

**Cultural Studies, International Education, Multicultural Education (CSIEME)  
Program Handbook**

**Ph.D. Degree Requirements: 60 Credits**

**Teaching and Learning Department Required Courses (6 Credits)**

CIG 761: Theoretical Foundations of Education (to be taken in the Fall of the second year)  
CIG 790: Doctoral Research Seminar (to be taken in the Fall of the first year)

**CSIEME Program Required Courses (9 Credits)**

See CSIEME Program Course Details below.

**Teaching and Learning Department Research Required Courses (6 Credits)**

EPY 718: Qualitative Research Methodologies (ideally taken in the Fall of the first year)  
EPY 721: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics (ideally taken in the Fall of the second year)

**CSIEME Program Elective Research Courses (6 Credits)**

See CSIEME Program Course Details below.

**CSIEME Program Elective Courses (15 Credits)**

See CSIEME Program Course Details below.

**CSIEME Program Internship Courses (6 Credits)**

See CSIEME Program Course Details below.

**Teaching and Learning Department Required Dissertation Hours (12 Credits)**

CIG 799: Dissertation Hours

**CSIEME Program Course Details: 30 Credits**

[Note that 6 of these credits, those associated with the research course credits, are also counted in the department-wide credits (iterated above), which may make your degree plan appear to be 66 credits, but the degree plan is only 60 credits.]

1. CSIEME Required Courses

CME 710: Cultural Studies in Education  
CME 720: International and Comparative Studies in Education  
CME 745: Theory and Research Multicultural Education

2. CSIEME Elective Courses

*Complete five additional advisor-approved research courses. These courses may include, **but are not required to include**, the following courses:*

CME 700: Social Justice Education  
 CME 705: Multicultural Education  
 [satisfies [Regulation 130-18](#) and [NRS 391.0347](#) requirements]  
 CME 730: Intersectional Analysis in Multicultural Education  
 CME 735 Multicultural Curriculum Transformation  
 [satisfies [Regulation 130-18](#) and [NRS 391.0347](#) requirements]  
 CME 740: Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation  
 CME 750: Critical Multicultural Education  
 [satisfies [Regulation 130-18](#) and [NRS 391.0347](#) requirements]  
 CME 755: Teaching about Latina/Latino Experiences in Education  
 CME 760: Critical Race Theory in Education  
 CME 765: Analysis of the School-to-Prison Pipeline  
 CME 775: Multicultural Organizational Development  
 CME 780: Critical Whiteness Studies in Education

CIG 773: Critical Literacies/Critical Pedagogies  
 EDH 609: Leading Diverse Organizations  
 EDH 714: Understanding Minority-Serving Institutions  
 EDH 740: Comparative and International Higher Education  
 EDH 780: Seminar: Teaching in Higher Education

### 3. CSIEME Research Courses

Note: While EPY 702 is a pre-requisite for EPY 718, it can also be counted as an elective qualitative research course. However, CSIEME students should discuss their preparedness to conduct dissertation research with their chair/co-chair and the other members of their committee before deciding what to take/not take; CSIEME students may consider taking additional research courses (i.e., beyond those explicated in their plan of study) to ensure their readiness.

*Complete one to two additional advisor-approved research courses. These courses may include, **but are NOT required to include**, the following courses:*

#### Qualitative Research Courses

CME 770: Critical Inquiry and Praxis (Indigenous Methodologies)  
 CIG 690: Teachers as Action Researchers  
 EAB 700: Research Methods for Public Health  
 EOH 715: Qualitative & Field Methods for Public Health  
 EPY 719: Advanced Qualitative Research  
 EPY 720: Research Design in Education  
 EPY 729: Qualitative Case Study Research  
 EPY 730: Advanced Research Methods  
 EPY 738: Interpretive Analysis of Text and Discourse  
 KIN 750: Research Methods (Mixed)  
 SOC 603: Techniques of Social Research  
 SOC 608: Qualitative Research  
 SOC 705: Qualitative Methods  
 SOC 757 Urban Field Methods  
 JMS 711: Qualitative Research Methods  
 NURS 781: Qualitative Research Methods in Nursing

## Quantitative Research Courses

SOC 604: Statistical Methods in the Social Sciences  
 SOC 702: Quantitative Methods  
 SOC 706: Seminar in Advanced Statistical Analysis in the Social Sciences  
 HSC 777: Advanced Applied Statistics for the Health Sciences  
 JMS 712: Quantitative Research Methods  
 KIN 751: Selected Application of Statistical Techniques I  
 KIN 752: Selected Application of Statistical Techniques II  
 NURS 775: Statistical Methods for Nursing Research I: Univariate Methods  
 NURS 776: Statistical Methods for Nursing Research II: Multivariate Methods  
 EPY 721: Descriptive and Inferential Statistics: An Introduction  
 ENV 725: Quantitative Methods for Environmental Science  
 PSC 702: Advanced Quantitative Methods  
 PUA 721: Quantitative Methods for Public Administration

## 4. Internships Credits

CIG 791: Internship in Curriculum and Instruction  
 (a maximum of three Internship credits may be taken in one semester)

*Complete three advisor-approved credits focused on Teaching Internship*

The CSIEME program teaching internship requirement (3 credits) can be met in a variety of ways through dialogue and negotiation between students and advisors. For example, through shadowing a professor teaching a graduate level course in a CSIEME-relevant content area in tandem with post-class debriefing sessions to discuss curricular and instructional decision making; or through conducting classroom-based inquiry (e.g., participant observation, ethnography, case study) of a professor teaching a graduate level course in a CSIEME-relevant content area and formally reporting inquiry findings and related critical analysis.

*Complete three advisor-approved credits focused on a Research Internship*

The CSIEME program research internship requirement (3 credits) can be completed in myriad manners through dialogic exchange and interchange between students and advisors. For instance, students may prepare and submit: a manuscript to a CSIEME-relevant refereed journal (e.g., Equity & Excellence in Education, Cultural Studies, Journal of Studies in International Education (JSIE), Multicultural Perspectives, Multicultural Education Review (MER), Lateral, International Journal of Multicultural Education (IJIE), Journal of Research in International Education (JRIE), etc.), or a conference proposal to a CSIEME-related national organization with a juried annual conference proposal review process (e.g., the Association for Cultural Studies Conference (ACS), the Comparative and International Education Conference (CIES), the National Association for Multicultural Education Conference (NAME) annual international conference, the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE), the Annual Conference of the National Association for Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE, affiliated with the American Council on Education (ACE)), a cultural studies-, international education-, or multicultural education-related division/section or committee/special interest group of the American Education Research Association (AERA), etc.).

## 5. Publication Requirements

### *Doctoral “Publication” or Scholarly Product Requirement*

Typically (though not always) to be completed in conjunction with the research internship (CIG 791), and can be met in one of at least two ways: 1) submit a manuscript for publication to a refereed source; or, 2) submit a proposal for a refereed presentation at an annual conference of a national organization. Students are encouraged to think of other ways to meet the spirit of this requirement and discuss it with their advisor/chair.

## 6. Course Sequencing

CSIEME program students should consider the follow course sequencing suggestions:

- a) Complete at least seven (of nine) required teaching and learning, research, specialization, and internship courses;
- b) Complete at least five (of seven) research and specialization elective courses;
- c) Complete qualifying or comprehensive examinations in tandem with at least one course from a or b, above;
- d) Complete the dissertation proposal and IRB in tandem with at least one course from a or b above;
- e) Defend the dissertation proposal, implement dissertation research, complete three-to-six dissertation credits;
- f) Write up dissertation research, complete six-to-nine dissertation credits (twelve total), defend dissertation.

### **CSIEME Program SECTION 3: Procedures and Processes**

Iterated below are CSIEME program-specific procedures and processes. These procedures and processes are aligned with CSIEME disciplines/frameworks and articulated in language that best reflects CSIEME dispositions. See also the [CSIEME program website](#) for additional information.

CSIEME students are encouraged to create a timeline of when they hope/expect to meet each doctoral program benchmarks (i.e., coursework, qualifying/comprehensive exams, dissertation proposal, and dissertation). However, before you start creating your timeline, resist the urge to compare yourself with your peers. Instead, remember that everyone has different strengths, different challenges, different experiences, different obligations, among many other things. Take some time to map out your uniqueness (as a person, student, parent, professional, etc.). With these uniquenesses in mind, think about what make sense for your timeline—when YOU can reasonably, reliably, and meaningfully commit to completing each benchmark with excellence. Of course, your timeline can and, likely, will change; still, it is important to have a solid starting point.

