



Bagwell College of Education

# Doctoral Policies and Procedures Handbook

Approved by BCOE Advanced Program Coordinators  
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**Bagwell College of Education  
Kennesaw State University**

**Doctoral Policies and Procedures Handbook**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I.	Purpose of the BCOE Doctoral Policies and Procedures Handbook	3
II.	Purpose of the BCOE Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Programs	3
III.	Admission and Entrance Requirements	4
IV.	Transfer of Credit and Time Limits (Age of Credit)	4
V.	Minimum Completion Requirements	5
VI.	Academic Requirements	6
VII.	Program of Study and Registration Information	8
VIII.	Specific Program Degree Requirements	9
IX.	Academic Policies	10
X.	Dissertation Chair and Committee Selection, Comprehensive Examination, Dissertation Proposal, and Dissertation	13
XI.	Petition to Graduate and Commencement	19
XII.	Important Doctoral Forms for Students and Faculty	20
XIII.	Program Timeline and Links to Required Forms	23

# BCOE Doctoral Policies and Procedures Handbook

## I. Purpose of the BCOE Doctoral Policies and Procedures Handbook

This handbook has been prepared as an overview for the convenience of current and prospective students in the various Doctor of Education programs in Bagwell College of Education (BCOE) at Kennesaw State University (KSU). This handbook is not intended to be a substitute for carefully reading the KSU Graduate Catalog and other documents prepared by the KSU Graduate College. Some of the content in this handbook is restated information from the current catalog. The official document for BCOE's Ed.D. degree programs is the Kennesaw State University Graduate Catalog of the academic year in which the student is admitted. Each doctoral student is responsible for knowing about and keeping up with specific degree requirements and expectations as outlined in his or her academic year catalog.

## II. Purpose of the BCOE Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Programs

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree programs offered by the Bagwell College of Education (BCOE) prepare professional educators who are practitioner scholars, content knowledge specialists, and instructional leaders who innovate, critically reflect, and effectively teach and lead within diverse P-20 educational settings. These doctoral programs prepare graduates to investigate theoretical constructs related to teaching, leading, and learning through applied research that advances knowledge and informs educational practice and/or policy.

Our doctoral programs are designed for experienced educators and school leaders. Our students are typically full-time professionals who address real-world problems in P-12 schools. Some programs are delivered fully online (Instructional Technology, Teacher Leadership) while others combine face-to-face, hybrid, and online learning experiences. All programs offer learning experiences that maximize collaboration with professional colleagues and peers. We currently offer the following Ed.D. degree programs:

- Ed.D. in Early Childhood Education
- Ed.D. in Educational Leadership
- Ed.D. in Instructional Technology: Initial or Advanced Track
- Ed.D. in Middle Grades Education: Language Arts
- Ed.D. in Middle Grades Education: Mathematics
- Ed.D. in Middle Grades Education: Social Studies
- Ed.D. in Secondary Education: Chemistry
- Ed.D. in Secondary Education: English
- Ed.D. in Secondary Education: History
- Ed.D. in Secondary Education: Mathematics
- Ed.D. in Special Education: General Curriculum
- Ed.D. in Teacher Leadership

### **III. Admission and Entrance Requirements**

Each BCOE doctoral program specifies admission requirements. The admissions process for the doctoral degree consists of multiple levels of review and is a highly competitive process. The final evaluation of applicant files is conducted by the doctoral admissions committee within each program. Faculty within each committee systematically evaluate application files. The committee's recommendation for an individual's admission into the Ed.D. program is based upon the committee's collective professional judgment of the overall merit of each applicant.

The determination of the merits of each applicant's admission file focuses on a number of key variables that are vitally important to a candidate's ability to complete a doctoral degree successfully. Those factors include related undergraduate and graduate degrees (master's degree required); academic performance and achievement; professional teaching and administrative certifications; professional employment in P-12 schools; verbal and writing skills; quantitative and problem solving skills; evidence of teaching effectiveness; evidence of educational and/or teacher leadership; sound educational philosophies and professional ethics; and other related contributions and achievements of note.

Formal admission to the doctoral program occurs only when the student receives a signed letter of acceptance to the doctoral program from the Office of Education Student Services in the Bagwell College of Education.

For information on specific admissions requirements for each BCOE doctoral program, see the Graduate Catalog or the program's website.

For more information on how to apply, see <http://graduate.kennesaw.edu/admissions/>.

For more information concerning the admissions process, contact the Graduate Admissions Coordinator, BCOE Office of Student Services at 470-KSU-6043 or [graded@kennesaw.edu](mailto:graded@kennesaw.edu).

### **IV. Transfer of Credit and Time Limits (Age of Credit)**

Graduate work completed at other regionally accredited institutions must be evaluated and approved by the doctoral program coordinator and graduate faculty of the respective program in order to satisfy degree requirements at KSU. Such transfer credit cannot exceed 25% of the total semester hours required for the degree and cannot reduce residency requirements. No grade below B may be accepted. Transfer grades are not used in calculating semester, summer term, or cumulative grade point averages. Individual degree programs may have additional specific requirements or limitations for transfer credit. Refer to the program descriptions in the Graduate Catalog or contact the doctoral program coordinator for additional information on transfer credit.

