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Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning
Concentration: Social Studies Education

Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology
College of Education
Georgia State University

Program Overview

The Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning with a concentration in Social Studies Education is unique in that it prepares scholars from across the multiple areas of social studies education, including educational studies in the various social sciences, such as economics, geography, history, sociology, psychology, political science/government, area studies, women’s studies, and multicultural issues. At sister institutions, such areas might comprise separate Ph.D. programs; however, at Georgia State University (GSU), students from all of these areas are brought together to study under the umbrella of Social Studies Education.

This guidebook¹ has been prepared to provide prospective and current students with a detailed description of the experiences to expect when accepted as a doctoral student in Social Studies Education. This guidebook is updated on a yearly basis and is meant as a tool for understanding the program structure. This guidebook is not intended to replace or supersede the importance of developing and maintaining a close working relationship with a faculty advisor and committee members. In addition, students are expected to read and follow all GSU, College of Education, and departmental guidelines as stipulated in university policies, the GSU Graduate Catalog, and the College of Education Guide for Preparation of Prospectuses and Dissertations.

¹ This version of the Ph.D. in Social Studies Education Guidebook was last updated on March 19, 2009.
Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning  
Concentration: Social Studies Education

*Program Standards*

The Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning with a concentration in Social Studies Education is based on the following standards:

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<tr>
<th>Knowledge Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Research Methodologies</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate demonstrates general research competence including expertise in at least one research paradigm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Psychological and Social Foundations</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate develops an in-depth understanding of forces such as historical, social, political, psychological, and economic influences that affect education today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge in Major</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate develops an in-depth understanding of teaching and learning in social studies education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship in Major</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate engages in scholarship and creates new knowledge about teaching and learning in social studies education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge in Cognate</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate demonstrates an extended knowledge base, or cognate, that is associated with or that supports the major in social studies education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Identity/Service to the Profession</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate demonstrates a professional identity by his or her contributions to the community of scholars and educators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching/Professional Development</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate demonstrates leadership through teaching and providing professional development within social studies education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>The Ph.D. candidate understands and uses technology as a tool of inquiry for teaching and learning.</td>
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Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning  
Concentration: Social Studies Education  

Principles Guiding the Consideration of Program Applicants  

Program faculty use the following principles as guidelines when considering candidates’ applications:  

- All candidates must indicate a clear understanding of the research nature of the Ph.D. program and a dedication to becoming a contributing researcher-scholar in social studies education.  

- All candidates will complete an interview with faculty during the application/interview process.  

- All candidates with goals/interests related to teacher education should have a minimum of three years teaching experience at the P-12 level. Candidates’ academic background should include graduate coursework/study beyond the initial teacher preparation stage (i.e., Master’s level coursework for individuals certified through a Bachelor’s level program; Ed.S. level coursework for individuals certified through a Master’s level program.)  

- Candidates with goals related to social studies education at the college level should have Master’s level preparation related to their specific fields.
Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning (Language and Literacy Education)
College of Education
Georgia State University
Program Flow Chart

Program Admission Requirements (Application Deadlines: March 1 or October 1):

Minimum 3.30 overall graduate GPA
Master’s degree from an accredited institution
GRE (minimum 460 Verbal and 460 Quantitative)
or MAT (50th %ile or higher) within last five years
Two letters of recommendation
Résumé and writing sample
Goals statement related to research interests in social studies education
Qualified applicants complete a successful interview with program faculty.

Beginning of the Program
Meet with faculty advisor and begin working with doctoral advisory committee.

Recommended courses:
EPRS 8500 Qualitative/Interpretive Research
EPRS 8530 Quantitative Methods and Analysis
EDCI 8970 Seminar in Teaching and Learning
EPSF and/or EPY Core Area Courses
EDSS 8550 Trends and Issues in Social Studies

Key Requirements:
Purchase LiveText account to use for program and residency updates
Within first 27 hours …
Select doctoral advisory committee
Plan program of study
Plan residency activities

During the Program
Continue meeting with faculty advisor and working with committee members.