### ***Advisory Committee***

#### Program Area Approved Advisors

[Dr. Norma A. Marrun](#)

[Dr. Iesha Jackson](#)

[Dr. Christine Clark](#)

Students are typically assigned a faculty advisor/co-advisor in their program of study when they are admitted—this advisor/co-advisor can become your committee chair/co-chair or a committee member, but does not have to become either.

### Committee Composition

Students form a committee of faculty to guide their programs of study and dissertation projects. Committees are minimally comprised of a chair/co-chair and two other members with “inside the department” faculty status, and one other member with “outside the department” status (this outside person can be from inside the college, or from any other department/college/school on campus). The outside the department member serves as the “graduate college representative.”

Committees can have more than four people, and additional members can also be from off campus (there’s a little bit of additional paperwork required to make this happen\*), but all additional members must have at least graduate faculty *affiliate* status (if they are on campus) and a terminal degree (if they are on or off campus).

Once your committee composition is confirmed (see more information about committee chair/co-chair and member selection, below) you will need to complete the Committee Formation form in the [Graduate College Gateway System](#) and route it for signature.

You can make changes to your committee composition at any time, and may have to at specific times (i.e., if a committee member leaves for another institution or retires). If you make a change, you will need to complete the Committee Change form in the [Graduate College Gateway System](#) and route it for signature.

*\*See [Graduate Faculty Status \(GFS\) Guidelines](#) for additional information on this paperwork.*

### Selection of the Dissertation Advisory Committee Chair-Advisor /Co-Chair-Co-Advisor

While it is generally assumed (and in the case of some programs of study, required) that students will choose a chair/advisor or a co-chair/co-advisor in their program area, that may not always be in the students’ best interest, so, in CSIEME, we try to be flexible to the extent that it makes sense to be, all things considered (e.g., if you can find an/other faculty member(s) with “inside the department” faculty status\* who is willing to assume the chair/co-chair role and has the ***content area expertise*** to serve effectively in this role).

The faculty member(s) you choose should be someone you trust to guide you in a manner that works for you as a student/educator/researcher/scholar/activist. Guidance does not always mean someone who makes things easy for you, but it should always mean someone who has your best interests at heart and will dedicate the time needed to ensure you grow and develop in ways that will ensure your successful completion of your degree program in ways that are affirming, humanizing, and just.

Send an email to any faculty member you are considering asking to chair/co-chair your committee asking for a meeting time to discuss your research interests. Alternatively, you can stop by the faculty member’s office hours. When you meet, be prepared to share your research interests (content and methodological approach) in broad strokes (where you think you might be heading). Ask them for their perspectives on your interests and see how they respond. Ideally, you should get a lot of resource referrals from the conversation. If the meeting goes well (however you define that), make the ask for them to serve as chair/co-chair.

*\*See [Graduate Advisory Committee \(GAC\) Guidelines](#) for additional information on this status.*

### Selection of Dissertation Advisory Committee Members

Your committee is YOUR COMMITTEE so exercise your will to pull together committee members you want to guide and support your success. In choosing committee members, ask your chair/co-chair for recommendations. In consultation with your chair/co-chair, as well independently, consider faculty who ***complement*** your committee chair/co-chair in terms of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and dispositions they

will bring to the committee and who will otherwise contribute robustly to your graduate student journey—in terms of their content expertise, their research expertise, their social and cultural capital/funds of knowledge relative to how things work generally and, more specifically, how things work for you, their status on campus (i.e., tenure, full professor, etc.), their availability (willingness to make time for/give time to you to scaffold your success), among their other identity dimensions, including, but not limited to race/ethnicity, geographic origins, linguistic prowess, gender/gender identity/expression, and sexuality.

Before you contact faculty about serving on your committee, you should take steps to establish, renew, build, and/or strengthen relationships with appropriate faculty; for example, faculty whose research interests/expertise dovetail with and/or can support your own, or faculty whose courses have been influential in your personal, academic, intellectual, scholarly, and/or activist development.

As with the selection of your committee chair/co-chair, once you are ready to approach faculty about joining your committee, send an email asking for a meeting time to discuss your research interests. Alternatively, you can stop by the faculty member's office hours. When you meet, be prepared to share your research interests (content and methodological approach) in broad strokes (where you think you might be heading). Ask them for their perspectives on your interests and see how they respond. Ideally, you should get a lot of resource referrals from the conversation. If the meeting goes well (however you define that), make the ask for them to serve on your committee (as an inside member or outside member/graduate college representative). When you do, be prepared to share why you want them on your committee (e.g., you enrolled in their course and you appreciated their feedback, or you read their scholarship and believe that it aligns with your dissertation project in some important way).

#### Role of the Dissertation Advisory Committee Chair/Co-Chairs

Your committee chair/co-chair serves as your academic advisor and your dissertation research advisor.

While your committee chair/co-chair is there to guide you, CSIEME students are expected to be active agents in their own personal, academic, and professional development (see also, *Role of the Student*, below).

As an academic advisor, your chair/co-chair:

1. Orients you to doctoral study generally, and to your CSIEME program of study in particular;
2. Facilitates you to find life, work, school balance, including decision-making related to becoming a full-time student (i.e., becoming a graduate assistant, applying for doctoral funding);
3. Aids you in navigating degree-related administrative requirements (e.g., forms, formats, scheduling);
4. Guides you in the sequenced selection of, and through completion of, course requirements; and,
5. Supports your transition to post-graduate life (e.g., résumé/vita development, job search/interview preparation).

As a dissertation research advisor, your chair/co-chair:

1. Generally, assists you to successfully prepare for, and complete, your qualifying or comprehensive exams, your dissertation proposal and IRB protocol, and your dissertation;
2. Specifically assists you in the development of your research interests, the identification and refinement of your dissertation research topic, and in the theoretical/conceptual framing of and methodological approach to your dissertation study.

### Role of Dissertation Advisory Committee Members

Your other committee members serve you in all of the same ways as your chair/co-chair does, though generally in more ancillary ways, to provide you additional and/or alternative perspectives.

Your other committee members may also play specific roles, for example to support your doctoral journey with a specific area of expertise (e.g., in a particular research methodology), that your chair/co-chair cannot play.

### Role of Dissertation Advisory Committee

Your committee is a team and your team. It is their job to work together, in an organically (not rigidly) coordinated fashion through open and honest dialogue with you and each other (usually facilitated by your chair/co-chair and/or you), to support your success. Think of your chair/co-chair as the head coach of your team, and the other members of your committee as specialty coaches.

As needed, all members of your committee should, in a timely fashion, consult with you on any aspect of all of your doctoral program benchmarks by: reviewing and constructively critiquing preliminary and near final drafts of your work; collaboratively determining your readiness to orally defend your work; and, evaluating your overall work performance (written and oral).

### ***Academic Reading and Writing***

The amount of reading required at the graduate, and especially the doctoral, level is substantial. While it may be possible for some students to cut corners on reading assignments during coursework and still complete courses in good academic standing, those who do will have a much more difficult time being successful with subsequent doctoral degree benchmarks in which the ability to adeptly organize and summarize large bodies of academic research is central and, clearly, predicated upon having read large bodies of academic research. Dedicating time to reading assignments during coursework will ensure greater success with qualifying/comprehensive exams, the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation.

Writing at the graduate, and especially the doctoral, level is iterative—numerous drafts and revisions of all written work are undertaken to achieve a high the level of quality and rigor in the final draft. Dedicating time to the iterative writing process will ensure greater and more expedient success with qualifying/comprehensive exams, the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation.

For all three major degree benchmarks (the qualifying/comprehensive exams, the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation) you are permitted to seek out professional technical (editing) support. For the qualifying/comprehensive exams you are not permitted to seek out academic content (input/feedback) support from anyone, but you are permitted to seek out academic content (input/feedback) on the dissertation proposal and the dissertation; you should avail yourself of such support from your committee chair/co-chair, committee members, UNLV reference librarians, professional editors, and trusted/esteemed others in your student/educator/researcher/scholar/activist network.