Students who wish to have credits transferred from another university to their doctoral program in the Bagwell College of Education must begin the application for transfer with their program coordinator, submit a Request for Transfer of Credit form along with an official transcript and catalog description of the course(s), and comply with Graduate Catalog policies.

Unless otherwise stated in the specific program description in the Graduate Catalog, all requirements for a doctoral degree must be completed within ten years, beginning with the first registration in graduate-level classes following admission to the degree program. The Graduate College may grant an extension of time for conditions beyond the student's control.

## **V. Minimum Completion Requirements**

The Doctor of Education degree (Ed.D.) in the Bagwell College of Education is awarded to students who complete the following:

- Maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher for all coursework taken in the program.
- Successfully complete all credit hours (the amount is program specific) as indicated in the program of study.
- Near the completion of course work, pass a written comprehensive examination;
- Successfully defend the dissertation proposal.
- Complete and successfully defend the dissertation.
- Using Owl Express, file the Petition to Graduate form (following deadlines published by the Registrar) and pay the graduation fee.
- Submit all required doctoral forms and signature pages as directed by your program coordinator and dissertation chair.
- Electronically submit the final copy of the approved dissertation to Digital Commons.

In addition, the responsibilities of the doctoral student include the following:

- Follow the guidelines for doctoral students and dissertations in this handbook and as directed by program coordinators and dissertation chairs.
- Establish a reasonable timeline for completion of all degree requirements (see dissertation timeline in this handbook and determine dates as appropriate).
- Work closely with the program coordinator, advisor (if one is assigned), dissertation chair and committee. In some programs, students will be assigned a faculty advisor upon admission. At some point in all programs, students will invite a graduate faculty member in the Bagwell College of Education or in his/her content discipline to serve as dissertation chair. The committee members are selected collaboratively and agreed upon with input from the

chair. The dissertation chair will work together with the committee to provide advice on matters related to the program of study, comprehensive examination, proposal, and dissertation.

- Prepare for any written or oral examinations by being thoroughly familiar with the material that is central to the topics being discussed. This preparation will greatly increase the chances of successfully passing these examinations.
- Monitor progress closely. Program coordinators and dissertation chairs assist in this, but ultimately it is the student's responsibility to make sure forms are filed when necessary and examinations are appropriately scheduled.
- Attend specific programs and/or Bagwell College of Education workshops and seminars for the duration of the time you are enrolled in the program.
- If possible, attend and/or present with faculty at local, regional, national, or international conferences.
- Adhere to KSU's standards of academic honesty and exhibit professional dispositions at all times. Student should understand KSU's process for addressing academic misconduct and plagiarism. For more information, see <http://scai.kennesaw.edu/faculty/academic-misconduct.php>.

## VI. Academic Requirements

**Full-time Load.** Full-time enrollment for graduate students is 9 semester hours. Typical load for BCOE doctoral students is 6 semester hours. Graduate students in good standing may enroll for 12 semester hours in any semester. To enroll for more than 12 semester hours, students must obtain approval from their graduate program coordinator.

**Residency Requirement.** To receive a graduate degree from Kennesaw State University, students must complete at least 75% of the total semester hours required for the degree within their graduate program at KSU. All of these hours must be completed after the student has been admitted to the degree program. The Residency Requirement should be considered prior to completing the Transfer of Credit Request form.

**Continuous Enrollment Policy.** Students enrolled in a Graduate degree program must register for at least one course in at least one semester per academic year in order for the original program requirements for their degree to remain unchanged unless a Leave of Absence has been approved. If dissertation, thesis, capstone or project courses comprise 50% or more of a student's credit hours in any semester, they must be continuously enrolled every semester thereafter until satisfying the requirements of the student's program. Summer registration is not required unless the student intends to graduate in summer semester. Students who have completed all coursework and are planning to submit a dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral degree should register for dissertation hours consistent with a realistic appraisal of the amount of remaining dissertation work and required faculty involvement. Students are

not eligible to receive thesis, dissertation or project guidance nor use campus resources during any term for which they are not registered. If a student has completed all degree requirements and will no longer require any of the campus resources or faculty time, the student may request an enrollment waiver. Graduate students must be registered for at least one semester hour in the semester, or proceeding semester, they plan to graduate.

***Leave of Absence.*** A leave of absence provides a mechanism for students experiencing unusual circumstances to be exempt temporarily from the continuous enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Graduate College. A leave of absence will be granted only for good cause such as serious medical and health-related issues; major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, child care, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study.

- An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of one (1) credit for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted. During a leave of absence, students may not use KSU facilities, resources, or services designed or intended only for enrolled students; receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, or financial aid from the University; or take any KSU courses related to their program of study. Time on leave counts toward any University, Graduate College, or program time limits pertaining to the degree being sought. The Graduate College, at its discretion, may grant an extension of the time to degree completion.
- Application. Students may apply for a leave of absence for good cause such as serious medical and health-related issues, major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, childcare, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study. An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of one (1) credit for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted.
- External Limitations. An approved leave of absence does not exempt students from the enrollment requirements of other programs, offices and agencies such as the Veterans Administration, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and federal financial aid programs. Please note that eligibility for certain types of financial aid (including graduate assistantships) may require enrollment for credits beyond those required by the Continuous Enrollment Policy. It is the student's responsibility to notify other appropriate agencies as necessary, as well as ensuring the leave does not adversely affect the student.
- Deadlines. It is the student's responsibility to apply for a leave of absence in a timely fashion. A student may apply for a leave of absence before or during any semester in which they are not registered for courses. Application for a leave of absence must be received by the Graduate College on or before the last day of

classes for the semester for which it is requested. A leave of absence will not be granted retroactively after the end of the semester.

