, 6 credits)		
Course number and name	Institution at which course was taken	Semester and year in which course was taken

Total credit hours = 60

Advisement sheet (PhD)

Required courses	Semester in which students typically take the course	Semester and year in which I took the course
HighEd 601: Educational leadership skills	First year, June	
HighEd 610: Administration and governance	First year, June	
HighEd 630: History of higher education	First year, fall	
HighEd 611: Access and equity in higher education	First year, fall	
HighEd 632: Organizational analysis of higher education	First year, spring	
HighEd 634: Public policy in higher education	First year, spring	
HighEd 612: Impact of college on students	Second year, June	
HighEd 620: Teaching, learning, and curriculum	Second year, fall	
HighEd 751: Research methods: Quantitative analysis	Second year, fall	
HighEd 752: Research methods: Qualitative analysis	Second year, spring	
HighEd 692: Capstone in higher education	Third year, June	
HighEd 793: Research seminar	Third year, June	
HighEd 891: Dissertation seminar I	Third year, fall	
HighEd 892: Dissertation seminar II	Third year, spring	
HighEd 753: Research design in higher education	Third year, spring	
HighEd 899: Dissertation research [students must enroll three times in HighEd 899 to earn a total of 9 credit hours]	Any semester following the acceptance of the Qualifying Paper	

Elective courses: Interdisciplinary cognate (three courses, 9 credits)		
Course number and name	Institution at which course was taken	Semester and year in which course was taken

Elective courses: Advanced research methods (one course, 3 credits)		
Course number and name	Institution at which course was taken	Semester and year in which course was taken

Elective courses: Any content area (two courses, 6 credits)		
Course number and name	Institution at which course was taken	Semester and year in which course was taken

Total credit hours = 72

Curriculum Summary

PhD degree	EdD degree
<p><u>Core curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight required content courses (24 credits) • One capstone course (3 credits) 	<p><u>Core curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight required content courses (24 credits) • One capstone course (3 credits)
<p><u>Research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research seminar in higher education (3 credits) • Three required research courses (3 credits qualitative; 3 credits quantitative; 3 credits research design) • One advanced research methods course (chosen to support dissertation methodology) (3 credits) 	<p><u>Research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research seminar in higher education (3 credits) • Three required research courses (3 credits qualitative; 3 credits quantitative; 3 credits research design)
<p><u>Electives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two elective courses (6 credits) • Three interdisciplinary cognate courses chosen in consultation with advisor (9 credits) 	<p><u>Electives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two elective courses (6 credits)
<p><u>Dissertation Proposal Preparation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 dissertation seminars (6 credits) 	<p><u>Dissertation Proposal Preparation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 dissertation seminars (6 credits)
<p><u>Dissertation research</u> (9 credits)</p>	<p><u>Dissertation research</u> (9 credits)</p>
<p>Total credits: 72 (21 courses & 9 research credits)</p>	<p>Total credits: 60 (17 courses & 9 research credits)</p>

Elective Courses

Electives can accommodate a variety of student interests, such as:

- Pursuing a specific topic in depth, especially if it pertains to the student's dissertation research interests;
- Exploring how literature in other disciplines and fields of study relates to higher education issues;
- Taking courses related to issues in higher education that are not addressed in the required courses; or
- Building additional skills in academic writing or in a specific research method.

Students can transfer up to **six credits** from coursework taken at other institutions. These six credits can be comprised of courses taken prior to admission to the UMass Boston doctoral program, and/or courses taken while the student is enrolled in the UMass Boston program. If the student seeks to transfer credits from courses taken prior to admission to UMass Boston, then the student must have taken those courses no more than seven years prior to the date of admission to the program. The university will not accept transfer credits from courses taken more than seven years prior to admission.

Note that the total number of transferred credits, including both prior coursework and courses taken while a student at UMass Boston, cannot exceed six.

Students can transfer an **additional six credits** from courses taken at UMass Boston within seven years prior to admission to the doctoral program. Thus, students can transfer a total of 12 credits: 6 from prior or concurrent coursework at other institutions, and 6 from prior coursework at UMass Boston.

All students should work with their faculty advisor to develop a coherent plan for taking elective courses. The Higher Education Program offers several elective courses, which include seminars in organizational change, higher education finance, community engagement, globalization of higher education, sociology of higher education, and critical race theory. In addition to elective courses offered by the Higher Education Program, students can enroll in elective courses offered by other graduate programs at UMass Boston. Several UMass Boston graduate programs offer courses that would be relevant to students in the Higher Education Program. These programs include Urban Education, Public Policy, Sociology (particularly survey design courses), Applied Linguistics (particularly discourse analysis courses), Counseling and School Psychology (particularly advanced quantitative courses), Critical and Creative Thinking, and Women's Studies. All elective course offerings are conditional on sufficient enrollment. The minimum enrollment for a graduate course is eight students.

EdD students must complete two elective courses. These courses must be approved by their faculty advisor.

PhD students must complete a total of six elective courses, which include: 1) three courses that represent interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives, 2) one advanced research methods course, and 3) two additional electives in any content area. Typically, students will take courses in other graduate programs to fulfill the PhD requirements. Taking courses in other graduate programs allows the student to explore and understand new disciplines, and develop a larger frame of reference for analyzing issues in higher education.

The PhD student's faculty advisor must approve the three courses that will fulfill the interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives, and must approve the course that will serve as the advanced methods course. To obtain this approval, students must complete the PhD elective form, prior to the start of the semester in which the student will take an interdisciplinary theory course or an advanced methods course. Students must submit completed forms to the department office (highereducation@umb.edu), where they will be kept on file and used to ensure that degree requirements have been fulfilled prior to students applying for graduation. The form is available at the link below:

https://www.umb.edu/academics/cehd/leadership/grad/higher_education_program/resources_for_current_students/forms

While PhD students should seek elective courses in other graduate programs, they can consider taking some elective courses in the Higher Education Program. The following elective courses in the Higher Education Program can be taken as part of the student's interdisciplinary cognate:

- HighEd 615: Critical Race Theory in Higher Education; HighEd 622: Community Engagement in Higher Education; HighEd 624: Globalization and Internationalization in Higher Education; HighEd 628: Gender in Higher Education: Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice; HighEd 636:

Sociological Perspectives in Higher Education Research; HighEd 641: Effecting Change in Higher Education; HighEd 651: Legal Issues in Higher Education; HighEd 652: Finance and Management in Higher Education; HighEd 660: Leadership Theory and Practice in Higher Education

Even if the elective course is offered by the Higher Education Program, students still need to complete the PhD elective form and obtain their faculty advisor's approval. Students can also take independent study courses to fulfill some of the PhD electives, again with approval of their faculty advisor.

Independent Studies

Students can enroll in up to **four independent studies** (3 credit hours each). The student must develop a learning plan for the independent study, and the plan must be approved by a faculty member who has agreed to supervise and assess the outcomes of the independent study. The plan must also be approved by the student's faculty advisor.

To register for an independent study, students must complete the **independent study registration form**, which requires approval signatures from the supervising faculty member and the faculty advisor. Students must send completed forms to the department office (highereducation@umb.edu), where they will be kept on file and used to ensure that students fulfill degree requirements. After submitting the completed form to the department office, the student should then log-on to the WISER registration system (www.umb.edu/it/getting_services/wiser/), and register for the independent study section number that corresponds with the name of the faculty member who will supervise the independent study.