See additional academic reading and writing resources [here](#) under “For Current Students,” then under “Advanced Academic Writing, Research, and Presentation Resources.”

### ***Qualifying+ or Comprehensive++ Exam***

The purpose of the qualifying or comprehensive exam is for students to demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge in their areas of academic specialization/interest, and the ability to conduct cogent research in

those areas. Typically, you should at least start thinking about your exam questions a semester before you plan to write your exam papers.

*+After completion of enough/key coursework (minimally, CIG 761, CIG 790, EPY 718, EPY 721, CME 710, CME 720, and CME 745) such that you and your committee chair/co-chair feel you are ready to move to the exam.*

*++After completion of all coursework.*

You should begin preparing for your qualifying or comprehensive exam from the outset of your coursework. To the greatest extent possible, in every course you take, you should try to align course assignments with your research interests (content and/or methodological) in some way. Doing this will enable you to begin amassing a body of reading materials (texts, articles, and other academic (broadly defined) media) that will, increasingly as you progress through your degree program, help you to develop the “data bank” of knowledge—both in your topic areas of interest/emerging expertise and in the methodological approach(es) you intend to use to study those topic areas—that you will need to pass your exam. In thinking about your preparedness/readiness to move to the qualifying or comprehensive exam, you should assess your “data bank.”

The end result of the exam is three papers that you have written over a 30-day period completely on your own in response to three question prompts (one paper per prompt). Additional details are provided below.

### Qualifying or Comprehensive Exam Questions

When you and your committee chair/co-chair agree that you are ready to move toward writing your qualifying or comprehensive exam (papers), the first step in that process is developing your examination questions—these are not exactly questions (i.e., with a question mark), rather they are question or inquiry areas (see: [Example Questions](#)).

Typically you will have: 1) an emphasis (or specialization) question, broadly related to CSIEME content areas; 2) a cognate (or sub-specialization) question, related to a specific CSIEME content area; and, 3) an educational inquiry or research question (which could also be considered a sub-sub-specialization question), related to where you might want to go with your dissertation study (don’t worry, this can change if your research interests change). The educational inquiry/research question should include discussion of how an inquiry/research process to examine a topic, issue, or problem of concern for education in which you are interested might be designed and executed.

The three questions you develop become the basis for your three exam papers—you write the questions, then you write the answers (responses) to those questions in the form of formal, APA-formatted, academic papers, one paper per question (see: [Example Papers](#)). The purpose the questions/papers is for you to move from the broad to the specific in illustrating your depth and breadth of knowledge about, and ability to conduct research in, the CSIEME content area generally, more specifically, and, finally, related to your specific study interest(s) within the CSIEME content area (i.e., what you might decide to focus on for your dissertation study).

On your own, you will create a first draft of your questions in concert with an at-least 20-source, APA formatted reference list for each question, then you will share your draft questions and reference lists with your committee chair/co-chair and you and your chair/co-chair will negotiate them back and forth until you are both more or less comfortable with a second (usually near final) draft of them. Then your chair/co-chair will share the near final draft questions and reference lists with committee members via email to garner feedback on/additional edits of them until a final draft of the questions is agreed upon by you and your entire committee.



### Qualifying or Comprehensive Exam Procedures

Usually your committee chair/co-chair will combine, in a single email to the rest of your committee (also cced to you):

1. The request for committee member feedback on/additional editing of, your near final draft questions feedback/additional editing request;
2. Information about when (the specific 30-day period) during which you would like to write your question responses (examination papers);
3. When the committee will receive your completed papers (the specific date) and when they need to have them read (the specific 10 working day period);\* and,
4. When your chair/co-chair would like to schedule your oral/sign defense of your completed papers (specific date and time options), if, after review of the papers, the committee agrees that you are ready to move to the defense.\*

Through back and forth email exchanges, the questions are finalized, the writing/reading timelines are agreed upon, and the date and time for the oral/sign defense of the completed papers is set.

Once the date and time of your exam defense is set with your committee members, and at least three weeks in advance of the defense date, please contact Ms. Nanette Meyer ([nanette.meyer@unlv.edu](mailto:nanette.meyer@unlv.edu)) in the Teaching and Learning Departmental Office to inform her of the date and time of your defense and to book a room for the defense (or to inform her that the defense will be held virtually). E-mail your committee members to confirm the location for the defense.

In the interim between when the exam questions are finalized and the start date for you to begin writing your exam papers, you should continue to develop your “data bank” in consultation with your committee chair/co-chair, committee members, UNLV reference librarians, and trusted/esteemed others in your student/educator/researcher/scholar/activist network.

Once the start date arrives, in addition to your already-amassed “data bank,” you can continue to access and consult relevant texts, articles, and other academic (broadly defined) media, however, you are to do this on your own, not in academic consultation with anyone else (with one caveat, you are allowed to have professional technical (editing) support, time permitting).

*\*Typically, the exam review (ten working days) and defense must occur when faculty are “on contract” (during the fall/spring academic semesters). However, if committee members are willing, both the review period and defense can occur outside of contracted time. Students who need or want to schedule exam question reviews and/or defenses outside of contracted time should contact each committee to determine if committee members are willing to do so, and, if they are, let their chair/co-chair know so that that can be factored into the email communication iterated above.*

### Qualifying or Comprehensive Exam Review

As noted previously, your committee members have 10 working (during the work week, not including holidays) days to review your exam papers; near after the conclusion of those 10 days the oral/sign defense of the papers is scheduled if the committee agrees that you are ready to move to the already-scheduled defense. Committee members who do not agree you are ready to move to the defense will communicate this to the rest of the committee via email for discussion. Your chair/co-chair will inform you of the call for discussion and the disposition rendered in it. If you are allowed to move forward to defense under these

circumstances, any aspects of the discussion not addressed/resolved by your defense will be raised at the defense with you for further discussion. If you are not allowed to move forward to your defense under these circumstances, your chair/co-chair will follow up with you regarding additional work that you need to do on the papers to be able to move forward, and a timeline for achieving this goal.

### Qualifying or Comprehensive Exam Defense Procedures

The defense of your qualifying or comprehensive exam papers involves preparing an introductory statement about yourself and an oral/sign summary of each of your papers. You should plan to speak for no more than about 35-45 minutes total. Remember, that the goal of these exams (in the papers and at the defense) is for you to demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge in their areas of academic specialization/interest, and the ability to conduct cogent research in those areas. Sometimes, even if the papers are not as strong as they could be, you can bridge knowledge/ability gaps by how you perform in the defense.

Your introductory statement about yourself should detail, briefly (5-10 minutes), what has brought you to this point—to this oral/sign defense—personally, academically, and professionally. Your summary of each of your three papers—1) Emphasis (CSIEME Major) area (10-12 minutes), 2) Cognate (CSIEME Minor) area (10-12 minutes), and, 3) CSIEME Research area oriented toward the dissertation proposal (10-12 minutes)—should succinctly describe your interest in the content area, the main/key points you make about the content area, and how you might undertake a formal study to extend understanding in the content area.

You can sit or stand when you present, just be mindful of your time limit. You can bring a handout or visual aid (graphic) to share with the committee, but generally you should *not* rely on a powerpoint or other like media, instead speak from an outline, note cards, and/or memory. You should think of these exams as you beginning to become an expert in your content/methodology, but still defer to your committee for guidance.

If you will need media support the day of the defense (e.g., to Skype in a committee member), please contact Mr. Young Kim ([young.kim@unlv.edu](mailto:young.kim@unlv.edu)) at least three weeks in advance to ensure that he and/or one of his staff members can be available to assist.

The defense will begin with your chair/co-chair welcoming everyone to the room—for these exams, only the committee members and you can attend, no guests (also, these exams are not advertised externally). You should also not bring refreshments (beyond what you need to discretely care for yourself) to this defense. The absence of guests/group refreshments is due to the fact that these exams are considered a “test,” meaning that you are to complete them without content/research area support in the process (again, you can have professional technical (editing) support), so your performance on them is typically treated as “pass/fail,” thus handled in this more discrete, less “festive” fashion. That said, keep in mind, everyone gets two chances to pass, so even if you fail the first time around, you will get another opportunity. Usually a student is not encouraged to move forward with these exams until their chair/co-chair and other committee members believe they are ready (likely to be successful), so it is generally wise to heed advice from your chair/co-chair and other committee members regarding your readiness; exceptions to this rule do, however, exist and, for that reason, you are encouraged to advocate for your readiness if you feel your chair/co-chair is moving too slowly—open, honest communication between you and your chair/co-chair and other committee members is key to your success.

