

Ed.D. in Educational Leadership  
Interim Assessment Report – Year 2 (2012-2013)

We have continued to implement the Ed.D. Assessment Plan described in 2010-2011. This interim report includes our Year 1 Interim Report for 2011-2012 and also our plan. Since our last full report was written under somewhat different requirements from those now in place, our plan is an excerpt from the 2010-2011 full report that you accepted last year as meeting university requirements last year.

There have been no significant changes in the implementation of our assessment plan. We continue to rely on an analytic rubric for assessing the Leadership Portfolio as our primary assessment point. Satisfactory performance is required before a candidate can move forward with work on the dissertation. Twenty students completed the portfolio during 2011-2012 assessment period. Our secondary assessment tool is a holistic rubric which we use to assess the post-dissertation dissemination report. Dissemination to both the world of practice and the scholarly community is a signature requirement of our doctoral program which blends a practitioner degree with rigorous scholarly requirements. Thirteen students satisfactorily completed this assessment milestone during the 2011-2012 assessment period. In addition, we monitor retention and rate of student progress at three additional points: (1) satisfactory completion of core and research courses in the end of year 2, (2) proposal defense (end of year 2 or later recorded as passed/not passed based on professional judgment of 4-person committee), and (3) dissertation (end of year 3 or later, recorded as passed/not passed based on professional judgment of committee of committee). A summary across cohorts and check-points is presented in Table 1, Doctoral Cohort Progress across Indicators as of November 1, 2012 (page 2 of this report). We are pleased that student progress during year 2 has accelerated and a record number of students completed portfolio requirements before entering their third year of study.

To address weaknesses in research design and quantitative analysis identified in previous reviews of student performance and assessment data, we have continued to fine-tune the second year research sequence (713-714-715) and have also brought quantitative study into the first summer residency. We struggle with differentiation in a cohort program: some people need a more personal and supportive environment for learning quantitative skills; others want more challenge. But in general, the re-engineering of our advanced inquiry seminars has assisted students to make better progress on their portfolios and dissertation proposals which in turn, we hope, will support them in completing their dissertations in a timely fashion.

We continue to emphasize writing tasks in our coursework, but have not yet developed a full-blown intervention program. More than quantitative skills, the quality of writing, and the rather large range of skills, vexes faculty advising dissertations. We know it is a tradition at universities for faculty to gripe about writing, but griping doesn't get us anywhere. We need to be more effective in helping some of the excellent leaders and thinkers we admit become adept scholarly writers. We are also planning to introduce the portfolio a little earlier (spring of the first year), and to provide more structure around writing and expectations. Students are passing, but we think it is time to raise the bar. Our concern about writing also cuts across the three dimensions of quality that matter to us in the dissertation – the conceptual, the methodological, and the rhetorical – and we so we hope to make progress in the year to come.

*Doctoral Cohort Status and Completion of Progress Indicators as of November 1, 2013*

Cohort	Status with Cohort Starting <i>N</i> and <i>N</i> of Active/Inactive/WD/Dismissed/Grad & Rate						Core/Methods Courses	Portfolio Defense <sup>1</sup>	Proposal Defense <sup>2</sup>	Dissertation Defense <sup>3</sup>	Dissemination (EDL 720) <sup>4</sup>
2002	24	0	0	1	0	23 (96%)	24	24	23	23	23
2003	25	0	0	1	3 <sup>5</sup>	21 (84%)	24	24	22	21	21
2005	22	1	0	2	2 <sup>5</sup>	17 (77%)	22	22	18	17	17
2007	22	4	0	4	1 <sup>5</sup>	13 (59%)	20	17	15	13	13
2009	21	6	2	0	0	13 (62%)	21	20	15	13	13
2011	22	22	0	0	0	0 (0%)	22	20	8	0	0
2013	21	21	0	0	0	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	157	54	2	8	6	87	133	127	101	87	87

*Note.* We anticipate the following additional progress by the end of spring semester 2014. Cohort 2005:: One additional student completing all requirements and graduating. Cohort 2007: 2 additional students graduating; 1 additional student defending proposal; 1 additional student defending portfolio and possibly the proposal. Cohort 2009: Cohort 2011: Up to 8 students completing all requirements and graduating in spring or summer; up to 14 more students completing proposal by the end of spring semester; 2 additional students completing portfolio defense.. Program graduates include 8 African American females, 3 African American males, 2 Asian females, 4 Hispanic females, 3 Hispanic males, 53 White females, and 14 White males.

