



*Language, Literacy, and Culture  
Student Handbook*

*Updated February 2022*

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## OVERVIEW

The Language, Literacy, and Culture (LLC) PhD is focused on the study of cultural, linguistic, social, psychological, and political perspectives on teaching, learning, and teacher education. LLC is an expansive scholarly landscape that provides opportunities for students to conduct research that will transform education. Doctoral students in the LLC program pursue their questions and interests and collaborate with faculty on research projects and in teaching undergraduate and graduate courses.

## FACULTY

Faculty	Email
Tinukwa Boulder	<a href="mailto:tboulderr@pitt.edu">tboulderr@pitt.edu</a>
Trish Crawford	<a href="mailto:pcrawfor@pitt.edu">pcrawfor@pitt.edu</a>
Beatrice Dias	<a href="mailto:beadias@pitt.edu">beadias@pitt.edu</a>
Rick Donato	<a href="mailto:donato@pitt.edu">donato@pitt.edu</a>
Martez Files	<a href="mailto:MFILES@pitt.edu">MFILES@pitt.edu</a>
Amanda Godley	<a href="mailto:agodley@pitt.edu">agodley@pitt.edu</a>
Katrina Bartow Jacobs	<a href="mailto:kbjacobs@pitt.edu">kbjacobs@pitt.edu</a>
Linda Kucan	<a href="mailto:lkucan@pitt.edu">lkucan@pitt.edu</a>
Lindsay Clare Matsumura	<a href="mailto:lclare@pitt.edu">lclare@pitt.edu</a>
Watufani Poe	<a href="mailto:WPOE@pitt.edu">WPOE@pitt.edu</a>
Emily Rainey	<a href="mailto:erainey@pitt.edu">erainey@pitt.edu</a>
Khirsten L. Scott	<a href="mailto:KLE37@pitt.edu">KLE37@pitt.edu</a>
Veena Vasudevan	<a href="mailto:VEENAV@pitt.edu">VEENAV@pitt.edu</a>

## TIMELINE OF REQUIREMENTS AND MILESTONES

Year	Fall Semester Courses	Spring Semester Courses	Requirements/ Milestones to Complete
1	<p><b>TLL 3248</b> Critical Readings in Language, Literacy, and Culture (offered every other year)</p> <p>Major Field course</p> <p><b>EDUC 3100</b> Introduction to Quantitative Methods: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics</p> <p><b>EDUC 3102</b> First Year Seminar 1</p>	<p>Major field course</p> <p><b>EDUC 3104</b> Introduction to Qualitative Methods</p> <p><b>EDUC 3103</b> Quantitative Methods 2</p> <p><b>EDUC 3105</b> First Year Seminar 2</p>	<p>Plan of Studies Form</p> <p>Transfer Credit Form (if applicable)</p> <p>IRB certification</p> <p>Successful completion of preliminary exam</p> <p>Preliminary Exam and Advancement to Doctoral Study Forms</p>
2	<p><b>TLL 3248</b> Critical Readings in LLC (if not taken in year 1)</p> <p>Major Field course</p> <p><b>TLL 3291</b> Supervised Research in LLC (Year 2 Fall or Spring)</p> <p><b>TLL 3526</b> Practicum in College Teaching (Fall or Spring)</p> <p>Advanced Research Methods course</p> <p><b>TLL 3016</b> PhD Writing Seminar</p>	<p>Major Field course</p> <p>Advanced Research Methods course</p> <p><b>TLL 3016</b> PhD Writing Seminar</p> <p>Electives (optional)</p>	<p>Successful completion of pre-dissertation research project</p> <p>Doctoral Pre-Dissertation Defense Form</p>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fall Semester Courses</b>	<b>Spring Semester Courses</b>	<b>Requirements/ Milestones to Complete</b>
<b>3</b>	Final Courses  <b>TLL 3296</b> Doctoral Dissertation Research: Language, Literacy, and Culture  <b>TLL 3016</b> PhD Writing Seminar	<b>TLL 3296</b> Doctoral Dissertation Research: Language, Literacy, and Culture  <b>TLL 3016</b> PhD Writing Seminar	Successful completion of comprehensive exam (MAP and oral defense)  Doctoral Competency Form  Doctoral Committee Form
<b>4</b>	<b>TLL 3296</b> Doctoral Dissertation Research: Language, Literacy, and Culture  <b>TLL 3016</b> PhD Writing Seminar	<b>TLL 3296</b> Doctoral Dissertation Research: Language, Literacy, and Culture  <b>TLL 3016</b> PhD Writing Seminar	Dissertation overview successfully completed  Dissertation Overview Examination Form and Doctoral Candidacy Form
<b>5</b>	Full Time Dissertation Status	Full Time Dissertation Status	Submit Meeting Announcement for Dissertation Defense  Dissertation Defense Form  <i>Successful completion constitutes awarding of Ph.D</i>