- **Limits.** A student may request a leave of absence for one semester, two consecutive semesters, or three consecutive semesters (summer semester included). There is a 12-month limit for any one request of leave of absence. A student may submit multiple requests for a leave of absence subject to a 3-semester limit while enrolled in a specific graduate program.

## **VII. Program of Study and Registration Information**

***Program of Study.*** The Program of Study for the Ed.D. is an advising guide showing how students should proceed with coursework. Each program coordinator and faculty advisor will outline the courses students need to complete for graduation and when these courses should be completed on a semester-by-semester basis. Ed.D. students are encouraged to communicate regularly with program coordinator and faculty advisors each semester to ensure they are taking the correct classes and are on track for graduation. Once a Program of Study is created and/or updated (i.e., course substitutions, independent studies, etc.), the Program of Study form should be submitted. Students should keep copies of all official documents in their own records.

***Student Guide to Degree Progression (DegreeWorks).*** DegreeWorks is a web-based advising tool that provides real-time advice on degree completion. This system is designed to aid and facilitate academic advising. It is not intended to replace face-to-face advising sessions. DegreeWorks is available to all degree seeking graduate students who have a catalog year equal to Fall 2011 or later. Students with a catalog year prior to those listed above should continue to meet with their academic advisor concerning degree progression. Students can access DegreeWorks through Owl Express.

***Possible Embedded Ed.S. Degree.*** In some BCOE Ed.D. programs, students have the opportunity to receive an Ed.S. (Specialist in Education degree) after the completion of 30-33 credit hours. Students are encouraged to review each program's website for specific information regarding this embedded degree opportunity.

***Registration.*** All registration at Kennesaw State University is conducted over the web through Owl Express. New graduate students, as well as continuing students, may register during the registration period in the preceding term or during the final registration period. Any course adjustments (dropping and adding classes) should be completed during this final registration period. Access to registration will be granted by time tickets in Banner/Owl Express based on a student's number of overall earned hours. The University may grant earlier access to registration to certain students who have been approved by the University. Specific dates can be found on the academic calendar located on the KSU Registrar webpage: <http://registrar.kennesaw.edu/>.

**Verification of Class Schedule.** Students should verify their class schedule for each semester enrolled. No course additions/deletions are permitted after the Drop/Add period has ended. It is the student's responsibility to verify their class schedule (including credit hours) on Owl Express for accuracy.

**Withdrawal from Courses.** Students may withdraw from one or more courses up to one week prior to the last day of class. To completely or partially withdraw from classes at KSU, a student must withdraw online at [www.kennesaw.edu](http://www.kennesaw.edu), under Owl Express, Registration and Student Records. Students who officially withdraw from courses before mid-semester will receive a "W" in those courses and receive no credit. They will not, however, suffer any academic penalty. Students who officially withdraw after mid-semester (one week prior to the last day of class) will receive a "WF," which will be counted as an "F" in the calculation of their grade point average. Exact withdrawal dates will be published in the official academic calendar and are subject to approval by the Board of Regents. The only exceptions to these withdrawal regulations will be for instances involving unusual circumstances that are fully documented. Students will receive refunds only when they withdraw from all their classes and only by the schedule outlined in the University System refund policy.

### **VIII. Specific Program Degree Requirements**

Please see each program's webpage and/or the KSU Graduate Catalog for specific program degree requirements:

Ed.D. in Early Childhood Education

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/eece/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Educational Leadership

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/edl/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Instructional Technology: Initial or Advanced Track

- Initial:  
<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/itec/programs/edd/cert/index.php>
- Advanced:  
<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/itec/programs/edd/adv/index.php>

Ed.D. in Middle Grades Education: Language Arts

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/smge/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Middle Grades Education: Mathematics

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/smge/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Middle Grades Education: Social Studies

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/smge/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Secondary Education: Chemistry

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/smge/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Secondary Education: English

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/smge/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Secondary Education: History

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/smge/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Secondary Education: Mathematics

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/smge/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Special Education: General Curriculum

<http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/departments/ined/programs/edd/index.php>

Ed.D. in Teacher Leadership

[http://catalog.kennesaw.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=39&poid=4917](http://catalog.kennesaw.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=39&poid=4917)

## IX. Academic Policies

***Grade Expectations for Satisfactory Graduate Level Performance.*** Each course syllabus sets the standard for academic grades. Class attendance is required, as specified by each course instructor. Graduate students are expected to earn grades of at least "B" in most of their course work for their degree. For graduation, a graduate student must have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in all graduate course work at Kennesaw State University and a grade of "C" or better in each course presented to meet degree requirements.

***Academic Probation.*** Whenever a graduate student's institutional graduate grade point average drops below 3.0, that student will be placed on probation and be advised of the significance and potential consequences of this action. While on probation, the student will not be permitted to take comprehensive exams or obtain a graduate degree. Academic probation may also affect a student's financial aid status or eligibility to hold a graduate assistantship. Students on probation are only allowed to register for courses during final registration. Graduate students can have their probationary status removed by raising their institutional grade-point average to at least 3.0. Individual graduate programs may have additional expectations and/or grading policies. Please see specific graduate program sections of the Graduate Catalog for additional information on graduate expectations.

