

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

**2023-2024**

## RESEARCH & EVALUATION METHODS



School of Education  
& Human Development

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

CU IN THE CITY



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## PREFACE

Your successful experience in the School of Education & Human Development (SEHD) is important to us. This *Research & Evaluation Methods Master of Arts Student Handbook* is a tool to ensure you maintain academic progress according to SEHD and University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) policies and procedures. Please take the necessary time to read this handbook. In addition to this handbook, students should refer to the *School of Education & Human Development Policies Handbook*, available on the [SEHD Student Resources Page](#).

**The student assumes full responsibility for meeting all basic requirements for the degree as well as the specific requirements outlined by their program.**

The University of Colorado Denver and the School of Education & Human Development reserve the right to make changes in the regulations, courses, rules, fees, or other content in this handbook without advance notice. No verbal modifications to the contents of this handbook are allowed. **All modifications must be in writing and approved by the SEHD prior to addition to the handbook.** The University of Colorado Denver is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). University of Colorado Denver's School of Education & Human Development is fully accredited by the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, and the National Association of School Psychologists.

### **Nondiscrimination**

The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, or political philosophy in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. The university takes action to increase ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity, to employ qualified disabled individuals, and to provide equal opportunity to all students and employees.

Qualification for the position and institutional need shall be the sole bases for hiring employees, and the criteria for retaining employees shall be related to performance evaluation, assessment of institutional need, fiscal constraints, and/or, in the case of exempt professionals, the rational exercise of administrative prerogative.

All students shall have the same fundamental rights to equal respect, due process, and judgment of them based solely on factors demonstrably related to performance and expectations as students. All students share equally the obligations to perform their duties and exercise judgments of others in accordance with the basic standards of fairness, equity, and inquiry that should always guide education.

History: Amended November 8, 2001; September 17, 2013.

## **Title IX Notice of Non-Discrimination**

The University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus (“the University”) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment. The University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, creed, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, political philosophy or political affiliation in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. ([Law of the Regents, Article 10](#)).

The University prohibition against any act of sexual misconduct or related retaliation applies to all students, faculty, staff, contractors, patients, volunteers, affiliated entities, and other third parties and applies to conduct that occurs on campus and off-campus conduct, including on-line or electronic conduct as noted in the University policy. Violations may be subject to disciplinary action. The University will consider what appropriate potential actions should be taken.

The University employs trained staff members who have responsibility for Title IX compliance. The Title IX Coordinator oversees the development, implementation, and evaluation of Title IX policies, procedures, and training efforts and will refer all reports to a trained Title IX Investigator. To submit a concern, please fill out the online form, noted above, or to ask further questions about Title IX, please contact the University Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator:

Campus Title IX Coordinator:

Will Dewese, Director of Equity/Title IX Coordinator  
Lawrence Street Center, 1380 Lawrence Street, Ste. 1443, Denver, CO 80204  
Phone: 1-303-315-0120  
Email: [TitleIX@ucdenver.edu](mailto:TitleIX@ucdenver.edu) or [william.dewese@ucdenver.edu](mailto:william.dewese@ucdenver.edu)

**WELCOME**

The School of Education & Human Development at the University of Colorado Denver welcomes you to the MA program in Education & Human Development. This handbook provides students with guidelines to the MA program, which are aligned with the University policy, Rules of the Graduate School and the SEHD.

**Program Faculty & Staff Contact Information**

<p>Academic Services Office: Lawrence Street Center (LSC) 701 303-315-6309 <a href="mailto:education@ucdenver.edu">education@ucdenver.edu</a></p>	<p>Geneva Sarcedo, PhD Academic Advisor Office: LSC 716 303-315-6351 <a href="mailto:Geneva.sarcedo@ucdenver.edu">Geneva.sarcedo@ucdenver.edu</a></p>
<p>Alan Davis, PhD Professor Office: LSC 1124 303-315-6322 <a href="mailto:Alan.Davis@ucdenver.edu">Alan.Davis@ucdenver.edu</a></p>	<p>Nancy Leech, PhD Professor Office: LSC 1128 303-315-6327 <a href="mailto:Nancy.Leech@ucdenver.edu">Nancy.Leech@ucdenver.edu</a></p>
<p>Courtney Donovan, PhD Clinical Assistant Professor Director, Faculty Research Center Office: LSC 610A 720-394-2273 <a href="mailto:Courtney.Donovan@ucdenver.edu">Courtney.Donovan@ucdenver.edu</a></p>	<p>Kent Seidel, PhD Associate Professor Director, Center for Practice Engaged Education Research (C-PEER) Office: LSC 608 303-315-0117 <a href="mailto:kent.seidel@ucdenver.edu">kent.seidel@ucdenver.edu</a></p>

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

As the demand for testing and assessment grows in education and beyond, the need for experts in the areas of statistical and qualitative research practice and data analysis has exploded. To meet this demand, University of Colorado Denver offers the MA in Research & Evaluation Methods as well as stand-alone graduate certificates.