Descriptions of Required Core Courses

HIGHED 601 -- Educational Leadership Skills: Communication and Collaboration

This core course focuses on the individual, interpersonal, and group skills that leaders of educational institutions must acquire if they are to effectively promote organizational change. At the individual level, the course focuses on five major areas of self-awareness: trust and trustworthiness, personal values and moral development, orientation toward change, interpersonal orientation, and personal temperament (including cognitive style). At the interpersonal level, the course assists students in forming accurate interpersonal perceptions and building communication skills. At the level of the group, students learn to diagnose group problems using theory and research about (1) group size, composition, and characteristics of group members; (2) stages of group development and team culture; (3) cognitive and relational roles in teams; and (4) patterns of intra-group communication. Particular attention is given to developing skills that enable students to function effectively on committees, interdepartmental working groups, and leadership teams. In all coursework, students are encouraged to consider the impact of gender and culture on skill development and practice. (3 credits)

HIGHED 610 – Administration and Governance in Higher Education

This core seminar introduces students to the organizational structure and systems of colleges and universities, including governance, strategic planning, assessment, and accreditation. A major goal of the course is to ensure that students learn about and are able to describe the functions of an institution of higher education. Key debates in governance and administration are framed in the context of

understanding how institutional cultures and external accountability pressures shape organizational behavior. Special emphasis is placed on strengthening students' analytical skills. (3 credits)

HIGHED 611 – Access and Equity in Higher Education

This core seminar examines historical and contemporary social, political, and legal issues related to access and equity for historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups in higher education. The course also addresses the broader frameworks and language within which specific problems of access and equity are considered. The course also addresses broader issues of access and equity and is particularly useful for students interested in research (as well as policy and practice) that intersects with race/ethnicity, class, gender, religion, and sexuality. (3 credits)

HIGHED 612 – Research on Students

This core course is aimed at providing students with an opportunity to develop an understanding of the theory and research focused on college students. There are three intended outcomes of the course. Students will (1) develop an understanding of the theory and literature focused on college students; (2) increase their current levels of knowledge about areas of critical research on students in higher education, and; (3) apply their increased understanding of the theory and literature on college students to efforts aimed at the improvement of higher education policy and practice. (3 credits)

HIGHED 620 -- Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum in Urban Contexts

This core course investigates common concerns in addressing the needs of urban learners in community colleges and four-year institutions, both public and private. It considers questions of human development in several domains, current problems and controversies about learning, and attempts to make curricula and pedagogical practices more responsive to the ways that college students learn. Readings frame issues across age groups and educational contexts. (3 credits)

HIGHED 630 -- The History of Higher Education in the United States

This core course surveys the history of higher education in the United States with a dual focus on mainstream collegiate institutions and non-traditional alternatives. Early class sessions explicate the development of traditional higher education from its liberal arts origins through the growth of the research university. Subsequent sessions explore how, over two centuries, various under-represented groups have contended for places within higher education. Participants explore how institutions and their leaders responded to these challenges, sometimes creating accommodations or changes in traditional settings, and other times prompting new structures that often marginalized the newcomers. Several questions guide inquiry through the various eras and subjects: whom do we educate? Why do we educate (our purposes and expectations)? How do we educate (in what sorts of institutions)? With what effects (or results) do we educate? The course does not presume a strong background in history. (3 credits)

HIGHED 632 -- Organization and Leadership in Educational Institutions

This core course focuses on higher education institutions as complex organizations. Drawing on readings and examples from the fields of organizational theory and organizational behavior, participants look both inside and outside educational institutions to examine the higher education industry as a whole and the sectors within it, as well as social definitions of educational institutions. Close attention is given to the internal structures in these institutions, especially the interactions between bureaucratic structures and professionals. Participants explore theories and cases related to external environments, internal structures, human dynamics, organizational culture, and power. An analysis of organizational

change is provided from several points of view, including positivist, social constructionist, and postmodern perspectives. (3 credits)

HIGHED 634 -- Public Policy Issues and Structures in Higher Education

This core course explores the development, design, and implementation of public policies that affect higher education. It is both a primer in how the economy and politics form public policy and a critical look at this fusion in higher education. The course examines the formation of public policy at the federal, regional, and state levels of government, and explores the local institutional impact of these policies on college and university campuses. (3 credits)

HIGHED 692 -- Capstone in Higher Education Administration

This required seminar focuses on the complexities of leadership in our society with a particular focus on higher education. It includes issues that university administrators address in their core leadership, political and managerial roles both as they relate to university staff and the community at large. The seminar assumes that students have rich and varied leadership experience as professionals in educational settings and that active, reflective learning in those settings will help clarify the relevance and validity of the literature. (3 credits)

Descriptions of Required Research Courses

HIGHED 751 -- Quantitative Methods in Higher Education Research

This core course, as the first part of the program's research methods sequence, introduces students to quantitative research methods. With a focus on educational research, students become familiar with a variety of statistical techniques and data analysis methods. The course emphasizes descriptive and inferential statistics, including t-tests, ANOVAs, chi-squares, correlations, and linear and multiple regression. The course is structured to achieve the following learning objectives: 1) to gain an understanding of statistical concepts and quantitative research in higher education; 2) to develop skills in running statistical analyses in SPSS; 3) to learn how to interpret statistical output; 4) to develop the skills to understand and interpret empirical research articles using quantitative research in higher education; and 5) to learn how to apply statistical concepts in original educational research. (3 credits)

HIGHED 752 -- Qualitative Methods in Higher Education Research

This course addresses issues related to qualitative research methods in education and, more specifically, higher education. The main focus of the course is to familiarize students with the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of qualitative inquiry and some of the major approaches to qualitative research, including ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, narrative inquiry, case study, and participatory action research. The course gives an opportunity for students to critically consider their own research interests in light of qualitative inquiry, design and conduct a small-scale research study reflecting those research interests, and read and interpret both theoretical and research literature on qualitative methods. In addition, during the course, students will have a range of opportunities to reflect on and question their own assumptions about the nature of knowledge and knowledge creation through qualitative research. (3 credits)

HIGHED 753 -- Research Design in Higher Education

This course, as the third part of the program's research methods sequence, introduces students to research design in educational and social science research, with specific emphasis on higher education. In this class, students will learn how to identify and frame research problems and how to select appropriate research methods. The course will review purpose statements and research questions,

experimental and quasi-experimental research designs, survey research, qualitative approaches to data collection, trustworthiness in qualitative research, reliability and validity in quantitative research, sample selection and recruitment, data analysis, and research proposal development. (3 credits)

HIGHED 793 – Research Seminar in Higher Education

This seminar examines issues related to research proposal development. Students will develop skills in framing research problems, defining research questions, and using theoretical and empirical literature to guide the development of a research proposal. The goal of this course is to prepare students for developing their Qualifying Papers, which are submitted during the students third year in the doctoral program (3 credits).

HIGHED 891 -- Dissertation Seminar I

This seminar is designed to assist students in developing their Qualifying Paper (QP) and initial frameworks for dissertation research. (3 credits)

HIGHED 892 -- Dissertation Seminar II

This seminar provides structured support as students develop research designs, write their dissertation proposals, and form dissertation committees. (3 credits)

HIGHED 899 -- Dissertation Research (3 credits)

Research conducted under the supervision of faculty and the dissertation committee leading to the presentation of a doctoral dissertation. All students must enroll three times in HighEd 899 to earn a total of 9 credit hours. Students can enroll in HighEd 899 during any semester following completion of the capstone course (HighEd 692). Note: HighEd 899 is not a traditional course (i.e. with class meetings); instead, these are the credits associated with conducting your dissertation research.