<sup>1</sup>Major assessment tool.

<sup>2</sup>Currently report as pass/pass with conditions/fail. Rubric is under consideration.

<sup>3</sup>Currently report as pass/fail. Rubric is under consideration.

<sup>4</sup>Secondary assessment tool.

<sup>5</sup>Cohort 2003: Two dismissed during 09-10 based on quality and progress (including one appeal which university denied) and one dismissed for progress/non-response. Cohort 2005: Two dismissal for progress/non-response. Cohort 2007: 1 dismissal for progress/non-response. Among the 14 students who withdrew or were dismissed, there are 3 African American females, 1 Hispanic male, 7 White females, and 3 White males.

Ed.D. in Educational Leadership  
Interim Assessment Report— Year 1 (2011-2012)

There have been no significant changes in the implementation of the Ed.D. assessment plan. We continue to rely on an analytic rubric for assessing the Leadership Portfolio. This is our primary assessment point, and satisfactory performance is required to move forward with work on the dissertation. Sixteen doctoral candidates completed the portfolio during the 2011-2012 assessment period. Our secondary assessment tool is a holistic rubric which we use to assess the post-dissertation dissemination report, a signature program requirement which documents that each graduate has developed the appropriate products for sharing the results of research with both the academic community and the world of practice. In addition, we monitor retention and rate of student progress at three additional points: completion of core and research courses at the end of year 2, proposal defense (late in year 2 or later; recorded as pass/pass with conditions/in progress), and dissertation defense (late in year 3 or later; recorded as pass or not passes). Table 1, Doctoral Cohort Progress across Indicators as of November 1, 2012, provides a summary of this data.

Our 2010-2011 Assessment Report did not include a sixth section describing our Assessment Plan which the directions for writing an Interim Assessment Report requests as an attachment. Instead we described our plan throughout, indicating areas in need of improvement and potential changes in assessment in Section 4. Therefore, we have attached section 4 from the 2010-2011 report. During the past year, we made no changes in course sequence or pre-requisites. Instead, teachers of core courses consulted frequently around two areas of weakness in our students' performance. Using our professional judgments about the quality of core assignments, initial drafts of portfolio essays, proposal drafts, and data analyses in dissertation, we concluded that we needed to provide additional support to students whose writing does not meet doctoral standards. As an example, during the current academic year, one of the faculty teaching the proposal seminar will target specific writing problems of a subset of students, working with them one-on-one to try to remedy the problems. We also re-engineered our advanced methods courses and asked a member of the psychology faculty to join the teaching team in an attempt to improve our students' quantitative skills. We will be looking for evidence that these strategies are producing qualitative changes in performance in drafts of leadership portfolios, dissertation proposals, dissertations, and dissemination artifacts.

We continue to work on a rubric for the dissertation, and have begun to embed the language we will be using – conceptual, methodological, and rhetorical dimensions of the dissertation – in the dissertation proposal course. The three faculty involved in the course expect that a rubric will emerge from their work together which will be pilot tested beginning in summer 2013.

Table 1

*Doctoral Cohort Status and Progress across Indicators as of November 1, 2012*

Cohort	Status with Cohort N and N of Active/Inact./WD/Dismissed/Grad & Rate						Core/Methods Courses	Portfolio Defense <sup>1</sup>	Proposal Defense <sup>2</sup>	Dissertation Defense <sup>3</sup>	Dissemination (EDL 720) <sup>4</sup>
2002	24	:	0	0	1	0	23 (96%)	24	24	23	23
2003	25	:	1	0	1	3 <sup>5</sup>	20 (80%)	24	24	22	21
2005	22	:	1	0	2	2 <sup>5</sup>	17 (77%)	22	22	18	17
2007	22	:	7	0	4	1 <sup>5</sup>	10 (45%)	20	18	15	11
2009	21	:	17	1	0	0	3 (14%)	21	20	13	8
2011	22	:	22	0	0	0	0 ( 0%)	0	0	0	0
Total	136		48	1	8	6	73	111	108	91	80

*Note.* We anticipate the following additional progress by the end of fall semester. Cohort 2003: One additional student graduating. Cohort 2007: One additional student completing all requirements and graduating. Cohort 2009: One additional student completing portfolio defense and 5 additional students graduating (one has not yet submitted the dissemination requirements). Program graduates include 6 African American females, 3 African American males, 1 Asian female, 4 Hispanic females, 2 Hispanic males, 45 White females, and 11 White males.