### **Master of Arts in Research & Evaluation**

The MA in Research & Evaluation Methods prepares students to provide leadership in professional practice in the following responsibilities:

- (1) interpreting, analyzing, and applying research in educational settings;
- (2) applying knowledge about learning theories, developmental aspects of growth and learning, research methods and statistics, measurement, group dynamics and individual differences; and
- (3) applying inquiry skills and creative thought in solving practice-based problems.

You will learn the skills necessary for a variety of roles in educational and teaching settings or community environments where knowledge of learning, development, assessment, and research is essential. Many of our graduates also seek this MA as preparation for advanced study in educational psychology, assessment, research, and related fields. **This is not a licensure program. No license or certification will be issued upon successful completion of the program.**

All students in the program will acquire skills necessary for a variety of roles that involve data-driven decisions. You will be better prepared to facilitate decision-making based on evidence. Some students pursue the degree to enhance their skills as classroom teachers. Others move out of the classroom and work in environments where information and data from different sources can be used to make informed decisions.

### **Graduate Certificates**

Additionally, students can pursue one or more graduate certificate during their master's degree: Applied Measurement, Applied Statistical Modeling, Classroom Assessment, and/or Program Evaluation.

#### **Applied Measurement**

Measurement is vital to the social science field as we study people's aptitude, learning/achievement, experiences, personality traits, and states of being. The Measurement certificate will develop your expertise by combining measurement theories, statistical modeling techniques, and observing human behavior. Students learn to use, create, and validate measures through Classical Test Theory and Item Response Theory. Our students work with real data in applied environments with applications in education, policy, counseling, and psychology fields. Students learn to write for publication and to communicate results to practitioners, the direct users of these scales.



The certificate consists of four courses, totaling 12 credit hours, and may be earned in one year. Courses may be taken as part of the certificate as well as used toward the Master of Arts in Research and Evaluation Methods. This is a fully online program.

### **Applied Statistical Modeling**

The Applied Statistical Modeling certificate is an ideal endorsement for those looking to learn advanced modeling skills. These classes will teach you to think and reason with quantitative data, especially using large scale datasets. You will learn to build model to test conceptual frameworks and communicate findings in a manner that is useful to those working in applied/field settings.

The certificate consists of four courses, totaling 12 credit hours, and may be earned in one year. Courses may be taken as part of the certificate as well as used toward the Master of Arts in Research and Evaluation Methods. This certificate is available fully online and in a hybrid format.

Note: All students are required to meet a prerequisite in introductory statistics (RSEM 5100 Basic Statistics or equivalent) prior to taking courses in the Applied Statistical Modeling certificate.

### **Classroom Assessment**

The Classroom Assessment Certificate is designed for educators such as teachers, administrators, coaches, program leaders, and curriculum leaders, who desire to learn how to develop, select, use, administer, and interpret educational assessments.

The goal of this certificate is for participants to become well-informed assessment designers and developers, critical assessment consumers, assessment evaluators, and advocates of reliable, valid and fair assessments for culturally and linguistically diverse populations. Students will:

- Develop quality assessments, which provide reliable and valid information for making instructional decisions at the classroom and at the school level.
- Become aware of the role of classroom assessment in the context of high-stakes testing and how it can help to maximize student learning and achievement.
- Become critical users of assessment instruments and assessment information.
- Become users, developers, and advocates of assessments, which are fair, reliable, and valid for diverse populations.

The certificate is designed as a three-course sequence and one elective course. Each course in the three-course sequence is designed to provide knowledge and skills that are considered building blocks for the next courses. The three courses are designed around four ideas, which are spiraled in the courses and allow participants to achieve the learning goals: assessment development, evaluation of assessments (validity, reliability, and fairness), consumers of assessments (selection of assessments and interpretation of large-scale assessment data), and issues of validity, reliability, bias, and fairness of assessments for diverse populations. The elective course is chosen to complement students' academic and professional goals and interests.

The certificate consists of four courses, totaling 12 credit hours, and may be earned in one year. Courses may be taken as part of the certificate as well as used toward the Master of Arts in Research and Evaluation Methods. This is a fully online program.

### **Culturally Responsive Methods**

This certificate focused on learning to use culturally responsive methods. This involves deep critical thinking skills and the ability to combine methodologies in the context of societal and cultural settings.

One of the unique things about this certificate is that it is under SEHD which values and directly teaches how important diversity is, how we need to be inclusive of all, and how to show respect to all persons in all aspects of research. Courses in this certificate address bias and equity concerns in data collection, coding bias, interpretation bias, cultural validity, and care when reporting.

The certificate consists of four courses, totaling 12 credit hours, and may be earned in one year. Courses may be taken as part of the certificate as well as used toward the Master of Arts in Research and Evaluation Methods.

### **Program Evaluation**

Evaluation specialists are in high demand! The Program Evaluation certificate provides both the theoretical knowledge and real-world experience to make our students well rounded, career-ready evaluators.

