



## Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program

### *Qualifying Paper*

#### **Student Learning Outcome(s) Assessed:**

SLO 3: Students demonstrate the ability to select, interpret, and apply theory and research to address a variety of compelling problems in urban education.

#### **Description of the Signature Assignment**

The written Qualifying Paper is the official examination of your ability to conceptualize an issue or concern in educational leadership and examine it using existing empirical, theoretical, or other scholarly literature. A successful qualifying exam paper demonstrates that the student has a command of the literature in a given area of educational leadership and can use that literature to better understand the concern and address it in both theoretical and practical ways. The qualifying exam is also the benchmark assignment that signals that students have the analytic ability and writing skills to perform at the levels expected for dissertation work and at the level expected for a professional who holds the academy's highest degree. Further, the paper provides evidence of your progress in acquiring the substantive knowledge and analytical skills on which the Ed. D. program's curriculum is based. Your work on this paper must demonstrate your ability to analyze, critique, synthesize, and apply knowledge relevant to a meaningful and urgent educational issue. As a leader and scholar in the field of education, your ability to conduct such analyses and to communicate your conclusions clearly is vital to your future effectiveness. More immediately, it is crucial to proposing, conducting, and defending your doctoral dissertation.

The Qualifying Paper should be written as a thoughtful, focused review of the research literature centered on a significant educational problem or issue. It should convey your substantive knowledge of the problem or issue, as well as your ability to embed the discussion of your topic in a framework of appropriate theoretical and/or conceptual constructs and traditions.

The Qualifying Paper should not be viewed as an actual study. Rather, it should be approached as an exploration of a possible topic for future dissertation work.

#### **Directions for Students**

See Qualifying Paper Overview in program office.

## Scoring Rubric:

Criteria	4 = Exceeds expectations	3 = Meets expectations	2 = Meets some expectations	1 = Does not meet expectations	0 = Unable to score; incomplete or missing work	Weight	Final Score
<b>Introduction</b>	Intro provides a clear, concise, and comprehensive picture of the global issue under investigation; an excellent case is made for the issue's significance and importance; topic or approach breaks new ground or contributes to knowledge base in a focused, specific manner; lays out the structure of the paper and prepares the reader for what's to come.	Intro provides a comprehensive picture of the global issue under investigation; an acceptable case is made for the issue's significance and importance; topic or approach contributes to knowledge base in a specific manner; lays out the structure of the paper and prepares the reader for what's to come.	Intro provides a picture of the global issue under investigation; a minimal case is made for the issue's significance and importance; topic or approach makes a limited contribution to knowledge base; vaguely lays out the structure of the paper and prepares the reader for what's to come.	Intro provides a limited and inadequate description of the global issue under investigation; a case is not made for the issue's significance and importance; topic or approach does not make a contribution to knowledge base can be derived; fails to lay out the structure of the paper and prepare the reader for what's to come.		5%	
<b>Problem Statement/ Significance, Rationale</b>	The problem, guiding questions, and purpose are well developed, precise and thoughtful; they provide an excellent foundation for future research; problem/questions/ purpose are tightly coupled to the identified issue.	The problem, guiding questions, and purpose are precise and thoughtful; they provide a foundation for future research; problem/questions/ purpose are coupled to the identified issue.	The problem, guiding questions, and purpose are somewhat thoughtful; they lack preciseness; provide a loose foundation for future research; problem/questions/ purpose are loosely coupled to the identified issue.	The problem, guiding questions, and purpose are poorly developed; they lack development, preciseness and thoughtfulness; they do not provide a foundation for future research; problem/questions/ purpose do not demonstrate a relationship to the identified issue.		10%	
<b>Theoretical and/or Conceptual Framework</b>	The theoretical or conceptual orientation is exceptionally clear and precise; there is a direct and obvious relationship between the chosen theory or concepts and the problem/purpose.	The theoretical or conceptual orientation is clear and precise; there is a direct relationship between the chosen theory or concepts and the problem/purpose.	The theoretical or conceptual orientation is somewhat clear; it is difficult to determine if there is a direct relationship between the chosen theory or concepts and the problem/purpose.	The theoretical or conceptual orientation is totally unclear; there is no direct relationship demonstrated between the chosen theory or concepts and the problem/purpose.		15%	