<sup>1</sup>Major assessment tool.

<sup>2</sup>Currently report as pass/pass with conditions/fail. Rubric is under consideration.

<sup>3</sup>Currently report as pass/fail. Rubric is under consideration.

<sup>4</sup>Secondary assessment tool.

<sup>5</sup>Cohort 2003: Two dismissed during 09-10 based on quality and progress (including one appeal which university denied) and one dismissed for progress/non-response. Cohort 2005: Two dismissals pending for progress/non-response. Cohort 2007: 1 dismissal pending for progress/non-response. Among the students who withdrew or were dismissed, there are 3 African American females, 1 Hispanic female, 1 Hispanic male, 7 White females, and 3 White males.

#### Section 4 from 2010-2011 Report

As we have noted in past years, since 2004 when the first students defended their proposals, we have identified a number of areas where we were able to make improvements in the quality of instruction: we implemented direct instruction on writing reflective essays, encouraged peer and third party review of draft essays, and provide coaching for oral presentation and defense. To improve work on the standard that requires “evidence and rationale have a sound relationship to research and knowledge base”, we began to develop a more substantial and scholarly canon of readings for our students. And we have greatly increased our emphasis on conceptual frameworks. Nonetheless, this is an area where we need to continue our efforts to be rigorous and to assure that each advisor has the same high expectations related to the standard. We also need to spend some time figuring out what we need to do to help our students move to higher levels of performance related to our diversity outcomes. In addition we need to continue our efforts to develop writing skills in across our curriculum. Our grant proposal laid out a good framework, but implementation of the framework has not yet been formalized.

The culture of the program is collaborative and virtually every required course is team taught. Faculty meet informally around instruction on a regular basis, and so we often devise solutions to problems of practice in advance of summative data. We collect formative data from courses, and make professional judgments based on observations. The use of analytic rubrics is the norm, and the presence of multiple faculty at key assessment events (portfolio defense, proposal defenses, dissertation defense) inevitably leads to discussions about improvements. It also helps promote reliability and consistency of our measurements. We also regularly ask students participating in these events to discuss instructional strengths and gaps related to their preparation, and they have responded with insight.

Because our N is so small each year, the patterns we think we see one year rarely persist. We know that our scores have tended to creep up but we also know that our pool of applicants has tended to improve (based on undergraduate GPA and GRE scores). Moreover, we seem to be responding to program weaknesses very effectively. We are, however, looking very carefully at data in Table 1 (which shows where people are in the process, and how many completers and non-completers we have) and talking about factors associated with success and lack of success. These discussions have implications for admissions as well as curriculum, instruction, and assessment. We use the GRE Writing Test and a writing sample as a part of the admission process, but we hope to add a writing prompt to the on-campus interview for Cohort 2013. We are incorporating writing standards on all formative assessments so that we can more reliably trigger interventions. This process worked well last summer. We are also thinking about adding a specific writing requirement to the Leadership Portfolio, perhaps a literature review related to the dissertation topic, but prepared independently of advisor guidance. Whatever we decide, we will fold information about our progress in assessing “writing across the program” into our next report.

One issue that cannot be teased out from our data but which swirls around our discussions is our lack of consensus around what research outcomes are critical in a program designed to prepare practitioners. In this regard, we are right in the center of a national discussion (funded in part by the Carnegie Foundation) about the role, function, and outcomes

of the Ed.D. Our kind of institution (not research intensive or doctoral extensive) has not been invited to the table, but we are beginning to access information such as 2010 dissertation about alternative dissertations at three Ed.D. leadership institutions. As we celebrate our 10th anniversary (2012), it is time to look comprehensively at some of our underlying assumptions about how research quality is demonstrated in a practitioner Ed.D. program.