

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY
DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
RESEARCH IN THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM
FEBRUARY, 2013

Faculty members, who work, teaching and/or serving on doctoral dissertation committees, with doctoral students typically have their own research agendas that are documented as part of the departmental reports developed this spring. This presentation focuses on the research process that is created for and implemented by doctoral students culminating in the successful presentation and defense of a doctoral dissertation. Doctoral students in Educational Leadership are typically located in PK-12 professional settings or in postsecondary education professional settings all with aspirations for enhanced leadership responsibilities. They proceed through the program in cohorts (of approximately 12) which are blends of PK-12 and postsecondary professionals. This blending is seen as one of the major strengths of the program as it necessitates communication with and between colleagues at all levels of education.

The first formal event in which the discussion of a research agenda typically takes place is in the three one credit hour professional seminars held during the first three semesters. Additionally discussions about the research agenda, its focus, and direction, are encouraged and take place in all of the courses taken by doctoral students. In the first two credit hour sessions of the professional seminar, considerable emphasis is placed on exposure to library resources and education in the effective use of library resources – especially data bases and search engines. In the third credit hour session of the professional seminar a written paper calls on students to address:

- **What is your research issue?
- **Why is it significant/important?
- **What is known about it?
- **What is not known about it?
- **What conceptual framework will be used to study the issue?
- **What methodology will be used to study the issue?

The paper is read the by instructor who then has individual meetings with each student to begin the identification of a faculty research network ultimately leading to the composition of a dissertation committee.

The second event/benchmark in the research sequence is the Qualifying Examination where the student is asked to:

- **Identify a researchable issue, define it, its context, significance, etc.
- **Present a Literature Review and Conceptual Framework that informs the study
- **Present a Methodology that will be used to conduct the study

The third event/benchmark in the research sequence is the preparation and presentation of Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus that is typically a refinement and enhancement of the Qualifying Examination.

The fourth event/benchmark is conducting the research, refining the first three chapters, adding a results chapter, and an analysis of the results; then the work is presented and defended in a formal examination.

In creating and carrying out the research agenda, the general trend is to identify topics that may address situations in the students' professional working environments and/or in practical ways add to their understanding of and perhaps capacity to conduct further research. Attached is a listing of topics addressed in the last three year period. The blending of all levels of education in the program is reflected in the wide range of topics addressed by doctoral students.

Two questions always asked in the final defense are, "what responsibilities do you have to share this research with the profession"? and "how do you plan to address those responsibilities"?

Faculty members always encourage students to share their results in the forms of papers, presentations, workshops and through other forums. From time to time faculty members serve as second authors on journal submissions emerging from the research.

Three areas in which research with doctoral students could be enhanced moving forward from here are:

- a) a much more concentrated effort by students and faculty to collaboratively present their results at local, regional, state, national and international levels;
- b) a much more concentrated effort by faculty to secure funding for research to included salaried doctoral students thereby providing much more in-depth research opportunities;

- c) an annual follow-up (to be conducted each May) of graduates from the previous calendar year (or more) to ascertain their professional status and how their doctoral program and dissertation research have informed that status. The results may be presented at the first fall meeting of the Program Policy Committee and perhaps inform part of the PPC agenda for the coming year.

Doctoral Program Dissertation Research Topics 2010-2012

A spelling based phonics approach to word instruction for children with down syndrome

Value-added effects of disadvantaged student supplemental funding on students in ___ county

Perceptions of 21st century community college leaders on the role of relational leadership

Honor bound: exploring the disparity of treatment of women in Kurdistan, Iraq

Cognitive and non-cognitive readiness in participants in three concurrent programs at a North Carolina Community College

Exploring common characteristics among community college students: exploring online and traditional student success

Still missing in action: the perceptions of African-American women about the barriers and challenges in ascending to the superintendency in North Carolina public schools

Experiences and perceptions of fatherhood among fathers with sons what have spectrum disorders

The effects of dual enrollment credit and Huskins program credit on college readiness

Parental perspectives and decision-making processes about school choice and supplemental educational services under No Child Left Behind in a large urban elementary school

The principal's role in defining a student success-based school culture: the impact of specific behaviors on school-level teacher working conditions

Navigating the labyrinth: women school superintendents in North Carolina

A "Quickguide" to inquiry-based physics laboratory reform

Exploring characteristics of public school facilities and resources and the relationship with teacher retention

Realities, risks, and responsibilities: a critical narrative inquiry and autoethnographic exploration of biculturality among Black professional women

Professional learning communities and teacher efficacy: a correlational study

Perceptions of displaced manufacturing works about their transition to successful re-employment through a community college education experience: six stories of success

The effect of technology infusion on at-risk high school students' motivation to learn

A phenomenological study of high school biology teachers' perceptions of the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards in an era of high stakes accountability

The impact of a middle-school tiered mathematics program on academically and gifted students: one school district's response to high stakes accountability

A case study of a professional learning community: an investigation of sustainability with a rural elementary school

Exploring the college-going scripts of students enrolled in a rural Early College high school

The impact of student mobility, gender, and Title 1 status on measures of school accountability

Digital storytelling: ordinary voices, extraordinary stories

Religious knowledge among pre-service secondary teachers of English and History

Lessons learned: a crisis responder's journey supporting friends in crisis

An examination and analysis of middle school transition plans: a study of local education agencies and middle schools in North Carolina

Predictors of success for community college developmental mathematics students in online, hybrid, and traditional courses

The beliefs of K-12 public school principals about disabilities and how those beliefs inform their leadership of students with disabilities

International library development in Africa: beliefs, challenges, and sustainability

The freshman-academy impact: a comparison of ninth grade structures through analysis of student perceptions and performance data