

# Doctor of Arts Degree

At the time this Graduate Catalog was printed, the University was awaiting final approval for conversion of several Doctor of Arts (D.A.) degrees to Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). The following programs have been recommended for conversion:

- Doctor of Arts in Economics to Doctor of Philosophy in Economics
- Doctor of Arts in English to Doctor of Philosophy in English
- Doctor of Arts in Physical Education to Doctor of Philosophy in Human Performance

Individuals considering graduate study in these areas should consult with the individual departments for the most current program information.

Middle Tennessee State University offers the Doctor of Arts (D.A.) degree in Chemistry, Economics, English, History, and Physical Education. An applicant for admission to this degree program must hold a master's degree from an accredited institution. The D.A. degree is offered for the purpose of developing doctoral-level expertise combining pedagogy with scholarly achievement (applied or theoretical) and research excellence in the fields of chemistry, economics, English, history, and physical education. The D.A. recipient is well prepared to teach at the collegiate level, including fulfilling professorial and similar advanced teaching positions. Above all, the D.A. recipient is a learned person who has demonstrated advanced educational leadership skills combined with the capacity to conduct independent scholarly investigation.

## Programs Leading to the D.A. Degree

There are two alternatives, as described below.

### Alternative I: Single Teaching Field

48 semester hours above the master's level with at least two-thirds of the program on the 7000 level. No more than 6 semester hours of dissertation research (course 7640) may apply to this 48-hour requirement. 5000-level courses may not be applied.

- The major (teaching field) includes at least 24 semester hours of coursework, plus 6 semester hours of internship/externship, plus at least 6 semester hours for the dissertation research (course 7640).

**NOTE:** Once a doctoral student has begun taking dissertation research, he/she is **expected** to enroll in **at least** 1 semester hour of dissertation research **until** the dissertation is **completed**. Thus, doctoral students normally enroll for more than 6 semester hours of dissertation research.

- The professional education core consists of at least 12 semester hours in higher education and must include courses FOED 7520 and 7560 and SPSE 7540 and 7550.

### Alternative II: Two Teaching Fields

60 semester hours above the master's level with at least two-thirds of the program on the 7000 level. No more than 6 semester hours of dissertation research (course 7640) may apply to this 60-hour requirement. 5000-level courses may not be applied.

- The major (first teaching field) includes at least 18 semester hours of coursework in the field (i.e., chemistry, economics, English, history, or physical education); plus 6 semester hours of internship/externship, plus at least 6 semester hours for the dissertation research (course 7640).

**NOTE:** Once a doctoral student has begun taking dissertation research, she/he is **expected** to enroll in **at least** 1 semester hour of dissertation research **until** the dissertation is **completed**. Therefore doctoral students normally register for more than 6 semester hours of dissertation research.

- The second teaching field consists of at least 18 semester hours of coursework in any discipline which has a master's program (except Administration and Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction, or Aerospace Education).

The fields of study from which the second teaching field may be selected are:

Accounting/Information Systems	Health, Physical Education, Recreation
Aerospace Administration	History
Biology	Human Sciences
Business Administration	Industrial Studies
Business Education	Mass Communication
Chemistry	Mathematics
Computer Information Systems	Music
Computer Science	Psychology
Criminal Justice	Reading
Economics	School Counseling
English	Sociology
Exercise Science and Health Promotion	Special Education
Foreign Languages	Vocational-Technical Education

- The professional education core consists of at least 12 semester hours in higher education and must include courses FOED 7520 and 7560 and SPSE 7540 and 7550.

## Advisory Committee

Each D.A. student has a three-person advisory committee constituted by the dean of the College of Graduate Studies; two are from the major field and one from higher education. The committee is recommended by the student, in consultation with the graduate advisor. If a curriculum comprising a major teaching field and a secondary teaching field is chosen, a fourth member representing the secondary field is appointed. If warranted, the committee membership may be reconstituted upon the approval of the dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

Beginning with acceptance into the doctoral program, the student should meet frequently with the advisory committee. The committee provides academic guidance to formulate a curricular plan best suited for the needs and interests of the student. The pre-candidacy stage permits optimal flexibility in the event of modified academic interests. Once the student has a well-formulated plan, he/she should petition for **advancement to candidacy**. Advancement to candidacy

must occur by the completion of 36 semester hours of coursework. (See advancement to candidacy, below.)