Next, the chair/co-chair will indicate to the rest of the committee that you have been invited to speak for about 35-45 minutes maximum, after which each committee member will have the opportunity to comment and/or ask questions. Once all committee members have exhausted their responses to your written and oral/sign work, you will be asked to leave the room (but do not go far), the committee will deliberate, and then you will be called back into the room for the decision.

When you are called back in, if you do not pass, your committee will provide you with supportive feedback for improving your exam papers and a timeline for you to do so and then to schedule a new defense. When you are called back in, if you do pass, your committee will congratulate you and discuss a plan for you to begin working toward the development of your dissertation proposal and IRB protocol.

Regardless of whether or not you pass, your committee may recommend that you take additional research courses, and/or that you conduct a small pilot study, before you begin work on the dissertation proposal, to ensure that you are well prepared to conduct your dissertation study.

Again, this defense is not externally marketed.

Be prepared to complete the appropriate forms in the [Graduate College Gateway System](#) for signature routing immediately after the defense (see [Departmental Milestone Results Tracking Form](#)).

### ***Dissertation Proposal***

The purpose of the dissertation proposal is for students to demonstrate increasing depth and breadth of knowledge in their areas of academic specialization/interest, and the ability to apply that knowledge in developing a comprehensive proposal for a dissertation-level research project. The dissertation proposal is both a theoretical and practical guide for conducting the dissertation study. Additional details are provided below.

In preparing to develop their dissertation proposals, CSIEME students are encouraged to read:

Gildersleeve, R., Croom, N., & Vasquez, P. (2011). [Am I going crazy? A critical race analysis of doctoral education](#). *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 44(1), 93-114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2011.539472>

Dissertation proposals must be completed in accordance with [Graduate College Dissertation Guidelines](#).

See also: [Example Dissertation Proposals](#) and [Example 3-Article Dissertation Proposal](#).

### **Identifying and Shaping the Research Topic**

Ideally, building off your learning from your required and elective research coursework, when you and your committee chair/co-chair agree that you are ready to move toward writing your dissertation proposal, the first step in this process is identifying and shaping your research topic which, eventually, will be expressed in the form of a research question(s). A research question is a large, overarching question that your proposed dissertation study will seek to answer. Research questions may begin with this kind of phraseology: What is the lived experience of...? In what ways do...? How, if at all, can...?

Typically, you will have a single, main research question, and sometimes you will also have one or a few (two or three) ancillary research questions. Ancillary research questions are similar large and overarching, but may need to be answered before the main research question can be answered. The data you collect in the execution of your dissertation study is what you will draw from in seeking answers to ancillary and main research questions. So, for example, you might have an overarching research question like: *What are the lived experiences of Students of Color in teacher preparation programs in the United States?* For this study, you might decide to interview Students of Color enrolled in teacher education courses in U.S. colleges, you might also decide to conduct classroom observations in these students' teacher preparation courses. To guide the interviews, you might develop an ancillary question like: *In what ways do Students of Color in pre-service teacher education programs experience racial affirmation, racial indifference, racial isolation, and/or racial animosity?* To guide the classroom observations, you might develop an ancillary research

question like: *How, if at all, are race, racism, and white supremacy discussed in teacher preparation courses?*

In discerning your research topic/question(s), you should thoughtfully consider your own researcher identities, standpoints, and positionalities. In CSIEME disciplines, it is important for researchers to share “organic connectedness” to the research topic/question. Park (1989) explains this connectedness in this way:

...Research begins with a problem...the sense of the problem arises from the people who are affected by it and whose interest demands that it be solved. And the problem addressed is social in nature and calls for collective solution, otherwise there is no participatory exigency. This sense of the problem may not always be externalized as a consensually derived and objectified target of attack in the community, although there may be suffering, a sense of malaise and frustration, and anger. ...The researcher should, of course, share the sense of the problem with the people that s/he works with and should be committed to its solution; s/he should be a partner in the endeavor in this sense. The researcher participates in the struggle of the people. (Park, 1989, p. 9)

Organic connectedness is also important to cultivate to push back against how research has traditionally been used to further the oppression of Communities of Color, as well as other historically and persistently marginalized and minoritized groups. Tuhiwai Smith (2012) notes, “The term ‘research’ is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, ‘research,’ is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary” (p. xi). Too often, especially urban universities like UNLV, function as “data plantations” because they promote “research on” rather than “research with” disposition. Accordingly, researchers in CSIEME disciplines seek to undertake inquiry in manners that invite and interest those in communities most impacted by “the problem” at focus in the research to become partners—co-learners, co-teachers, co-investigators, and co-problem solvers—and, thus, also agents in their own continued advancement as well as ours.

Also, in discerning your research topic/question(s), you should consider your timeline, resources, and other commitments. While these considerations should not determine whether or not you do or do not pursue a particular line of inquiry for your dissertation, but they may impact how you pursue whatever inquiry line you choose.

In developing your research question(s), you should consult with all members of your committee to get different perspectives on how you might craft it(them) to ensure that your question(s) will engage you with a topic, and in manners that most interest/concern you. This consultation will, necessarily, involve a discussion of proposed methodological approaches to your study, as you will need to identify a research methodology that will best enable you to answer your research question(s).

### Acceptable Formats for the Proposal/Dissertation

5-Chapter Dissertation (Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Findings, Results; output can be organized in more than five chapters so long as the format remains more or less the same (e.g., Findings could be reported over two chapters; see [these guidelines](#)).

3-Article Dissertation (see [this overview](#) and [these guidelines](#)).

Other formats approved by the committee, aligned with approved *department-to-system* policy and law.

### Preparing the Dissertation Proposal

The proposal must be specific enough for any academic reader to understand: 1) why the proposed study is needed (its broad significance for education, and its specific significance to CSIEME disciplines); 2) how the

study relates to, and differs from, prior studies on similar topics and/or with similar methodological approaches; and, 3) how the study will be carried out. CSIEME students are expected to consult a broad range of resources outlining content considerations for each chapter in the dissertation proposal, as well as the proposal as a whole. Below are a few key resources to consult in these regards, but CSIEME students should also seek out other resources on their own, as well as in consultation with their committee, the Education liaison librarian, local and inter/national peers, etc.

Within eurocentrism, especially within elite historically and/or predominantly white higher education institutions, there is an embedded bias for linear thinking and writing. Linearity assumes that there is a universal “logic” and that logic flows from one point to another, to another, etc. (e.g., A to B to C, to D) in a predictable, even a “scientific” fashion. CSIEME and other counterhegemonic and/or resistance disciplines challenge the efficacy of universality, a singular notion of “logic,” and linearity in favor of, for example, various conceptual approaches to knowledge construction/ways of knowing in which sense-making may flow in multiple directions simultaneously. CSIEME students are encouraged to challenge eurocentrism and to trouble linearity in their work in ways that reveal the absurdity either (as well as other manifestations of white supremacy and heteropatriarchy) are synonymous with truth, accuracy, and academic rigor. This means that CSIEME students should explicitly demonstrate exemplary understanding of eurocentric academic expectations, and then go beyond those expectations in enacting critically conscious work.

See *Traditional (More or Less “Eurocentric”) Chapter Content Outline* (see pp. 1-2)  
<http://csieme.us/documents/DissertationChapterOutline-Revised.pdf>

See *Additional Chapter Outline Considerations for Bridging the Eurocentric to the Counterhegemonic* (see pp. 3-4)  
<http://csieme.us/documents/DissertationChapterOutline-Revised.pdf>

See *Establishing Rigor/Validity in Critical Disciplinary Research*  
<http://csieme.us/documents/Establishing%20Rigor-Rev.pdf>

See additional chapter/proposal/dissertation development resources [here](#) under “For Current Students,” then under “Doctoral Programs: Doctoral Benchmark and Academic Job Search Resources.”