Academic advising

In the fall semester of the first year, students will be assigned a faculty advisor. Advisors will assist students in planning for effective time management, selecting electives, and fulfilling research requirements. Students should also feel free to seek out their advisor for career and professional advice.

In seeking advising appointments, please keep in mind that all UMass Boston faculty members are nine-month contract employees. Faculty who teach in the June session, do so as an extension of their spring semester teaching responsibilities. Faculty members in the program are generally willing to schedule appointments with students during the summer months, but their schedules are likely to be more limited due to their other summer commitments, which include research. Please plan ahead, and schedule summer appointments with faculty before the end of the spring semester.

Students are welcome to change faculty advisors at any time, especially if students identify another faculty member whose expertise is relevant to their research interests. To change advisors, students should discuss their options with both their current advisor and the prospective (future) advisor. When the current advisor and prospective advisor agree to the change, then the student should contact the Department office (highereducation@umb.edu) to request that the change be recorded in the student's file.

To reiterate, the doctoral program encourages students to change faculty advisors if doing so creates a better match between the student's research interests and the faculty advisor's expertise.

Non-standard course taking patterns

Students must enroll in the required cohort courses in the sequence prescribed by the program (see page 8 for course sequence). If unforeseen circumstances arise, students can petition to pursue a non-standard course-taking sequence. This petition shall include two parts: 1) a written explanation regarding the circumstances that compel the student to request a modified course-taking pattern, and 2) a completed advising sheet that indicates the semesters in which the student has taken courses in the program, and the semesters in which the student plans to take the remaining courses in the program (see pages 9 and 10 for advising sheets). This petition will need to be approved by the student's advisor and by the program faculty as a whole. This petition must be approved two weeks prior to the semester in which the modified course-taking pattern will begin.

HighEd 692 is the program's capstone course, which integrates learning across the program's required core courses. These core courses include: 1) HighEd 601: Educational Leadership Skills; 2) HighEd 610: Administration and Governance; 3) HighEd 630: History of Higher Education; 4) HighEd 611: Access and Equity; 5) HighEd 632: Organizational Analysis; 6) HighEd 634: Public Policy; 7) HighEd 612: Impact of College on Students; and 8) HighEd 620: Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum. Students must complete all eight of these courses before they can enroll in the capstone course (HighEd 692).

Section 4 Research Requirements

All students must fulfill three research requirements to receive the PhD or the EdD in Higher Education: 1) an accepted Qualifying Paper Proposal (QPP), 2) an accepted Qualifying Paper (QP), and 3) a successful dissertation defense and a committee-approved dissertation.

The **QPP** is a brief paper (8 – 10 pages, not including references), in which the student proposes to study a particular research problem. In the QPP, students use data and evidence to describe a research problem, explain how the problem has been studied by other researchers, and indicate why the problem is significant for the field of higher education.

Students enroll in **HighEd 793: Research Seminar in Higher Education**, at the beginning of their third year in the program (third June session). This course provides structured guidance for students, as they write their QPP. The QPP is due at the beginning of the subsequent fall semester (early September).

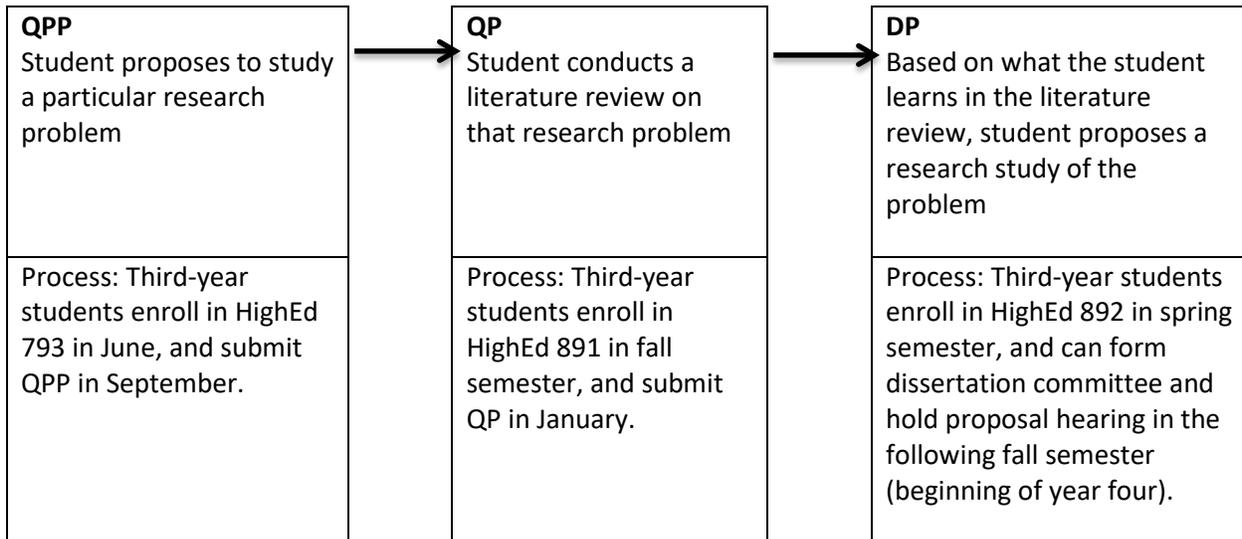
A faculty committee reviews each QPP and provides students with specific feedback regarding the clarity and feasibility of their proposed research problem. Faculty members use a structured rubric to convey this feedback, and the program director provides an evaluation letter to each student, in which the substantive comments from the faculty reviewers are synthesized into specific action items. Occasionally, students will need to revise the QPP before it is accepted by the faculty.

The **QP** is a comprehensive literature review (30 – 40 pages, not including references), which focuses on theoretical and empirical literature related to the student's research problem. This literature review builds the student's knowledge of the research problem and prepares the student for conducting dissertation research on the problem.

Students enroll in **HighEd 891: Dissertation Seminar I**, in the fall semester of their third year in the program. This seminar provides structured guidance for students, as they write their QP. The QP is due in January of the students' third year. A faculty committee reviews each QP, and uses a structured rubric to provide feedback to each student. The program director provides an evaluation letter that synthesizes the faculty reviewers' feedback.

The QP can provide a foundation for developing a dissertation proposal (DP). In the spring semester of year three, students enroll in **HighEd 892: Dissertation Seminar II**, which provides structured support for developing the dissertation proposal. Following this course, students can form dissertation committees and schedule dissertation proposal hearings with their committee members. Students must convene a successful dissertation proposal hearing before they can seek IRB approval for their research.

Progression from QPP to QP to DP



After conducting the research that was proposed in the DP, the student will write the dissertation. Most dissertations include all of the elements found in the DP, along with a presentation of the research findings, an analysis of those findings, and a discussion of the implications of those findings for research and practice.

Each of these research requirements is discussed more extensively below.

Qualifying Paper Proposal (QPP)

The QPP makes an argument for a proposed area of research. The QPP must focus on a specific research problem, which is of critical concern in higher education because of its implications for policy or practice.

