



ACADEMIC ALERT #2009-18

DATE: October, 2009

DECISION: National College of Education (NCE)

**NCE Doctoral Programs
Revised Policies**

RATIONALE: The policy changes and additions have been made by the Doctoral Program Directors after a year-long review of existing policies in the Doctoral Program Handbook. They include: a revised policy for C grades and probation; a new policy for I grades; an addition of a policy for continuous enrollment; and a revision of the comprehensive examination policy to state what happens if students fail and to make it more consistent with practice. The commencement ceremony deadlines are separated from the graduation deadlines and are explicated for students. The graduation policy revision makes the policy the same for all quarters.

Senate Academic Planning Committee Approval: October 15, 2009

PROGRAM AUTHORIZATIONS: The Curriculum and Social Inquiry, Disability and Equity in Education, Educational Leadership, Educational Psychology and Reading and Language Doctoral Programs are authorized to be offered in the following Illinois Regions: Chicago; North Suburban; West Suburban and South Metropolitan. The Educational Leadership is also authorized to be offered in the Fox Valley region of Illinois, and at NLU campuses in Wisconsin. The Reading and Language Doctoral Program is also authorized to be offered at NLU campuses in Wisconsin.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Fall Term 2010

CONTACTS: Valerie Owen, Faculty NCE; vowen@nl.edu; (847) 947-5049
Jerry Ligon, Associate Dean, NCE; jligon@nl.edu; (847) 947-5699; or
(847) 947-5089 Doctoral Program Office

SIGNATURE

**Carol R. Melnick, Ph.D.
Vice Provost**

Revised NCE Doctoral Policies

Grade Policies/Credits

Student academic progress will be monitored at the end of each term by the program. Any student who receives one or more grades of "C" or lower in any program, research, or doctoral core courses in any one term will be placed on probation. Students on probation will receive official notification from the NCE Doctoral Office. Probation continues until doctoral course work is completed. A student who receives one or more grades of C or lower in two terms will be withdrawn from the program. If the student has already registered for the next term, the student's tuition will be reimbursed in accordance with published university policy. Students may appeal such decisions to the individual Program Directors and then to the Graduate Admissions and Retention Council following the University Policy on Academic Appeals in the *Student Guidebook* (www.nl.edu/studentaffairs). Students must have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher to graduate. Course grades of "D" or lower will not apply toward the degree.

A student who accumulates (one or more) In Progress ("I") grades for 2 consecutive terms will not be allowed to register for a subsequent term until "In Progress" course requirements are completed and the "I" grades are updated. When the "I" grades for at least one quarter are updated to letter grades and posted, the student should contact his or her program director to have the registration hold lifted. "I" grades are issued following the In Progress Grade Policy in the *NLU Catalog* (www.nl.edu/oar).

Grades may be viewed through the NLU portal one week after the end of the term. Students may obtain an official transcript from the Office of Admissions and Records. Students who have incurred financial debt to the University may not have access to copies of their records until the financial debt has been settled.

Comprehensive Examinations

All doctoral students must successfully complete a comprehensive examination prior to beginning formal work on their dissertation. Each of the doctoral programs determines the format and scope of the comprehensive exam (see the description of comprehensive examinations described under each of the programs). With the exception of summer term, if the student is not registered for any other course during the term in which the comprehensive exam is taken, the student must be continuously enrolled in CCD 60XX. At least two faculty members and the Program Director (or designee) of the respective program evaluate the exam. The Program Director notifies the student in writing concerning the results of the exam. The Program Director will inform the NCE Director of Doctoral Programs and the student's advisor of the final outcome. Once a student has passed the comprehensive examination he or she is eligible to register for ESR 604, Dissertation Proposal Seminar and CCD 699, Dissertation. If a student ultimately fails the comprehensive examination, the student will not be allowed to proceed to dissertation.

Continuous registration is required until the written dissertation is complete. Students who have been inactive for three consecutive quarters and are not on an approved leave will be considered withdrawn from the Doctoral program. Students desiring to be reinstated must file a re-entry form with the Registrar and submit a written petition to the Graduate Admissions and Retention Council stating the reason for their inactivity.

When unforeseen circumstances require a student to temporarily withdraw from their doctoral studies, the student must submit a Request for a Leave of Absence form in the first quarter of becoming inactive (see Request for Leave of Absence form). A leave of absence may be approved for up to one year.

Please note that the eight-year time limit for completing doctoral studies remains the same even if a leave is granted. Students who are granted a leave of absence must still complete the program within the eight-year time limit.

Graduation

Students planning to complete all doctoral requirements prior to the June, August, December, or March graduation dates, adhere to the following time-line: Final dissertation hearing must take place no less than four weeks prior to the graduation deadline and the final bound copy must be received by the University Library at the Lisle Campus no less than five business days before the graduation date. Students obtain approval from the committee to schedule the final hearing, submit the Form to Schedule Dissertation Approval Meeting, and submit a copy of the final document to the Director of Doctoral Program and the Dean's Representative, no less than three weeks prior to the final hearing date. Students should therefore plan to complete a final draft of the dissertation and obtain approval for scheduling a final hearing no less than seven weeks prior to the graduation date.

Students wishing to participate in June commencement hooding ceremonies must have their final hearing on or before April 30th. Students who have their hearing after the April 30th deadline will be invited to participate in the June commencement ceremony the following year.

Monitoring

In order for student grades to be tracked, the NCE Doctoral Programs Administrative Assistant will request a report from the University data system (e.g., Banner) for all doctoral students with C (or lower) and I grades within their respective programs to date. The assistant will send the results to each program director for review and then the NCE Doctoral Programs Office will send written correspondence to the student informing the student of the actions to be taken (i.e., probation, hold on registration, or removal from program).

Implementation

Any NCE doctoral students who receive the In-progress grade in Winter or Spring terms 2010 will receive a second notification because they will be impacted by this policy change. In addition, current doctoral students need to be informed as soon as possible by the NCE Doctoral Program office regarding the impending policy changes before the implementation date of September 2010.

Changes need to be entered in the appropriate NLU web pages.

The Office of Admission and Records (OAR), and staff in Enrollment, Recruitment, and Marketing need to be knowledgeable about the revised policies.

The revised catalog copy will be written and submitted to the Vice Provost and Assistant Registrar for Schedules and Catalogs to ensure that catalog copy is prepared and ready for the next catalog, 2010-2011.