Recommended courses:
Research Track courses
EDCI 9660 Teaching and/or Research Internship
Finish EPSF and/or EPY Core Area Courses
Take Major and Cognate Area courses:
EDSS 8420 Special Topics in Social Studies
EDSS 8290 Learning, Curriculum and Instruction in Social Studies

Key Requirements:
Attend PSW sessions each semester
Submit program and residency updates
Take courses in program of study
Complete residency activities

Toward the End of the Program
Continue meeting with faculty advisor and working with committee members.

Recommended courses:
EDCI 9900 Critique of Educational Research
EDCI 9850 Research Seminar (Prospectus)
Finish Major and Cognate Area courses
Begin taking dissertation hours (9 hours total required)

Key Requirements:
Attend PSW sessions each semester
Submit program and residency updates
Take comprehensive exams
Complete residency report
Finalize dissertation committee
Write and defend prospectus
Application to doctoral candidacy
Apply for graduation

End of the Program
Continue meeting with faculty advisor and working with committee members.

Key Requirements:
Submit IRB Application
Complete dissertation hours (9 hours total required)
Conduct dissertation research
Write and defend dissertation
Submit final PDF version of dissertation to OAA

Important Websites:
www.ncss.org
www.area.net
www.gsu.edu
http://education.gsu.edu/
http://msit.gsu.edu/
www.livetext.com

Updated 3/19/09
Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning
Concentration: Social Studies Education

Monitoring of Student Progress

The following guidelines and procedures are used to monitor student progress so that students remain in good standing throughout the program:

- Each student must file an approved Program of Study form by the end of their first 27 semester hours or by the end of their first calendar year in the program. The Program of Study must include (1) a minimum of 18 semester hours in the College Core plus 9 semester hours of dissertation credits; (2) a minimum of 21 semester hours of coursework in the major area; and (3) a minimum of 18 semester hours in a cognate area. In total, the Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning (Concentration: Social Studies Education) requires a minimum of 66 semester hours.

- Students must register for at least a total of 6 semester hours of coursework during any period of three consecutive terms (fall, spring, summer) until completion of degree. In the College of Education, students must enroll for a minimum of 3 semester hours during at least two out of each three-term period following successful completion of the comprehensive examination until graduation. In order to graduate, students must be actively enrolled in the program of study during the semester they finish degree requirements for graduation.

- Students complete a Program of Study update at least once a year during Professional Standards Week in the Division of Language, Literacy, and Social Studies Education. Advisors present the update to the faculty, and recommendations for the student are constructed in light of each individual’s progress. Written feedback is provided to the student following this faculty evaluation. Students who receive two unsatisfactory reviews may put their status in the program in jeopardy.

- Students must maintain a 3.5 cumulative grade point average in the Ph.D. program of study.
• All students are expected to present their scholarly work at the local/state level and at the regional/national level, to attend national conferences, and to submit at least one manuscript for publication during the program.

• Minimum requirements for the Doctoral Residency must be met by all students (see “Program of Study Update” and “Doctoral Residency Update” in the section that follows). For the Residency requirements, all students are expected to complete both a teaching internship and a research internship/GRA. To meet the university Residency requirement, students must complete at least 36 semester hours at GSU after admission to the program (exclusive of dissertation credit).

• All students take EDCI 9850 as a regular course and attend class with other doctoral students as they prepare and draft their dissertation prospectuses. This course is not meant to replace or supersede the importance of close contact with the major advisor and committee members concerning prospectus drafting and final approval.

• Admission to doctoral candidacy must be achieved in seven (7) years from the time the first course on the program of study was taken (exclusive of dissertation credits). All degree requirements must be completed in nine (9) years from the time the first course on the program of study was taken.

