The Department of Educational Leadership and School Counseling

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Advisement Information for Advisors and Students

2012-2013
Disclaimer: This packet was created to assist advisors and graduate students in the Department of Educational Leadership and School Counseling (ELSC) with advisement issues. It does not replace or supplant the Graduate Bulletin (GB), which contains officially recognized university policies that govern graduate education at Southern Miss.

Degrees Offered in the Department:
Doctor of Education (EdD) Emphasis in Educational Administration (K-12)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Emphasis in Educational Administration (K-12)
Specialist in Education (EdS) Emphasis in Educational Administration (K-12)
Master of Education Degree (MED)
  Educational Administration and Supervision (K-12)
  Counseling and Personnel Services Emphasis in School Counseling

Admission Application Deadlines

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<th>Semester</th>
<th>Application Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>First Monday in April</td>
<td>First Monday in May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>First Monday in September</td>
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Individuals who have complete application packets on file by the above deadlines will be considered. Applications submitted after the deadline may not be considered until the next review cycle. Each program has specific admission criteria listed in the Graduate Bulletin, which is available on the Graduate School homepage http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school.

Admission to Program
Qualified students are admitted to a specific program of study after being approved by the admissions committee, department chair, college dean, and Graduate Dean (GB). There are two types of admission: regular and conditional.

Conditional Admission Status
Students who do not meet the regular admission criteria, but who demonstrate potential, may be allowed to begin the program conditionally. Students must meet the following criteria to have the conditional status changed to “regular” admission:

A *master’s* student admitted conditionally must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 on the first nine (9) hours of coursework at or above the 500 level.

A *specialist’s* student admitted conditionally must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.25 on the first nine (9) hours of coursework at or above the 600 level.

A *doctoral* student admitted conditionally must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.5 on the first nine (9) hours of coursework at or above the 600 level.

Student responsibilities: Upon completion of the first nine (9) hours of approved coursework and any additional requirements imposed by the department, the student must schedule a conference with his/her advisor and provide evidence of an appropriate GPA.
Advisor responsibilities: The advisor submits a “Change of Status Form” (available online on the Graduate School website) indicating whether or not the student has met the criteria. If all requirements were not met, the advisor should notify the department chair. The student will not be allowed to take additional courses for credit and may be dismissed from the program. The student may appeal this decision to the department chair if there are extenuating circumstances.

Non-Degree Status

Students may take courses within the department who are not enrolled in a degree program with permission of the department chair, college dean, and Graduate Dean. Advisors do not flag non-degree students for registration. Permission to take courses as a non-degree graduate student may be granted for any of the following reasons:

A. The student did not meet requirements for conditional or regular admission before the deadline.
B. The student does not desire to work toward a graduate degree. For example, an individual may wish to take courses for licensure or to earn a certificate.
C. The student is enrolled in another university and desires to obtain credit from The University of Southern Mississippi to be transferred to the university in which he or she is seeking a degree.
D. The student has been denied admission to a program but wishes to take graduate courses.

* No more than nine (9) semester hours earned while classified as a non-degree graduate student will be accepted toward a master’s or specialist’s degree at The University of Southern Mississippi.
* No credit earned beyond the master's degree while classified as a non-degree student may be applied toward the doctoral degree. {GB}

Note: Once admitted into a program the student is no longer classified as “non-degree.” It is possible for a student to begin a semester as a non-degree student, be admitted into a degree program, and receive credit for coursework taken during that semester. Admission as a non-degree graduate student does not imply nor guarantee subsequent admission into any degree program within the department.

Licensure (Certification)

Licensure is a function of each state’s department of education, and requirements for licensure vary from state to state. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of his/her state’s requirements for licensure and ensure that all requirements are met through completed coursework. The College of Education and Psychology has a certification officer that assists students with filing appropriate licensure paperwork, but it is the student’s responsibility to provide the necessary forms. For these reasons, students seeking licensure are encouraged to stay current with licensure regulations within their respective states.

