

EDUCATION, DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PH.D.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN CURRICULUM, CULTURE AND CHANGE

Program goal

The curriculum, culture and change concentration offers a rigorous doctoral-level learning experience in curriculum and instruction, teacher education, and advocacy for social justice. The concentration prepares curriculum and instruction leaders for positions in school systems at the building level and above, as well as scholars with a wide range of interests — philosophical and sociocultural foundations of education, urban education, linguistically diverse groups, critical and culturally relevant pedagogy, anti-oppressive education, critical youth studies etc. In addition to a deep grounding in theoretical, practical and methodological approaches to curriculum and instruction, the concentration prepares instructional leaders to advocate for change across a wide range of institutions, systems and contexts. The concentration offers challenging learning experiences in the field of curriculum and instruction. Its expressed social justice values allow framing of courses in ways that provide critical analyses of contemporary schooling and ground students in the philosophical and historical roots of school change. The program welcomes students with interests in all institutional settings serving students across the life span (early childhood through adulthood) as well as informal and nonformal contexts. It also allows for discipline-specific inquiry in fields including but not limited to STEM, technology, history and literacy.

The concentration distinguishes itself by preparing curriculum and instruction leaders to be change agents capable of working in school systems, higher education and advocacy organizations. It reflects an activist stance toward the education profession — one that views schooling as not only shaped by society but also as an active force for equity and meaningful societal change. It will appeal to a wide range of students: those who are seeking to become instructional leaders in school systems, those preparing to teach in the academy and all those desiring a strong foundation in educational reform.

Student learning outcomes

Education core outcomes

- 1. Knowledge of foundations of educational research and design:** Students will demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge of theoretical and social issues of scholarly inquiry, policy and ethics of educational research and will demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge and skills essential to designing, conducting and interpreting qualitative and quantitative design research.
- 2. Application of leadership, research and/or professional skills:** Graduates will engage in and practice leadership, research and/or professional skills in a professional placement in a school, agency or corporate setting (e.g., school, agency, corporation).
- 3. Research design and implementation:** Graduates will design and conduct original educational research, including developing novel educational research questions, demonstrating proficiency in selecting the most appropriate study designs, demonstrating

proficiency in data collection, analysis and synthesis within the identified theoretical/ conceptual framework of study.

- 4. Oral and written communication skills:** Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills, framing questions appropriately and implementing active listening skills, developing effective presentations with respect to content, organization and appropriate use of language. Students will demonstrate proficiency in academic writing, including writing for publications and presentations.

Curriculum, culture and change concentration-specific outcome

1. Students will demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge and critical consciousness of theories of curriculum and instruction, advocacy and social justice and demonstrate in-depth understanding of one or more substantive theories related to research. Students will be able to appropriately link theoretical frameworks to the design, conduct and interpretation of educational research and demonstrate familiarity with the research literature and the ability to evaluate and critique publications appropriate to an independent educational researcher.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the [academic regulations section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements](https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/). (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/>)

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the [academic regulations section for additional information on graduation requirements](https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/). (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>)

Apply online today. (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>)

Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
Ph.D.	Summer or fall	Jan 15	GRE optional

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), the following represent the minimum requirements for admission:

1. Master's degree in curriculum and instruction, teaching and learning, educational philosophy or related discipline
2. Three letters of recommendation addressing the student's potential for graduate study in education
3. Statement of intent
4. Transcripts of all previous college work
5. Academic writing sample
6. Professional vitae/resume
7. A personal interview (may be requested)

If an applicant chooses to submit a GRE score, it will be considered holistically with other application materials. If an applicant chooses not to submit a GRE score, that decision will have no impact on the application review.

Please visit the School of Education website (<https://soe.vcu.edu/academics/doctoral-programs/phd-curriculum-culture/>) for further information.

Degree requirements

In addition to the VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), students are required to complete course work in core and elective courses.

1. Credit hour requirements: Students are required to complete a minimum of 60 credit hours.
2. Grade requirements: Receipt of a grade of C or below in three courses constitutes automatic dismissal from the program. Courses with a grade below C cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.
3. Externship requirement: Students must complete an approved externship.

4. Examination requirements: Students must pass both a qualifying examination early in the program and a comprehensive examination near the end of the program.
5. Dissertation requirements: Students must complete and defend a research dissertation.

Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
Foundation		
EDUS 702	Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship I	3
EDUS 703	Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship II	3
Research		
EDUS 608	Educational Statistics	3
EDUS 710	Quantitative Research Design	3
EDUS 711	Qualitative Methods and Analysis	3
• Collaborative research		3
EDUC 697 or EDUC 797	Collaborative Scholarship Directed Research	
• Research elective		3
Externship		
EDUC 700	Externship	3
Dissertation		
EDUC 899	Dissertation Research (minimum of six credit hours)	6
EDUS 890	Dissertation Seminar	3
Concentration courses		
EDUS 706	Educational Theory and Praxis in Historical and Contemporary Contexts	3
EDUS 707	Socio-cultural Perspectives on Schooling, Society and Change	3
TEDU 617	Tensions in Educational Theory	3
TEDU 730	Teacher Education and Professional Development	3
TEDU 731	Exploring Research in Classrooms	3
TEDU 732	Advanced Seminar in Curriculum Studies	3
Electives (chosen in consultation with adviser)		9
Total Hours		60

The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 60.

Students who complete the requirements for this concentration will receive a Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

Contact

Enrollment Management
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Additional contact

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Program website: soe.vcu.edu/academics/doctoral-programs/phd-curriculum-culture (<https://soe.vcu.edu/academics/doctoral-programs/phd-curriculum-culture/>)