

## **REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS BEYOND FIVE-YEARS OF CANDIDACY FOR EDD AND PHD STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES**

### **Background:**

Acceptance into a graduate program of study and enrollment in graduate courses does not in itself confer doctoral candidacy. Candidacy occurs after the student has satisfactorily passed a comprehensive or qualifying examination, which occurs after coursework has been completed. Once candidacy begins, the doctoral student (EdD or PhD) begins a 5-year time period in which the dissertation is to be proposed, conducted, and defended before the student graduates. The 5-year time frame extends through the end of the semester in which the student had moved to candidacy 5 years previously. At least one credit hour must be completed for each fall and spring semester during candidacy; however, when working intensively with faculty, three credits of research should be taken. Periodically the CEHS Advising Office will send letters to doctoral students and the committee chairperson reminding them of the 5-year time limit and the semester by which they must complete the degree program.

This document conforms to the WVU Graduate Catalog, <http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/>, as well as previous years' catalogs dating back to at least 2000. Catalogs since that time frame have been verified to include the 5-year rule.

### **Extension Requirements:**

Extensions of the 5-year candidacy time frame are not automatic and require justification that such an extension is warranted. Only one extension is permitted under extraordinary circumstances, and in these cases WVU requires that the qualifying exam (sometimes known as comprehensive exam, candidacy or competency exam) be retaken to ensure the student's knowledge in his/her field of study is current. In some cases, other evidence may be reviewed to ensure the validity of the student's knowledge.

### **Extension Procedures:**

The following steps should be taken in pursuing an extension:

1. The student should consult with his/her Chair to discuss the situation and reasons for the extension request.
2. The Chair and committee should determine if there is sufficient justification for an extension and, if so, determine how the student's knowledge will be assessed to determine whether the student's knowledge is current in the field. Generally the competency exam is to be retaken; however, other evidence showing that the student's knowledge in the subject matter is current may be considered. In some cases, courses may need to be retaken or other requirements fulfilled. A re-taking of the exam should precede any request for an extension.
3. Once the student has demonstrated current competence in the field of study, a formal request for an extension can be assembled by the student and submitted to the student's doctoral chair and committee members. The student should include the following details in the written request: (a) a statement on why circumstances justify the extension and a

summary as to the work completed; (b) evidence that the student's knowledge in the field of study is current; and (c) a specific and realistic timeline for completion of each task that will lead to successful completion of the dissertation.

4. If the student's Chair and committee members believe the request is justified, evidence must be provided that the committee endorses the request for an extension. The request should then be submitted to the student's Department Chair.
5. With the Department Chair's endorsement, documentation from (3) and (4) are then submitted to the CEHS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs who will review the request and supporting documentation to determine if the College will support the request. If so, the Associate Dean will write a statement of support and submit it along with the other supporting documentation to the Associate Provost for Graduate Academic Affairs who provides final approval for the extension.
6. If the request for an extension is approved at all levels, the student will be required to adhere to the timeline completion date that was proposed or the extension is withdrawn and the student is dismissed from the program.
7. Notification of the approved extension is then submitted to the Chair of the student's doctoral committee, the student's Department Chair, and the CEHS Advising Office for data recording.

**Reviewed:**

Academic Affairs: December 10, 2013

Faculty Executive Committee: January 16, 2014

Provost Office: February 7, 2014

Dean: February 10, 2014

Deans & Chairs: February 19, 2014

**Note:**

From K. Karraker, Associate Provost for Graduate Academic Affairs February 7, 2014: *The Catalog Committee is working on the section of the catalog that deals with this issue, and so there are likely to be some minor changes that you will want to incorporate...when the new catalog is published in June.*