Responsible Conduct of Research Training

Faculty (holding Regular or Associate graduate faculty status) and graduate students must complete the RCR training modules required by the Graduate School and their departments the first semester they are enrolled in Graduate School. The RCR policy and training information are found on the Graduate School web page. Contact the Dean of the Graduate School if you have any questions regarding the policy or RCR training.
Advisement

When a student is admitted into a degree program s/he is assigned an advisor who is a full-time faculty member in the corresponding program. The student must meet with the assigned advisor during the first semester of enrollment and during advisement periods each semester thereafter. (See registration activities listed in the Academic Calendar located on the Registrar’s homepage.)

Student Responsibilities: Students should schedule an initial appointment with their assigned advisor shortly after being notified of admittance into their degree program. Students should schedule and attend appointments during the advisement period (see Academic Calendar) each semester. For each advisement session, students should:

1. Provide an updated plan of study (Graduate School homepage)
2. Provide and an “unofficial” transcript (SOAR)
3. Review advising transcript (GRD11) regularly and be sure paperwork is up-to-date and accurate (SOAR). To print transcripts and view the GRD11, students should log into SOAR and follow these directions:

   Log into SOAR> click on Self Service then Student Center> under Academics there is a drop down box, select Advisement/Degree Progress then click Go (or the arrow key next to the box)> this will pull up your advisement report, click to change it to PDF format & print

4. Notify advisor of requests for transfer credits and/or change of admission status from conditional to regular (forms on Graduate School homepage).
5. Be familiar with course offerings listed in the schedule for the upcoming semesters (SOAR) and submit for advisor approval a list of courses s/he wishes to take. These courses should be on the student’s plan of study.

Advisor Responsibilities: Advisors should make themselves available for advisement purposes and should inform advisees of preferences regarding scheduling appointments. Advisors should post office hours, be aware of designated advisement periods (see Academic Calendar), and assist students with:

1. Degree program selection: The advisor will discuss degree options with the student in accordance with the student’s career path, aspirations, opportunities, qualifications, and/or abilities and advise the student if s/he is pursuing an appropriate degree program.
2. Plan of Study: Students should submit a “Plan of Study” to the Graduate School during the first semester of enrollment, but no later than the end of the second semester. (Plans of Study are located on the Graduate School homepage.) The advisor should advise the student regarding course sequence, prerequisites, timelines, degree requirements, and internships, and answer questions the student may have. This plan should be reviewed and updated during advisement sessions; however, only the original plan of study needs to be filed with the Graduate School unless major degree requirements change. The Plan of Study is updated and submitted again at the time the student applies for degree at the end of the program.
3. Advisement and Registration: During advisement periods, students should consult with and gain approval from their advisors regarding course selection prior to registration. Students cannot register for courses until their registration has been approved (flagged). Advisors must flag a student for registration within SOAR before
the student can register for courses. To flag a student to register, advisors should follow these directions:

ADVISORS ONLY: Enter SOAR > click on Campus Community > Student Services Ctr > enter the student’s ID # > this should be the student’s service panel... at the top of the page there will be a red indicator (like a no-smoking sign); click on it > you will see (in blue) NEE, click on this > at the top of the page click on Release, it will then ask if you are sure, click yes.

4. Dissertation Committee Chair: Advisors assist students with the selection of their dissertation committee chair. The advisor may or may not serve in this capacity.

5. Application for degree: The semester prior to a student’s graduation date, the student must apply for degree/candidacy (deadlines are posted on the Graduate School homepage). The student should provide the advisor with an updated plan of study form and unofficial transcript. The advisor should verify that all degree requirements have been met to date and inform the student of any missing requirements.

6. Other: Other duties carried out by the advisor include submitting necessary paperwork such as forms for Change of Status (for conditionally admitted students) and Transfer Credit Approval.