The QPP should accomplish the following:

1. Demonstrate that a research problem exists by citing evidence such as trends, statistics, and current effects of policies and practices;
2. Briefly explain how that problem has been studied by previous researchers, including a discussion of pertinent theories or conceptual frameworks employed and the findings of prominent empirical studies;
3. Frame questions about the problem; the student will use those questions later to guide the subsequent literature review in the Qualifying Paper (QP);
4. Describe the areas of literature (with examples of scholarship and accompanying references) that the student will use to address the questions that he/she has posed about the problem (this identified literature will serve as the basis for the subsequent QP literature review); and

5. Explain briefly why the research problem is significant for the field of higher education, and how a review of literature on this problem will be beneficial to scholars and practitioners.

Based on these criteria, the Program Committee will determine whether the QPP is accepted, needs to be revised and resubmitted, or is unacceptable. Students are expected to work with their faculty advisor throughout the process of writing and revising the QPP.

Qualifying Paper (QP)

An accepted QPP functions as a “road map” for the Qualifying Paper (QP). The QP is designed to assess the student’s ability to formulate and analyze a research problem in higher education using available empirical and theoretical literature. The QP prepares the student to examine the research problem in their dissertation; in some cases, however, the QP may lead the student to conceive a different research problem for the dissertation.

Based on the criteria listed below, the Program Committee will determine whether the paper is acceptable, needs revision, or is unacceptable.

1. The QP provides a clear **statement of the research problem**, which defines the problem, uses evidence to substantiate the problem, and explains why the problem is worthy of study
2. The QP poses clear **questions about the problem**, which structure the student’s inquiry into the literature
3. The QP identifies a **comprehensive set of the most prominent studies** that are relevant to the research problem
4. The QP provides an **analysis and synthesis of the empirical literature** related to the research problem; this review of the literature should yield a comprehensive understanding of the research problem
5. The QP discusses the **theoretical foundations and/or conceptual frameworks** that have informed previous research on the problem
6. The QP describes **areas for future research** that the student might pursue in the dissertation, and explains how such research will build on, contribute to, or differ from previous research on the problem

Students are required to produce an accepted Qualifying Paper no later than January of their fourth year in the program. Students who do not produce an accepted Qualifying Paper by January of their fourth year in the program will be subject to dismissal from the program. These time limits will be adjusted to reflect leaves-of-absence or any program-approved change in the sequence of the student’s coursework.

The Qualifying Paper constitutes the candidacy exam for the Higher Education Doctoral Program. As such, the QP is an assessment of students’ academic readiness for independent research. If a student’s initial QP submission is **not accepted** by the Program Committee, then the student will have up to two

opportunities to submit an acceptable QP. If after two resubmissions, the student's QP still has not been accepted by the Program Committee, the student will not be permitted to continue in the program.

To summarize, students have one year (January year three to January year four) to complete an accepted QP. During that one year, students will be able to submit their QP for review no more than three times (the initial submission plus two possible resubmissions). Program faculty will review QP submissions any time during the academic year (September through May). The one-year time limit will be adjusted for leaves-of-absence, as well as for any program-approved change in the student's curriculum (e.g., taking only one course per semester rather than two).

Students can consider the QP as an extension of the thinking and analysis that they developed in their QPP. The QP, therefore, should contain all of the elements that were included in the QPP, as well as new elements that reflect additional analysis of the literature and additional refinement of the research problem. The table below demonstrates this progression.

Qualifying Paper Proposal: QPP Makes an argument for a proposed area of research (due in September of academic year three)	Qualifying Paper: QP An extensive examination of the literature related to the research problem (due in January of academic year three)
1. Demonstrate that a research problem exists by citing evidence such as trends, statistics, and current effects of practices and policies;	<u>QPP element #1 and</u> provide a precise statement of the research problem, which will be the focal point for the literature review.
2. Explain how the problem has been studied by previous researchers, including a discussion of pertinent theories or conceptual frameworks employed and the findings of prominent empirical studies;	<u>QPP element #2 and</u> provide an analysis of the theoretical and empirical literatures pertinent to the research problem
3. Frame questions about the problem, which the student proposes to study more extensively in the subsequent literature review for the Qualifying Paper (QP);	<u>QPP element #3 and</u> provide a more specific delineation of the questions that derive from the research problem
4. Describe the areas of literature (with examples of scholarship and accompanying references) that the student will use to address the questions that he/she has posed about the problem	<u>QPP element #4 and</u> provide a discussion and synthesis of the literature that addresses each of the questions posed about the problem

<p>5. Explain briefly why the student’s research problem is significant for the field of higher education, and how a review of literature on this problem will be beneficial to scholars and practitioners.</p>	<p><u>QPP element #5</u> and provide a discussion of areas for future research on the problem, which might become the focus of your dissertation research; explain how your future research would build on, contribute to, or differ from previous research.</p>
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A successful QP can provide a framework for the student to develop the dissertation proposal (DP). In some instances, the QP can become a working document from which the student develops the first two chapters of the DP; specifically, the introduction chapter and the literature review chapter.

Dissertation Proposal

The DP typically includes:

1. An **introduction chapter** that provides a clear statement of the research problem with a justification and rationale for selecting that problem; as well as the research questions that will be examined in the dissertation
2. A **literature review chapter** that analyzes and synthesizes the theoretical and empirical literature on the problem; and that delineates a theoretical or conceptual framework that the student will use to guide the dissertation research
3. A **methods chapter** that includes the research design that the student will use to study the problem

The DP is reviewed by the student’s dissertation committee. When directed by the dissertation committee chair, the student can schedule a **proposal hearing**, at which time, the student will present their plans for the research. During the proposal hearing, the committee members will assess the student’s readiness to move forward with the dissertation research. If the committee members approve the student’s DP at the proposal hearing, then the student can seek authorization from the UMass Boston **Institutional Review Board** (IRB) to conduct the study.

Dissertation proposals must be approved by the student’s dissertation committee before the student can proceed with an IRB application or data collection for the study. Additional information regarding the IRB review process can be found at the following website:

www.umb.edu/research/policies_procedures/research_compliance/institutional_review_board_irb/irb_applications_and_forms/

The Dissertation

The dissertation is designed to demonstrate the capacity of students to analyze a problem in higher education in significant depth, to carry out original empirical research, and to articulate research-based implications for practice or policy. The research problem will involve a specific issue or policy, which is of critical concern in higher education. The problem can be drawn from organizational or administrative practice, theories and practices concerning learning and teaching, issues pertaining to college student development, historical or cultural issues, or public policy at the state, regional, national, or international level. The requirements for the dissertation are: 1) a detailed statement of the research problem; 2) an analytical review of the literature, which includes a discussion of the theoretical or conceptual framework that will guide the study; 3) a thorough discussion of the research design; 4) a systematic presentation of the research findings; and 5) an analysis of those findings from which implications and recommendations for research and practice will be based.

1. Statement of the research problem

The research problem is a crucial part of the dissertation. The nature and specificity of the problem depends on the topic to be investigated, and can range from a specific hypothesis to be confirmed or refuted to an exploration into why a particular condition exists.

The research problem is derived from a significant higher education issue in practice or policy; it is defined as a problem because it assumes that 1) an element of the issue raises practical concerns or is not well understood; or 2) a policy or practice is perceived to be flawed or inadequate. The resolution of the problem must be of significant value and interest to scholar-practitioners in the field of higher education.

The definition of the research problem should include 1) a comprehensive statement of the broad issue, practice, or policy to be explored; 2) a clear statement of the problem to be addressed in the proposed study; 3) a rationale for the problem's significance, including relevant data and evidence; and 4) a discussion of how the problem is described by others in the literature.