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<b>Source Selection, Rationale and Strategies for</b>	Information is gathered from a wide variety of electronic and print sources. Sources are clearly relevant, balanced, and include critical, seminal and timely readings related directly to the topic. Rationale for choice of literature is impressively cogent and well defined.	Information is gathered from a variety of electronic and print sources. Sources are relevant, balanced, and include seminal and timely readings directly related to the topic. Rationale for choice of literature is cogent and defined.	Information is gathered from a limited variety of electronic and print sources. Sources are basically timely and relevant, may not represent all areas of the focus of study and include readings somewhat or inconsistently related to the topic. Review is missing key sources relevant to the topic or problem. Rationale for choice of literature is limited.	Information is gathered from a too few sources. Many sources are not relevant or balanced, and include readings not directly related to the topic. Rationale for choice of literature is limited in score or not included.		10%	
<b>Literature Review</b>	Studies and other sources are presented fairly, accurately and thoroughly; studies' methods and findings are expertly summarized and critiqued; themes, trends, and patterns are identified and logically connected. Author uses sources and persuasive prose to build a case for importance of topic and specific approach to understanding it.	Studies and other sources are fairly and accurately; studies' methods and findings are summarized and critiqued; themes, trends, and patterns are somewhat identified and logically connected. Author uses sources and to build a case for importance of topic and specific approach to understanding it.	Studies and other sources are presented with some gaps or misrepresentations; studies' methods and findings are adequately summarized with some critique; themes, trends, and patterns are somewhat identified, but may not be logically connected. Author uses sources to build a case for importance of topic.	Studies and other sources presented have multiple gaps or misrepresentations; studies' methods and findings in the study are superficial and do not support the overall points being made in the paper; minimal critique offered; themes, trends, and patterns are not identified or identified incorrectly; they are not logically connected. Author does not build a case for the importance of topic. The argument is descriptive in nature.		20%	
<b>Discussion of Policy, Practical, and Research Implications and Applications</b>	Demonstrates excellent ability to integrate, interpret and extend what has been learned; demonstrates high ability to derive meaningful implications and make thoughtful applications to practice; provides recommendations for how the topic should be studied in future; evidence of strong analytic thinking.	Demonstrates ability to integrate, interpret and extend what has been learned; demonstrates ability to derive meaningful implications and make thoughtful applications to practice; makes suggestions for future research; evidence of analytic thinking.	Demonstrates inconsistent of ability to integrate, interpret and extend what has been learned; Demonstrates inconsistent ability to derive meaningful implications and make applications to practice; evidence of inconsistent analytic thinking.	Demonstrates limited or no ability to integrate, interpret and extend what has been learned; Demonstrates limited or no ability to derive meaningful implications and make practical applications to practice; limited to no evidence of independent thinking.		10%	

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<b>Conclusion</b>	Convincingly and clearly describes the “so what” derived from the literature review drawing logical and meaningful conclusions based on the paper’s stated purpose.	Describes the “so what” derived from the literature review drawing logical conclusions based on the paper’s stated purpose.	Somewhat or loosely describes the “so what” derived from the literature review drawing loose or illogical conclusions based on the paper’s stated purpose.	Poorly describes the “so what” derived from the literature review; little to no connection between conclusions drawn and the paper’s stated purpose; or conclusions are absent.		5%	
<b>Quality of Writing/ Scholarly Tone</b>	Language is used skillfully to communicate complex ideas and claims; transitions are facilitated smoothly with appropriate headings and subheadings to convey the organization of the paper; each section logically flows to the next with guiding transitions; the writing is consistently focused and organized; the writing is mostly free of grammatical, usage, and spelling; the writing clearly contributes to understanding the overall purpose and discussion; strong academic tone.	Language is used well to communicate complex ideas and claims; appropriate use of headings and subheadings to convey the organization of the paper; each section flows to the next; the writing is focused and organized; the writing contains some grammatical, usage, and spelling errors but they do not distract the reader; the writing adds to the overall purpose and discussion.	Language is used inconsistently to communicate complex ideas and claims; headings and subheadings are either not present or inappropriately used; inconsistent use of transitions; the flow is interrupted by poor organization, and inconsistent focus; the writing has three to the writing contains substantial grammatical, usage, and spelling errors that distract the reader; the writing quality detracts from the overall purpose and discussion.	Language is used poorly to communicate complex ideas and claims; major headings and sub headings notably missing; poor use of or lack of transitions; poorly organized writing;, lack of focus; numerous grammatical, usage and spelling errors; the overall writing quality is unacceptable.		20%	
<b>Adherence to APA</b>	Current APA style guidelines are followed consistently and correctly both in the body of the paper and in the reference list; almost error free use of APA style manual requirements.	Current APA style guidelines are followed both in the body of the paper and in the reference list; some errors in use of APA style manual requirements.	Current APA style guidelines are inconsistently followed both in the body of the paper and in the reference list; substantial errors in use of APA style manual requirements	Current APA style guidelines are not followed both in the body of the paper and in the reference list; unacceptable use of APA style manual requirements		5%	
<b>Total</b>							<b>/4.0</b>

## Legend

<b>Scoring Totals</b>	<b>College of Education Assessment Scale Equivalent</b>
<b>3.50 – 4.00</b>	Pass with Distinction
<b>2.50 – 3.49</b>	Pass
<b>2.00 – 2.49</b>	Pass with Reservations
<b>&lt; 2.00</b>	No Pass/Revise
<b>0</b>	Did not Submit