***Dismissal.*** Graduate students will be dismissed from further graduate study under any of the following conditions: (1) while on probation, the term GPA is less than 3.0 or (2) not achieving an institutional graduate GPA of 3.0 after two semesters

**Reinstatement.** As a general practice, students who wish to request reinstatement after their dismissal must sit out at least one semester or summer term. The student must complete the "Request for Reinstatement" form and submit it to the Office of Graduate Admissions. The form will be routed to the appropriate graduate program personnel for review. The program will then forward their recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate College. The Dean of the Graduate College will then notify the appropriate graduate program coordinator, the Office of the Registrar, and the student of his/her decision. Graduate students who are granted a reinstatement must agree to a remediation plan. Any deviation from the remediation plan will result in permanent dismissal. Individual graduate programs may have additional expectations and/or grading policies. Please see specific graduate program sections of the Graduate Catalog for additional information on graduate expectations.

**Incomplete Grades.** The grade of "I" denotes an incomplete grade for the course, and will be awarded only when the student has done satisfactory work up to the last two weeks of the semester, but for nonacademic reasons beyond his/her control is unable to meet the full requirements of the course. The grade of "I" must be removed by the end of the next semester or term. The grade of "I" will not be included in the calculation of the student's scholastic average at the end of the semester in which the grade of "I" is received. Upon completion of the outstanding requirements within the specified time limit, a final grade of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" will be assigned in the course on the basis of the student's total performance, and the grade will then be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade point average. If the outstanding work is not completed by the end of the following semester or term, the "I" will be changed to an "F" and calculated into the student's cumulative grade point average. An "I" cannot be removed by reenrolling in the course.

**IP (In Progress) Grade.** In most graduate courses, the grades "A," "B," "C," "D," "F," "I" (Incomplete), "W" (Withdrawal), and "WF" (Withdrawal with an "F") are awarded. In some graduate courses, the notation "IP" (In Progress) is used, particularly thesis, dissertation, and capstone/project courses intended to extend beyond one semester. A student will enroll for a specified number of hours in each consecutive semester in which work is still in progress. While the work is in progress, the instructor will report a grade of "IP" for these credit hours at the end of each term. Thesis, dissertation, and project course credit hours taken during the semester that the work is completed will be awarded a grade of "S" (satisfactory) or "U" (unsatisfactory). Grades of "IP," "S," or "U" will not be computed in the student's grade-point average.

**Grade Appeals.** Kennesaw State University is committed to treating students fairly in the grading process. Students may appeal a final grade that they receive in a course, but interim grades or grades on specific assignments cannot be appealed. Any such appeal must be based on an allegation that the faculty member has violated his/her stated grading policy in the course syllabus or that the grade was a result of discrimination or

retaliation. The student has the burden of proving these allegations. All formal appeals under these procedures will be based only on the written record.

- *Informal:* Students are encouraged to discuss concerns and disputes over final course grades with the faculty member, prior to filing a formal grade appeal, in an effort to understand the basis of his/her grade. Faculty members are encouraged to be available to students for such discussion regarding grades so that if possible, grade disputes can be resolved informally.
- *Formal:* In situations where such informal resolution does not occur or is not successful, the student may appeal the final course grade to the Department Chair. The appeal must be in writing and describe the precise basis for the appeal. Any pertinent information must be submitted with the appeal in order to be considered in this or subsequent appeals. The appeal must be submitted within 20 business days after the first day of classes of the next academic term (fall, spring, summer [or any other term]) after the academic term in which the final grade was awarded to the student. The Chair will invite the faculty member whose grade is appealed to provide a written response to the student's appeal statement. The Department Chair (or the Chair's designee) will review the allegations and conduct any additional fact finding as needed and will provide a decision in writing to the student, within 20 business days of the receipt of the complaint in the Department if there is no allegation of discrimination or retaliation that impacted the grade. The Chair's written decision will specifically address the relevant issues raised by the student. If the student alleges that the grade was a result of discrimination or retaliation, the following procedures will be followed. The Chair will consult with the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) if there is an allegation that discrimination or retaliation based on status in a protected class has an impact on the grade. Please see <http://equity.kennesaw.edu/titleix/non-discrimination.php> for the University's Non-Discrimination Statement. The Executive Director of Institutional Equity or designee will review the information provided by the Chair to determine jurisdiction, routing, and whether an investigation is warranted; if so, the OIE will conduct an investigation. The general timeframe for the investigation is 60 business days, absent any special circumstances. The OIE will issue an investigation report to the Chair. The Chair will use the OIE investigation report to make the grade appeal decision and communicate the decision to the student within twenty (20) business days after receipt of the OIE investigation report. The Chair's written decision will specifically address the relevant issues raised by the student.
- The student may appeal the Department Chair's decision within 20 business days of being notified of the Chair's decision. Such appeal will be made, in writing, to the Dean of the College in which the Department is located. At the Dean's discretion, the Dean can appoint an advisory panel, consisting of two (2) faculty

members from outside the department where the grade was awarded and one (1) student to review the written documentation and make a recommendation to the Dean. The advisory panel may invite the student and the faculty member who awarded the grade to meet with the panel to share each party's position on the grade dispute. The panel will provide a written recommendation to the Dean within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the appeal. The Dean will issue a decision to the student, in writing, within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the report from the advisory panel or within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of the written complaint from the student if no panel was appointed.

