ED.D. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Student Handbook

Higher Education

Superintendency

Curriculum and Instruction
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Academic Advising

Academic Advising is crucial to student success in the doctoral program. There are three phases in the program that students will need advising, and students may request a change in advisors to better meet their academic needs and research interest.

Phase 1

At the time of admission, each student is assigned an interim advisor based on the student’s interest in their application and interview. During this phase, the advisor and student will develop a course of study using a Course Planning Guide. Copies of the planning guide will be retained by both the student and advisor. Toward the end of Phase 1 (about 9-12 hours), each student may change advisors who will support the student through subsequent coursework.

Phase 2

With the support of the Graduate Program Director, the Phase 2 program advisor will advise the student on all program requirements. Toward the end of Phase 2, the program advisor will coordinate the student’s qualifying examinations by creating a committee of faculty members who will prepare and evaluate the written and oral qualifying examinations (see Qualifying Examinations section of this handbook). The program advisor will also help the student identify faculty members whose research interests and expertise are congruent with the student’s probable area of inquiry for the dissertation.

Phase 3

Upon successful completion of the qualifying examinations, students are recommended for admission to candidacy and select a dissertation chair and committee members from the Department of Educational Leadership. Dissertation committee members are identified by mutual consent of the student and each faculty member. Dissertation committees consist of four members of the Graduate Faculty. Typically, three members are from the department and the Graduate School assigns one from outside the College of Education. This process allows students to develop a direct working relationship with several faculty members. At the same time, it provides an individualized and personalized approach to the advising process. During Phase 3, dissertation committee members:

1) Approve the student’s dissertation topic;
2) Review and approve the dissertation proposal during a proposal defense;
3) Provide advice and counsel throughout the dissertation research process; and,
4) Evaluate the student’s final dissertation and oral defense.
Residency

UNC Charlotte’s residency requirement must be completed by taking a minimum of 18 credit hours of coursework over three consecutive semesters, which may include a summer session. There is no provision for waiving the residency requirement. The residency provides students a period of immersion and sustained involvement in all aspects of graduate education, including the intellectual, social, and cultural life. The experience of a close, ongoing affiliation with professors and fellow students, participation in research and service projects, and informal work with individual faculty members adds substantially to the learning process.

Leave of Absence

Personal circumstances may cause a student to take a leave of absence from the program for a specified period of time. To officially withdraw from all classes and thereby from the University and to not register in a given semester without loss of student status, doctoral students must obtain the prior approval of the Doctoral Program Director. Students choosing this option must file a special request for a leave of absence attained from the Graduate School that states they will not use University resources during the leave period. If the leave of absence extends beyond two calendar years, the student must reapply for readmission (active status) in the doctoral program.

Coursework and Related Requirements

The Graduate School requires all incoming doctoral students to complete a non-credit course, GRAD 8990 (Academic Integrity), designed to address issues of academic integrity and University policies related to violations. The course is administered as an on-line module and quiz. Upon passing the quiz, the grade of N (non-graded) is recorded on the student’s official transcript.

To earn the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, students must complete a minimum of 60 credit hours of doctoral-level coursework (8000-level courses) beyond the master’s degree. The department of Educational Leadership offers the Ed. D in three concentrations: Higher Education, Superintendency, and Curriculum and Supervision.

Higher Education Concentration

Students are required to take a minimum of 60 credit hours of doctoral coursework (8000-level courses) beyond the master’s degree and complete a Qualifying Examination and Doctoral Dissertation. Courses for students in the Higher Education Concentration include:

**Foundations Coursework** (9 Credit Hours)
- ADMN 8101: Perspectives on Adult Learning Theory
- ADMN 8110: Organizational Theory and Behavior
- ADMN 8160: Introduction to Educational Administration

**Research Coursework** (12 Credit Hours)
- Students must take RSCH 8210 before taking RSCH 8110 and RSCH 8111.
RSCH 8210: Applied Educational Research
RSCH 8110: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics
RSCH 8111: Qualitative Research Methods
RSCH 8120: Advanced Statistics

Higher Education Concentration (15 Credit Hours)

ADMN 8171: The American College Student
ADMN 8172: Higher Education in the United States
ADMN 8173: Legal Issues in Higher Education
ADMN: 8174: Higher Education Finance and Budgeting
ADMN: 8175: Nontraditional Approaches to Higher Education

Electives (15 Credit Hours)
Students may take 15 credit hours of elective courses. These courses must be at the 8000 level and geared toward one’s doctoral dissertation and /or professional pathway. Elective courses will include higher education, adult education, educational research, instructional systems technology, and related courses. Students should work with their advisor to select courses that best meet their needs.