## Advancement to Candidacy

After having successfully completed a significant component of the curriculum (not to exceed 36 semester hours and including at least one course in the major and one in higher education), the student must file a Candidacy Form with the dean of the College of Graduate Studies. This degree plan, approved by the student's advisory committee, is listed on the Candidacy Form. The Graduate Office will notify the applicant after the degree plan has been approved. A student may not take the qualifying examination unless he/she has been advanced to candidacy.

## Qualifying Examinations

The qualifying examinations are intended to assess whether a candidate is qualified to continue in a doctoral program. At the appropriate point in the doctoral program, following advancement to candidacy, the candidate must pass written and oral qualifying examinations. D.A. programs generally require that the qualifying examinations be taken during the last semester of prescribed coursework exclusive of dissertation research.

These examinations are given at least one month before the close of the fall and spring semesters and summer session.

A satisfactory or passing performance on both the written and oral examinations means that the candidate is qualified to continue the program as planned. A less than satisfactory outcome on any phase(s) of the qualifying examination may result in additional academic requirements and/or a re-examination. A re-examination may be given only once. A second failing performance results in a recommendation to the dean of the College of Graduate Studies for academic dismissal. The student may appeal the dismissal recommendation, for cause, to the dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

## Written Qualifying Examination

1. For Alternative #1, the written examination encompasses the candidate's major teaching field and higher education. The purpose of the written examination is to evaluate the candidate's overall knowledge of the field, integrative skills, ability to organize material, and competency in written expression. The maximum time limit for the written examinations is 12 hours: 8 hours in the major field and 4 hours in the higher education component.
2. For Alternative #2, an additional maximum 4-hour examination in the second teaching field is required.
3. The examinations are administered by the major department and by higher education.
4. The graded examinations are filed in the department office for a period of five (5) years, and the student has the right of access to his/her graded examination.

## Oral Qualifying Examination

The oral examination is given by the candidate's advisory committee and covers the candidate's field of specialization and general knowledge. The committee evaluates the candidate's breadth of knowledge of the field(s), integration and problem-solving skills, competency in oral expression, and potential for conducting independent scholarly investigation.

## Dissertation Information

### Prospectus

1. The presentation of the dissertation prospectus is scheduled by the student, in consultation with the dissertation committee, as soon as practicable so as to enable the candidate to get a timely start on the research phase of the dissertation. **In no event shall the prospectus presentation precede advancement to candidacy.**
2. The prospectus must be distributed to all members of the dissertation (advisory) committee at least one week prior to the scheduled presentation.
3. The presentation of the dissertation prospectus is open to faculty.
4. The dissertation committee may impose additional conditions, such as requiring extra statistical analyses, revision of protocols, or knowledge of a foreign language appropriate for the dissertation research.
5. If relevant, the committee provides the candidate with procedures for requesting consent and clearance by the MTSU Institutional Review Board.
6. Immediately upon completion, the committee orally informs the candidate of its decision on the prospectus. The committee then provides the candidate with a written synopsis of the decision, including any applicable additional requirements, so as to minimize potential misunderstandings.

## Preparation of the Prospectus

The prospectus need not conform to a set series of conditions since each research investigation is unique. The dissertation committee should be consulted when the candidate is preparing the prospectus. However, the following may prove useful as guidelines:

**Research Statement.** This is a brief statement about the purpose of the research and the rationale for the study. It may also include reference to projected social, literary, or scientific impact, etc., to be realized by the study. Also included might be a brief description of the major subdivisions or aspects of the proposed study, stated in general terms.

**Hypothesis.** A hypothesis is a tentative assumption of an anticipated outcome from among projections of (all) possible outcomes of a research investigation. The hypothesis is based on presumably valid conclusions and backed by previous scholarly evidence; i.e., there is a rationale for the hypothesis. The scholar's goal is to prove, or disprove, the hypothesis.

**Research Protocol or Experimental Design.** This is the methodology devised by the researcher to examine whether or not the hypothesis is correct. The methodology or testing is performed so as to generate data (facts) which are used either to prove or disprove the hypothesis. A note of caution—when data are generated which disagree with an

investigator's hypothesis, a tendency of many young scholars is to attempt to explain why the data are incorrect, since they don't fit the hypothesis. It is very important to accept the validity of one's data and, if necessary, generate a new hypothesis which then may be further examined.