Some guiding questions to consider include the following:

- What evidence demonstrates that it is a problem?
- Why would scholars, practitioners, and policymakers be interested in the problem?
- Why is it a significant problem?
- How is the problem defined and discussed by others in the literature?

2. Review of the related literature

The student is expected to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate bodies of knowledge and theories that are relevant to the problem. The theories can be taken from the fields of history, education, management, economics, politics, sociology, psychology, or other relevant disciplines. The review of related literature should analyze theory and prior research that is directly connected to the research problem. It should demonstrate an ability to synthesize and analyze disparate bodies of knowledge and theories (not simply provide a summary of a body of literature).

Some guiding questions to consider include the following:

- What bodies of knowledge and theories are relevant to the research problem?

- Does the existing literature identify corroborating and/or conflicting evidence or perspectives about the problem?
- What are the limitations of the existing literature?
- How does the existing literature help you clarify the research problem?

3. Research Design

The student should select and justify a strategy of inquiry (that is, a research design). The goal of the research design may be to examine current or past practice, investigate the association between two or more factors, or explore a relationship among variables. The method of analysis may be historical, qualitative, quantitative, or a combination. The form of analysis should be carefully delineated and justified. For example, if students are conducting an original survey, they must justify both the sample and the protocol used. If students are carrying out an ethnographic analysis, they must justify the situations that they will be observing. If students are designing a statistical analysis, they must describe and justify the variables that will be examined, including how they will be measured.

Some guiding questions to consider include the following:

- What is your research objective?
- Which is your general strategy of inquiry?
- What is your method of analysis?
- Why did you choose this particular design?

4. Findings and analysis

Another crucial part of the dissertation is the discussion of the research findings and the analysis of those findings. The analysis should include 1) a discussion of the data that were collected; 2) an analysis of those data; 3) an assessment of the extent to which the findings can be generalized or transferable; and 4) an examination of the limitations of the findings. These discussions should be thorough and provide sufficient evidence to support any conclusions reached. This section should also take into account and explain any data or past studies that support and/or conflict with the results of the analysis.

Some guiding questions to consider include the following:

- What data were collected? From where? From whom?
- What are your findings?
- What accounts for these findings?
- How do the findings relate to what you learned in the literature review?
- What are the limitations of your findings?
- What is the significance of your findings?

5. Implications and recommendations

The implications and recommendations should address the issue of how an understanding of the research findings can be of use to scholar-practitioners facing similar problems. The discussion of recommendations should include alternative strategies and changes that would need to take place to implement those solutions. Finally, the researcher should explore the extent to which the research findings might provide insight into related problems, and suggest directions for further studies in this area.

Some guiding questions to consider include the following:

- How might you redefine the problem now that you have completed your analysis?
- What alternative strategies and changes do you recommend related to the issue, practice, or policy that gave rise to the problem?
- What conditions might be required for these alternative strategies and changes to be implemented?
- To what extent do the research findings provide insight into related problems?

Guidelines for PhD and EdD Dissertations

All dissertations in the Higher Education Program must address the five components noted above: 1) statement of the problem, 2) review of related literature, 3) research design, 4) findings/analysis, and 5) implications and recommendations. The process by which students address these five components, however, will differ somewhat, depending upon whether the student is pursuing an EdD or a PhD. The differences between PhD and EdD dissertations in the Higher Education Program are summarized below.

	PhD Dissertation	EdD Dissertation
Focus	The PhD dissertation presents an original, empirical research study focusing on an educational problem that addresses an issue of relevance to higher education practice, policy, and/or theory. It is designed to demonstrate students' ability to use theory and prior literature to design and carry out an empirical research project that makes a contribution to and articulates implications for research, practice, policy, and/or theory in higher education.	The EdD dissertation presents an original, empirical research study focusing on an educational problem with special relevance to professional practice or policy. It is designed to demonstrate students' ability to use existing knowledge to design and carry out an empirical research project that makes a contribution to and articulates implications for higher education practice or policy. The EdD dissertation may be focused on the evaluation of an existing educational program or policy in a higher education setting.
Requirements	The requirements for the PhD dissertation are: 1) a detailed statement of the research problem; 2) an analytical review of the literature, which includes a discussion of the theoretical framework that will guide the study; 3) a thorough discussion of the research design; 4) a systematic presentation of the research findings; and 5) an analysis of those findings from which implications and recommendations for research, practice, policy, and theory will be based.	The requirements for the EdD dissertation are: 1) a detailed statement of the research problem; 2) an analytical review of the literature; 3) a conceptual or evaluation framework; 4) a thorough discussion of the research design; 5) a systematic presentation of the research findings; and 6) an analysis of those findings from which implications and recommendations for practice and/or policy will be based.

Methods	The PhD dissertation may use a range of historical, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methodologies that are appropriate in addressing the research questions raised in the study. Multi-site projects or studies with a national or international scope are particularly relevant for the PhD dissertation.	The EdD dissertation may use a range of historical, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methodologies that are appropriate in addressing the research questions raised in the study. Action research or campus-based studies that deal with questions of practice and policy are especially relevant for the EdD dissertation.
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APA Style and References

The format used in the dissertation and for other papers in the Higher Education Program is the style specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (also called the APA Publication Manual).

American Psychological Association. (2009). APA Publication Manual, 6th ed. Washington, DC: APA.

Follow the APA guidelines for citing and quoting sources. Follow these guidelines, as well, when preparing the references section of the dissertation. The references section must provide a list of all works cited in the text, and only those works cited in the text. In preparing the list of references, you should begin on a new page with the word *References* typed in the top center of the page. Please refer to the APA manual for a discussion of other style requirements. You can find an excellent online tutorial for APA style requirements at the following website:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

Section 5 The Dissertation Process

Dissertation Seminars

Students must complete all required coursework from years one and two, before they can register for **HighEd 891: Dissertation Seminar I** in year three. This first seminar (HighEd 891) provides structured support for students to write the Qualifying Paper (QP). Students must complete an acceptable QP in order to move into **HighEd 892: Dissertation Seminar II**. This second seminar (HighEd 892) provides structured support for students to write the Dissertation Proposal (DP).

The instructor for HighEd 892 will evaluate dissertation proposals for their readiness to be submitted to a dissertation committee. During the first weeks of HighEd 892, students will fill out the Declare Committee Chair Form, noting their selection of their dissertation chair. The form must be signed by the dissertation chair and submitted to the Department Office at highereducation@umb.edu.

Dissertation Funding

Several sources of funding are available to defray some of the expense of conducting dissertation research. National associations such as the Association for Institutional Research (www.airweb.org), the American Educational Research Association (www.aera.net), and the Association for the Study of Higher Education (www.ashe.ws) sponsor grant competitions to support dissertation research.

The University of Massachusetts Boston, through the Office of Graduate Studies, conducts a university-wide dissertation grant competition once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester. For more information, visit the website below.

http://www.umb.edu/research/info_for_students/graduate_research_opportunities_funds/

The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) at UMass Boston also sponsors doctoral dissertation awards. Furthermore, the GSA provides funds for graduate students to travel to research conferences. The GSA provides \$250 in **travel funds** for students who attend conferences and \$400 in travel funds for students who present at conferences. Students can receive this GSA travel award twice during their program of study. For more information about the GSA, visit the website below.

<http://gsaumb.wordpress.com/>

In the spring semester, the Department of Leadership in Education sponsors an **Alumni Dissertation Award** competition, which provides grants to students in the Higher Education Doctoral Program and the Urban Education Doctoral Program. For more information about the Alumni Dissertation Award, contact the department office (highereducation@umb.edu or 617.287.7601).