## EXPECTED RATE OF PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE

The table below outlines the rate at which students are expected to progress through the milestones in the LLC PhD program by successfully completing milestones and other parts of the program. We recognize that the progress of each student will vary, and for this reason the rates of progress are displayed in terms of “zones” rather than specific cut off dates.

For each milestone, the GREEN zone represents the optimal rate of progress.

For each milestone, the YELLOW zone represents a cautionary zone. This rate of progress should not be a problem unless the student slips into the RED zone. For some students whose quality of work is high and who are completing other professional experiences (such as authoring published papers) or for students who have experienced temporary setbacks, being in the yellow zone is not a problem. However, for other students, being in the yellow zone may be a cause for concern. Regardless of the cause, it is imperative that students and faculty work together to identify the causes behind a problematic level of performance and progress toward degree and develop a plan for change. Students should not wait for faculty to determine that there is a problem; instead, if they are concerned about their progress, they should confer with their advisor immediately.

For each milestone, students who reach the RED zone are not making satisfactory progress toward the degree and are in danger of formal actions, such as University Probation or exceeding the statute of limitations for the degree.

YEAR	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Term (F =fall, S=Spring)	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S
Preliminary Exam		X	X	X	X									
Predissertation Project			X	X	X	X	X	X						
Finish Coursework					X	X	X	X	X	X				
Comprehensive Exam					X	X	X	X	X	X				
Dissertation Overview							X	X	X	X	X	X		
Defend Dissertation								X	X	X	X	X	X	X

## OVERVIEW OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS for LLC PhD

<b>LLC Major Field</b>	<b>24-27 credits</b> <b>Required:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 credits minimum at the 3000 level or equivalent (If a doctoral-level course from a department other than TLL is numbered in the 2000, it can count as a 3000-level course on the plan of studies.)</li> <li>• TLL 3248: Critical Readings in Language, Literacy, and Culture</li> </ul>
<b>Cognate (Supporting) Field</b>	<b>0, 9, or 18 credits</b> outside of the School of Education
<b>Research Methods</b>	<b>15 credits</b> <b>Required:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDUC 3100 Introduction to Quantitative Methods: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics</li> <li>• EDUC 3104: Introduction to Qualitative Methods</li> <li>• EDUC 3103: Quantitative Methods 2</li> </ul>
<b>First Year Seminars</b>	<b>3 credits</b> <b>Required:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDUC 3102 (Fall) First Year Seminar 1</li> <li>• EDUC 3105 (Spring) First Year Seminar 2</li> </ul>
<b>Research Practicum</b>	<b>3 credits</b> <b>Required:</b> TLL 3291 Supervised Research in Language, Literacy, and Culture
<b>Teaching Practicum</b>	<b>3 credits</b> <b>Required:</b> TLL 3526 Practicum in College Teaching
<b>PhD Writing Seminar</b>	<b>Variable:</b> <b>one credit per semester starting in year 2</b> TLL 3016 PhD Writing Seminar
<b>Electives</b>	<b>Variable</b>

<b>Dissertation</b>	<b>18 credits</b> <b>Required:</b> TLL 3296 Doctoral Dissertation Research: Language, Literacy, and Culture
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>90-93 credits</b>

## DESCRIPTION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **Major Field**

The major field credit requirement is 24-27 credits. At least 15 credits must be at the 3000 level (doctoral level). If a doctoral-level course from a department other than TLL is numbered in the 2000, it can count as a 3000-level course on the plan of studies. Major field courses will come from offerings in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leading, other departments in the School of Education, and other schools across the University.

### **Required Course**

**TLL 3248: Special Topics in Language and Literacy: Critical Readings in Language, Literacy, and Culture** (offered every other year)

This seminar focuses on in-depth readings of several key texts in fields related to language, literacy, and culture. Reading, writing, and discussion will examine original works by theorists and researchers who have made important contributions to fields related to language, literacy, and culture as well as topics of current interest and attention.