In this four-course series, students learn leading theories of program evaluation, explore evaluation design processes, and gain practical experience by developing and conducting at least one evaluation for a client. Students learn to collaborate with stakeholders to design meaningful evaluations, develop strong quantitative and qualitative analytical skills, examine ethical considerations in evaluation, and construct reports to target multiple program users. Examples and experiences provided are varied within P-12 school settings, non-profit and community settings, large scale policies, and culturally responsive evaluation.

The certificate consists of four courses, totaling 12 credit hours, and may be earned in one year. Courses may be taken as part of the certificate as well as used toward the Master of Arts in Research and Evaluation Methods. This certificate is available fully online and in a hybrid format.

**COURSE PLANS**

**Master of Arts in Research & Evaluation**

<b>Semester Typically Offered</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Cr</b>	<b>Semester Planned</b>	<b>Semester Completed</b>
<b>Required Courses</b>				
All	RSEM 5100 Basic Statistics	3		
All Fall	RSEM 5120 Introduction to Research Methods OR RSEM 7000 Doctoral Seminar in Research Methods	3		
All	RSEM 5110 Introduction to Measurement	3		
Fall	RSEM 7110 Intermediate Statistics	3		
Spring	RSEM 7080 Methods of Qualitative Inquiry	3		
Spring	RSEM 7210 Program Evaluation	3		
<b>Choose 3 of the following:</b>				
As Offered	RSEM 6200 Single Case Research Design for Education	3		
Summer	RSEM 7050 Methods of Survey Research	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7100 Advanced Methods of Qualitative Inquiry	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7120 Advanced Methods of Quantitative Inquiry & Measurement	3		
Spring	RSEM 7150 Mixed Methods Research	3		
As Offered	5000+ Level RSEM course with faculty advisor approval	3		
<b>Choose 1 of the following:</b>				
All	RSEM 6950 Master's Thesis	3		
All	RSEM 5840 Independent Study	3		
All	RSEM 5910 Practicum in Research & Evaluation Methods	3		
	<b>Total Credits for MA</b>	<b>30</b>		

**Graduate Certificate in Applied Measurement**

<b>Semester Typically Offered</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Cr</b>	<b>Semester Planned</b>	<b>Semester Completed</b>
<b>Required Course</b>				
Fall	RSEM 7110 Intermediate Statistics	3		
<b>Choose 3 of the following:</b>				
All	RSEM 5110 Introduction to Measurement	3		
Summer	RSEM 7050 Methods of Survey Research	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7130 Advanced Measurement using Item Response Theory	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7800 Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling	3		
All	RSEM 5840 Independent Study [an independent project focused on measure creation or validation]	3		
	<b>Total Credits for Certificate</b>	<b>12</b>		

**Graduate Certificate in Applied Statistical Modeling**

<b>Semester Typically Offered</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Cr</b>	<b>Semester Planned</b>	<b>Semester Completed</b>
<b>Required Course</b>				
Fall	RSEM 7110 Intermediate Statistics	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7800 Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling	3		
<b>Choose 2 of the following:</b>				
As Offered	RSEM 7120 Advanced Methods of Quantitative Inquiry & Measurement	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7700 Multi-Level Data Modeling	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7130 Advanced Measurement using Item Response Theory	3		
As Offered	RSEM 7140 Management & Secondary Analysis of Large Datasets	3		
	<b>Total Credits for Certificate</b>	<b>12</b>		

Note: All students are required to meet a prerequisite in introductory statistics (RSEM 5100 Basic Statistics or equivalent) prior to taking courses in the Applied Statistical Modeling certificate.

**Graduate Certificate in Classroom Assessment**

<b>Semester Typically Offered</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Cr</b>	<b>Semester Planned</b>	<b>Semester Completed</b>
<b>Required Course</b>				
Spring	RSEM 5600 Issues in Assessment Development	3		
Summer	RSEM 5610 Formative and Summative Assessment in the Classroom	3		
Fall	RSEM 5620 Analyzing, Using, and Reporting Assessment Results	3		
<b>Choose 1 of the following:</b>				
All	RSEM 5080 Research In Schools	3		
All	RSEM 5100 Basic Statistic	3		
Summer	RSEM 7050 Methods of Survey Research	3		
All	RSEM 5840 Independent Study [an independent project focused classroom assessment]	3		
	<b>Total Credits for Certificate</b>	<b>12</b>		

**Graduate Certificate in Culturally Responsive Methods**

<b>Semester Typically Offered</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Cr</b>	<b>Semester Planned</b>	<b>Semester Completed</b>
<b>Required Courses</b>				
Fall	RSEM 7400 Culturally Responsive Research & Evaluation Methods	3		
<b>Choose 1 of the following:</b>				
All	RSEM 5120 Introduction to Research Methods	3		
Fall	RSEM 7000 Doctoral Seminar in Research	3		
<b>Choose 1 of the following:</b>				
Spring	RSEM 7210 Program Evaluation in Schools	3		
Fall	RSEM 7220 Program Evaluation Theory and Design	3		
<b>Choose 1 of the following:</b>				
As Offered	ETST 5000 Research Methods in Ethnic Studies	3		
As Offered	5000+ Level ETST course with faculty advisor approval	3		
Fall	RSEM 7200 Ethnography			
Fall	STME 7020 Power of Data	3		
All	RSEM 5840 Independent Study [an independent project focused on culturally responsive methods]	3		
	<b>Total Credits for Certificate</b>	<b>12</b>		