Typically (with both a five-chapter and three-article dissertation), the proposal includes the first three chapters (Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology) and corresponding front (e.g., Cover Page Table of Contents, Abstract) and back matter (e.g., References, Appendices) for what will eventually become your full dissertation. These chapters are generally developed over a three- to six-month period in consultation with your committee, other academic mentors\*/mentors, and colleagues/peers (broadly defined) (again, see [these guidelines](#), [this overview](#), and [these guidelines](#)).

Generally...

### ***The Introduction Chapter...***

Introduces and provides background on the “problem” (or issue, concern, etc.) that you want to study— what is the problem, what gives rise to the problem, why does the problem merit study, what theoretical or conceptual framework(s) will be used to frame the problem and why, and what will education broadly, and CSIEME disciplines more specifically, glean from the study of the problem.

As noted above, beginning in this Introduction chapter (and revisited, as is relevant, in subsequent chapters), CSIEME students should also articulate how their researcher identities, standpoints, and positionalities relate to their study problem; specifically, their “shared connectedness” to the problem.

In identifying and delineating theoretical or conceptual framework(s), CSIEME students should consider frameworks that have been developed by critical scholars and are critically aligned with their research topic, for example Critical Race Theory, BlackCrit, TribalCrit, LatCrit, QueerCrit, OutCrit, DisCrit, among many others.

### ***The Literature Review Chapter...***

Identifies the research gap that your study will fill in some way by summarizing, synthesizing, and critiquing efficacy of relevant prior studies, in illustrating how the study you are proposing to do will build on/expand/extend the thinking documented in, and the understanding emanating from, these previous studies in some way. Said another way, the literature review chapter provides a comprehensive review of relevant *content (or topic) and research (or methodological)* literature bases that are important to the proposed study; this review is comprised of a critical appraisal of this literature, how the proposed study relates to and differs from studies discussed in this literature, and how the proposed study will build on this literature in improving understanding of/helping to solve the problem being studied.

The literature review needs to move, in a funneling manner, from broad to specific, and in an interwoven fashion that is sort of like hair braiding.

The literature starts with several large (more general) strands that are intertwined down to the specifics that are most closely related to your proposed study. These strands describe the existing bodies of research that inform your study 1) broadly, 2) less broadly/more specifically, and then 3) most specifically in order to illustrate that you know what existing work informs (is similar, in some more broad and/or more specific way, to) the study you want to do so that, when you get to the bottom of the funnel, you can reveal what's missing in each strand that your study will seek to fill in, even if it is only in some small way. Within each strand, there is an element that relates to your study.

Even if your proposed study is in an emerging or less studied area, this does not mean that there is “no” or only a small amount of research to review, on the contrary, it can mean that you have more broad strands of research to review to illustrate from where your study idea and/or approach has emerged.

For example, let's say you want to do your dissertation on Gay Latinx men in Education Ph.D. programs. It is likely that there is not a lot of literature about this group's academic success, but that doesn't mean your literature review will be short, instead it means you might have to look at, for example, Lesbian and Gay student success, Gay male student success, Latinx student success, and Latinx male student success in K-12-, undergraduate-, masters-, and doctoral-level education to funnel from the broad to the specific. This review of the educational pipeline for these all of these students will, itself, start broad, but when you get down to the specific focus group, it will become very narrow, paralleling the literature review funneling, which is an even more powerful and rigorous way of illustrating the need for this example study. Another way to approach the literature for this example study might be to look at all Ph.D. students in Education, all Ph.D. Students of Color in Education, all Lesbian and Gay Ph.D. students in Education, all Lesbian and Gay Ph.D. Students of Color in Education, all Lesbian and Gay Latinx Ph.D. students in Education, to get to all Gay Latinx male Ph.D. Students of Color in Education.

Here's a different example. Let's imagine you want to study the higher education experiences of international Iranian Muslim women who wear hijab in the United States. You might consider reviewing literature on:

1. The attention given to religious oppression in Multicultural Education, and within that attention, the attention given to Muslims;
2. The experiences of Muslim women in U.S. higher education, and within those experiences, the attention given to Iranian Muslim women; and,



3. The history of the hijab documented in Islamic thought, the emergence of Islamic Feminist Epistemology (IFE) in response to the history of the hijab, and, how IFE has influenced decision making around hijab wearing among Iranian Muslim women in Iran and in other parts of the world.

At the end of the review of these three broad-to-specific areas, there will be a sharp intersection between the literature in all three strands that points directly to the need for this study.

In crafting the Literature Review chapter, CSIEME students should also consider whose work they cite. While many “seminal” or key works in a particular area of research may have been pioneered/authored by white men, it is important to consider if, and to what extent, the ideas/knowledge bases in these works may have been appropriated from indigenous communities and, where relevant, to re-attribute them accordingly (Sankofa). Additionally, to the extent possible, CSIEME students should also seek to cite the relevant works of Scholars of Color, women scholars, young scholars, LGBTQ scholars, among others as is appropriate to their studies. So, for example, a study on Black women educational leaders may be informed by research undertaken by Black women educational leaders, Black educational leaders, and/or other Black/women scholars.

### *The Methodology Chapter...*

Provides a detailed description of how the study of the problem (issue or concern) will be designed/carried out: via a qualitative or quantitative or mixed approach, with what participants, at what sites, using what data collection and analysis tools, over what time period, in spite of what limitations. As noted above, your committee chair/co-chair may ask you to work on this chapter in tandem with your IRB Protocol (see The IRB Protocol..., below), however, you cannot submit your protocol until you successfully defend your proposal and officially “move to candidacy” (also referred to as the ABD or All But Dissertation stage).

In conceptualizing the Methodology chapter, CSIEME students should consider a critical methodological approach to their study that is critically aligned with their topic. While many “traditional” qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods may have been developed by white men, it is important to consider if, and to what extent, the research approaches/orientations articulated in these works may have been appropriated from indigenous communities and, where relevant, to re-attribute them accordingly (Sankofa). Additionally, to the extent possible, CSIEME students should also seek to find/uncover and employ research methods developed by Scholars of Color, feminist/womynist scholars, youth scholars, activist scholars, LGBTQ scholars, among others as is appropriate to their studies; these methods might include public interest research, critical advocacy research, participatory action research (PAR), testimonio research, youth and/or teach participatory action research (Y/T-PAR), queering rhizomatic method, emancipatory prison research, critical self-study/autoethnography, collective narrative analysis, critical relational decolonizing inquiry, among many others others.

For the three-article dissertation, the proposal chapters will be configured a bit differently than for the five-chapter dissertation: chapter 1 will summarize the rationale for, and approach to, the three article dissertation, and introduce the literature bases that will inform each of the three proposed articles and the corresponding research questions; chapters 2-4 will introduce each of the three proposed articles, including the corresponding conceptual and/or theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches (see [this overview](#) and follow [these guidelines](#)).

For other dissertation formats, students should work with all members of their committee to identify or adapt/develop a proposal framework that aligns with the chosen format, as well as with approved *department-to-system* policy and law.

*\*The term mentor does not have etymological roots in the word man, thus the term femtor is not intended to identify womyn/female mentors in contrast to men/male mentors—these terms are not intended to be seen, even falsely, as binaries or false equivalencies; rather, used in tandem, these terms are intended to problematize the way mentoring is typically practiced—as empowering, but still situated in hierarchy. Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, suggested that teaching should be a mutually reciprocal act, where students and teachers share information with one another, thus also periodically sharing the roles of students and teachers. Rather than seeing teachers as all-knowing, and students as empty receptacles into which teachers make deposits of knowledge, Freire suggested that teachers become facilitators of learning in a manner that starts with students’ prior knowledge and builds from there. From Freire’s lens, mentorship is about emancipation, situated in community. Empowerment as an outcome of mentorship, encourages the mentee to develop the skills and capacity to successfully navigate existing systems and structures of power as they currently exist; whereas, emancipation as a result of femtorship, encourages femtees to develop the critical consciousness to also challenge these systems and structures in seeking to change the world for the better for all (see [Bell, 1976](#); [Cornejo, 2017](#); [Freire, 1970](#); [Gonzalez, Lara, Prado, Rivera, & Rodriguez, 2015](#); [Morgan, 2009](#)).*

### ***The Institutional Research Board (IRB) Protocol...***

Outlines your plan for executing your dissertation study in a manner that is ethical and, specially, that protects “human subjects” or “research participants.” In particular, the protocol requires you to explicate the ways in which you will: 1) recruit eligible participants for your study (without coercion); 2) mitigate participant risk during their participation in your study; and, 3) protect participant privacy and confidentiality during data collection and for five years thereafter.