### **Cognate (Supporting) Field**

Per university policy, PhD students in the School of Education are required to have 9-18 credits in a disciplinary area outside of the School of Education to meet the University cognate requirement. In the past, students have taken courses in sociology, library science, Africana Studies, English, history, linguistics, social work, and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies. The number of courses a PhD student must take outside of the School of Education depends on his or her academic background.

1. **If the student lacks a bachelor's degree in an appropriate academic discipline or interdisciplinary concentration**, a minimum of 18 credits must be taken outside the School of Education in one field (e.g., linguistics or history) or in an interdisciplinary concentration (e.g., Latin American studies or psycholinguistics) as approved by the program or department.
2. **If the student has a bachelor's degree in an appropriate academic discipline or interdisciplinary concentration**, a minimum of 9 credits must be taken outside the School of Education in one field or in an interdisciplinary concentration approved by the program.
3. **If the student has a master's degree (or equivalent number of credits toward a master's degree) in an appropriate academic discipline**, no additional credits outside the School of Education are required.

### **Research Methods**

LLC PhD students are required to complete a minimum of **5 research methods courses (15 credits)**, including:

- EDUC 3100 Introduction to Quantitative Methods: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics
- EDUC 3104: Introduction to Qualitative Methods
- EDUC 3103: Quantitative Methods 2

It is recommended that students take courses in both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

## **First Year Seminars**

### **EDUC 3102: Fall First Year Seminar (1 credit)**

This seminar addresses professional issues germane to doctoral skills and competencies. Topics addressed in the seminar, include social, ethical and legal issues pertaining to conducting research such as collaborating with research partners, determining authorship, obtaining clearances, and IRB requirements. [Note: This class meets every other week.]

### **EDUC 3105: Spring First Year Seminar (2 credits)**

This seminar focuses on developing students' competencies toward completing a proposal for their pre-dissertation research project (Milestone 1). Topics addressed in the seminar include developing research questions and a literature review. [Note: This class meets every other week.]

### **Research Practicum: TLL 3291 Supervised Research in LLC**

Students must complete a 3-credit research practicum. The research practicum should be completed during Year 2 of the program and should be tied to students' work on their pre-dissertation projects to promote timely and high-quality completion of this milestone (Milestone 2). Students may collect either a unique set of new data or use existing data from a larger faculty project for this independent research project. Students should sign up for the research practicum course number that corresponds to the faculty member overseeing the research (usually the advisor).

### **Teaching Practicum: TLL 3526 Practicum in College Teaching**

All LLC PhD students are required to complete a 3-credit teaching practicum. Students will fulfill this requirement by registering for TLL 3526 and by negotiating an agreement with the professor for specific tasks that they must complete. Generally, the student is expected to complete their teaching practicum in a teacher education course. The teaching practicum requirement can be completed by serving as a paid or unpaid TA to a professor for a course or serving as a paid GSA of one's own course at Pitt.

### **Writing Seminars: TLL 3016 PhD Writing Seminar**

Beginning in their second year, LLC PhD students also participate in ongoing writing workshops designed to support students' development of research articles and grant proposals (1-credit per semester for 6-8 credits). The writing workshops provide students with an opportunity to get regular feedback on manuscripts and milestone documents.

### **Electives**

LLC PhD students can take courses as electives that complement their area of specialization or address issues of interest. Courses must be approved by the advisor and put on the plan of studies.

**Dissertation: TLL 3296 Doctoral Dissertation Research: Language, Literacy, and Culture**

LLC PhD students must complete a minimum of 18 dissertation credits. All students register for dissertation credits during the terms in which they are preparing their overview document as well as during the terms in which they carry out and defend their research. Students must register for at least one credit during the 12-month period preceding their graduation. PhD students complete research to contribute to the knowledge and basic understandings in their specializations.

**NOTE: Once students have completed 18 credits of dissertation research, they must register for full-time dissertation study, which provides for a reduced rate of tuition.**

## PROGRAM MILESTONES

PhD students across the School of Education also complete a common set of planning and review documents, milestones, and professional experiences intended to (a) ensure that students have the requisite knowledge and skills needed for independent research, and (b) position students for success in the job market.