Grades
The university requires graduate students to maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher with no grade below a “C”. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Additionally, each program within the Department of Educational Leadership and School Counseling sets GPA requirements for graduation. These are:

- Master’s GPA 3.0
- Specialist’s GPA 3.25
- Doctorate GPA 3.5

Retake policy: On the recommendation of the student’s committee or major professor, a student may retake only one graduate level course in order to improve his/her GPA and/or a grade.

Academic Probation: A student whose cumulative GPA or whose program GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. That student must attain a cumulative 3.0 GPA by the end of the following (probationary) semester. A student who fails to achieve a 3.0 at the end of the probationary semester will be dropped from the program.

Time Limitation for Degree Completion
Degree requirements within each program must be completed within a designated time frame. Petitions for exceptions should be directed to the department chair (see Graduate Bulletin).

Master’s or Specialist’s: The student must complete the degree within six (6) calendar years from the date of initial enrollment. Six years is the maximum age allowed for graduate credits toward a master’s or specialist’s degree, including approved transfer credits.

Doctorate: The student must complete the degree within eight (8) calendar years from the date of initial enrollment. Students must complete coursework and pass comprehensive exams within the first six (6) years of initial enrollment (including approved transfer credits). The student may continue to enroll in dissertation hours the remaining two (2) years.
Transfer Credit and Credit for Non-degree Coursework

Credit for as many as six (6) semester hours of graduate credit from other accredited institutions may be transferred to the student’s program with the approval of the department chair and dean, provided that the coursework transferred falls within the six-year period allowed (see time limitations). Such coursework may not have counted toward another degree and must carry a letter or numeric grade of “B” or better (cannot be a pass/fail course). A total sum of no more than nine (9) semester hours of transfer work and non-degree work may be applied toward a master’s or specialist’s degree. No non-degree hours may apply toward a doctoral degree.

The student must provide the advisor a copy of an official transcript indicating the course(s) the student wishes to transfer. The student’s advisor may ask for additional information including course syllabi and/or other information to ascertain the appropriateness of the course. The student’s advisor should submit a Transfer Credit Approval Form along with a copy of the student’s transcript to the department chair.

Continuous Enrollment

Unless a student has been approved for a leave of absence (see Graduate Bulletin), students are expected to enroll continuously after they have taken required coursework until they complete their degree. Failure to enroll for the appropriate hours will result in the student being discontinued, and the student will be required to reapply for admission to the program.

Master’s or Specialist’s Students:

A. Students must enroll for at least one (1) hour each semester if they are taking coursework, using university services (e.g., library and/or technology services, or consulting their advisor).

B. Master’s or specialist’s students in the department complete a field project instead of a thesis and must be enrolled in a minimum of 3 hours the semester the project is completed.

C. Students who have completed required coursework, but have not completed degree requirements, (e.g., have not passed comps; has an “I” grade) must continue to enroll in at least one (1) hour of EDA 797 until degree requirements are met.

Doctoral Students:

A. Students must register for three (3) hours of coursework during the semester in which they take their comprehensive examinations.

B. After a doctoral student completes his or her comprehensive examination, continuous enrollment in at least one (1) semester hour must be maintained during each fall and spring semester until the student successfully defends the dissertation.

C. A student may petition the Graduate School for an exemption from the continuous enrollment policy in accordance with policies outlined in the Graduate Bulletin.

D. Students must register for a total of 12 dissertation hours (EDA 898); they must register for a minimum of three (3) hours of EDA 898 during the semester they propose (formal prospectus meeting) and the semester they defend the dissertation. All required coursework must be completed before the semester in which the dissertation is defended.

E. If a student does not submit copies of his or her dissertation in a form acceptable to the Graduate Reader prior to the deadlines established in a given semester, or if the student’s degree will not be awarded until the next term, then the student must register for one (1) hour of EDA 898 (dissertation) during the semester or term in which the degree will be awarded.
Comprehensive Exam

Comprehensive exams will be administered each semester for each degree program and should be taken by students during or after their last semester of coursework. Students living outside a 100 mile radius of campus may have their exam proctored at an off-campus testing site. A student whose response is deemed “marginal” may be asked to complete a “rewrite” within the same semester the exam was taken. A student who fails the comprehensive examination may not retake the examination until its next regular administration and may repeat the examination only once.