**Graduate Certificate in Program Evaluation**

<b>Semester Typically Offered</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Cr</b>	<b>Semester Planned</b>	<b>Semester Completed</b>
<b>Required Course</b>				
Spring	RSEM 7080 Methods of Qualitative Inquiry	3		
Fall	RSEM 7110 Intermediate Statistics	3		
<b>Choose 2 of the following:</b>				
Spring	RSEM 7210 Program Evaluation	3		
As Offered	7500 Program Evaluation Theory and Design	3		
All	RSEM 5840 Independent Study [an independent project focused on program evaluation]	3		
	<b>Total Credits for Certificate</b>	<b>12</b>		

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENTS**

The faculty integrates formative and summative assessments of students' learning across the entire program. Assessments are designed to provide information at both the student and program levels. All assessments are linked to the desired program outcomes.

### **Faculty Course Questionnaires**

Faculty Course Questionnaires (FCQs) are administered according to university rules at the end of each course. Results of these questionnaires are reviewed by course instructors, the C&I Program Leader, and Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Research. Student feedback is used to make inform improvements.

### **Student Exit and Follow-up Surveys**

Program assessment of the curriculum and culminating experiences is also accomplished through student exit and follow-up surveys. Within the SEHD, a formal system exists to conduct exit and follow-up surveys of program graduates, thereby allowing tracking of student placement or advancement in professional jobs following degree completion and documenting the long-term success of graduates.

### **Program Review**

Data from the program assessments (diversity assessment, comprehensive exams, course outcomes, and individual course assessments) as well as on student recruitment, retention, and career placements are examined yearly through a school- wide continuous improvement process linked to the SEHD and the university's accrediting bodies. Engaging in this process allows the doctoral faculty to determine if various courses and experiences are addressing the goals and outcomes of the program. Ongoing curriculum, instruction and assessment refinements are made based on these data. In addition, periodic program reviews are required and conducted by the campus-level office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. These assessments of program quality are used to modify curriculum and program delivery as necessary. All efforts and rationale for changes are fully documented in accreditation reports.

Academic outcomes assessment of student learning is conducted through these multiple and varied assessments in an ongoing and systematic way across individual students, courses, and at the program level to meet the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association's ten-year accreditation review. Finally, through our extended partnership activities, input is continuously sought from current students, graduates, and the educational community about new issues that should be addressed by the curriculum.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

All of the processes and procedures within the MA program are within the guidelines of the *School of Education & Human Development Student Policy and Procedures Handbook* found at the [SEHD Student Resources Page](#). Students should refer to the SEHD Policy and Procedures Handbook for information on all SEHD policies and procedures.

### **FERPA**

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." ~ U.S. Department of Education. (See Appendix D.)

### **Advising**

Students will be assigned a faculty adviser **and** an academic advisor. Students should rely on their faculty adviser for course selection and questions relating to their career goals and aspirations. The academic adviser for the program should be consulted for process questions (i.e., registration, forms). **Students should meet with their faculty advisor at least once per semester and may be blocked from registering until they have met with their faculty advisor.**

### **UCDAccess**

UCDAccess is the student portal you will use to register for classes, check your grades, view financial aid, pay your tuition, etc. You will login using your official University username and password. You can login at the UCDAccess website located at <https://portal.prod.cu.edu/UCDAccessFedAuthLogin.html>.

### **Email**

**University E-mail is an official means of communication for students at the CU Denver. All official university e-mail will be sent to each student's assigned a CU Denver e-mail address.**

CU Denver will *only* use CU Denver student e-mail accounts if it elects to send e-mail communications to students. CU Denver e-mail accounts are available through IT Services. Students are responsible for reading e-mails received from CU Denver.



### **Forwarding your CU Denver Email**

Students are discouraged from forwarding their CU Denver email to an external account (Gmail, Yahoo, etc.). Students are **strongly** encouraged to regularly check their CU Denver email to ensure you are receiving all messages sent from the university.

### **Canvas**

Canvas is the online learning management system used by CU Denver, which allows you to access course material, interact with other students, submit assignments online, take quizzes, and engage in online classes. You can login to Canvas at <https://ucdenver.instructure.com/> using your University username and password.

### **Grade Requirements**

To maintain satisfactory academic progress students are required to maintain a minimum GPA of “B” (3.0). Failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA will result in students being placed on academic probation. Courses in which grades below “B-” (2.7) are received cannot be applied toward fulfillment of the requirements for any graduate (PhD or Master’s) degree, and consequently, the course must be retaken in order to achieve a B- or better grade. However, all grades received, including repeat courses, will appear on the student’s transcript and will be included in the GPA calculation, but only one course enrollment may be counted towards graduation credits.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (‘I’) should refer to the SEHD [Application for Incomplete Grade](#) for the full policy and form.