Elective hours for the Concentration in Higher Education may be selected from the following:
- Doctoral (8000) level courses with the following prefixes: ADMN, EIST, RSCH
- CUSU 8126, CUSU 8127
- Other 8000 – level courses approved by the advisor

Dissertation Proposal Seminar (3 Credit Hours)
ADMN 8699: Dissertation Proposal Seminar (Students may take ADMN 8699 only after all coursework is completed or during the final semester of coursework.)

Dissertation Coursework (at least 6 Credit Hours)
ADMN 8999: Dissertation Research (students may take ADMN 8999 only after all other coursework in the program is complete. Students must maintain continuous enrollment in ADMN 8999, to include at least one summer session, until degree completion and must be enrolled during the semester in which they graduate. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment in ADMN 8999 will result in dismissal from the program.)
**Superintendent Concentration**

**Foundations Coursework (33 Credit Hours)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8610</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMN 8160</td>
<td>Introduction to Educational Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMN 8121</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in Curriculum Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8140</td>
<td>School Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8130</td>
<td>Educational Governance and Policy Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8110</td>
<td>Organizational Theory and Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8120</td>
<td>Advanced School Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMN 8101</td>
<td>Perspectives on Adult Learning Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8150</td>
<td>Human Resources Development and Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8410</td>
<td>Advanced Internship in Educational Leadership – Part I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8420</td>
<td>Advanced Internship in Educational Leadership – Part II</td>
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**Research Coursework (12 Credit Hours)**

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<tr>
<td>RSCH 8111</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods</td>
</tr>
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**Electives (6 Credit Hours)**

Students may take 6 credit hours of elective courses. These courses often include additional research courses that will assist the dissertation process.

**Dissertation Proposal Seminar (3 Credit Hours)**

<table>
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<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8699</td>
<td>Dissertation Proposal Seminar *</td>
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*Students may take ADMN 8699 only after all other coursework is completed or during the final semester of coursework.*

**Dissertation Coursework (at least 6 Credit Hours)**

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## Curriculum and Supervision Concentration

**Foundations Coursework (33 Credit Hours)**

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<td>ADMN 8140</td>
<td>School Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMN 8125</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMN 8660</td>
<td>Instructional Leadership Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8122</td>
<td>Advanced Curriculum Theory and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMN 8120</td>
<td>Advanced School Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8101</td>
<td>Perspectives on Adult Learning Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMN 8489</td>
<td>Practicum in Staff Development</td>
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<td>ADMN 8110</td>
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**Electives (6 Credit Hours)**

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**Dissertation Proposal Seminar (3 Credit Hours)**

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**Dissertation Coursework (at least 6 Credit Hours)**

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</table>

** Students may take ADMN 8999 only after all other coursework is completed. **
Time Limitation

The Graduate School requires completion of a doctoral program within eight years after admission. Although individual situations vary, most students complete the Ed.D. program in three to six years after admission.

Grading

Grades Required and Grade Point Average

Students must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average throughout the program and may earn no more than two Cs in all coursework. Grade point averages are based only on courses in one’s approved program of study taken at UNC Charlotte. They are determined by multiplying the number of points for each letter grade (A=4, B=3, C=2, U=0) by the number of semester hours of credit received in that course, adding all accumulated grade points together, and dividing by the total number of semester hours attempted (excluding those for which one received a grade of I, IP, W, P, N, AU, or NR). A course may be repeated to improve a grade but no additional credit hours accrue. The hours earned, and those of the current grade replace the grade points of the previous grade.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of incomplete (I) is assigned at the discretion of the instructor when a student who is otherwise passing has not completed all the work in the course due to circumstances beyond his or her control. The missing work must be completed during the next semester of enrollment or no later than 12 months after the term in which the incomplete was assigned, whichever comes first. If the incomplete is not removed during the specified time, a grade of unsatisfactory (U) will automatically be assigned. The grade of incomplete cannot be removed by enrolling again in the same course. Students will be assigned a grade of IP (in progress) while they are enrolled in ADMN 8999 (Dissertation Research) until they have successfully defended their dissertation. Upon a successful defense of the dissertation, an IP is changed to an appropriate grade by the dissertation chair using a Change of Grade form.

