**University of
Delaware School of
Education PhD In
Education
Learning Sciences Specialization Area Qualifying
Project**

The purpose of the Learning Sciences specialization area project is to support students to develop (a) scholarly skills (e.g., research design, analysis, writing, argumentation, synthesis) and (b) knowledge of the major issues, literature, and research in the Learning Sciences (LS).

During their second year of study, LS students will prepare a literature review or conduct a pilot study, and then produce a written product of approximately 20-30 pages. They will also present their findings at a meeting of the LS students and faculty (e.g., LS brown bag series). The topic and format of the project will be chosen in consultation with the student's advisor. Students may wish to enroll in an independent study course with their advisor as they undertake the project.

The written product will be evaluated by a committee of three LS faculty members. The Committee will consist of the student's adviser and two faculty members from LS, one of whom will be the chair. Passing is required in order to advance to proposing, researching, and writing the dissertation.

Projects are rated as Pass/Revise/Fail. Within one month, results will be returned to the student.

- If a student receives a rating of "Pass" the student is eligible to advance to preparation of the dissertation.
- If a student receives a rating of "Fail" the student is terminated from the Learning Sciences program.
- In the case of the "Revise" rating, the student must complete additional tasks to be determined by the LS faculty (e.g., written revisions that take into account faculty comments, oral exam, production of a paper). The LS faculty will then re-evaluate student performance on the project and additional tasks, and assign either a Pass or Fail rating, with consequences as outlined above. Only one revision round is permitted.

Timeline

*By the End of Spring Semester in the **First Year** (May 31):*

1. Students will meet with their advisor to select the format and topic of the LS
   Specialization Area Project, and to plan when in the second year the student will
   complete the written product and presentation.

2. Students and advisors will complete the LS Specialization Area Project Proposal Form
   and send the form to the LS Coordinator.

3. The LS Coordinator will form an evaluation committee for each student.

*By End of Spring Semester in the **Second Year***:

- Students will work on the Specialization Area Project based on the proposal form that they
  submitted to the LS Coordinator at the end of their first year. Advisors can provide feedback to
  their students on the project in the form of comments, but not line edits. Note that it is possible to
  change the proposed plan as long as the revised plan is approved by the advisor. If this happens,
  then a new form must be completed and submitted to the LS Coordinator.

- Students inform the LS Coordinator of when they will complete and present the project. Students
  may submit their written product for evaluation any of the following times during their second year.

  February

  - The written product for evaluation must be submitted to the LS Coordinator by
    February 1.
  - The presentation must be completed no later than February 15.
  - The committee will evaluate the written product and return results and comments to
    the student no later than March 1. If a "Revise" rating is received, additional tasks
    as specified by the evaluation committee (see above) must be completed and
    evaluated by April 1.

  April

  - The written product for evaluation must be submitted to the LS Coordinator by
    April 1.
  - The presentation must be completed no later than April 15.

- The committee will evaluate the written product and return results and comments to the student no later than May 1. If a "Revise" rating is received, additional tasks as specified by the evaluation committee (see above) must be completed and evaluated by June 1.

June

- The written product for evaluation must be submitted to the LS Coordinator by June 1.
- The presentation must be completed no later than June 15.
- The committee will evaluate the written product and return results and comments to the student no later than July 1. If a "Revise" rating is received, additional tasks as specified by the evaluation committee (see above) must be completed and evaluated by August 1.