

**College of Education**  
**Doctoral Advisor Orientation**  
Milestones, Expectations, and Best Practices

November 9, 2023



# Mentorship & Advising Relationships

- Frequently both parties come to a mentor relationship with divergent expectations.
- Successful mentoring also depends on the quality of the relationship between mentor and mentee.
- The relationship should attend to both career and psychosocial aspects.
- Respect is a cornerstone of the mentoring process.
- Mentor and Mentee Dos and Don'ts



# Program-Specific Requirements

- **Each program should have a doctoral student handbook that addresses program-specific requirements.**
- **This handbook should be given to students during their first semester.**
- **The material covered in today's presentation is College-specific, but some programs may have more rigorous requirements.**



# Advisory Committee

- **Purpose: Provide initial guidance on course selection, provide support as student narrows to research topic**
- **A group of at least 3 faculty members**
- **The doctoral advisor will be the chair**
- **Complete the committee form/program of studies in the first semester**
- **Doctoral advisors can provide recommendations for committee members**
- **Comprehensive exams**
- **Submit Program of Study Form**
  - Doctoral Program Guide



# Residency Project

- **Purpose: Provides doctoral student with the opportunity to conduct independent research prior to starting the dissertation**
- **Research apprenticeship project with advisor or faculty member**
- **Submitting a manuscript or giving a conference presentation**
- **The Dean's Office no longer approves completion of the project. It is approved within each program**



# Comprehensive Exams

- Students must take both written and oral exams.
- The Comps Results form must have results from both exams on the same form.
- The entire committee must sign the Comps Results form.
- Dissertation credits cannot be taken until comps are passed.
- If student passes comps, the university expects faculty to work with student to finish dissertation.
- If student fails comps, they cannot change committee members and must retake with same committee members.
- Time between comps and proposal defense is a problem across the college.

# Dissertation

- **2 milestones:**
  - **Dissertation Proposal Defense**
  - **Dissertation Defense**
- **Be clear about expectations**
  - **2 weeks chair**
  - **2 weeks committee**
  - **Resolving issues**
- **Traditional format, manuscript option, or project (program-specific decision)**
- **IRB must be completed by student and advisor**
- **Dissertation Preparation Guide**
- **Thesis/Dissertation Checklist**



# Dissertation Committee Membership

## 1. Membership

- The Dissertation Advisory Committee must consist of at least four graduate faculty members.

2. The Chair (major professor) must be a full graduate faculty member from the student's area of concentration within their major.

3. Only person with external graduate faculty status (i.e., someone external to the university) may serve as a member of the committee.

4. At least one other committee member must be a faculty member in the student's major.

5. The remaining committee members may be within or outside the student's major, department and college.



# Graduation

- **2 pieces to application to graduate:**
  - Application in [my.memphis](#)
  - Candidacy form on Etrieve
- **Grad School absolutely needs Comps Results form and Dissertation Defense Results forms**
- **Deadlines can be found here.**
- **Expired coursework**
  - Experiential learning credit
  - Credit by exam
  - **Successful defense and completion of one's dissertation**



# Forms

- All forms can be found on the Graduate School website .
- Some forms are on Etrieve, and some need to be submitted as hard copies.
- The Graduate School is working to eventually get all forms on Etrieve.
- Other Common Forms:
  - Course Substitution
  - Transfer Credit Evaluation

**Questions?**