**Background and Significance of the Study.** The theoretical and empirical framework of prior scholarly work related to the research proposal and to which the proposal is indebted should be determined. A short statement of the value of the study and of the possible applications of the results is advisable. Citation of a limited number of authorities may support the significance of the proposed study.

**Definition of Terms.** Technical terms or words and phrases having special meanings should be defined.

**Basic Assumptions.** Certain defensible assumptions may be necessary to reach a scholarly conclusion. A justification should be provided explaining the basis for any assumption made.

**Data Collection (Materials and Methods).** A complete, precise description should be given for all instruments, materials, devices, or sources of information used in the collection of data or generation of information. There should be a detailed step-by-step description of the ways in which data are to be collected (i.e., methodology). This description should include detailed information of the data to be collected, the sources to be used, sampling procedures, if any, and any other information necessary to further clarify the procedure.

**Data Analysis.** It is necessary to describe precisely and specifically the way in which data are to be organized and analyzed. The steps and techniques used to analyze and interpret the data should be clearly described.

## The Dissertation

Each dissertation is unique and reflects the academic accomplishments of the author, in consultation with the dissertation committee. Although the candidate should confer frequently with the dissertation committee for mentoring and advice, the dissertation is the primary means by which the candidate demonstrates proficiency as an independent scholar. Following are some guidelines that may prove useful:

1. The dissertation (research project) should be strongly based upon the discipline, but it should also have relevance to pedagogy.
2. The research may be a restudy of problems with variations in new and different settings, a reevaluation of prior research, or the generation of new and original scholarly information.
3. The research should combine creativity with originality.
4. For additional information, the student may wish to consult the *Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations*, produced by the Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools. It is available for perusal in the Office of Graduate Studies.

## Defense of Dissertation—Final Examination

1. Upon completion of the dissertation, the dissertation committee will hold an oral examination (often called the dissertation defense), which deals with the dissertation. However, the committee may designate any other aspect of the candidate's program for examination.
2. Arrangements for this examination are made by the student, in consultation with the major professor.
3. This oral examination may be open to the public.

4. The defense of dissertation is normally held during the same semester as the anticipated conferral of the degree.
5. The dean of the College of Graduate Studies must be notified by the major professor, in writing, of the outcome of the final examination/dissertation defense.

## Filing the Dissertation

1. The completed dissertation should follow a general format as outlined by the College of Graduate Studies; however there is considerable flexibility so that the author may use a format consistent with that of leading journals representative of the discipline.
2. Before submission to the dean of the College of Graduate Studies, the completed dissertation must be approved by the entire advisory committee and the department chair in the following order: major advisor, second member from the major field, professor of higher education, and chair of the major department. When a second teaching field is involved (alternative #2), that advisor's name should be inserted prior to that of the professor of higher education.
3. The completed dissertation must be filed in the office of the dean of the College of Graduate Studies by the deadline set for accepting theses, dissertations, and research projects. The deadline(s) are found in the calendar section of this catalog and in the current class schedule book.
4. Upon receipt of the original and four copies of the dissertation by the Office of Graduate Studies, they are sent to the bindery. Each of the five approval pages must bear original signatures. Two copies are filed in the MTSU Library. One copy will be filed in the major department, one with the major professor, and one with the candidate. Laser print may be used if it is of professional quality. Letter grade copy paper will suffice; the copies need not be on bond paper.

## Dissertation Abstract

The dissertation must include an abstract of the treatise which should not exceed 350 words.

## Other Information

In addition to the materials found below, the reader should refer to the Glossary section in this catalog for additional important information relative to graduate education at MTSU.

## Checklist for the Semester of Intended Graduation

1. By the end of the first full week of the term or by the end of the first week of Session II (for August graduation), the candidate files an Intent to Graduate Form with the College of Graduate Studies and relevant fees are paid. There is an additional charge if more than five copies of the dissertation are to be bound.

2. The final examination (oral defense of dissertation) is administered.
3. If the defense is satisfactory, the dissertation is filed with the Graduate Office no later than 30 days prior to the intended graduation date. Final authority for approval of the dissertation rests with the dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

## **Time Limit**

After matriculation, there is a ten-year time limit for completing all D.A. degree requirements.

## **Transfer Credits**

Only coursework completed at a doctoral institution that would count toward the doctorate there will be considered for approval as transfer credit toward the Doctor of Arts coursework requirement at MTSU. Additional information on transfer credit is given in the section on academic regulations.