**Please note that grades of I, W, NC, and F do NOT satisfy financial aid requirements.**

### **Grade Appeals Process**

The steps in the program grade appeals process are as follows:

1. The student appeals to the individual faculty member.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor’s decision, he or she can follow the Academic Appeals Process outlined at <https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/academic-appeal-process> through the Student Committee in the School of Education & Human Development.

### **Transfer Credits**

The MA program will transfer a **maximum of 9 semester credit hours**. Students should refer to the Request for Transfer of Credit form for the full policy and process found at <https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources>.

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## **Culminating Experience**

All students must complete a final culminating experience in the MA in Research & Evaluation Methods, and can choose between an independent study, practicum, or thesis. Students should consult with their faculty advisor as they weigh their options for the capstone to choose the option which best matches the academic and professional goals.

### **Independent Study**

The independent study is most appropriate for the student who will benefit by developing expertise on a particular topic. For example, a student who has begun a consulting practice working with parents of children who are struggling in school may want to develop an in-depth knowledge of Attention Deficit Disorder, including the etiology and diagnosis of the condition, and research on treatments and design of interventions. The student will work out a plan with his or her faculty advisor to complete a synthesis of literature on the topic or other scholarly product driven by an applied purpose.

### **Practicum**

The practicum is a supervised onsite professional working experience, similar to an internship, and focusing on a particular project, which is jointly supervised by a worksite supervisor and the student's faculty advisor. The practicum requires 225 clock hours in the worksite, which includes "indirect" time such as online research, preparation of materials, and report writing.

The practicum provides an introduction to the target work environment, with opportunities for networking and demonstrating qualifications to a prospective employer. The practicum project must be a valuable learning experience for the student, and also be of value to the hosting organization, and the details of the project are negotiated in advance by the faculty advisor, site supervisor, and the graduate student.

The student and the faculty advisor first meet together to agree on a worksite and focus for the practicum. They then meet with the onsite supervisor and work out a plan that includes a list of objectives, activities associated with each objective and a plan for evaluation. The evaluation and grade are determined jointly by the onsite supervisor and the faculty advisor, and submitted to the university by the faculty advisor. The student should keep a log of practicum activities. A written report on the experience, responding to the practicum objectives, may or may not be required, as determined by the faculty advisor.

### **Thesis**

The thesis provides experience in conducting an empirical investigation, but provides a great deal of flexibility based on students' interests. The investigation may be qualitative (involving interviews and observation) or quantitative (involving measured variables) or mixed-methods and should address a question of practical importance to the student.

The student will work out a research plan with his or her faculty advisor and produce a thesis to the specifications of the Graduate School's Style and Policy Manual for Theses and Dissertations.

Please visit <https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/master's-thesis> for additional information on the thesis.

### **Registration for Culminating Experiences**

To register for an individualized "special study" course such as practicum, independent study, or thesis, you will need to complete a Special Processing Form, available at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/Registrar-dev/Documents/FormStorage/SpecialProcessingForm.pdf>.

Students should complete the Student Section and sign it, and work with their faculty advisor, or practicum/independent study/thesis supervisor if it is not your faculty advisor, to complete the Independent Study/Thesis Completion Contract section. Essentially, this section is for students and faculty to be on the same page. It is recommended students use the questions in this section to guide their discussion with faculty.

Completed Special Processing Forms with student and faculty signatures (or a forwarded email indicating approval in lieu of a physical signature from faculty) should be submitted to the Academic Advisor via email for processing. Students will either be automatically enrolled in the course or emailed when registration information once it is available.

### **Comprehensive Exam**

All students must successfully pass a written comprehensive exam, also known as COMPS, prior to graduation. COMPS is a take-home essay exam to be completed during students' final semester in the program.

Students are able to sign up for COMPS at [https://forms.ucdenver.edu/secure/sehd\\_comps](https://forms.ucdenver.edu/secure/sehd_comps). The deadline to register for COMPS is always Census Date for the term in which you intend to complete COMPS, which can be found on the academic calendar at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/Registrar-dev/CourseListings/Pages/AcademicCalendar.aspx>.

General information about COMPS is available at <https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/student-resources/comps>.

## **Graduation Requirements**

Students must:

1. Complete all coursework
2. Maintain a 3.0 grade point average
3. Receive no lower than a B- in all coursework (see Grade Requirements above)
4. Satisfactorily complete a Capstone
5. Pass a Comprehensive Exam

## **Timetable for Completion**

The MA program has a time limit of 7 years. That said, there may be extenuating circumstances that require a student to stop out of her/his studies and return at a later date. Students may apply for extensions to their timetable; these requests will be considered by the program faculty. However, students must complete the requirements of their program within a maximum of 8 years from term of admission. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the program.