In the spring semester, the Higher Education Doctoral Program awards the **Zelda F. Gamson Fellowship** to support dissertation research. For more information about the Gamson Fellowship, contact the Higher Education Doctoral Program (highereducation@umb.edu or 617.287.7601). Students should discuss these funding opportunities with their dissertation committee chair.

To support student travel to research conference, in the fall semester, the Higher Education Doctoral Program sponsors the **Sandra Kanter student travel grant** competition. Each year, the program awards two to three travel grants of \$400 each. For more information about the Kanter travel grant, contact the Higher Education Doctoral Program (highereducation@umb.edu or 617.287.7601).

The Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee must consist of no fewer than three and no more than five members. Typically, committees consist of three members: the chair, the second reader, and the third reader. The committee must be approved by the Higher Education Program Director and by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The committee chair and the second reader must be faculty members in the Department of Leadership in Education.

The dissertation committee shall also include a member who is external to the Department of Leadership in Education; that is, the third reader. Eligible third readers include faculty from other departments at UMass Boston, and faculty or administrators at other higher education institutions. The third reader shall have a terminal degree (e.g., doctorate, law degree) and experience or knowledge that would make that person qualified to be a contributing member of the committee, as well as a record of recent research/scholarship related to the student's dissertation topic.

Students can select dissertation committee members after the instructor for HighEd 892 has endorsed the readiness of their proposal for dissertation-level work. When selecting dissertation committee members, students should consider the range of expertise that they will need to guide them in their research, including expertise in content, methods, and connections to practice.

Students who have participated in both dissertation seminars (HighEd 891 and 892), but still have not received the seminar instructor's endorsement to form and work with a dissertation committee, must submit their dissertation proposal to their faculty advisor for approval prior to selecting a dissertation committee chair and forming a dissertation committee.

Human Subjects Review Process

Federal regulations mandate that all research involving human subjects, including dissertation research, must be approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB at UMass Boston is managed by the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects.

After a successful dissertation proposal (DP) hearing, students can develop their applications for IRB approval. Students' IRB applications must be approved first by their respective dissertation committee chair, and then by the chair of the Department of Leadership in Education. Only after these two approvals have been obtained can a student submit an application to the IRB. Additional information regarding the IRB review process can be found at the following website:

www.umb.edu/research/policies_procedures/research_compliance/institutional_review_board_irb/irb_applications_and_forms/

The Dissertation Defense

The first step in scheduling the dissertation defense is obtaining approval from the committee for a defense to take place. All committee members must agree that the research is ready to be defended, and all members must agree on a day and time for the dissertation defense meeting.

The second step involves the student working with the Department office (highereducation@umb.edu) to identify a dissertation defense meeting location, and to publicize the dissertation defense to the UMass Boston community. Public notice of the dissertation defense must be provided to the Office of Graduate Studies no fewer than 30 days prior to the dissertation defense date (see below for procedures to do so).

The dissertation defense is an open meeting attended by the student/candidate, the committee, and other interested parties. At the end of the defense, the dissertation committee meets in a private session to assess the dissertation. The candidate can pass the dissertation defense examination only with the unanimous approval of all members of the dissertation committee.

The Office of Graduate Studies allows the student to order, at a discounted rate, seven bound copies of their dissertation. One of the seven bound copies is provided to the UMass Boston library collection. One of the seven bound copies is housed in the Kanter Library of the Department of Leadership in Education. It is also customary for students to give bound copies of the dissertation to each member of the dissertation committee.

Stages of the Dissertation Process

The Office of Graduate Studies tracks students' progress through six dissertation stages, which are described below and outlined in the following chart. A student's progress through these stages is at the discretion of the dissertation committee chair, and each chair may structure this process somewhat differently; yet, all students must progress through the following six stages.

Stage 1. Notification of Candidacy. After students have successfully completed the Qualifying Paper (QP), the Department Office will automatically generate a "stage one" form to notify the Office of Graduate Studies of the student's candidacy for the degree.

Stage 2. Formation of Dissertation Committee. After students have selected all members of their dissertation committee, they must contact the Department Office in writing via email (highereducation@umb.edu) and request that a "stage two" form be prepared on their behalf. The "stage two" form indicates who will serve on the committee; specifically, the two committee members from within the Department and the third reader from outside the Department. When the third reader is not a UMass Boston faculty member, the resume/vita for that person must be submitted along with the "stage two" form.

The student's written request for the "stage two" form must include the following:

1. a listing of the proposed committee members and their institutional and departmental affiliations;

2. a brief explanation of the rationale for selecting the third reader (frame this memo in terms of the relevant expertise that the third reader would bring to the committee); and
3. a copy of the third reader's resume/vita if that person is not a UMass Boston faculty member.

Following the student's written request, the Department Office will prepare the "stage two" form, obtain the Program Director's signature, and submit the form to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval.

After the Program Director and the Dean of Graduate Studies approve the committee, the Department Office will return a copy of the "stage two" form to the student and to the student's dissertation committee chair. Students are not allowed to schedule dissertation committee meetings (including dissertation proposal hearings) until the dissertation chair has received a copy of the approved "stage two" form.

Stage 3. Notification of Proposal Acceptance. Students must submit a written request via email to the Department Office for a "stage three" form prior to their dissertation proposal hearing. The Department Office will prepare the "stage three" form, and students should bring the "stage three" form to the proposal hearing for their committee members to sign.

If the committee approves the student's dissertation proposal, then the committee members will need to sign the "stage three" form, and the student will need to submit the signed form to the Department Office following the proposal hearing. The Department Office will then send the "stage three" form to the Office of Graduate Studies to be filed on behalf of the student.

Stage 4. Notification of Intent to Defend Dissertation. After all dissertation committee members agree that the student is ready to schedule a dissertation defense and have agreed on a day and time for the defense, the student must submit a written request via email to the Department Office and ask for a "stage four" form. The student's written request should include the proposed day and time for the defense, which has already been agreed upon by all dissertation committee members. This notification must occur **no fewer than 30 days prior to the date of the proposed dissertation defense.**

The Department Office will obtain signatures from the Program Director and from the student's dissertation committee chair, which are required for the "stage four" form. The Department Office will send the "stage four" form to the Office of Graduate Studies on behalf of the student, and will assist the student in scheduling a room for the meeting and in acquiring audio-visual equipment requested by the student for the dissertation defense presentation.

Stage 5. Result of Dissertation Defense. Students must submit a written request via email to the Department Office for a "stage five" form prior to their dissertation defense. Students should bring the "stage five" form to the dissertation defense meeting.

If the dissertation committee approves the student's dissertation defense presentation, the committee members will sign the "stage five" form, and the student will submit the signed form to the Department Office following the defense meeting. The Department Office will send the "stage five" form to the Office of Graduate Studies on behalf of the student.

Signature Page. Oftentimes, students will need to make revisions and modifications to the dissertation following the dissertation defense presentation. Typically the dissertation committee members will

approve the content of the dissertation at some point following the defense presentation. When the dissertation committee has approved the content of the dissertation (in addition to approving the defense presentation), then the dissertation committee members will sign the signature page of the dissertation.

Students are responsible for obtaining the necessary signatures and for submitting the signature page – along with the committee-approved dissertation – to the Office of Graduate Studies. [Note: the signature page should follow the format guidelines provided by the Office of Graduate Studies. It is advised that students prepare and obtain signatures on multiple copies of the signature page, in case a particular copy of that page becomes damaged in any way.] The signature page, **with original signatures**, must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies. Electronic signatures are not allowed.