Repeating a Graduate Course

Doctoral students will be allowed to repeat a maximum of two courses in which the student has been assigned a grade of C, U, or N (but not an I). A course may be repeated one time only. Whenever a course is repeated, no additional hours attempted accrue and the new grade replaces the previous grade in computing the grade point average and in the assignment of academic credit. The record of the first attempt will remain a part of the student’s permanent record and will count in the number of marginal C grades accumulated. In other words, successfully repeating a course does not change the number of marginal grades accumulated. Enrollment in the doctoral program will be terminated if a student receives a grade of U in a course.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes of all courses unless extenuating circumstances exist. Those circumstances are rare and must be approved by the Doctorate Program Director and the specific course instructor.
Academic Dismissal

An accumulation of three marginal grades (Cs) results in termination of a student’s enrollment. If a student makes a grade of unsatisfactory (U), further enrollment will be prohibited. A doctoral student whose enrollment has been prohibited because of grades is ineligible to attend any semester or summer session unless properly readmitted. A student readmitted to the doctoral program through the reapplication procedures will be expected to complete the degree program with satisfactory or commendable performance. Should students receive a grade of C or U after being readmitted to the program, their enrollment in the doctoral program will be terminated.

Administrative Dismissal

Students are subject to administrative dismissal from the doctoral program for any of the following reasons:

1) Failure to maintain continuous registration (fall and spring terms) until the doctoral degree has been completed once admitted to candidacy;
2) Failure to pass a second qualifying examination that may be required due to poor performance on the first examination;
3) Failure to gain admission to candidacy within two terms of the completion of all coursework in the program of study (not including the internship);
4) Failure to register for three semester hours of dissertation research credit each semester (fall and spring terms) after admission to candidacy until graduation; and,
5) Failure to successfully defend the dissertation within the University approved time frame for completion of degree.

Transfer Credit

With the approval of the Doctorate Program Director and Department Chair, students may transfer up to six semester hours of doctoral degree credit not previously applied toward a degree to their Ed.D. program, if the following conditions apply:

1) The courses must have been completed at an accredited institution of higher education within five years prior to admission to the doctoral program; The student must have earned at least a B in each course;
2) The courses are equivalent to 8000-level courses at UNC Charlotte; and,
3) The courses are required or allowed in the Ed.D. program and are deemed relevant to the student’s program of study.

Courses applied toward a degree previously earned at UNC Charlotte or another institution may not be transferred to the Ed.D. program. While enrolled in the Ed.D. program, prior written approval must be secured from the Doctorate Program Director before enrolling in another institution’s courses with the intention of transferring those courses to UNC Charlotte’s Ed.D. program.

Credit by Examination

No courses in the Ed.D. program may be waived. However, if a student believes that he/she already has the knowledge/skills of a course in the program, the student may be allowed to take a specially prepared challenge examination (equivalent to a course final examination) and receive credit for that course. The decision to offer a credit by examination is that of the program. If allowed to take
the examination, the student will pay the “credit by examination” fee and will bring the receipt of payment to the examination. If the student passes the examination, credit by examination will be indicated on the transcript but no grade points will be awarded. Failure on such an examination will result in no grade point penalty. Students may not challenge a failing credit by examination grade.

Qualifying Examinations

Purpose

The written and oral qualifying examinations allow students to demonstrate:

1) Understanding of the body of knowledge addressed in the initial portion of the doctoral program;
2) Ability to integrate and apply this knowledge;
3) Understanding of the tools of academic scholarship;
4) Skills of written and oral expression; and,
5) Potential for success in the remaining coursework and on the dissertation.

Written Examination Procedure

Students should take the written qualifying examination as soon as possible after completing 24 credit hours of coursework and not later than 36 credit hours of coursework. Enrollment in ADMN 8699 (Dissertation Proposal Seminar) will be prohibited until the student passes the examination. The exams will be offered twice per year: (1) write from July 1 to July 31, orals from August 15 to September 15; or, (2) write from February 1 to February 28, orals from March 15 to April 15.

It is the student’s responsibility to initiate the exam process early in the semester prior to the desired exam period by communicating with his/her advisor on the proposed timing of the exam and discussing members of the committee. Advisors will notify the Educational Leadership Office Manager of a student’s intent to complete the exam, the exam time period, and committee members; this must be complete by April 1 for those completing the written exam in July or by November 1 for those completing the written exam in February. Department staff will request questions from appropriate faculty for each student, disseminate and collect all exam materials for the take-home written exams, schedule and administer the on-campus exams, provide copies of all exam responses to students and committee members (all committee members should receive all responses), and schedule the oral exams. Advisors will work with Department staff on follow-up with faculty and provide general oversight of the process for each advisee.

The advisor will coordinate the qualifying exam. If at the time the qualifying exam no advisor has been appointed, then the Department Program Director will assist the student in selecting an advisor.