## **Academic Probation and Dismissal**

If, at any time, a student's cumulative graduate grade point average (GPA) after matriculation falls below 3.00 (some graduate programs may require that a higher GPA be maintained) the student will be placed on academic probation. Probationary full-time students have 2 semesters, probationary part-time students have 4 semesters, in which to raise their cumulative GPA to a 3.00 (or greater if required by the program) for removal from academic probation (calculated using **all** graduate-level courses since matriculation, including graduate courses that a student enrolled in outside his/her main program). In addition, a minimum GPA of 3.00 (or greater if required by the program) must be maintained in each probationary term. Students who fail to meet the conditions of probation are subject to dismissal from the School of Education and Human

Development. Any student who is dismissed following unsuccessful academic probation or failure to meet his/her program's guidelines for satisfactory academic progress may reapply for admission to the same or a different graduate program only after 1 year. The student should consult with the Program Director before applying.

Probation also may be imposed for other reasons related to unsatisfactory academic progress and for unprofessional behavior, including honor code violations and conduct that violates the integrity of training and research. In such instances, the length and specific conditions of the probationary period will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## **Removal from Probation**

Once the student's GPA has been recalculated and shown to be 3.00 or above, and/or other specified conditions of the probationary status have been met, the student will be notified by email, with a copy of the notification sent to the student's program.

### **Probation and Graduation**

A student cannot take a milestone exam (comprehensive exam or thesis defense) or obtain a degree from CU Denver while on probation.

### **Graduation**

Students MUST file an application for graduation! Apply through your [UCDAccess](#) student portal to notify the Office of the Registrar of your intent to confer your degree by the posted deadlines. Full instructions can be found at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/registrar/degrees/Pages/Graduation.aspx>.

### **CU Denver Student Code of Conduct**

As members of the CU Denver community, students are expected to uphold University standards, which include abiding by state, civil and criminal laws and all University policies and standards of conduct. These standards assist in promoting a safe and welcoming community.

The University strives to make the campus community a place of study, work and residence where people are treated, and treat one another, with respect and courtesy. The University views the student conduct process as a learning experience that can result in growth and personal understanding of one's responsibilities and privileges within both the University community and the greater community. Students who violate these standards will be subject to the actions described below. These procedures are designed to provide fairness to all who are involved in the conduct process.

### **Philosophy of Student Conduct**

The Office of Community Standards and Wellness views the conduct process as a learning experience that helps students to understand their responsibility both to themselves and their living and learning community. We strive to learn from one another in an educational environment that holds mutual respect for individuals and community in high regard and self-responsibility for behaviors. Behavior that conflicts with established

standards, policies and guidelines may be referred for conduct proceedings. Every member of the student community must assume responsibility for becoming educated about the various University and housing standards, policies, and guidelines. It is against the basic nature of this community for anyone to demean or discriminate against another human being. A caring, educational community does not tolerate physical or psychological threats, harassment, intimidation, or violence directed against a person. Such behavior is subject to the University conduct processes.

### **Diversity**

We are committed to a campus community where diversity is appreciated and valued, and where all individuals are treated fairly and with respect. We encourage curiosity, open communication,



continuous learning, and community service as ways to create a socially just environment. We support the right to respectful disagreement with ideas and philosophies different from their own. However, we do not permit any form of behavior that places anyone in dangerous, discriminatory, or harassing environments. As a community, we expect all community members to work towards these same goals.

The full CU Denver Student Code of Conduct can be found at:

<http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/standards/Documents/CU Denver-CodeofConduct.pdf>.

Students should also refer to individual program handbooks for additional, specific, information regarding expectations related to professional behaviors and/or ethical standards.

### **SEHD STUDENT HONOR CODE**

Education at CU Denver is conducted under the honor system. All students entering an academic program should have developed the qualities of honesty and integrity, and each student should apply these principles to his or her academic and subsequent professional career. All students are expected to achieve a level of maturity which is reflected by appropriate conduct at all times. The type of conduct which violates the School of Education & Human Development's Student Honor Code may include but is not limited to the following:

#### **Academic Dishonesty**

1. Plagiarism
2. Cheating
3. Fabrication, falsification and deception
4. Multiple submissions
5. Misuse of academic materials
6. Complicity
7. Intoxication
8. Unprofessionalism
9. Disruptive or disorderly conduct or any violation of the Student Code of Conduct

Students are expected to know, understand, and comply with the ethical standards of the University. In addition, students have an obligation to inform the appropriate official

of any acts of academic dishonesty by other students of the University. Academic dishonesty is defined as a student's use of unauthorized assistance with intent to deceive an instructor or other such person who may be assigned to evaluate the student's work in meeting course and degree requirements.

#### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the use of another person's distinctive ideas or words without acknowledgment. The incorporation of another person's work into one's own required appropriate identification and acknowledgment, regardless of the means of appropriation. The following are considered to be forms of plagiarism when the source is not noted:



1. Word-for-word copying of another person's ideas or words.
2. The mosaic (the interspersing of one's own words here and there while, in essence, copying another's work).
3. The paraphrase (the rewriting of another's work, yet still using their fundamental idea or theory).
4. Fabrication of references (inventing or counterfeiting sources).
5. Submission of another's work as one's own.
6. Neglecting quotation marks on material that is otherwise acknowledged.