• Transfer courses may be approved as part of the doctoral program of study and are indicated with an asterisk (*) on the Program of Study form (a transcript listing all transfer courses must be attached). All transfer courses must have a grade of “B” or better. When considering transfer credits, keep in mind that students must complete a minimum of 36 semester hours at GSU after admission to the Ph.D. program. Also keep in mind the time-to-degree requirements listed above. Decisions about transfer credits are made by the major advisor and doctoral advisory committee.
Name: 
Current Semester: 
Major Advisor: 
Semester Started: 
Semester Planned for Comps: 
Semester Planned for Prospectus: 
Semester Planned for Dissertation Defense:

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<th>Required Research Core Coursework (12 semester hours minimum):</th>
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<td><strong>Grade</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Social Foundations and Psychology of Learning Core Coursework (6 semester hours):</th>
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<td><strong>Grade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Semester Completed or Plan to Complete</strong></td>
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<th>Dissertation (9 semester hours minimum):</th>
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<td><strong>Grade</strong></td>
<td><strong>Semester(s) Completed or Plan to Complete</strong></td>
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<th>Major Area Coursework (21 semester hours minimum):</th>
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<td><strong>Grade</strong></td>
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<th>Cognate Coursework (18 semester hours minimum):</th>
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* Requirements pertain to those students who began in Fall 2007 or after. Updates should be cumulative across each student’s program.
## Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning (Concentration: Social Studies Education)
### Doctoral Residency Update

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residency Requirements</th>
<th>Semester Completed or Plan to Complete</th>
<th>Description of Completed Activity or Planned Activity</th>
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<td>Experience teaching preservice / inservice teachers or college students through grad...</td>
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<td>Experience collecting and analyzing data for research purposes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation experience at a local or state conference <em>(year, conference)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation experience at a national or international conference <em>(year, conference)</em></td>
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<td>Membership in a national professional organization and attendance at a national conf...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience writing and submitting manuscript(s) for consideration for publication <em>(year, submitted or published, journal)</em></td>
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<td>Experience participating in a writing support group at the beginning, middle, and end of coursework</td>
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<td>Service experience through involvement in the program, department, university, and/or local, state, or national professional organization</td>
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<td>Demonstrate use of technology as a tool of inquiry, pedagogy, and communication</td>
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Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning  
Concentration: Social Studies Education

Teaching and Research Internships

Working closely with their advisor and committee, students should select and plan teaching and research internships in relationship to their own professional goals and doctoral residency plans. For most Ph.D. students in Social Studies Education, both a teaching internship and a research internship are required as part of their program of study and doctoral residency. Before doctoral students are invited to teach courses in our program, we expect them first to complete a teaching internship with a faculty member. Before doctoral students reach the prospectus and dissertation stages of their program of study, we expect them to complete at least one research internship with a faculty member. Students may select from available internships with faculty each semester. Also, students should be aware that research internships may take more than one semester to complete. While the types of learning experiences involved in internships will vary, some possibilities are listed below.

What possible types of learning experiences might be involved in a teaching internship?

- Planning the course syllabus and course sessions with faculty
- Team-teaching class sessions with faculty
- Planning and teaching some class sessions on your own with faculty mentoring
- Responding to and evaluating student work with guidance and mentoring from faculty
- Learning more about adult learning theory and approaches that work in teacher education courses
- Debriefing on class sessions to reflect and grow as a teacher educator.

What possible types of learning experiences might be involved in a research internship?

- Experience with developing a research design and collecting data
- Experience with a review and synthesis of professional literature
- Hands-on experience with data management and analysis
- Experience with presenting research at a national or international conference
- Experience co-authoring and publishing a research article.
An Overview of the Written and Oral Comprehensive Examination Process

To be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, the student must have at least a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 in the doctoral Program of Study. The examination may be taken when all or nearly all Program of Study coursework is completed. Social Studies Education Ph.D. students are assessed in the major area of social studies education, in research methodology, and in their specific cognate area (i.e. economics, history, sociology, etc). Each student completes both written and oral comprehensive exams.

The student initiates the process of preparing for the comprehensive exam by contacting his or her major advisor approximately two-three months prior to the projected time of the written portion of the comprehensive exam. The student should work closely with his or her advisor and committee in planning for both the written and oral comprehensive exams.

Procedures for the Written Comprehensive Exam

The written comprehensive exam consists of an individual written examination designed in light of social studies education, research methodology, and the student’s specific area of interest. Students answer four questions in total: two general questions with respect to social studies education, one question with respect to research methodology, and one question in the student’s specific area of interest.

