Program Mission and Vision

The Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership (HESAL) program is distinguished for weaving social justice throughout a curriculum of student development and leadership theories, law and policy, and research design. Our graduates develop an understanding of organizational dynamics and cultivate skills to provide effective leadership in a variety of student affairs, academic, and policy arenas. Excellence in professional practice and scholarly writing are emphasized throughout the program.

A distinguishing feature of doctoral education is its commitment to developing the next generation of researchers and scholars. To this end, each Ph.D. student must conduct an original research project under the supervision of a chair and doctoral committee. This is a highly individualized process that requires ongoing interaction with your committee chair and the HESAL faculty. There are at least four distinct steps in this process:

1) The submission of written comprehensive examinations and the doctoral committee’s approval of both the written and the oral comprehensive examinations.
2) The development, presentation, and acceptance of a dissertation proposal. At UNC the proposal includes chapters 1-3 of an eventual dissertation.
3) After approval from IRB the collection and analysis of empirical data as defined in step 1.
4) The submission of a completed dissertation (including all revisions) that is accepted by the doctoral committee.

HESA 797 - Course Description: Required dissertation proposal experience for all doctoral students. Four hours of credit must be earned in this course in partial fulfillment of requirements for doctoral degrees before admission to candidacy. S/U graded. Repeatable, maximum of four credits.

This course is designed to assist students in preparing for their comprehensive examinations and/or the research proposal that will ultimately guide their dissertations. Students must have the permission of their chair to enroll. In preparing the initial materials for the comprehensive examination, proposal, or the proposal itself, students must receive ongoing input from their research advisor and/or committee to ensure the work they are doing meets their standards. In many instances it will take students more than one
semester to complete a proposal that is acceptable to the committee. Therefore, students will not receive a final grade until their entire committee has approved the proposal. In most cases students should take HESA 797 only after successfully completing the necessary content, research design, and methodology courses. During the semester in which students are enrolled in HESA 797 it is expected that they will have regular contact with their committee chair and other committee members.

Course Objectives
This seminar is intended to support students as they prepare materials for comprehensive exams (as needed) and/or their doctoral research proposal. In addition, students receive help in understanding the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) and Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership (HESAL) policies and procedures associated with preparing for comprehensive examinations, research proposals, and conducting dissertation research. As a result of the seminar activities and assignments, students will:
1. Understand the major components included in the comprehensive examination (as needed), a research proposal, and the dissertation.
2. Become familiar with the UNC and HESAL policies and procedures associated with the comprehensive exams, preparing a research proposal, and conducting dissertation research.
3. Examine and critique dissertation proposals and dissertations.
4. Understand the importance of how to select a chairperson and work effectively with their research advisor and committee members.
5. Choose significant research ideas and complete an outline and a draft copy of portions or all of a literature review related to a chosen research topic. The guidance for this process will come primarily from their research/faculty advisor, and/or committee members. In addition, the instructor and student colleagues also provide support.
6. Select an appropriate research methodology or methodologies, with guidance primarily from their research/faculty advisor, and/or committee members. In addition, the instructor and student colleagues also provide support.
7. Continue to improve their conceptual, methodological, and scholarly writing skills.
8. Receive and use feedback appropriately.
9. Develop a network of doctoral student colleagues and others who can continue to support them in studying for comprehensive exams, working on their research proposals, and conducting their dissertation research.

Recommended Texts/Readings


Required Assignment(s)
If you are completing a written comprehensive exam:
1. Meet with instructor to plan out your timeline for when you will write your comprehensive exam.
2. Submit your request to take the doctoral comprehensive exam, if you have not already done so.
3. Submit your dissertation committee form, based upon the agreement of HESAL faculty who have agreed to serve on your committee and a faculty representative outside of the HESAL program.
4. Submit an outline of your comprehensive exam and review this outline with the instructor.
5. Contact the members of your committee to schedule a time for the oral examination (on campus) and then submit the appropriate form to schedule the oral exam to the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.

If you are completing your dissertation proposal:
1. Meet with your instructor to plan out a timeline for submission and review/revision of each chapter of your proposal.
2. Complete a draft of each chapter, beginning with chapter one, and send this draft to the instructor.
3. Revise each chapter, according to feedback from the instructor and any input from other committee members from the oral examination meeting.
4. Contact each member of your committee to schedule an on-campus hearing for your proposal after your committee chair(s) have approved each chapter of your proposal draft.

Important Note: Students cannot enroll for more than 4 credit hours of HESAL 797 as part of their doctoral program. You may divide the required four credit hours of HESAL 797 across semesters, as agreed upon with your program advisor and the instructor. For example, you may enroll in two credit hours in one semester and two additional hours the next semester, completing the comprehensive exam in the first semester and the proposal in the second semester of enrollment.

Grading
Students will receive a “S” grade signifying successful completion of the dissertation proposal when the dissertation proposal is filed, with any revisions suggested by the committee, by the student with the Graduate School. The results of students completing the written and oral doctoral comprehensive exams will be filed with the Graduate School upon the written agreement of all committee members but will not result in a grade for the class until the proposal is completed.

Meeting Dates
Individual meetings can be scheduled for May 20, June 10, June 24, August 8, and by arrangement. Regular communication with the instructor is the responsibility of the student and may include phone conversations as well as online communications.

Writing and Proper Citation: HESAL faculty members expect students to grow as writers and make this evident as they move through the program. Your ability to write independently and collaboratively as a doctoral student is a key consideration in my evaluation of the grade you earn in this course. You are encouraged to make links and
connections between the elements in the course and your writing. In scholarly writing your personal opinions have significantly less value than your ability to develop an informed argument using the existing literature.

APA, 6th Edition is the writing style required by the Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership Program and UNC’s Graduate School. Unless otherwise noted, papers for this course should be submitted in APA style, 6th edition. APA is more than just citations and headings; it is a specific style of writing. If you are unsure of how to properly paraphrase or cite a source in APA style, please seek assistance. The UNC bookstore usually carries the spiral bound versions that are more helpful than regular bound. Purdue University has a great APA resource online: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.

Religious Observances: Students will not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs. If you are not able to attend class due to your participation in religious observances, please inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

Students with disabilities: Any student requesting disability accommodations for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Diversity Statement: The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, and staff within CEBS will be accepting of differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples’ perspectives, behaviors, and world views may be different from their own.

Academic Integrity: The HESAL faculty expects that your work, and the work of the group, will demonstrate academic integrity and honesty. Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. It is my expectation that your work is properly referenced, and that you will not cheat on exams, plagiarize papers, or turn in the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization. The penalty for academic dishonesty is an “F” letter grade for the course and/or additional sanctions as permitted under University policy. If you are unsure of how to properly paraphrase or cite a source in APA style, we encourage you to seek assistance immediately.

Student Code of Conduct: You are held accountable to the UNC Student Code of Conduct: http://www.unco.edu/dos/communityStandards/student_code_conduct/

Specifically Section III-D details “Academic Integrity.” “The University does not tolerate any form of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and knowingly or recklessly encouraging or making possible any act of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication. Academic misconduct is an unacceptable activity in scholarship and is in conflict with academic and professional ethics and morals” (p. 8).
For definitions and a discussion of what all counts as plagiarism and how to avoid it, see *APA Manual* Chapter 6 and UNC’s resources.