Milestone Forms can be accessed at:

<http://www.education.pitt.edu/CurrentStudents/PoliciesandForms.aspx>

### **Plan of Studies (Year 1 Fall, updated each semester)**

LLC PhD students should meet with their advisors to develop a preliminary plan of study based on an evaluation of transcripts and interests. The plan of studies should include any transfer courses that will be applied to the PhD program. Although this plan will probably be revised based on a student's developing interests and course availability, the preliminary plan of studies provides a template for keeping requirements in focus.

### **Doctoral Progress Review (each year)**

LLC PhD students are required to submit the Doctoral Progress Review. An e-mail notice will be sent to cue this submission with a link to the form to be completed.

**Milestone 1: Preliminary Exam (Year 1):** A proposal for an independent research project.

For the Preliminary Exam, LLC PhD students write a proposal that includes a well-defined research problem, relevant literature review, methodological approach and an analysis plan for an appropriately scoped second year research project. Students defend the proposal in a meeting of program faculty and staff. A committee of 3 faculty members, including the student's advisor, makes a final decision about the student's successful completion of the proposal based on faculty input. The purpose of this defense is to ensure that the proposed project is theoretically grounded, methodologically rigorous, and appropriate for submission to a peer-reviewed journal upon completion. The defense should begin with a 10-15 minute presentation, followed by Q&A with the committee. If the student does not pass this milestone on his or her first attempt, they have one opportunity to revise their work and attempt to pass before they are required to leave the PhD program.

**Milestone 2: Predissertation Project (Year 2):** A completed manuscript of an independent research project.

For the Predissertation Project, LLC PhD students submit a full manuscript (Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results and Discussion sections) in APA Style to a 3-member committee. The defense should begin with a 15-20 minute presentation followed by Q&A with the committee. *To complete this milestone, the committee should agree that the manuscript is ready (or will be ready with revisions suggested by the committee members) to be submitted to a journal.* If the student does not pass this milestone on his or her first attempt, they have one opportunity to revise their work and attempt to pass before they are required to leave the PhD program.

### **Milestone 3: Comprehensive exam (Year 3): Major Area Paper.**

The Major Area Paper (MAP) serves as a PhD student's comprehensive examination for all programs within the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leading at the University of Pittsburgh. The Comprehensive Exam is designed to assess the student's mastery of the general field of doctoral study, the student's acquisition of both depth and breadth in the area of specialization within the general field, and the ability to use the research methods of the discipline. The MAP consists of a systematic review of the literature in his or her specialized area of research and propose a study to address 2-3 significant remaining research questions in that area. The student will then give an oral presentation of the MAP, including the proposed study. If the student does not pass this milestone on their first attempt, they have one opportunity to revise their work and attempt to pass before they are required to leave the PhD program. (See Appendix B.)

### **Milestone 4: Dissertation Overview (Year 4): Proposal for a traditional dissertation or a two-paper dissertation**

After successfully completing the comprehensive examination, the student will invite faculty to serve as his or her dissertation advisor and committee members. The dissertation committee consists of the research advisor and at least three other members, including one member from another department outside the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh or from an appropriate graduate program outside education at another academic institution. The chair of the dissertation committee as well as a majority of the dissertation committee must be members of the graduate faculty.

Students may propose either a traditional dissertation or 2-paper dissertation. Students will defend their proposals to the committee. The defense should begin with a 10-15 minute presentation, followed by Q&A with the committee.

### **Milestone 5: Dissertation Defense (Year 5)**

The doctoral dissertation committee consists of the research advisor and at least three other members, including one member from another department outside the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh or from an appropriate graduate program outside education at another academic institution.

The Dissertation Defense should begin with a 15-20 minute public presentation, followed by Q&A with the committee.

**NOTE: Once students have completed all credit requirements, including 18 credits of dissertation research, they must register for full-time dissertation study, which provides for a reduced rate of tuition.**

## **Professional Experiences**

Below is a list of professional experiences that students should strive to acquire for their curriculum vitae during their graduate training. Many of these experiences will involve intensive mentoring and assistance from students' advisors:

- Conference Poster or Paper Presentation
- Co-Authored or First-Author Publication
- Teaching Experience
- Grant Proposal (e.g., SOE, Dissertation, Advisor grants)
- Service (e.g., SOE or CGSE committees; search committees)

## GENERAL ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### ***Graduate and Professional Bulletin of the School of Education***

In order to make sure that you understand the University of Pittsburgh regulations for graduate students, you should download the *Graduate and Professional Bulletin of the School of Education*. That document provides information about important topics such as transfer credits, statute of limitations, and graduation requirements. You can access the graduate bulletin at: <https://catalog.upp.pitt.edu/content.php?catoid=73&navoid=6368>

### **Registering for Classes**

The University of Pittsburgh has an online registration system. Registration is done through the **my.pitt.edu** portal.