Acknowledgment is not necessary when the material used is common knowledge.

### **Cheating**

Cheating involves the possession, communication, or use of information, materials, notes, study aids or other devices not authorized by the instructor in an academic exercise, or communication with another person during such an exercise. Some examples of cheating include:

1. Copying from another's paper or receiving unauthorized assistance from another during an academic exercise or in the submission of academic material;
2. Using any electronic, or digital, or technological or other device when its use has been disallowed;
3. Collaborating with another student or students during an academic exercise without the consent of the instructor.

### **Fabrication, Falsification and Deception**

Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information, e.g., creating results not obtained in a study or research. Falsification, on the other hand, involves deliberately altering or changing results to suit one's needs in an experiment or other academic exercise. Deception is providing false information or knowingly withholding information.

### **Multiple Submissions**

This is the submission of academic work for which academic credit has already been earned, when such submission is made without instructor authorization.

### **Misuse of Academic Materials**

The misuse of academic materials includes, but is not limited to, the following

1. Stealing or destroying library or reference materials or computer programs;
2. Stealing or destroying another student's notes or materials, or having such materials in one's possession without the owner's permission;
3. Receiving assistance in locating or using sources of information in an assignment when such assistance has been forbidden by the instructor;
4. Illegitimate possession, disposition, or use of examinations or answer keys to

- examinations;
5. Unauthorized alteration, forgery, or falsification; and
  6. Unauthorized sale or purchase of examinations, papers, or assignments.

### **Complicity in Academic Dishonesty**

Complicity involves knowingly contributing to another's acts of academic dishonesty.

### **Intoxication**

This is defined as being under the influence of drugs or alcohol in any University setting, classroom setting, practicum/internship, professional development school/site, computer lab or shared student space that compromises the student's ability to learn and participate in educational activities, interferes with the learning process of other students and/or customers and clients of the School of Education & Human Development. Students who have difficulties with alcohol and/or other substances may seek assistance from services available on campus such as the CU Denver Student/Community Counseling Center.

### **Unprofessional Behavior**

Any conduct including electronic communications, both on and off campus, that interfere with the student's ability to maintain professional standards as defined in program handbooks, professional codes of ethics, University policies or procedures or reflects poorly on the student, School of Education & Human Development or University is prohibited.

### **Disruptive or Disorderly Conduct**

Disruptive or disorderly conduct in any University setting or partner setting, such as the disregard of rights of faculty, staff, administration and peers, threatening behaviors in any medium of communication and sexual harassment are examples of disruptive and disorderly conduct and a violation of the University Code of Student Conduct is prohibited. The Code of Student Conduct can be found by visiting the Office of Community Standards and Wellness website at [www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/standards](http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/standards).

All proceedings concerned with academic dishonesty are confidential to the extent permitted by law. A student accused of academic dishonesty has the right to:

- Admit to the charges and accept the penalty imposed by the instructor. If the student admits to the charges, the faculty member will invoke an appropriate penalty, which could include the issuance of a failing grade in the course. If the faculty member believes further action is warranted, then the faculty member may request a hearing of the Academic Ethics Committee, which will determine if further action is necessary; or
- Dispute the charges or the penalty by following the Student Academic Appeal process.



### **Leaves of Absence**

A student may take periodic leaves of absence from the program, as long as the total time to the completion of the degree does not exceed seven years. A student may take up to two semesters of approved leave of absence without having to apply for readmission to the program upon her/his return. Any student gone for more than 3 semesters MUST re-establish residency and apply for readmission.

### **Medical Withdrawal Policy**

Students diagnosed with either physical or psychological medical conditions that significantly impact their safety or ability to be academically successful are eligible to petition for a medical withdrawal. A student who wishes to withdraw under the Medical Withdrawal Policy must withdraw from all classes; partial withdrawals are not permitted. Additionally, international students must contact their assigned International Services Specialist to discuss visa implications associated with withdrawing. Students seeking to withdraw for non-medical reasons will need to review the withdrawal policies and procedures for their respective school or college.

The official request for a Medical Withdrawal and all appropriate documentation of the medical condition must be submitted online at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/care/case/Pages/medical-withdrawals.aspx>. The Office of Case Management will review all requests for medical withdrawals; Case Managers may request the student provide additional documentation or clarification when necessary. **All required documentation must be attached to the request to receive full consideration.** Questions can be directed to the Office of Case Management Staff at 303-352-3579.

### **Disability Resources and Medical Issues**

Students with a disability or a serious medical issue should consult with the Disability Resources and Services (DRS) office. The DRS encourages students to self-identify and make their needs known at the beginning of each semester. It is the students' responsibility to initially seek out services. Unless you contact their office, no one will be aware of your needed accommodations. Documentation must be provided to the DRS before any accommodations will be made.