Even if your study does not involve “human subjects,” you should still complete a protocol to ensure that the manner in which you are planning to execute your study is ethical. Regardless of whether or not your study requires IRB approval, you should always follow ethical guidelines for the conduct of research.

After you pass your proposal, but before you can begin data collection, you must secure university Institutional Research Board (IRB) approval (or a determination from the IRB board that your study is “exempt” from approval). You secure this approval by completing and submitting your IRB Protocol. To accomplish this goal, complete the following steps:

**Step 1:** Go to the university’s IRB Protocol submission portal, [IRBnet.org](http://IRBnet.org).

**Step 2:** [Register](#) as a “new user.” [Note: Registration is free, so if you find that you are being asked to pay for your registration, you are on the wrong site—the site is IRBnet.org NOT IRB.net]

**Step 3:** [Login](#) to the portal.

**Step 4:** In the left side menu bar, under “Other Tools,” click on “Forms and Templates”

**Step 5:** From the “Select a Library” dropdown menu, choose “UNLV Social/Behavioral IRB, Las Vegas, NV-Documents for Researchers, then, from the “Document Description” list below this dropdown menu, click on, download, and read “1 (GUIDE) IRBNet Researcher Quick Start Guide.”

The Quick Start Guide will help to orient you to the portal. Your chair/co-chair and other members of your committee can also support you to navigate the portal. You may also learn how to use the portal in one or more of your research courses. You can also request a Web-based demo of the portal [here](#).

Before you can submit your IRB Protocol for approval, you need to take and pass the UNLV-specific Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Research Ethics and Compliance Training requirements. To accomplish this goal, complete the following steps:



**Step 1:** Go to the [CITI homepage](#).

**Step 2:** [Register](#) as a “new user.” [Note: Registration is free, so if you find that you are being asked to pay for your registration, you are on the wrong part of the site, you need to make sure you are on the part of the site that asks you to first identify yourself by your university affiliation.]

Once you complete the registration process you will have access to the UNLV-specific requirements that you need to complete. If you want to complete them immediately, be advised that it could take you several days to do so, even if you work on them several hours a day. If you want to complete them at another time (or over several days), note that you will not access them through the “new user” registration process, rather simply through the site Login (see Step 3, below).

**Step 3:** [Login](#) to the site. [Note: Use the generic Login, NOT the “Login through My Institution” option.]

**Step 4:** Once you finish the requirements, be sure to print (and save as PDFs) your CITI Completion Report and Certificate. When you are ready to submit your IRB Protocol, you will upload these documents with it.

CSIEME students should be especially appreciative of, and attentive to, the IRB review process as this process was established in response to long-standing legacies of racist, classist, sexist, and other oppressive research practices. The CITI Research Ethics and Compliance Training requirements review some of these legacies in delineating the guidelines for the ethical conduct of research.

#### Proposal Procedures: 3Rs Phase 1—Rewrite, Revise, Repeat

Your chair/co-chair may suggest particular ways for you to begin work on the dissertation proposal, though they will also want to hear from you what you believe are good approaches/approaches that will work well for you (“your process”). For example, your chair/co-chair may encourage you to work on Chapter 3 first (often in tandem with the IRB proposal) to help you “concretize” the “how” of your study. Once you and your chair/co-chair agree on an organizational approach to your work on the proposal, on your own, you will create a first draft; this draft could be as discrete as a specific portion of one chapter, or a whole single chapter, or of your proposal as a whole (all three chapters). Once your first draft is complete, you will share it with your committee chair/co-chair and you and your chair/co-chair will negotiate this draft (and, where relevant, subsequent drafts of other chapter portions/chapters), back and forth via email and/or face-to-face, until you are both more or less comfortable with a strong working draft of your whole proposal (**rewrite**). During this back and forth process, your chair/co-chair and/or you may opt to also include other members of your committee (for example, if one of your committee members has specific expertise in the methodological approach that you are using in your study, you may want to include them in the development of parts or all of your Chapter 3 draft). Once you have the good working draft of your whole proposal completed, you should email each member of your committee individually, share the draft with them, and ask to schedule a face-to-face meeting with them over the next two weeks (to give them time to review the draft) to discuss any feedback they have to offer you (**revise**). After getting feedback from every member of your committee, you should meet with your chair/co-chair to discuss the feedback you received and discuss if/how to integrate it into a second draft of your proposal. Once you have completed this second draft, you should share it with your chair/co-chair. After getting feedback from your chair/co-chair, you should integrate it into a third draft of your proposal and then send that draft back to your chair/co-chair (**repeat**). Additional rounds of feedback and new draft development will continue until chair/co-chair believes that your proposal is ready to defend.

Usually your committee chair/co-chair will send an email, with your proposal attached, to the rest of your committee (also cced to you) to schedule your oral/sign proposal defense (specific date and time options), if, after review of the proposal, the committee members agree that you are ready to move to the defense.\*

Once the date and time of your exam defense is set with your committee members, and at least three weeks in advance of the defense date, please contact Ms. Nanette Meyer ([nanette.meyer@unlv.edu](mailto:nanette.meyer@unlv.edu)) in the Teaching

and Learning Departmental Office to inform her of the date and time of your defense and to book a room for the defense (or to inform her that the defense will be held virtually). E-mail your committee members to confirm the location for the defense.

In the interim between when the defense is scheduled and the defense date you should begin working on your proposal defense presentation (see Proposal Defense Procedures, below) in consultation with your committee chair/co-chair, committee members, UNLV reference librarians, and trusted/esteemed others in your student/educator/researcher/scholar/activist network (see [Example Proposal Defenses](#)).

*\*Typically, the proposal review (ten working days) and defense must occur when faculty are “on contract” (during the fall/spring academic semesters). However, if committee members are willing, both the review period and defense can occur outside of contracted time. Students who need or want to schedule proposal reviews and/or defenses outside of contracted time should contact each committee to determine if committee members are willing to do so, and, if they are, let their chair/co-chair know so that that can be factored into the email communication iterated above.*

### Proposal Review

As noted previously, your committee members have 10 working (during the work week, not including holidays) days to review your proposal; near after the conclusion of those 10 days the oral/sign defense of the papers is scheduled if the committee agrees that you are ready to move to the already-scheduled defense. Committee members who do not agree you are ready to move to the defense will communicate this to the rest of the committee via email for discussion. Your chair/co-chair will inform you of the call for discussion and the disposition rendered in it. If you are allowed to move forward to defense under these circumstances, any aspects of the discussion not addressed/resolved by your defense will be raised at the defense with you for further discussion. If you are not allowed to move forward to your defense under these circumstances, your chair/co-chair will follow up with you regarding additional work that you need to do on the proposal to be able to move forward, and a timeline for achieving this goal.

### Proposal Defense Procedures

The defense of the dissertation proposal involves preparing an introductory statement about yourself and an oral/sign summary of each of your three chapters (1-introduction, 2-literature review, 3-methodology). You should plan to speak for no more than about 35-45 minutes total. Remember that the goal of proposal is for you to demonstrate your preparedness to implement your dissertation study. Sometimes, even if the chapters are not as strong as they should be, you can bridge knowledge/ability gaps by how you perform in the defense.

Your introductory statement about yourself should detail, briefly (5-10 minutes), what has brought you to this point—to this oral/sign defense—personally, academically, and professionally. Your summary of each of your chapters (10-12 minutes) should succinctly describe how you plan to enact your study—intellectually and practically, and the relationship between the two.

You should stand when you present, just be mindful of your time limit. You can bring handouts or visual aids (graphics) to share with the committee, and you can also speak/from rely on memory, an outline, note cards, powerpoint and/or other like media (again, see [Example Proposal Defenses](#)). You should think of this defense as you being a co-expert in your content/methodology along with your co-expert committee members, so be prepared to engage in equitable, spirited back and forth exchanges about your work with your committee members.