For the written examination, each student will demonstrate breadth of knowledge of the social studies education field in terms of understanding relevant contemporary theories, research, and the history of social studies education. The examination is administered in coordination with the committee members. The student should schedule the examination two months in advance and should check with chair of the committee, as well as committee members with respect to timing and location. The exam must be completed in four – three hour sessions. Students may not use any outside materials (such as books or journal articles) or the Internet during the written examination. The two general questions with respect to social
studies education should be completed on campus. The methodology and cognate questions can be completed either on campus, or in take-home format.

To plan for the written exam, the advisor assists the student by initiating contact with the committee members to let them know that the student is ready to prepare for the comprehensive exams. The doctoral committee, under the leadership of the student’s advisor, will determine appropriate questions and the context for the individual written examination.

Options regarding the individual written exam for each area (i.e., major, research, cognate) include the following:

- The amount of information provided to the student prior to testing regarding the focus of the exam (i.e., a topic to be addressed vs. a specific question or questions to be answered);
- The specific timeframe for the exam (i.e., when the student actually receives the questions and how long he or she is given to complete the exam);
- The location for the exam (i.e., at home vs. on campus);
- The resources the student is allowed to use during the exam, such as a list of references

Once the advisor has initiated contact with the committee about the comprehensive exam process, the student is encouraged to discuss with each committee member the possible areas or topics for each individual written exam question. Even though the process of planning for the individual written exam should be a process of negotiation between the student and the committee, the final decisions concerning the options for the student’s individual written exam are made by the committee.

Prior to the individual written exam, the advisor collects the individual written exam questions from the committee members and distributes each of these questions to the student at the time agreed upon by the committee. If the student selects the take-home model, the advisor should ensure that the student follows a focused timeframe for the take-home individual written exams.

After the program-wide comprehensive exam and the individual written comprehensive exam are completed, the advisor is responsible for collecting the students’ written exams and distributing copies to the committee members. These copies should include both the exam questions and the students’ written answers. Typically, committee members receive copies of questions and answers for all
areas of the exam. Once committee members receive the written exams and have been given some time to read and evaluate them, students are encouraged to contact each committee member to determine whether or not there are particular follow-up questions that may be asked at the oral examination. If committee members have major concerns about the quality of the student’s written exams, they should contact the student’s advisor prior to the oral exam.

**The Oral Comprehensive Exam**

The oral exam is typically scheduled two-three weeks after the written exams. The oral examination is attended by all members of the student’s committee. The purpose of the oral examination is to provide the student with an opportunity to expand upon and clarify his or her written responses and to allow committee members to ensure that the student has an in-depth understanding of the major area, research methodology, and the cognate. All members of the committee receive the complete set of the students’ written exam.

Students are encouraged to contact all committee members prior to the oral exam to determine if there are questions or specific areas a faculty member would like clarified in the oral exam. Students are expected to schedule their oral comprehensive exam during the fall or spring semesters. Note that faculty may not be available during the summer session.

Oral examinations last approximately 60-90 minutes. Each faculty member asks follow-up questions related to his/her own question(s) and may also participate in the discussion of the candidate’s responses to other faculty members’ questions.

**Evaluation of the Comprehensive Exam**

Unless otherwise noted, responses to the comprehensive examinations will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Demonstration of in-depth knowledge and/or expertise
- Integration of concepts and principles from the discipline(s)
- Clarity, logic and organization of responses
- Significance and number of sources cited from professional literature.

Students may be “passed” outright on both the oral and written sections, or they may be asked to complete a revision of answers to particular questions and
then return for an additional oral exam on that question or questions. Students who “fail” the written exam may also be asked to complete additional coursework prior to attempting the written/oral comprehensive again.

Students have two opportunities to pass the comprehensive examination. Students who do not pass the examination on the second attempt are not permitted to continue in the doctoral program.
Procedures for Writing and Defending the Dissertation Prospectus

Students are encouraged to explore possible topics for their dissertation as they encounter theory and research throughout the Social Studies Education doctoral program. Students are expected to enroll in EDCI 9850 toward the end of their coursework when they are ready to begin writing their actual prospectus. Enrollment in this course should take place only after the student has read widely on his or her proposed topic and is ready to begin the writing of the actual prospectus.