Stage 6. Review of Dissertation by Office of Graduate Studies. After the dissertation committee has approved the content of the student’s dissertation (via their signatures on the signature page), the student will submit the committee-approved version of the dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies for format review. The format-review submission occurs electronically. See the website below for more information regarding the submission of committee-approved dissertations to the Office of Graduate Studies.

http://www.umb.edu/academics/graduate/info_for_graduate_students/graduating_from_umass_boston/theses_dissertations/

Only committee-approved dissertations should be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies. The dissertation document must follow the format guidelines specified by the Office of Graduate Studies. Staff in the Office of Graduate Studies will examine the format of the dissertation and indicate if format revisions are necessary. After Graduate Studies staff approve the format, “stage six” is achieved, and the dissertation is considered complete.

The Office of Graduate Studies sets deadlines for December and May graduations, regarding final dates for dissertation defenses and submission of committee-approved dissertations. Students are responsible for meeting all deadlines associated with a particular graduation date.

DISSERTATION TRACKING STAGES

Stage or action	What it means	What is required	Approvals required
Stage One: Notification of Candidacy	You have finished your required courses and your Qualifying Paper (QP) has been accepted.	No action needed from student. Department Office will complete form and submit to Office of Graduate Studies.	Graduate program director (GPD) signs form.
Stage Two: Formation of Dissertation Committee	You have selected all members of your dissertation committee	Student provides written memo to Department office. Department office will complete form and submit to Office of Graduate Studies	Graduate program director and dean of graduate studies must approve.
Stage Three: Notification of Proposal Acceptance	Your dissertation committee approves your dissertation proposal (DP) at your proposal hearing.	Student requests form and brings form to proposal hearing. After committee members sign the form, the student returns the form to the Department office. The Department office submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.	Dissertation committee members and GPD sign form.
Stage Four: Notification of Intent to Defend Dissertation	Your dissertation committee agrees that you are ready to defend the dissertation, and has selected a day and time for the dissertation defense.	Student notifies Department office. The Department office submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.	Dissertation committee chair and GPD sign form.
Stage Five: Approval of Dissertation Defense	Your dissertation committee provides approval for your dissertation defense presentation.	Student requests and brings form to dissertation defense. After committee members sign the form, the student returns the form to the Department office. The Department office submits the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.	Dissertation committee members and GPD sign form.
Signature page	Your dissertation committee approves the final version of your dissertation.	Student prepares signature page based on Office of Graduate Studies format guidelines. Student obtains necessary original signatures and submits signature page to Office of Graduate Studies.	Dissertation committee members, GPD, and department chair sign the signature page. Original signatures required.
Stage Six:			

Format Review.	Office of Graduate Studies approves format of the dissertation.	Student electronically submits committee approved dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies for format review.	Office of Graduate Studies approves format of the dissertation.
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Section 6 Academic Policies

General academic regulations

Students should carefully review and understand the general academic regulations that govern their participation in a graduate program at UMass Boston. In this section of the student handbook, several of these regulations are described and explained in relation to the context of the Higher Education Doctoral Program. But a more comprehensive set of academic policies can be found on the website for the Office of Graduate Studies. In the event of any discrepancy between this student handbook and the Graduate Studies website, the Graduate Studies website shall be considered the governing policy.

<http://catalog.umb.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=1766>

Transfer credits: Coursework at other institutions

Students can include in their program of study coursework taken at other institutions prior to matriculation in the Higher Education Program at UMass Boston. These courses must be approved for transfer by the Program Director.

The maximum number of course credits that can be transferred from other institutions is six. This includes coursework taken prior to admission to UMass Boston, and courses taken at other institutions while enrolled in the doctoral program at UMass Boston.

Transfer courses taken while the student is enrolled in the doctoral program at UMass Boston must be approved by the student's faculty advisor prior to the student registering for such courses.

Following completion of the course, students must request that the credits be transferred into their program of study. Students must complete a **transfer credit request form**. The form must be accompanied by an official sealed (un-opened) transcript for the course. Completed forms and transcripts should be submitted to the Department office for the Program Director's approval. The form is located on the following website: www.umb.edu/registrar/forms/

After the Department Office obtains the Program Director's approval, the Department Office will deliver the transfer credit form and the sealed (un-opened) transcript to the Registrar's Office on the student's behalf.

Courses taken more than seven years prior to entering the UMass Boston doctoral program are not eligible for transfer. Furthermore, the course grade must be "B" or higher; courses taken on a pass/fail basis are not eligible for transfer. The course must not have been used toward a previous degree.

Previous coursework at UMass Boston

Students can include in their program of study coursework taken at UMass Boston prior to matriculation in the Higher Education Program. These courses must be approved by the Program Director.

The maximum number of course credits that can be transferred from previous coursework at UMass Boston is six. Students must complete the **transfer credit request form**. Completed forms should be submitted to the Department office for the Program Director's approval.

UMass Boston courses taken more than seven years prior to entering the doctoral program are not eligible for transfer. The course grade must be "B" or higher; courses taken on a pass/fail basis are not eligible for transfer. The course must not have been used toward a previous degree.

Statute of Limitations: Maximum Time Allowed for Degree Completion

Rather than being merely a collection of courses, a graduate degree requires intense commitment to scholarship and practice within a specific period of time. Such focus and coherence is lost if the degree is not completed within a reasonable time period. Therefore, each graduate program at UMass Boston requires that students complete their program of study within designated time limits. The statute of limitations to complete the Higher Education doctoral degree is **seven years** for both the PhD and the EdD.

Students who are unable to complete degree requirements within the seven-year statute of limitations can appeal to the Program Committee for an extension beyond this period. To request an extension, the student must provide the Program Committee with an explanation of the circumstances that precluded degree completion within the seven-year period. The request must also include a detailed plan for completing the degree within one year. The Program Committee will grant extensions only if the student is making satisfactory progress toward degree completion, and has already achieved an accepted Qualifying Paper. Students who have not had their QPs approved by the program faculty are not eligible to be considered for a statute-of-limitations extension.

If the extension request is approved by the Program Committee, then the student must submit a **statute of limitations extension form** to the Department office. The form must then be signed by the Program Director, who will submit the form to the Registrar and the Office of Graduate Studies. These forms can be found on the website for the Registrar. www.umb.edu/registrar/forms/

Required Grade Point Average

The lowest passing grade for a graduate student is a "C." Grades lower than a "C" will be recorded automatically as "F."

The University further specifies that students must obtain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 in order to be awarded their graduate degree. When students fall below a GPA of 3.0 for two or more consecutive semesters, they will be placed on academic probation by the Office of Graduate Studies. Students who are placed on academic probation will be removed from any Graduate Assistantship positions that they hold, and they will be subject to dismissal if they are unable to return to a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above.

Program Continuation: Registration After Course Work is Completed

Students who do not register for any UMass Boston courses in a particular fall or spring semester must maintain continuous enrollment in the University by registering for “program continuation.” The program continuation fee is \$225 per semester.

Students can register for **program continuation** on the WISER online registration system. This process must be completed prior to the registration deadline for the semester in which the student is registering. Late registrations will be subject to a \$110 fee.

All students must maintain continuous registration in the University until the degree sought by the student has been formally awarded. Continuous registration through program continuation must be maintained even when a student is working on dissertation research.