To register:

- Log in to **my.pitt.edu** with your University Computer Account username and password.
- Click the **Student Services** tab at the top of the page.
- Click **Link to Student Center**.
- Click **Self Service** and then click **Student Center**.

Your Enrollment Appointment will be listed in the box entitled **Enrollment Dates** on the right-hand side of the page. Once you have seen your advisor and have completed your plan of study, you can enroll in classes right from your Student Center page.

### **Transfer Credits**

In keeping with university-wide requirements, students will be able to apply a maximum of 30 post-baccalaureate credits from a master's degree awarded by another institution to meet the minimum credit requirement. Each course must meet the following conditions:

- The course grade must be at least B or its equivalent.
- The course must be judged relevant to a student's doctoral Plan of Studies by the program or department.
- The course must be approved for equivalent graduate degrees at the accredited institution, extension, or off-campus center of other institutions at which the course was taken.

### **Statute of Limitations**

From the student's initial registration for doctoral study at the University of Pittsburgh, all requirements for the PhD must be completed within a period of 10 years (or 8 years if the student has received credit for a master's degree appropriate to the field of study).

### **Cross-Registration Credits**

All graduate students may register for graduate courses at Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and Robert Morris University. Such work, if approved in advance by the student's advisor, will not be considered as transfer credit and may be counted for credit toward a graduate degree; the grade earned will be used in computing the student's grade point average. Cross-registration is only available in the fall and spring terms. Only full-time students may cross-register.

### **Full-Time Study**

All LLC PhD students must register as full-time students in the fall and spring terms. Graduate students who register for 9 to 15 credits in the fall or spring term are full-time students.

### **Registration Status at Graduation**

All graduate students must register for at least 1 credit or full-time dissertation study during the 12-month period preceding graduation (that is, must be on active status).

### **Inactive Status**

Students who have not registered for at least 1 credit or full-time dissertation study (eligible doctoral students) during a 12-month period are transferred to inactive status and must file an application for readmission to graduate study (application fee required) before being permitted to register again. Students on inactive status cannot apply to graduate or take preliminary or comprehensive examinations. Also, students on inactive status are not eligible to use University facilities and should not expect to receive counseling from the faculty or active supervision by their advisor and committee.

### **Adding and Dropping Courses**

Students may add and drop courses only during the add/drop period. The dates for the add/drop period are listed in the University's Schedule of Classes, in course descriptions, on calendars including the University's Academic Calendar, and in numerous other publications. Students who no longer wish to remain enrolled in a course after the add/drop period has ended may withdraw from the course or resign from the University.

### **Academic Standards**

An average of at least B (GPA=3.00) is required in the courses that make up the program for any graduate degree. Students with full graduate status are automatically placed on probation whenever their cumulative GPA falls below 3.00. Each school determines the restrictions placed on a student on probation. A student on probation is not eligible to take the PhD preliminary or comprehensive examination, or to be graduated.

**Additional information and policies concerning statute of limitations, leaves of absence, academic probation, and other related topics can be found on the SOE website under “current students” or at:**

**<http://www.education.pitt.edu/CurrentStudents/PoliciesandForms.aspx>**

# SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH INFORMATION

## *School of Education*

### **Graduate Policies and Forms Website**

<http://www.education.pitt.edu/CurrentStudents/PoliciesandForms.aspx>

### **Admissions and Enrollment Services (AES)**

AES should be your first stop for any administrative questions, such as: enrollment in courses, financial aid, add/drop/withdrawal of course, change of advisors, milestone forms, ETD dissertation process, graduation, Pitt calendar and deadlines.

<https://www.education.pitt.edu/admissions/admissions>

### **Council of Graduate Students in Education (CGSE)**

The Council of Graduate Students in Education is the official student organization representing all students enrolled in the graduate division of the School of Education. You are automatically a member of CGSE. There are other graduate student organizations as well. The link below provides information about them.