- The student may appeal the Dean's decision to the Provost, in writing, within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the Dean's decision. [However, if it is a graduate course, the student will direct this written appeal to the Graduate Dean, and the Graduate Dean will issue a decision to the student, in writing, within twenty (20) business days of receiving the appeal. Within twenty (20) days of that decision, the student may then appeal to the Provost as is described in this section]. The Provost will issue a decision to the student in writing within twenty (20) business days of receiving the appeal.
- The Provost's decision is final, and decisions regarding grades may not be appealed to the Board of Regents (BOR Policy 4.7.1)

Nothing in this grade appeals process prohibits the parties from settling this matter at any stage. However, any attempt to settle the matter through mediation does not affect time deadlines for this grade appeals process.

#### **X. Dissertation Chair and Committee Selection, Comprehensive Examination, Dissertation Proposal, and Dissertation**

In some programs, students will be assigned a faculty advisor upon admission. At some point in all programs, students will invite a graduate faculty member in the Bagwell College of Education or in his/her content discipline to serve as dissertation chair. Students should request a chair based on the faculty member's expertise in the area of research and based on an appropriate level of trust, collaboration, and mentorship between the faculty member and the student.

***Process for Forming the Dissertation Committee.*** Prior to meeting with faculty, the doctoral student should:

1. Write a concept paper of the tentative dissertation topic to provide (a) to the potential chair and, once committee members are collaboratively chosen and agreed upon with input from the chair, (b) the committee members.

2. The concept paper serves as an early communication and brainstorming tool between the candidate, dissertation chair and committee about the proposed research. The student should understand that the dissertation will likely be quite different from what is explored initially in the concept paper as the chair and committee members work with the student to formalize the research into the final dissertation proposal.

Typically, the concept paper presents an early overview of the proposed research problem, its context, and initial thoughts on research design and methodology. At minimum, the paper should include the following:

- Purpose and significance of the research;
- Conceptual framework and brief literature review;
- Overview of major studies, scholars, theorists and related literature that informs the research questions and design;
- Problem statement or research questions;
- Research design, including initial thoughts on data collection methods, participants, instruments, and data analysis procedures;
- References or works cited.

The process of dissertation committee formation begins when the student contacts the potential dissertation chair, forwarding the Concept Paper for consideration.

Next, the student meets with the potential chair to discuss research topic and his/her service as chair. At this point, the faculty member may ask for more information or may agree or not agree to serve.

After consulting and reaching agreement with the dissertation chair, the student will then invite two additional faculty members to sit on the dissertation committee. The student should forward the Concept Paper to each faculty member for his/her consideration prior to meeting.

Dissertation committees will consist of a minimum of three faculty with the chair's option to invite an outside individual to serve as a fourth, non-voting member. The Chair of the committee must be KSU Graduate Faculty associated with the student's program.

If the chair invites a committee member from outside the university to sit on a dissertation committee, the outside member may be a collaborating P-12 professional, state or accrediting agency employee, faculty member at another institution, or an individual who holds unique skills or expertise related to the dissertation; however, this individual may not serve as chair. Any outside individual invited to serve must meet criteria for graduate faculty status as established by the Graduate College. Once the committee is selected, the student completes the Request for Approval of the Thesis/Dissertation Committee form and obtains appropriate signatures.

Note: Once the dissertation committee is finalized, it is highly irregular for the committee membership to change. Should there be extenuating circumstances that warrant a change in membership, however, a Request for Change in Dissertation Committee Membership form must be completed.

**Comprehensive Examination.** The comprehensive examination provides doctoral students with the opportunity to demonstrate their level of knowledge in a selected field of study and to synthesize that knowledge into a professionally written document. Written comprehensive examinations are taken after the completion of doctoral course work. Individual programs may allow students to take 1-2 courses in the same semester as comprehensive exams but all research courses must be complete. To schedule comprehensive exams, the student must complete and submit (with faculty signatures) the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Request form.

Comprehensive exams consist of 2-3 questions drafted by the student's dissertation committee. These questions may be used to inform Chapters 1-3 of the students' dissertation proposal. The dissertation chair may invite the student to assist in shaping these questions. At the chair's discretion, questions may be answered on-site or in an off-campus setting:

*On site:* Students will compose their responses on campus in a secured environment and will not be permitted to use resource materials. Other guidelines for testing will be distributed well in advance of the examination sessions and established by the dissertation committee. Written responses to all questions must be completed during one eight-hour writing session.

*Off campus:* Questions may be written at home over a specified period as determined by the student's dissertation committee. The off-campus format provides access to additional resources and implies a higher level of expectation for responses, including more thorough coverage of citations, greater depth and breadth of content coverage, and attention to the conventions that exemplify the characteristics of a high-quality, polished professional writing product.

All dissertation committee members will read the questions administered and will evaluate the responses by providing written feedback and/or comments. The responses will be deemed as "pass" or "fail." Students must earn a minimum rate of "pass" from all committee members.

Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination, students must complete and submit (with faculty signatures) the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Approval Ballot form. Students must then enroll in dissertation hours and prepare to write the dissertation proposal under the guidance of their dissertation chair and committee.

***Dissertation Proposal.*** During the candidate's first semester of dissertation hours, the candidate, under the direction of the dissertation committee chair, completes the written proposal, and later orally defends the proposal before the dissertation committee.

Under the direction of the dissertation chair, and in consultation with the committee, the candidate completes a dissertation proposal outlining in detail all aspects of the research project being proposed. The dissertation chair and committee have discretion regarding the format of the proposal. Typically, the proposal consists of Chapters 1-3:

Chapter One: Introduction (problem statement, purpose, research questions)

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

Once the proposal is completed, the candidate will meet with the chair to schedule an oral defense of the proposal. At the completion of the oral defense, the committee may render one of several decisions: (a) the proposal is accepted; (b) the proposal is accepted with stated qualifications; or (c) the proposal is rejected in its present form, but may be revised and resubmitted at a later date and another oral defense will be held.

When the dissertation committee members are satisfied with the proposal, they will sign and submit the Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Approval Form and the Application for Admissions to Candidacy Form, which designates the student's advancement to Doctoral Candidacy. All dissertation committee members must sign the form before the proposal may be considered accepted.

***Human Subjects Review Application.*** Concurrent with the dissertation proposal approval process, the doctoral candidate will compose an Application for Approval of Research Project Involving Human Subjects form, which is to be forwarded to the Kennesaw State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This application is subject to the committee's approval of the student's methods; therefore, it is advisable that the student time his/her submission of the IRB application very close to, or immediately following, the proposal defense. If the research involves individuals at a school site, review and approval of the research is also required from school district officials.

Doctoral candidates must have a certificate indicating that they have completed the required (CITI) training course before submitting a proposal to the IRB. This certificate should be secured prior to approval of the dissertation proposal, ensuring that the student is familiar with the Human Subjects Review process prior to the defense. The dissertation chair must approve the Human Subjects Review application before submitting it on behalf of the student to the IRB Review Board. Students should also

visit the Kennesaw State University Human Subjects Review webpage and the IRB website for further details on this process: <http://research.kennesaw.edu/irb/>.

It is the policy of Kennesaw State University IRB that *no data may be collected for the dissertation research prior to the approval of the Human Subjects Review application*. Likewise, most school districts and/or private schools also require a separate Human Subjects Review process. It is the responsibility of the doctoral student to verify with the school and/or district in which research is to take place that the required IRB approval (at the school district level) has been secured prior to conducting any data collection for the dissertation research. The student, in consultation with the dissertation chair, will write and sign a letter to the district and/or school, stating that the proposed research is part of the doctoral student’s dissertation study. The doctoral student must provide to the dissertation chair proof (e.g., a certificate or official letter of permission) of district and/or school approval for the research to be conducted within the school and/or district. The doctoral student must also file the school district’s official IRB approval with Kennesaw State University’s IRB. If the district does not have an official IRB process in place, the student must complete and submit an IRB application through KSU.

***Dissertation and Final Defense.*** All dissertations submitted by candidates for the Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) in the Bagwell College of Education must comply with current American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines. Other requirements may be specified by the KSU Graduate College. Strict timelines are in place for the submission of all dissertation related documents. Doctoral candidates are required to adhere to these timelines. While the dissertation committee may offer suggestions for revision, the doctoral student is ultimately responsible for review of the dissertation manuscript for adherence to all APA guidelines.

**Timelines for Completion of Dissertation, Final Defense**

<b>Anticipated Graduation</b>	<b>Petition to Graduate Deadline</b>	<b>Final Dissertation Draft to Committee</b>	<b>Dissertation Defense Successfully Completed</b>	<b>Final Copy with Revisions/ Edits to Committee</b>	<b>Final PDF Copy Submitted in Digital Commons</b>
<b>Spring</b>	See KSU Registrar’s Deadline	March 1	April 1	May 1	May 8
<b>Summer</b>	See KSU Registrar’s Deadline	May 1	June 1	July 1	July 8
<b>Fall</b>	See KSU Registrar’s Deadline	October 1	November 1	December 1	December 8

After each dissertation committee member agrees that the dissertation is ready to move to final defense, the student will consult with the chair and committee members to schedule a tentative date for the final defense and complete and submit the Agreement to Schedule a Final Defense form. The student will provide a final draft of the dissertation to each of the dissertation committee members at least 30 days before the defense. This final draft must be complete in all respects and editorially acceptable for final approval at the time of the defense. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in a delay of the defense. The defense is posted as a public hearing and may be attended by other members of the University community and, as reasonable in the judgment of the dissertation committee chair, by others from outside the University.

As arranged by the dissertation chair, the dissertation committee will meet before the scheduled defense to discuss the dissertation and procedures for the defense. Whenever possible, the defense should be scheduled in a room that will accommodate visitors comfortably. The dissertation chair establishes matters of protocol prior to the actual defense. Faculty and any others who sit in as an audience for the defense are required to defer to the dissertation chair's judgment concerning matters of protocol.

The public defense provides a formal opportunity for the doctoral candidate to present his/her research questions, design, methods, findings, and conclusions to those in attendance. Generally, this presentation by the candidate will last from between 30-45 minutes. The dissertation committee will formally question the doctoral candidate about the work he/she has completed.