Leave of absence from the program

A student who has been accepted into a graduate program is expected to remain in continuous enrollment until graduation. However, if circumstances arise that cause an interruption in graduate study, a student can apply for a leave of absence (LOA). Leaves of absence are generally granted only in cases of substantiated illness or disability of the student or family member, military service, or one semester maternity or paternity leave. A student should document the basis for the leave. If a student is providing medical information on another person (e.g., a family member) as the basis for a medical leave of absence, s/he must have the permission of that person to release the information.

A leave of absence must be approved by the graduate program director and the dean of graduate studies.

- Leaves of absence are granted in yearly increments, and students may not be granted more than three years total LOA.
- Time spent on leave approved by the Office of Graduate Studies does not count toward the statute of limitations (SOL). The “SOL clock” is stopped for the period of the leave.
- Students on LOA will not be covered by the health insurance plan until they return to registration.
- Students on LOA do not pay the program continuation fee while on leave, and a leave of absence does not make a student eligible for student loan deferments.

Failure to Remain an Active Student

A student who does not register for any classes and fails to register for program continuation will be classified as inactive. To become active again, students will need to submit a **readmission application** (available on the Registrar's Office website) along with a readmission fee and any owed program continuation fees from previous semesters. Readmission to the program is not automatic and must be approved by the Program Committee.

Incomplete Work

Students with incomplete work in more than one course may be suspended from the program. Specifically, they will not be allowed to enroll in either second-year or third-year courses until such time as incomplete work from the prior year has been completed.

Students must complete all first-year and second-year required courses before they will be permitted to enroll in courses during their third June session in the program. These June session courses include the Capstone Course (HighEd 692) and the Qualifying Paper Proposal Seminar (HighEd 793).

Students should communicate with their instructors to request an incomplete grade. Incomplete grades are entered in WISER by the university after submitting an Incomplete Contract signed by the student, the instructor, and the department chair. The form must be submitted prior to finals week for timely processing. In the Incomplete Contract, the instructor and student will agree to a new date at which time the remaining assignments will be submitted. The completed contract should be submitted to the Department Office (highereducation@umb.edu).

Removing an Incomplete Grade

The specific requirements and arrangements for successfully removing a grade of Incomplete (INC) are determined by the instructor of the course. Ordinarily, all grades of Incomplete must be resolved within six weeks of the end of the course. Except in extenuating circumstances agreed to by the faculty member, no work necessary to remove a grade of Incomplete will be accepted later than 12 weeks after the end of the course. The maximum allowable time to remove an incomplete grade is one year, but this amount of time is permitted only when extreme circumstances intervene.

After one year, an incomplete grade will revert to an "F," which cannot be changed. **No appeals will be considered by the Office of Graduate Studies.** Failure to successfully remove an incomplete grade will result in a grade of "F" for the course and will necessitate that the student retake the course, if the course is a requirement for the degree. The responsibility to address incomplete work resides entirely with the student.

Withdrawal from the Program

A student who seeks to withdraw from the Higher Education Program should submit a letter of intent to their advisor. The student is strongly encouraged to have an advising session with their advisor and the Program Director before starting the withdrawal process.

The effective date of withdrawal from the University is that on which the withdrawal form is completed, signed, and returned to the Registrar. Failure to complete a withdrawal form will result in the recording of the grade of "F" for all courses at the end of the term.

Academic Integrity: The Code of Student Conduct

Graduate students at UMass Boston should adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Students are obligated to uphold the scholarly responsibilities described in the University's Code of

Student Conduct. Consequences for failing to adhere to these responsibilities may include (but are not limited to) failure in the course in which the violation occurred and/or dismissal from the University. For more information, visit the website below:

https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/community/code

Graduate Assistantships

The Higher Education Program offers a limited number of graduate assistantships. Graduate assistantships are awarded for a maximum of three years. Exceptions to the three-year time limit may be granted upon agreement by the Higher Education Program committee. Graduate assistants are required to maintain good academic standing in the program, which includes holding no more than two incompletes at any one time or no more than one incomplete that is older than one semester. In addition, graduate assistants cannot be more than one semester (two courses) behind their cohort's schedule in terms of completing the Higher Education Program's required courses. Preference will be given to students enrolled in courses or dissertation research credits.

According to University policy, assistantships can be awarded as ½-time, ¾-time, and full-time positions, entailing 9, 13.5, and 18 hours of work per week, respectively. Graduate assistants support faculty in their research and teaching. Assistantship contracts are offered in late spring or early summer for the following academic year. Assistantships provide stipends and tuition discounts that are indexed to the size of the assistantship. For more information about graduate assistantships, contact your faculty advisor or the Program Director.

Section 7 Contact Information

Higher Education Doctoral Program

Contact information: highereducation@umb.edu (617.287.7601)

Higher Education Faculty

Cheryl D. Ching, Assistant Professor, PhD, University of Southern California. Dr. Ching teaches courses in qualitative methods, community colleges, and the historical foundations of higher education. Her research focuses on educational equity, particularly in the context of the experiences of low-income and racially minoritized students in higher education. (617-287-3263)

Jay R. Dee, Professor, PhD, University of Iowa. Dr. Dee teaches courses in higher education governance, organizational theory, and leadership. His research interests include faculty development, organizational change, and academic leadership. He has published several studies of college and university organization and leadership with particular attention to how institutional cultures and external environments shape organizational behavior. Contact information: Jay.Dee@umb.edu (617.287.7694)

Ray Franke, Assistant Professor, PhD, University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Dr. Franke's research focuses on the effects of financial aid policies on college student retention and subsequent educational and career outcomes. He also studies higher education finance and administrative issues in colleges and universities. He teaches courses in quantitative research methods, research design, and higher education finance and management. Contact information: Ray.Franke@umb.edu (617.287.3164)

Tara L. Parker, Associate Professor, PhD, New York University. Dr. Parker is a policy scholar whose work is informed by social and cultural perspectives. Her research focuses on race, access, and equity in higher education. Her policy analyses focus on states and state systems with an emphasis on remedial/developmental education. Contact information: Tara.Parker@umb.edu (617.287.7728)

John Saltmarsh, Professor, PhD, Boston University. Dr. Saltmarsh teaches courses on teaching, learning, and curriculum in higher education and community engagement. He also teaches the program's leadership capstone class. His areas of expertise include civic engagement in higher education, community-based learning, and organizational change. Contact information: John.Saltmarsh@umb.edu (617.287.7743)

Katalin Szelenyi, Associate Professor, PhD, University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Dr. Szelenyi teaches classes on research design, historical foundations of higher education, internationalization of higher education, and gender in higher education. Her research interests focus on STEM education at the undergraduate and graduate levels, women in STEM fields, the effects of academic capitalism, public good in higher education, and globalization and internationalization in higher education. Contact information: katalin.szelenyi@umb.edu. (617.287.7765)

The fax number for all Department faculty members is 617.287.7664.

Affiliated faculty include:

- Dr. Peter Kiang, Asian American Studies, UMass Boston

- Dr. Sherry Penney, former Chancellor, UMass Boston
- Dr. J. Keith Motley, Chancellor, UMass Boston
- Dr. Dwight E. Giles, Jr., Professor Emeritus, Higher Education Program, UMass Boston

University

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Computing Services, Main Office	617-287-5200
College of Education and Human Development	617-287-7600
Graduate Admissions/Registrar	617-287-6400
Office of Graduate Studies	617-287-5700
UMass Bookstore	617-287-5090
Public Safety	617-287-7799