<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/sorc/graduatestudentorganizations/>

### **School of Education Technology Help**

<https://www.technology.pitt.edu/about-us/contact-us>

### **Assistant Dean for Student Engagement**

**Dr. Andrea Zito**

[andreaz@pitt.edu](mailto:andreaz@pitt.edu)

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the right to be offered a program of studies as outlined in the University of Pittsburgh Graduate and Professional Bulletin:

<https://catalog.upp.pitt.edu/content.php?catoid=73&navoid=6368>

Students have the right to be assigned an *academic advisor* whose responsibilities include helping those students to design a plan of studies and plan and prepare for their preliminary examination. Students have the right to change academic advisors if another faculty member agrees with the student that s/he may be better suited to guide the student in developing and carrying out an approved plan of studies. When it is time to assemble a comprehensive examination committee, students also have the right to seek a different faculty member within the program to serve as *research advisor*. However, the research advisor normally must be **a member of the Graduate Faculty of the University of Pittsburgh**. If the identified faculty member is part of the Graduate Faculty, and agrees to serve as research advisor, s/he is expected to chair both the comprehensive exam committee and the doctoral committee.

Students have the responsibility to be cognizant of those **University, School, and Departmental regulations** relevant to their program of study. These include crucial deadlines such as:

1. Statute of limitations requirements regarding the time allowed to complete a graduate program
2. Registration requirements to maintain active status as a student and to be eligible to graduate
3. The Academic Calendar for meeting classes, taking examinations, and applying for graduation <http://www.registrar.pitt.edu/calendars>

Students have the responsibility to complete the **Doctoral Progress Review** and submit it on time to their advisors.

Students have the responsibility to obtain a **University of Pittsburgh e-mail account**. You will receive Program materials and communications via your Pitt e-mail account. Use this account, whether directly through [www.my.pitt.edu](http://www.my.pitt.edu); or by forwarding the mail to your personal e-mail.

Students have the responsibility to abide by the University of Pittsburgh Student **Code of Conduct**, including the responsibility to be honest, to avoid plagiarism (i.e., the use of another author's words and phrasing without quotation marks and proper reference in any self-authored document or presentation), and to conduct him or herself in an ethical manner while pursuing academic studies.

### **Accommodations for students with disabilities**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or (TTY) 412-383-7355 as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. Information about Pitt's services for students with disabilities can be found on [www.drs.pitt.edu](http://www.drs.pitt.edu).

## **University Care and Resource Support (CARS) Team**

<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cars/>

### **Food/Housing Insecurity**

Many students, both undergraduate and graduate, experience housing and/or food insecurity that can have an impact on their academic work and general health. Please know there are resources available to you that are confidential. Of course, you are welcome to speak with me if you need support in contacting the right people/offices:

- Pitt Pantry (Food Pantry available to the wider University community)  
<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/pittserves/sustain/pantry/>
- Off-Campus Housing Office: <http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/>

### **Teaching, Learning, and Leading Departmental Grievance Procedures**

The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. When a student in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leading believes that a faculty member has not met his or her obligations (as an instructor or in another capacity) as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow this procedure:

1. The student should talk directly to the faculty member to attempt to resolve the matter.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the student should talk to the relevant program coordinator.
3. If the matter remains unresolved, the student should talk to the associate department chair of Teaching, Learning, and Leading, Dr. Cassie Quigley.

If needed, the student should next talk to the School of Education assistant dean of student engagement, Dr. Andrea Zito. If the matter still remains unresolved, the student should file a written statement of charges with the dean's designated Academic Integrity Administrator.

## ACT 33/34 and FEDERAL CLEARANCES

**You must obtain the following clearances as soon as possible after enrolling at the University of Pittsburgh.**

1. You can obtain the **PA State Criminal Record Check (Act 34) online** – the website for (Pitt’s) School of Education says that you have to mail the form (which is included in this packet), but you do not. You can more easily do it using a credit card to pay, online at: <https://epatch.state.pa.us/>

Once you enter all of your information (use your local address here in PA) online and click “search”, you will get search results with a “control number” link. Click on the “control number” link and that will bring up your results page. When you see the results page, print several copies of it because you cannot access it again later. **Be sure to always keep one copy for yourself – you can make more copies of it later if needed if you keep a copy of your own.**

**Then show this results page as needed – this is your official PA State Criminal Record Check.**

2. To complete the fingerprints (**FBI Criminal Background Check/Fingerprinting**), you must follow the directions in the following link: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/Clearances/Pages/FBI-Fingerprinting.aspx>

There is a location in Oakland for fingerprinting on Forbes Ave (the UPS Store) as well as locations around the state. Also, take note of the acceptable types of photo ID you may show at the fingerprinting location as these are the only accepted options.