Doctoral Students: The comprehensive examination should be successfully completed either before the first formal prospectus meeting or before substantial research is completed for the dissertation and within six years from initial enrollment.

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<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Fourth week in October</td>
<td>Second week in November</td>
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<td>Fourth week in June</td>
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Residency

Residency is required for students enrolled in a doctoral program. The purposes of academic residency are to provide students with significant time for extensive involvement with faculty, professional colleagues, and peers and to provide a period of time for concentrated study and course work. It is structured as a full-time experience exclusive of dissertation hours.

Doctoral: The following are options for satisfying the residency requirement:

a) two consecutive terms of 12 hours each,

b) two consecutive summer terms of 12 hours each with continuous enrollment during intervening terms (fall/spring),

c) three consecutive terms of 9 hours each, or

d) four consecutive terms of 6 hours each. Approved by the Graduate Council (1/28/02)

The Doctoral Committee

The student’s work toward the doctoral degree is supervised by a departmental committee composed of a chair and at least four members approved by the department chair. At least three of the members must be full time faculty within the department. Qualified individuals from outside the department and/or university may serve if they have specialized knowledge needed by the student and are approved by the Graduate Council. The Graduate Committee Request Form should be sent to the Graduate School by the student’s second semester. The form is located on the Graduate School website. {GB}

In consultation with the advisor, students formally invite a faculty member (with chair status) to serve as dissertation chair. In consultation with the dissertation chair, the student invites other members (with committee status) to serve on the committee. Once the committee is identified, the advisor completes the Graduate Committee Request Form and forwards to the department chair for approval. The dissertation committee exists only after being formally appointed by the Graduate School.

Documentation Requirements for Graduation

Before a student is awarded his/her degree, the following documents must be on file in the Graduate School. Students should check the “milestone” section of their advising transcript
(GRD11) via SOAR to verify that these documents have been received by the Graduate Office. Deadlines and a list of the most current forms are available on the Graduate School website.

Documents include:

A. Plan of Study Form. Students must submit a “plan of study” form to the Graduate School by their second semester of enrollment.
B. Qualifying Exam Results Form. The department uses information obtained during the application process in lieu of a Qualifying Exam.
C. Doctoral Committee Appointment Form (Graduate Committee Request Form). The department chair should submit the form to the Graduate School indicating who will serve on the student’s committee. A letter of appointment will be sent to the committee members and adviser. Should committee membership change, the department chair should submit a memo.
D. Comprehensive Exam Results Form. The department should submit the results of the comprehensive exam form to the graduate degree auditor.
E. Application for Degree. The student should present two copies of the Application for Degree form, stamped by the Business Office to verify payment of fees during the semester preceding that of graduation. Students not graduating in the semester for which they applied must contact the graduate degree auditor.
F. Dissertation Prospectus Approval and Application for Candidacy Form. After completing all the requirements for the doctoral degree other than the dissertation and after the dissertation prospectus (proposal) has been approved and at least one semester prior to graduation, the student must file two copies of the form with the graduate degree auditor and one copy with the adviser, before or at the time the application for degree is filed. Students are reminded to secure approval of the Human Subjects Review Committee after the prospectus (proposal) is approved and before data collection.
G. Dissertation Defense Results Form. After acquiring appropriate signatures, the student should submit the Oral Defense of the Dissertation form to the Graduate Reader immediately following defense. A copy of the dissertation title page should also be submitted. Final copies of the dissertation must be deposited in the Graduate School; deadlines are posted on the Graduate School website.

Departmental Dead Weeks: Dissertation deadlines are posted on the Graduate School website. In addition to these deadlines, students should be aware that dissertation committee meetings (proposal / defense) may not be scheduled during departmental Dead Weeks. These Dead Weeks include:

a) semester breaks and holidays
b) the first week of a semester
c) the week of final exams