If you will need media support the day of the defense (to Skype in a committee member and/or for powerpoint, etc.), please contact Mr. Young Kim ([young.kim@unlv.edu](mailto:young.kim@unlv.edu)) at least three weeks in advance to ensure that he and/or one of his staff members can be available to assist.

The defense will begin with your chair/co-chair welcoming everyone to the room—for the proposal, committee members and guests can attend (though the defense is not advertised externally). You can bring refreshments (for yourself, the committee members, and guests) to this defense if you choose to do so (be advised that people do not usually eat very much (so less is more) and typically prefer beverages (especially coffee/tea for morning defenses) and healthier snacks, like fruit). The presence of guests/group refreshments is due to the fact that this defense is considered more of a formality, meaning that you work with your chair/co-chair and other committee to complete your chapters (they act as content area/methodology supports, and you can also seek out professional technical (editing) support), so your performance in this defense is typically treated as likely to be successful, thus handled in this more public, more “festive,” fashion. This is because a student is not encouraged to move forward with this defense until their chair/co-chair and other committee members believe they are ready (likely to be successful), so it is generally wise to heed advice from your chair/co-chair and other committee members regarding your readiness; exceptions to this rule do, however, exist and, for that reason, you are encouraged to advocate for your readiness if you feel your chair/co-chair is moving too slowly—open, honest communication between you and your chair/co-chair and other committee members is key to your success.

Next the chair /co-chair will indicate to the rest of the committee that you have been invited to speak for about 35-45 minutes maximum, after which each committee member will have the opportunity to comment and/or ask questions. Once all committee members have exhausted their responses to your written and oral/sign work, you and your guests will be asked to leave the room (but not go far), the committee will deliberate, and then you alone will be called back into the room for the decision—it is up to you how/when/if you want to inform your guests of the decision.

While it is rare, because of the rigor of preparation, for a student to not pass their proposal defense, when you are called back in, if you do not pass, your committee will provide you with supportive feedback for improving your proposal and a timeline for you to do so and then to schedule a new defense.

When you are called back in, if you do pass, your committee will congratulate you and discuss your plan for completing the IRB protocol, getting it approved, and then executing your dissertation study.

Again, this defense is not externally marketed.

Be prepared to complete the appropriate forms in the [Graduate College Gateway System](#) for signature routing immediately after the defense (see [Information about Program of Study-Related Form Changes](#), as well as [Ph.D./Ed.D. Benchmark-Forms Overview](#)).

### ***Dissertation***

The purpose of the dissertation is for students to demonstrate advanced depth and breadth of knowledge in their areas of academic specialization/interest, and the ability to apply that knowledge in carrying out a comprehensive research project. Additional details are provided below.

Dissertations must be completed in accordance with [Graduate College Dissertation Guidelines](#).

See also: [Example Dissertations](#) and [Example 3-Article Dissertation](#).

### Acceptable Formats for the Dissertation

5-Chapter Dissertation (Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Findings, Results; output can be organized in more than five chapters so long as the format remains more or less the same (e.g., Findings could be reported over two chapters; see [these guidelines](#)).

3-Article Dissertation (see [this overview](#) and [these guidelines](#)).

Other formats approved by the committee, aligned with approved *department-to-system* policy and law.

### Preparing the Dissertation

Please review “[Preparing the Dissertation Proposal](#)” section above.

Generally...

#### ***The Findings Chapter...***

Documents the results of your study; it is an organized presentation of the data you collected (i.e., from individual interviews, document review, observations, focus groups, self-reflective journaling, testimonios, surveys, among many other data sources). Said another way, your findings “tell the story” of your research—what did you learn, and how will, and/or to what extent will, what you learned enable you (or not) to answer your research questions.

In constructing the Findings chapter, CSIEME students should consider telling the story of their research in a manner that is aligned with their researcher identities, standpoints, and positionalities, their critical engagement with the work of similarly aligned scholars in the literature reviewed, and in their choice of conceptual/theoretical framework and methodological approach. For example, a study focused on the experiences of Black women may share findings in a feminist, womynist, and/or Afrocentric circular (as opposed to linear) and/or oral storytelling tradition; or a study focused on Latinx students may use “dichos” or culturally-informed idioms to group findings.

#### ***The Implications Chapter***

Analyzes the impact of your study. In research academia, implications that have broad impact, for example, at the policy level, thus also for changing institutional practices, are highly valued and, therefore, are generally foregrounded. For example, a study documenting how teacher evaluation practices disproportionately negatively impact older teachers, Teachers of Color, and teachers who engage liberatory pedagogies may be analyzed for its value to teacher unions that, armed with evidence that these practices are discriminatory, will seek to have them eliminated in service to their constituents. While this is a powerful analytical perspective, it does not necessarily engage concerns about the nature of teacher preparation and the preparedness of teachers to teach all students well, especially those students who are also disproportionately negatively impacted by student disciplinary policies; policies that are often enforced by the teachers who are almost never negatively impacted by teacher evaluation practices.

In building the Implications chapter, CSIEME students should consider multiple, critical analytical points of entry that, again, dovetail with the critical commitments articulated through each main component of the study in all of the preceding chapters. While policy- and related institutional practice-level study impacts are important, especially from a CSIEME lens, so too (and perhaps even moreso) are the impacts of the study on you, your participants (if you have them), the communities you/your participants represent, and on education at the local/community level, especially impacts that seek, unapologetically, to end suffering by amplifying educational equity and justice.

For the three-article dissertation, the dissertation chapters will be configured a bit differently than for the five-chapter dissertation: chapter 1 will summarize the rationale for, and approach to, the three article dissertation; chapters 2-4 will summarize the first, second, and third articles, respectively, inclusive of the corresponding literature review, conceptual and/or theoretical framework(s), methodological approach, findings, implications, and references; and chapter 5 will summarize, through syntheses of all three articles, overarching study conclusions (see [this overview](#) and follow [these guidelines](#)).

For other dissertation formats, students should work with all members of their committee to identify or adapt/develop a dissertation framework that aligns with the chosen format, as well as with approved *department-to-system* policy and law.

### Dissertation Procedures: 3Rs Phase 2—Rewrite, Revise, Repeat

Again, your chair/co-chair may suggest particular approaches for you to consider in undertaking your dissertation data collection and analysis, in discerning and then writing up your findings and implications, and, as indicated based on your study execution and/or new developments in the research related to your study, in updating your introduction, literature review, and methodology chapters. However, as is always the case, your chair/co-chair will also want to hear from you what you believe are good approaches/approaches that will work well for you (“your process”). For example, your chair/co-chair may encourage you to work on updating Chapter 3 first to ensure that it documents: 1) the original plan for undertaking your study; 2) how the study was actually undertaken; and, 3) the reasons for the changes (**rewrite**). Or, your chair/co-chair may suggest that you use your research questions to organize your findings and implications chapters to highlight if/how/the extent to which the data you collected enables you to answer your research questions. Once you and your chair/co-chair agree on an organizational plan for enacting your research and completing your study, on your own, you will actualize that plan, checking in, as needed (or as encouraged/directed) with your chair/co-chair.

As with the dissertation proposal, when you are ready, you will create a first draft of the dissertation; this draft could be as discrete as a specific portion of one revised chapter (1-3), or a whole single new chapter (4-5), or of your dissertation as a whole (all five chapters). Once your first draft is complete, you will share it with your committee chair/co-chair and you and your chair/co-chair will negotiate this draft (and, where relevant, subsequent drafts of other chapter portions/chapters, back and forth), via email and/or face-to-face until you are both more or less comfortable with a strong working draft of your whole dissertation (**revise**). During this back and forth process, your chair/co-chair and/or you may opt to also include other members of your committee (for example, if one of your committee members has specific expertise with a data coding tool that you are using in your study, you may want to include them in your data analysis process and related sections of dissertation draft). Once you have the good working draft of your whole dissertation completed, you should email each member of your committee individually, share the draft with them, and ask to schedule a face-to-face meeting with them over the next two weeks (to give them time to review the draft) to discuss any feedback they have to offer you. After getting feedback from every member of your committee, you should meet with your chair/co-chair to discuss the feedback you received and discuss if/how to integrate it into a second draft of your dissertation (**repeat**). Once you have completed this second draft, you should share it with your chair/co-chair. After getting feedback from your chair/co-chair, you should integrate it into a third draft of your dissertation and then send that draft back to your chair/co-chair. Additional rounds of feedback and new draft development will continue until chair/co-chair believes that your dissertation is ready to defend.