You will then receive the fingerprint (FBI/Federal) clearance paper in the mail. Make several copies of it to keep in your files, as well as keeping the original. **DO NOT** give away the original.

3. For the **PA Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 33)**, follow the directions in the following link: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe/Clearances/Pages/PA-Child-Abuse-History-Clearance.aspx>

This website also gives specific directions for completing the form. Use your current, local address for the main contact information. Select “School Employee” as the reason for the clearance. Note that you must mail payment with your form, and you cannot use a personal check. It **MUST** be a money order.

Be sure to list all of your addresses since 1975. Also, for “Household Members,” be sure to list ALL family members and/or friends/roommates with whom you have lived since 1975. If you leave out people (such as a roommate in college), it is possible the form will be returned for you to correct and re-submit.

4. Upload all clearances to the following website:

<https://my.education.pitt.edu/clearances/instructor/index>

### **OTHER REQUIRED TRAINING AND MODULES**

In order to conduct most research during your time as a doctoral student, you must complete the research training offered through CITI. It is recommended that you complete this training in your first semester of study. More information can be found at: <http://www.irb.pitt.edu/training>

**APPENDIX A**

**LLC PhD PLAN OF STUDIES**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PeopleSoft #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Admission:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Statute of Limitations Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Area of Specialization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cognate Field:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Degrees Held**

<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>DEGREE RECEIVED</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>QPA</b>	<b>MAJOR</b>

A maximum of 30 credits from the masters, plus nine post masters doctoral level courses may be applied to the plan of studies.

**APPROVAL:**

Student/Date \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Advisor/Date \_\_\_\_\_

Program Coordinator/Date \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair/Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Major Field (24-27 Credits – 15 credits minimum at 3000 level.** (If a doctoral-level course from a department other than TLL is numbered in the 2000, it can count as a 3000-level course on the plan of studies.)

PROGRAM & COURSE NO.	TITLE OF COURSE	INSTITUTION	DATE COMPLETED & GRADE	CREDITS
TLL 3248 (required)	Critical Readings in LLC	Pitt		3

**Cognate Field (0, 9 or 18 Credits)**

Courses in academic discipline studies supportive of the candidate’s area of specialization. These credits must be in coursework outside of the School of Education.

PROGRAM & COURSE NO.	TITLE OF COURSE	INSTITUTION	DATE COMPLETED & GRADE	CREDITS

**Research Methods (15 credits)**

PROGRAM & COURSE NO.	TITLE OF COURSE	INSTITUTION	DATE COMPLETED & GRADE	CREDITS
EDUC 3100 (required)	Introduction to Quantitative Methods: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics	Pitt		3
EDUC 3104 (required)	Introduction to Qualitative Methods	Pitt		3
EDUC 3103 (required)	Quantitative Methods 2	Pitt		3

**First Year Seminars (3 Credits)**

<b>PROGRAM &amp; COURSE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE OF COURSE</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED &amp; GRADE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
EDUC 3102 (required)	First Year Seminar 1	Pitt		
EDUC 3105 (required)	First Year Seminar 2	Pitt		

**Research Practicum (3 Credits)**

<b>PROGRAM &amp; COURSE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE OF COURSE</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED &amp; GRADE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
TLL 3291	Supervised Research in LLC	Pitt		

**Teaching Practicum (3 credits)**

<b>PROGRAM &amp; COURSE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE OF COURSE</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED &amp; GRADE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>
TLL 3526	Practicum in College Teaching	Pitt		

**Electives (Credits Variable)**

<b>PROGRAM &amp; COURSE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE OF COURSE</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED &amp; GRADE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>

**Writing Workshops (Credits Variable)**

<b>PROGRAM &amp; COURSE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE OF COURSE</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED &amp; GRADE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>

**Dissertation (18 Credits)**

<b>SUMMARY AREA</b>	<b>PITT DOCTORAL CREDITS</b>	<b>PITT MASTER CREDITS</b>	<b>TRANSFER CREDITS</b>
<b>Major Field</b>			
<b>Supporting Field</b>			
<b>Research Practicum</b>	3		
<b>Teaching Practicum</b>	3		
<b>Research Methods</b>			
<b>Electives</b>			
<b>Dissertation</b>	18		
<b>TOTAL</b>			