The exam will consist of three questions/series of questions: one research and two others that represent a combination of foundation courses and specialization/elective courses. The questions will come from three faculty including the advisor and two other faculty members who have had the student in class. At least one member of the committee must be a research faculty member. Each faculty member on the committee asks one question/series of questions. Each of the three questions/series of questions will be based on course material but do not need to be based on just one course. Faculty members must ask a question/series of questions that relate to the courses the student completed with them. The questions may address material in multiple courses and individualized guidance should be given to each student.

Each faculty member will have two options for asking questions: (1) take-home exam where students
will have one month (July or February) to complete the question/series of questions; or, (2) on-campus exam where students will have up to four hours to complete an exam question/series of questions for each faculty member (12 hour maximum for students completing 3 on-campus questions). Fixed dates in July and February will be set for the on-campus exam offerings.

The use of outside materials will not be restricted for off-campus exams; the use of outside materials for on-campus exams will be at the discretion of the faculty member.

**Oral Examination Procedure**

Following the written exam, all students will have an oral exam at least two weeks but no more 1 and 1/2 months after the written exam. During the oral examination, the student’s advisor and committee will engage in dialog with the student about the written examination. The discussion has two purposes. First, it provides an opportunity for the student to address in more detail or to clarify responses to questions on the written examination. Second, it allows the committee to engage the student in a discussion of issues not addressed in the written examination but which are pertinent to the content.

**Evaluation by Qualifying Exam**

The QE Committee will assign one of three outcomes: (1) A student receives a "pass" if the majority of Committee members are satisfied with the written and oral exam; (2) A student passes "contingent upon successful remediation" if a majority of Committee members agree that the student has met minimum requirements, but the Committee indicates that additional work, as determined by the advisor, still must be done; or, (3) A student receives a "fail" if the majority of members are not satisfied with the written and oral exam.

If a student receives a "pass contingent upon remediation", then the Committee assigns appropriate next steps. Successful remediation will be determined by a majority vote of the committee. If the student receives a "fail," then he/she must retake the entire exam during the next qualifying exam cycle (approximately 6 months later) followed by a second oral exam. The committee will retain the same membership for the retake exam. In exceptional cases, a student may submit a request in writing to his or her advisor that the committee membership be changed before a re-examination. Approval is by the Department Chair.

A second failure results in the student being removed from the program. Students terminated from the program may consult the "Appeal of Academic Termination for the Purpose of Reinstatement (Degree Seeking Students)" in the UNC Charlotte Graduate Catalog. Students are also referred to the "Discriminatory Personal Conduct" statement in the graduate catalog.
Admission to Candidacy

Admission to candidacy is an indication that the student is prepared to proceed with her/his final coursework and dissertation research. Students may be admitted to candidacy when they have:

1) Successfully completed the written and oral qualifying examinations;
2) Established a tentative dissertation topic and identified dissertation committee members;
3) Maintained a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 (with no more than two Cs) and removed any incomplete grades; and,
4) Completed the Application for Admission to Candidacy with all signatures.

Dissertation

Candidates for a doctoral degree must prepare and present a dissertation that reveals independent investigation and is acceptable in content and form to the dissertation committee. The dissertation must demonstrate the student’s ability to conceive, design, conduct, and interpret research, and must contribute to the knowledge base in one’s field. Dissertation work is directly supervised by the chair of the dissertation committee; however, students are encouraged to consult fully with all members of their committee during the planning, conducting, and writing of their dissertations. Students are strongly encouraged to select a dissertation topic from among those listed on the Faculty Collaborative Research Efforts. Students should also consult the Graduate School’s Manual of Basic Requirements for Thesis and Dissertations.

Appointment and Responsibilities of a Dissertation Committee

Although students are encouraged to work with faculty on dissertation ideas well before the formal appointment of a committee, the Graduate School will formally appoint a dissertation committee after the student is admitted to candidacy. The committee will be comprised of at least four qualified faculty members. Typically, three members are Department of Educational Leadership faculty members, and the Graduate School, from the University at large, appoints one. Although students may request a specific at-large University representative, the Graduate School will make the final decision. The Doctoral Program Director will approve the composition of the dissertation committee. Committee members will have the privilege of voice and vote on all relevant matters that come before the committee pertaining to a student’s progress toward the degree. All four dissertation committee members should be present for the dissertation proposal defense and the oral defense of the dissertation and must attest to the successful completion of the dissertation.