Generally, the dissertation defense will not exceed two hours in duration. Once the candidate has completed his/her public presentation, the dissertation chair will dismiss the audience in order to conduct a private questioning of the candidate, followed by a final discussion of the dissertation work and vote on the quality of that work without the candidate present. That is, the dissertation committee's final deliberations will take place in Executive Session, with only the dissertation committee members present. Only dissertation committee members may express opinions or vote on the outcome of the defense. The dissertation committee members will vote on whether the candidate passed or failed the final dissertation defense.

Once the vote is taken, the dissertation chair invites the candidate to return to the room. The candidate is the only person who returns to the room after the dissertation committee's deliberations. The committee's final decision and any additional feedback from the dissertation committee is presented to the candidate at this time.

Generally, immediately following the announcement to the candidate of the results of the dissertation committee's deliberations, the candidate may expect the dissertation committee to make suggestions for revision and final edits. The doctoral student and dissertation committee should schedule their time to be available to discuss these revisions and edits at this time. It is the responsibility of the doctoral student to make

personal written notes about the suggested revisions and, subsequently, to complete all edits.

The dissertation chair completes the Thesis/Dissertation Defense Outcome form signifying any additional edits or final changes that need to be made in the dissertation document. All committee members must sign the form prior to leaving the dissertation defense.

In the event a student does not successfully defend, he/she may re-defend within six (6) months of the initial defense. A candidate may have only one additional attempt to defend and to pass the defense of the dissertation. Failure to re-defend within six (6) months or failure to pass the second dissertation defense results in the candidate's dismissal from the program without the awarding of the Ed.D. degree.

**Copyright of Dissertation.** Candidates may choose to copyright their dissertation when submitting their final copy to Digital Commons. Regardless of whether the doctoral student copyrights the dissertation, the candidate is responsible for complying with all current copyright laws and regulations governing inclusion of another's work in his or her work.

**Submitting the Completed Dissertation to Digital Commons.** All BCOE doctoral students are required to submit their completed dissertations to Digital Commons, the digital repository for scholarly work at Kennesaw State University. Final dissertations should be submitted to <http://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/etds.html>.

**Publishing Manuscripts from the Dissertation.** Doctoral students frequently collaborate with faculty who have made substantive contributions to the dissertation. In all cases, however, the author of the dissertation should be listed as the first author on any paper and/or publication based primarily on the dissertation research that is submitted for publication (see APA Ethical Principles).

**Dissertation Awards.** Graduate students are also advised that numerous professional organizations present competitive awards for outstanding dissertation research, including the BCOE Outstanding Dissertation Award. Upon completion and approval of the dissertation, doctoral students should consult with their dissertation chair and/or committee members about requirements and submissions for such awards.

## **XI. Petition to Graduate and Commencement**

Each candidate for a doctoral degree must petition to graduate online well in advance of the expected graduation date. A Petition to Graduate form will be accepted and may be filed by the posted deadlines using the online Petition to Graduate form in OwlExpress. A student must complete at least 75% of the total semester hours required for the degree in residence at KSU. Degree candidates must have earned an institutional grade

point average of 3.0 calculated on all graduate courses attempted at KSU and a grade of "C" or better in each course presented to meet degree requirements.

Students should check with the Registrar to ensure no grades of "Incomplete" remain on their transcript, that they have completed all program and Bagwell College of Education requirements (i.e., Petition to Graduate), all fees are paid, and that they are on the graduation clearance list. These checks ensure the graduation process will go smoothly. Students can also check most of this information online.

Students will follow graduation procedures as outlined by the university. During KSU Commencement, Bagwell College of Education doctoral graduates and faculty participate in a university-wide Doctoral Hooding Ceremony. Names of doctoral candidates and dissertation chairs, along with the titles of dissertations, are announced, and candidates are hooded by their dissertation chair. Candidates' names, dissertation chairs' names, and dissertation titles are provided in the official commencement program. Doctoral regalia are available in the KSU Bookstore and may be purchased or rented. The regalia are featured on the KSU Bookstore website in advance of graduation.

## **XII. Important Doctoral Forms for Students and Faculty**

All Dissertation Forms (both BCOE and Graduate College forms) are located on the BCOE website on both the "Current Students" tab and the "Faculty and Staff" tab. All forms should be completed and sent to Department Chairs for signatures. All completed forms should then be sent to the BCOE Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, who will review and approve each form, save the forms to the BCOE Dean's Office I: drive, and forward forms to the Graduate College, when appropriate. *Please ensure that forms have signatures as well as printed names beside the signatures on the form.* We must be able to read committee chair and committee members' names on the forms.

Graduate College Forms: <http://graduate.kennesaw.edu/students/forms.php>

BCOE Doctoral Forms and Resources: <http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/current-students/graduate-student-resources.php>

Please note the following about all required doctoral forms:

- Please fill in the forms electronically instead of handwriting the forms.
- If possible, electronically sign the forms with an Adobe signature.
- All signatures should also include a printed name beside each signature.