**TOTAL CREDITS** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>MILESTONES</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>
<b>Initial plan of studies</b>	
<b>Preliminary examination</b>	
<b>Predissertation project</b>	
<b>Research practicum</b>	
<b>Teaching practicum</b>	
<b>Complete coursework</b>	
<b>Comprehensive examination</b>	
<b>Final plan of studies</b>	
<b>Dissertation Overview</b>	
<b>Dissertation Defense</b>	

## Appendix B Comprehensive Examination

The Major Area Paper (MAP) and oral examination serve as a PhD student's comprehensive examination for all programs within the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leading at the University of Pittsburgh. The University of Pittsburgh's website provides basic guidelines regarding this milestone:

The Comprehensive Examination should be designed to assess the student's mastery of the general field of doctoral study, the student's acquisition of both depth and breadth in the area of specialization within the general field, and the ability to use the research methods of the discipline. In some programs, the comprehensive examination is combined with the overview or prospectus meeting. It should be administered at approximately the time of the completion of the formal course requirements and should be passed at least eight months before the scheduling of the final oral examination and dissertation defense. In no case may the comprehensive examination be taken in the same term in which the student is graduated. Examination results must be reported promptly to the dean's office but no later than the last day of the term in which the examination is administered. A student who is unable to complete all degree requirements within a five-year period after passing the comprehensive examination may be re-examined at the discretion of the department, program, or school.  
<https://catalog.upp.pitt.edu/content.php?catoid=73&navoid=6368>

Below are the specific guidelines and timetable that PhD students in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leading should follow:

### *I. Identifying a "Major Area" of research*

Construct **2-3 related research questions about a topic** that will frame a comprehensive review of the literature. Research questions must be approved by the advisor. The department also recommends identifying a target journal (e.g., *Review of Educational Research*) at the outset and writing the paper for publication in that outlet, which should also be approved by the advisor.

### *II. Writing the MAP*

Conduct a systematic review of the literature with the goal of answering your questions:

- The review should not simply catalog the literature. It should represent **a new synthesis and critique of an existing body of research**, highlighting themes and differences within that body with respect to attributes such as theoretical perspectives, historical context, ambiguities in language, methodology (and appropriateness of methods to the theoretical framing and research questions), findings, and limitations of the studies.
- The review should conclude with an **explicit statement that synthesizes research findings**, indicates what is generally accepted to be the case and by

- whom, and what questions remain. If you discover a classic ‘gap’ in the literature, discuss the nature of the gap, whether good reason exists for the gap, or whether the gap needs to be addressed.
- Develop **2-3 research questions** that remain after the review of the literature and discussion in part 1b above. Motivate these questions by providing a rationale grounded in the literature for why the study needs to be conducted.
  - Propose a **brief design of at least one study** to address the questions in part 2. Discuss in some detail how and why your proposed design will address and answer the research questions. The design must include descriptions of participants, context, timeline, theoretical framework, data sources, possible analytical tools and methods, and possible findings that might derive from the study.

The MAP should (a) be written in a **style consistent with published review articles** in the student’s field (the department recommends using APA headings to guide the reader through the sections of the review); and (b) **not exceed 40 pages in length** (minus front and back matter, references, and text dedicated to the description of the studies).

While the MAP is be written independently, the faculty advisor (and, optionally, committee members or peers) may provide guidance before, during, and after the writing process. It is recommended that the nature and frequency of advisor feedback be made explicit at the outset. Should the student decide to pursue publication status for their MAP, they may write collaboratively with their advisor, committee members, and/or peers **AFTER** the defense.

### III. *Defending the MAP*

1. With the approval of your advisor, **establish a committee** consisting of the academic advisor and at least two other full-time, faculty members (which can include faculty outside the department), who can provide substantive input during the MAP process and can potentially serve on the dissertation committee. The department recommends establishing a MAP committee by the end of the third year.
2. The student is responsible for scheduling the defense well before the anticipated date, and submitting the completed paper to the committee in sufficient time (e.g., two weeks).
3. Advisors are responsible for structuring the defense. In general, however, students should present a summary of the MAP’s major points and a full description of the study (or studies) being proposed, and then respond to questions from committee members.

4. Following successful completion of the MAP oral/written examination, students are considered doctoral candidates, and per School of Education guidelines, have five years to complete a dissertation. If the committee decides that the student has not passed the MAP process, the student may revise the MAP and attempt the defense again. If the committee decides again that the student has not passed, the student is then asked to withdraw from the doctoral program.

Note: Students must be registered during the term in which they complete their MAP and oral defense.