Usually your committee chair/co-chair will send an email, with your dissertation attached, to the rest of your committee (also cced to you) to schedule your oral/sign dissertation defense (specific date and time options), if, after review of the dissertation, the committee members agree that you are ready to move to the defense.\*



Once the date and time of your exam defense is set with your committee members, and at least three weeks in advance of the defense date, please contact Ms. Nanette Meyer ([nanette.meyer@unlv.edu](mailto:nanette.meyer@unlv.edu)) in the Teaching and Learning Departmental Office to:

1. Inform her of the date and time of your defense;
2. Book a room for the defense (or to inform her that the defense will be held virtually); immediately thereafter, email your committee members to confirm the location for the defense;
3. Provide the title of the dissertation; and,
4. Provide the names and titles/roles of your committee members.

In the interim between when the defense is scheduled and the defense date you should begin working on your dissertation defense presentation (see Dissertation Defense Procedures, below) in consultation with your committee chair/co-chair, committee members, UNLV reference librarians, and trusted/esteemed others in your student/educator/researcher/scholar/activist network (see [Example Dissertation Defenses](#)).

*\*Typically, the dissertation review (ten working days) and defense must occur when faculty are “on contract” (during the fall/spring academic semesters). However, if committee members are willing, both the review period and defense can occur outside of contracted time. Students who need or want to schedule dissertation reviews and/or defenses outside of contracted time should contact each committee to determine if committee members are willing to do so, and, if they are, let their chair/co-chair know so that that can be factored into the email communication iterated above.*

### Dissertation Review

As noted previously, your committee members have 10 working (during the work week, not including holidays) days to review your dissertation; near after the conclusion of those 10 days the oral/sign defense of the dissertation is scheduled if the committee agrees that you are ready to move to the already-scheduled defense. Committee members who do not agree you are ready to move to the defense will communicate this to the rest of the committee via email for discussion. Your chair/co-chair will inform you of the call for discussion and the disposition rendered in it. If you are allowed to move forward to defense under these circumstances, any aspects of the discussion not addressed/resolved by your defense will be raised at the defense with you for further discussion. If you are not allowed to move forward to your defense under these circumstances, your chair/co-chair will follow up with you regarding additional work that you need to do on the dissertation to be able to move forward, and a timeline for achieving this goal.

### Dissertation Defense Procedures

Prior to the defense, submit your completed (near final) dissertation to the iThenticate system. The day of the defense, print and bring your iThenticate report with you. See [this link to information on iThenticate](#), including how to print the report.

The defense of the dissertation involves preparing an introductory statement about yourself and an oral summary of each of your five chapters (1-introduction, 2-literature review, 3- methodology, 4-findings, 5-implications). Because the proposal defense focused on chapters 1-3, the bulk of the dissertation defense should be spent on chapters 4-5, only briefly reviewing chapters 1-3, giving special attention to anything that changed in them as a result of the implementation of the study. You should plan to speak for no more than about 35-45 minutes total. Remember, that the goal of the dissertation is for you to demonstrate your expertise in the content/methodology of your dissertation study. Sometimes, even if the chapters are not as strong as they should be, you can bridge knowledge/ability gaps by how you perform in the defense.

Your introductory statement about yourself should detail, briefly (5-10 minutes), what has brought you to this point—to this oral defense—personally, academically, and professionally. Your summary of each of

your chapters (3-5 minutes on chapters 1-3, and 10-12 minutes on chapters 4-5) should succinctly describe how you enacted your study—intellectually and practically, and the relationship between the two—as well as what you learned from so doing, especially how your work “fills the gap” in knowledge that existed prior to your study being conducted and the implications of your work for the field moving forward (e.g., areas for future research your study has uncovered).

You should stand when you present, and be mindful of your time limit. You can bring handouts or visual aids (graphics) to share with the committee, and you can also speak from or rely on memory, an outline, note cards, powerpoint and/or other like media (again see [Example Dissertation Defenses](#)). You should think of this defense as you being the expert on your study, and your committee members being colleagues with whom you are sharing your work, so be prepared to “own the floor” as you respond to questions from committee members about your work, as well as to “push back” against challenges from them on it.

If you will need media support the day of the defense (to Skype in a committee member and/or for powerpoint, etc.), please contact Mr. Young Kim ([young.kim@unlv.edu](mailto:young.kim@unlv.edu)) at least three weeks in advance to ensure that he and/or one of his staff members can be available to assist.

The defense will begin with your chair welcoming everyone to the room—for the dissertation, committee members and guests can attend (also, the defense *is* advertised externally; typically anyone who sees the advertisement and wants to attend is encouraged to contact your committee chair/co-chair for permission to attend—in CSIEME chairs/co-chairs defer to students regarding attendance permissions). You can bring refreshments (for yourself, the committee members, and guests) to this defense if you choose to do so (be advised that people do not usually eat very much (so less is more) and typically prefer beverages (especially coffee/tea for morning defenses) and healthier snacks, like fruit). The presence of guests/group refreshments is due to the fact that this defense is considered more of a formality given your work with your chair/co-chair and other committee members to implement your study and analyze/write up the results of it, so your performance in this defense is typically treated as likely to be successful, thus handled in this more public, more “festive” fashion. A student is not encouraged to move forward with this defense until their chair/co-chair and other committee members believe they are ready (likely to be successful), so it is generally wise to heed advice from your chair/co-chair and other committee members regarding your readiness; exceptions to this rule do, however, exist and, for that reason, you are encouraged to advocate for your readiness if you feel your chair/co-chair is moving too slowly—open, honest communication between you and your chair/co-chair and other committee members is key to your success.

Next, the chair/co-chair will indicate to the rest of the committee that you have been invited to speak for about 35-45 minutes maximum, after which each committee member will have the opportunity to comment and/or ask questions. Once all committee members have exhausted their responses to your written and oral work, you and your guests will be asked to leave the room (but not go far), the committee will deliberate, and then you alone will be called back into the room for the decision—it is up to you how/when/if you want to inform your guests of the decision.

While it is rare, because of the rigor of preparation, for a student to not pass their dissertation defense, when you are called back in, if you do not pass, your committee will provide you with supportive feedback for improving your dissertation and a timeline for you to do so and then to schedule a new defense.

When you are called back in, if you do pass, your committee will congratulate and celebrate your success! Your chair/co-chair will also provide guidance on any final edits you need to make to the dissertation, as well as to instructions for [administratively submitting it](#) and [applying for graduation](#).

This defense *is* externally marketed.

Be prepared to complete the appropriate forms in the [Graduate College Gateway System](#) for signature routing immediately after the defense (see [Information about Program of Study-Related Form Changes](#), as well as [Ph.D./Ed.D. Benchmark-Forms Overview](#)).

### ***Role of the Student***

CSIEME students are expected to:

1. Take full advantage of all members of their dissertation advisory committee;
2. Take full advantage of CSIEME-specific resources, supports, and directives (e.g., use the CSIEME website, attend CSIEME academic and co-curricular events, form and leverage support from peer writing cohorts);
3. Take full advantage of campus-wide resources and supports (e.g., use the Education liaison librarian and Lied Library website, work with Writing Center tutors, attend Graduate College and Office of Undergraduate Research workshops);
4. Take full advantages of local-to-international resources and supports (e.g., use the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity website, consider applying for a Ford Foundation dissertation fellowship, attend a national education-related and/or educational equity-related conference to network with academic peers and faculty from across the country who share research interests);
5. Strive for excellence: take initiative; ask questions/seek out answers; prepare well for all written or oral evaluative benchmarks (including coursework); submit work that at least meets, and seeks to *exceed*, expected protocols (e.g., APA formatting, English writing conventions, comprehensive (deep and broad) literature review, accurate and thorough data analysis); and,
6. Learn and follow degree program procedures, processes, and policies, and closely monitor progress toward degree completion.

### **CSIEME Program SECTION 4: Resources**

#### Writing Style Guide

American Psychological Association (APA) (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (seventh edition). Washington, D.C.: Author.

#### Additional Resources

See also CSIEME-related [Key Professional Organizations, Conferences, Journals, & Additional Scholar-Activist Resources](#)