- BCOE Doctoral Program Coordinators and Department Chairs will approve, sign, and send the forms to the BCOE Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research.
- The BCOE Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research will review and approve the forms, save the forms to the BCOE Dean's Office I: drive, and send the forms to the Graduate College, when appropriate.
- Incomplete or illegible forms will be returned. Please note the Committee Approval form asks for each committee member to sign.
- All students completing a thesis or dissertation should be submitting these forms in a timely manner, not all forms just prior to or after graduation. Suggesting timing for each form is listed with the link to the form.

Below is a list of all required forms for BCOE doctoral students. Some forms are required by the Bagwell College of Education (BCOE), while others are required by the KSU Graduate College (GC). Students should plan their timeline for completion carefully and ensure that these forms are submitted when required. Please check with your doctoral program coordinator and the program timeline below to see when each form should be completed. Students also should be sure to keep copies of all official documents for their own records.

**Required Forms** (GC = Graduate College; BCOE = Bagwell College of Education)

1. Program of Study (GC)  
<http://graduate.kennesaw.edu/students/docs/Program%20of%20Study%20v2.pdf>
2. Request for Transfer Credit (GC)  
[http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Request\\_for\\_Transfer\\_Credit.pdf](http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Request_for_Transfer_Credit.pdf)
3. Request for Approval of Thesis/Dissertation Committee (GC)  
<http://graduate.kennesaw.edu/students/docs/CommitteeApproval20180125.pdf>
4. Request for Change in Dissertation Committee Membership (BCOE)  
[http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Request\\_for\\_Change\\_in\\_Dissertation\\_Committee\\_Membership.pdf](http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Request_for_Change_in_Dissertation_Committee_Membership.pdf)
5. Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Request (BCOE)  
[http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Doctoral\\_Comprehensive\\_Exams\\_Request.pdf](http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Doctoral_Comprehensive_Exams_Request.pdf)
6. Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Approval Ballot (BCOE)  
[http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Doctoral\\_Comprehensive\\_Examination\\_Approval\\_Ballot.pdf](http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Doctoral_Comprehensive_Examination_Approval_Ballot.pdf)
7. Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Approval (GC)  
<http://graduate.kennesaw.edu/students/docs/Proposal%20Approval20160526.pdf>
8. Application for Admission to Candidacy (GC)  
<http://graduate.kennesaw.edu/students/docs/Candidacy%20Approval20160526.pdf>
9. Agreement to Schedule a Final Defense (BCOE)  
[http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Agreement\\_to\\_Schedule\\_a\\_Final\\_Defense.pdf](http://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/docs/Agreement_to_Schedule_a_Final_Defense.pdf)
10. Thesis/Dissertation Defense Outcome (GC)  
<http://graduate.kennesaw.edu/students/docs/Dissertation%20Defense20160526.pdf>
11. Final Submission of Thesis or Dissertation  
<http://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/etds.html>  
Follow the directions at the Digital Commons to upload your dissertation. Digital Commons will notify the Graduate College when your submission is complete.

### XIII. Program Timeline with Links to Required Forms

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Action or Event</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Additional activities may be required by individual BCOE doctoral programs. GC = Graduate College BCOE = Bagwell College of Education</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>When</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The student and faculty advisor/committee should plan a timeline and establish appropriate dates together.</p>	
Apply for Admission		
Formal Admission to Program (note Graduate Catalog year of admission)		
Faculty Advisor Assigned		
Program Orientation		
<p><a href="#">Program of Study Form</a> Completed and Submitted (GC)</p> <p><a href="#">Request for Transfer Credit Form</a> Completed and Submitted (GC) (if applicable)</p>		
Concept Paper Developed During Coursework		
Dissertation Chair Identified		
Dissertation Chair Consulted on Dissertation Committee Membership		
<p>Dissertation Committee Identified</p> <p><a href="#">Request for Approval of Thesis/Dissertation Committee Form</a> Submitted (GC)</p> <p>Note: If committee membership changes at any point, the <a href="#">Request for Change in Dissertation Committee</a> form must be submitted (BCOE).</p>		
<p>Comprehensive Examination</p> <p><a href="#">Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Request Form</a> Submitted (BCOE)</p> <p><a href="#">Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Approval Ballot</a> Submitted (BCOE)</p>		
Dissertation Proposal Draft Provided to Chair		

Dissertation Proposal Draft Provided to Committee		
Draft of IRB Application for Dissertation (KSU and School District) is prepared to be ready to submit when Dissertation Proposal is defended and approved by Chair and Committee		
Dissertation Proposal Successfully Defended <a href="#">Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Approval Form</a> Submitted (GC)		
IRB Application for Dissertation Submitted (KSU and School District)		
Admission to Candidacy <a href="#">Application for Admission to Candidacy Form</a> Submitted (GC)		
Collect Data for Dissertation Study (once IRB Applications are approved)		
Analyze Data/Develop Dissertation <a href="#">Petition to Graduate Form</a> Submitted and Fee Paid (one semester in advance)		
Dissertation Draft Provided to Chair		
Dissertation Draft Provided to Committee <a href="#">Agreement to Schedule a Final Defense Form</a> Submitted (BCOE)		
Dissertation Defense <a href="#">Thesis/Dissertation Defense Outcome Form</a> Submitted (GC)		
Final Copy of Dissertation (with revisions) approved by Chair and Committee		
Final Copy of Dissertation Submitted to <a href="#">Digital Commons</a>		
Doctoral Hooding/ <a href="#">Commencement</a>		