

## **DEE Culminating Inquiry Paper**

Many doctoral programs refer to this phase of the doctoral program as the comprehensive examination. This phase begins once the student has completed all courses with the exception of Dissertation Proposal Seminar (ESR604). The DEE doctoral program thinks of this as a reflective and conceptual phase during which the doctoral student synthesizes what s/he has learned and understand as a result of his or her studies.

The DEE culminating inquiry paper must meet six (6) criteria. It must be (1) critical, (2) reflexive, (3) foundational, and (4) praxis oriented. In addition, the student must use this paper to explore the ways in which what is written is important (5) to oneself and (6) to something outside oneself (e.g., their school, their community, society as a whole, etc.). The student is encouraged to work with the advisor to identify the ways in which these six criteria might be met in a meaningful way.

The student has several options for the focus of the culminating inquiry paper. In collaboration with his or her advisor, the student can construct a question or questions to reflect upon, investigate, and respond to. Or, the student can write a conceptual paper that constructs his or her theoretical framework or in some way intellectually presages the dissertation. Many students choose to use the culminating inquiry paper to begin the literature review required for the dissertation and this is also an option. Regardless of the option chosen, students must work with the advisor to plan the paper and must address the six criteria required.

The student has one quarter (12 weeks) in which to complete the culminating inquiry paper. If revisions are necessary, the student has up to two opportunities to revise.

When a topic or question for the paper is identified, the student should select a start date that coincides with the beginning of a regular academic quarter. If the student chooses to complete the paper during summer term the start and end dates should be approved by the advisor and Program Director but should adhere to 12 weeks. Other options can be requested but must be approved by the advisor and Program Director and must adhere to 12 weeks. The student must obtain approval of the advisor and the Program Director for the paper's focus and the start date.

The paper must be at least 30 pages in length without references. The student is encouraged to use the culminating inquiry paper rubric and the *Doctoral Handbook* Dissertation Formatting Guidelines in organizing the paper. The paper will be evaluated by at least 3 DEE faculty using the culminating inquiry paper rubric. Faculty evaluations usually take one month. Their completed rubrics and any narrative feedback are then given to the student. If revisions are necessary, the student will have one month (30 days) to complete. Revisions will be evaluated using the culminating inquiry paper rubric. If the revisions do not meet the rubric standards, the student will have an additional month to respond to faculty feedback. No more than two revisions will be allowed. The student who passes with "developing" or "advanced" on all rubric criteria in two revisions or less will be able to move to the dissertation proposal phase of the program and will be considered a "doctoral candidate."

## **DEE Chronology for Culminating Inquiry Paper**

--Student finishes or is in final term of all coursework except ESR604.

- Student meets with advisor to discuss focus of culminating inquiry paper; student and advisor agree upon focus and start date.
- Student obtains written approval for focus and start date from Program Director.
- Student completes paper within 12 weeks of start date.
- Student receives faculty feedback within approximately 4 weeks.
- Student moves to dissertation proposal phase OR revises within 4 weeks, if necessary.
- If revising, student revises within 4 weeks and receives faculty feedback approximately 2 weeks later.
- If student passes, student moves to dissertation proposal phase; if student does not pass, student revises within 4 weeks and receives faculty feedback approximately 2 weeks later.
- If student passes, student moves to dissertation proposal phase; if student does not pass, student, advisor, and Program Director meet to discuss other options.