In EDCI 9850, students will read previously defended prospectuses, study possible organizational structures of the prospectus, take the Institutional Review Board (IRB) tests concerning research with human subjects, study IRB protocols including the submission of the IRB application, study academic and scholarly writing used in prospectuses, complete a draft of a full prospectus, and prepare a PowerPoint presentation of the prospectus draft. The course is also designed as a writing support group. Each class member reads and responds to others’ work and offers substantive feedback on the quality of the research, writing, and methodology.

Doctoral students in Social Studies Education enrolled in EDCI 9850 are responsible for close communication with their major advisor about their planned dissertation research topic, research questions, IRB approval, submission of required forms, prospectus and abstract, and prospectus defense. Successful completion of the prospectus for the purpose of the EDCI 9850 course does not guarantee that a prospectus will be approved by a dissertation committee. If a dissertation committee chair and/or committee deems the prospectus completed for the course assignment is not yet defensible, the candidate may be required to repeat EDCI 9850 in the subsequent semester to continue the conceptualization and revision process.

Upon the approval of the prospectus by all members of the Dissertation Advisory Committee (DAC), the DAC committee chair will sign a prospectus defense announcement attesting to agreement among committee members that minimum standards of research design, scholarly writing, and style expected of a doctoral student at the prospectus stage are evident.
The prospectus defense announcement and a copy of prospectus, with the Dissertation Advisory Committee chair’s signature, must be submitted to the department chair for review and signature at least seven calendar days prior to the deadline for submitting to the College of Education’s Office of Academic Assistance. The department chair will forward the prospectus defense announcement to the advisor with either a signature of approval or statement of concerns. It is the student’s responsibility to allow sufficient time for this process in advance of submitting to OAA in case any further revisions are required. A prospectus defense announcement must be submitted to the COE Office of Academic Assistance ten (10) working days prior to the date of the scheduled defense.

Students are strongly encouraged to schedule their prospectus defense during the fall or spring semester. Note that faculty may not be available during the summer session.
Ph.D. in Teaching and Learning
Concentration: Social Studies Education

Procedures for Writing and Defending the Dissertation

The student and the dissertation advisor work closely on the initial drafts of each chapter of the dissertation prior to submitting the penultimate draft to Dissertation Advisory Committee (DAC) members. Typically, each DAC member will have an opportunity to read the completed dissertation draft and determine whether further revisions are necessary prior to the scheduling of the dissertation defense. Students should work with their dissertation advisor and DAC committee members closely to determine how and when drafts of chapters will be shared.

Once committee members have agreed that a student is ready to proceed to the dissertation defense stage, the dissertation defense is scheduled. Students are strongly encouraged to schedule their dissertation defense during the fall or spring semester. Note that faculty may not be available during the summer session.

The final dissertation abstract and dissertation defense announcement form (with the Dissertation Advisory Committee chair’s signature) must be submitted to the department chair for review and signature at least seven calendar days prior to the deadline for submitting to the College of Education’s Office of Academic Assistance. The student should also present a copy of the dissertation draft to the department chair at this time. The department chair will forward the dissertation announcement form to the advisor with either a signature of approval or statement of concerns. It is the student’s responsibility to allow sufficient time for this process in advance of submitting to the OAA in case any further revisions are required. An abstract of the dissertation study and an announcement of the dissertation defense must be submitted to the COE Office of Academic Assistance ten (10) working days prior to the date of the scheduled defense.

The dissertation presentation is typically conducted through a PowerPoint presentation of approximately 20-30 minutes in length. This presentation and the subsequent oral defense are conducted at an open meeting that may be attended by other doctoral students and faculty. The doctoral candidate is expected not only to describe and explain the research, but also to justify research methods, findings, conclusions, and implications. Approval and acceptance of the dissertation requires a favorable vote of a majority of the Dissertation Advisory Committee. This majority must include no fewer than four members.