Dissertation Committee Chair

Students must identify a dissertation committee chair from the Department of Educational Leadership by the completion date of their Qualifying Examinations and prior to enrolling in ADMN 8699 (Dissertation Research). The dissertation committee chair will provide program advisement through the remainder of the student’s program and will see that students have the opportunity to progress expeditiously toward degree completion.

Chairs will assist students in organizing committee meetings, obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board, presenting the proposal, conducting original research, and organizing the dissertation defense.
Dissertation Proposal

The development and defense of a dissertation proposal is an important aspect of dissertation research. The proposal is a draft of the first three chapters of one’s dissertation. When considering the proposal, the dissertation committee may approve, approve with stipulations, or disapprove. Once the dissertation committee has approved a proposal without stipulations, committee members must sign the Graduate School’s Petition for Topic Approval form (appendix). Students must ensure that this form has been completed and signed properly.

Before collecting any data for a dissertation, students must take and pass the on-line Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative on human subjects found at https://www.citiprogram.org/.

Dissertation Defense

When the student’s dissertation committee believes that the dissertation is in satisfactory form, a final defense is scheduled. The date for the defense must be scheduled at least two weeks prior to the defense to allow for thorough reading by the committee members. The student, with the chair’s assistance, should arrange for a public announcement of the time, date, and place of the defense. This announcement should be submitted by the dissertation chair to the Office of Academic Affairs – Weekly Dissertation Defense Announcements for publication at least one week prior to the defense. Although interested members of the University community are invited to attend the defense, only committee members evaluate the dissertation. When rendering its decision, the committee may approve, approve contingent upon specific changes being made, defer a decision pending another defense, or disapprove.

After a successful defense, students must work with their advisor and Graduate School to complete all forms for graduation. The student and dissertation chair will also review the student’s transcript to ensure that all grades of IP and I have been changed to earned grades and that all outstanding fees have been paid. Students should schedule preliminary and final reviews of the dissertation format by the Graduate School and should file an on-line Application for Degree Form with the Graduate School. The deadline for submission of this form is usually one-half way through the semester in which graduation will occur. Students must refer to the official academic calendar for the official due date for submission.

Degree Completion

In order to be awarded the doctoral degree, students must:

1) Complete the approved program of study within the prescribed time limit;
2) Maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or better in all work attempted on the program of study and resolve all grades other than acceptable letter grades;
3) Satisfactorily complete all required examinations;
4) Receive approval of the dissertation by the dissertation committee and Graduate School;
5) Be registered for ADMN 8999 (Dissertation Research) each fall, spring, and summer semester after all other coursework is completed, to include the semester in which the degree is conferred; and,
6) Meet all other academic and professional qualifications as published by the appropriate governing bodies of the University.
Special Opportunities

Doctoral Dinners

Each year, students enrolled in the Ed.D program are encouraged to attend doctoral dinners sponsored by the Department of Educational Leadership. These dinners allow doctoral students to interact and discuss activities in the program and to get to know one another in an informal setting. To help students with their own research and dissertation efforts, dinners typically include a short presentation of current research by a doctoral student or faculty member.

Additional Information

Code of Student Academic Integrity

Students must know and observe the requirements of the UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity. This code forbids cheating, fabrication, or falsification of information, multiple submission of work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty.

College of Education Technology Statement

UNC Charlotte’s professional education programs prepare candidates for success in the 21st century through an emphasis on knowledge, effectiveness, and commitment to technology integration and application. Preparation in the integration and application of technology to enhance student learning is essential. Programs across the professional education unit, including the College of Arts and Architecture, College of Education, and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, reflect this commitment in coursework, early field experiences, and clinical practice.

Religious Accommodations

UNC Charlotte provides reasonable accommodations, including a minimum of two excused absences each academic year, for religious observances required by a student’s religious practice or belief. Such reasonable accommodations must be requested in accordance with policy procedures and must include the opportunity to make up tests or other work missed due to an excused absence for a religious observance. Students seeking a religious accommodation should refer to http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-134.html.

Disability Accommodations

Students with disabilities that qualify them for academic accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services (Fretwell 230 or 704-687-4355). Some requests for accommodations cannot be honored without supporting documentation from the Office of Disability Services. All information shared with a professor concerning a disability remains confidential unless otherwise specified.

Online Student Course Evaluation Process

Students may provide feedback on all courses in the College of Education through an online evaluation survey process conducted during the final two weeks (prior to final examinations) of each semester. Electronic mail messages announce the beginning of the survey period and periodic reminders are sent during the time period. The process is anonymous and confidential and all students are encouraged to participate.