### **Conflict Resolution Protocol**

Teaching and learning are collaborative endeavors. Just as any close relationship requires excellent communication and problem-solving skills, so do professional relationships. **Every student will inevitably encounter conflict during their preparation and should expect to encounter conflict in their professional career.** Having the skills and the experience to successfully navigate conflict are an essential part of doctoral preparation. We coach students to apply “guiding principles” to a helpful “conflict resolution process” that starts with analyzing/defining the problem, considering potential solutions and their effects and then deciding on a practical action.



The **principles** underlying conflict resolution are:

1. Individuals filter experiences through personal lenses. A person's standards or norms may be different from another person's, resulting in different perceptions of a problem.
2. Those who are in the situation can usually best solve the problem, not someone outside of the situation. If at all possible, individuals ought to talk to the person perceived to be a part of the problem, rather than to others. If needed, a person ought to first speak to an academic adviser who can offer coaching around language and ways to interact with the person.
3. Most problems are best solved when addressed as soon as possible. Problems that fester are harder to solve. Consider setting up a private meeting that works well for individuals involved.
4. Most people act and talk with good intentions. Try to understand what the other person's intentions might have been and/or assume that they may have been positive even if you didn't perceive them that way. However part of problem solving includes analyzing whether intentions matched the action perceived by the other person.
5. In approaching another person about a problem, it is usually helpful to be prepared to suggest *several* possible resolutions. In fact, a first idea may not always be the most satisfying to everyone involved.
6. Individuals have a tendency to assume that the other person involved in problem solving has not listened when they do not agree. Although this is possible, it is not necessarily the case. When one feels that s/he has not been listened to, ask the other person to summarize what s/he has heard. One may find that the person has listened but simply doesn't agree.
7. Practice confidentiality! Resist the urge to share the issue with others not involved in the problem, including those in a university class or peers. Please know, though, that university faculty and the academic adviser are helpful mentors and "sounding boards." They are always willing to help navigate conflict by coaching with this protocol!
8. Avoid the tendency to make generalities regarding the situation (i.e., everyone in our class feels this way;" "all of these students think and act alike").
9. When problems are well defined, resolutions follow more easily. To help define the problem, consider the following process:
  - *Suspend judgment.*
  - *Define the problem for yourself as clearly as you can at the point where you recognize that something is bothering you.*

- *Consider who/what is contributing to the problem. Consider your role in this issue.*
- *What is within your control and others' control regarding the problem? If the problem is outside of yours and others' control, practice acceptance.*
- *What do you suppose the other person's interpretation of the problem is?*
- *Put yourself in the other person's shoes.*
- *Now restate the problem. Are you ready to present the problem to those involved now?*

## **FINANCIAL AID**

Students must apply for financial aid every year. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available starting October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for the following academic year. It can be accessed by navigating to the Federal Student Aid website at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>. The [CU Denver Financial Aid and Scholarships Office](#) website has full information on financial aid policies and procedures.

**Note:** Financial aid is awarded on a first come, first served basis. We recommend that you file your federal tax returns as early in the calendar year as possible so that your tax data is available through the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) when completing the FAFSA application. Income tax return data is available through the DRT three weeks after electronic tax filing and eight weeks after paper tax filing.

More than 50% of our students take advantage of need-based financial aid awards and loans.

When available, we may also offer limited scholarships, grants, and work-study. The CU Denver Scholarship Office has information and resources and can be found at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/CostsAndFinancing/FASO/Do/Scholarships/Pages/default.aspx>.

### **Maymester and Summer Financial Aid**

The amount of financial aid offered to you for the fall and spring semesters may be at or near your yearly maximum and, if utilized in the fall and spring semesters, will leave you with little or no eligibility for Maymester or summer. If you plan to take summer classes, and will need loan assistance, then you will need to make plans during fall and spring semesters to budget your loan funds. You may want to reserve some funds for summer by reducing the amount of loans that you borrow during the school year.

If you opt to borrow your maximum loan eligibility during the fall and spring semesters, please contact Financial Aid at 303-315-1850 or [financialaid@ucdenver.edu](mailto:financialaid@ucdenver.edu) for more information on your summer options. You must be enrolled at least half-time (3 credit hours) to receive aid.



### **Public Service Loan Forgiveness**

If you are employed by a government or not-for-profit organization, you may be able to receive loan forgiveness under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. Learn more at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service>.

### **Scholarships**

We encourage you to apply for scholarships. Some are need-based while others are not. To apply for scholarships – university and SEHD), log in to your UCDAccess Portal at <https://portal.prod.cu.edu/UCDAccessFedAuthLogin.html>. Be sure to read the scholarship criteria carefully before applying. If you have questions about the application process, contact the Scholarship Resource Office at 303-352-3608.

Scholarship awards are determined by the School's scholarship committee which includes faculty and staff. Award amounts may vary semester to semester. If you aren't awarded a scholarship the first time you apply, reapply for any scholarship you are interested in if you continue to meet the criteria. Information on SEHD scholarships can be found at <https://education.ucdenver.edu/academic-services/financial-aid/scholarships>.