PhD Handbook

ISLT 2022–23 Doctoral Handbook:
Ph.D. in Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies

Updated August 12, 2022

The policies identified in this document are to be construed in light of existing University policies and with deference to the requirements imposed on graduate education by the University, the Board of Trustees of Florida State University, and the Governing Board of the State University System of Florida. The information outlined is subject to change and students should be alert to announced revisions required by the faculty of the program, the department, College, and University.

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Section 1. About the Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies Program

General Information

The field of Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies is concerned with the processes for creating effective, efficient, and engaging learning environments and with the improvement of educational and training programs through the application of research and technology.

This area of specialization incorporates principles from numerous disciplines including education, psychology, communications, and management with the practical aim of improving instruction, learning, and performance. The Florida State University Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies (ISLT) Program is distinctive in that it also provides you with the opportunity to learn the principles and practices of Human Performance Technology, which affords you an expanded set of employment opportunities. This area of professional practice provides a broad perspective on the identification of various causes of human performance problems and the kinds of improvement strategies that are available in addition to programs of instruction, training, and education.

More information on the FSU ISLT program can be found at education.fsu.edu/islt.

Program Goals
The doctoral program in ISLT helps you build competencies in several areas, with the overall goal of developing a program of research based on an integrated understanding of inquiry and practice in a focused content area of interest.

1. ISLT Foundations
   1. Instructional design and development
   2. Human performance technology and instructional systems
   3. Learning and instructional theories and models
   4. Trends and current issues in the field
   5. Focus Area: specialization within instructional systems & learning technologies

2. Inquiry & Research
   1. Design and implementation of research studies
   2. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis and research methods
   3. Measurement, assessment, and evaluation

3. Dissertation
   1. The culminating experience of the doctoral program includes the completion of a dissertation that requires the design and implementation of a research study within the instructional systems & learning technologies domain.

Section 2. Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies Degree Programs

Students in the ISLT program study the theoretical basis for, and receive applied training in, the design, development, implementation, evaluation, and management of education and training programs. Skill areas range from needs assessment and job analysis through instructional design, multimedia development, and evaluation. The doctoral program differs from the master's program by its strong emphasis on research.
Section 3. Major Professor/Academic Advising

"Early in the doctoral program, the student should consult with the professors under whom the student may be interested in working and from whose areas of competency a dissertation topic could be selected. The student should request that the selected faculty member serve as major professor. The departmental chair will approve the major professor who must be a member of the faculty with Graduate Faculty Status (GFS) and have special competence in the student's proposed area of concentration. The appointment must be mutually agreeable to the student, major professor, and departmental chair." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–2023, page 103)

Upon admission, you will be assigned an appropriate faculty member as your Major Professor (i.e., advisor). In appointing a Major Professor, the admissions committee considers such factors pertaining to the faculty member as (1) the match of interests with those of the student; (2) teaching and advising load; (3) percentage of faculty time allotted to Instructional Systems; and (4) specific requests by the student in his/her application.

Although most students work with the same major professor throughout their time at FSU, a change may be requested by the student, the major professor, or both. Occasionally, as student interests mature, students identify an area of specialization which differs from that of the major professor and a new appointment becomes desirable. You should not hesitate to request a change if you believe it is in your best interest. There is no stigma associated with such a decision.

Section 4. Office of Academic Services and Intern Support (OASIS)

Contact Information: 2301 Stone Building, (850) 644-3760

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Website: http://education.fsu.edu/student-resources/student-academic-services-oasis

OASIS serves as the representative office for the academic dean of the College of Education, assisting graduate students in the steps and milestones required to achieve degree completion. OASIS maintains records for College of Education students, including all paperwork related to graduate study. OASIS serves as the primary liaison between prospective and current graduate students in the College of Education and the University Office of Admissions, the Office of the Registrar, the Center for Global Engagement and The Graduate School. OASIS staff members also assist the educator preparation programs throughout the University to coordinate internship placements and field-based experiences with PK-12 schools and students.

OASIS utilizes a graduate student email listserv to inform students of important dates and deadlines and other academic opportunities. Per the FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, the official method of communication at Florida State University is the FSU student e-mail account. In order
to stay informed and aware, students are required to set up and maintain their account and check it three times per week. If a student chooses to have the official FSU account forwarded to another e-mail account, the student is still held responsible for all information distributed by the University to the FSU account.

**OASIS Staff Contacts**

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
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**Section 5. Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies Faculty & Staff**

**Full-Time Faculty**
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<tr>
<th><strong>Dr. Diana Brandon</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Faculty I</td>
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Section 6. Registration

For questions or for assistance in registering for thesis/dissertation hours, DIS hours, defense courses, qualifying exams, preliminary exams, or other non-lecture courses, please contact your major professor.

For general registration questions, contact the Office of the Registrar at registrar@admin.fsu.edu or (850) 644-1050.

Registration Windows and Academic Calendars

The University Office of the Registrar website provides information on registration, enrollment appointments, the course lookup system, and online fee payment at http://registrar.fsu.edu/Links to an external site..

If a student's enrollment appointment (registration window) is current, the student can add, drop or swap classes.

• For instructions on how to enroll in classes, visit https://sc.my.fsu.edu/students/how/enroll-classes-your-shopping-cartLinks to an external site..
A detailed University Academic Calendar can be viewed, by semester/term, at [http://registrar.fsu.edu/calendar/](http://registrar.fsu.edu/calendar/). The Extended Academic Calendar can be viewed at [http://registrar.fsu.edu/calendar/extended/](http://registrar.fsu.edu/calendar/extended/).

### Required First Day Attendance Policy

"University-wide policy requires all students to attend the first class meeting of all classes for which they are registered. Students who do not attend the first class meeting of a course for which they are registered will be dropped from the course by the academic department that offers the course. This policy applies to all levels of courses and to all campuses and study centers. It remains the student's responsibility to verify course drops and check that fees are adjusted. Please refer to 'Class Attendance' below for additional information.

"Note: Students who have received some or all of their financial aid prior to the end of drop/add for a term, may be subject to repayment of financial aid if there is a change in their financial aid eligibility. Examples of this may include, but are not limited to, reduction of course load below required levels, cancellation of schedule, failure to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements, and other conditions required to maintain financial aid eligibility." ([FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23](http://registrar.fsu.edu), page 85)

### Full-Time Student Course Load

"The standard full-time load for graduate students for certification purposes is twelve credit hours per semester, unless otherwise noted.

"Some departments may permit students to register for less than full-time enrollment, also called an underload. This part-time underload registration may consist of individualized graduate credit hours and must be initiated by the student, approved by the student's faculty advisor, and may require approval by the academic dean or designee. Guidelines for dean's level approval by college and are available at respective Dean's Offices." ([FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23](http://registrar.fsu.edu), page 86)

Please note that in ISLT, a full-time course load for Ph.D. students with a 10-hour per week assistantship is nine credit hours per semester.

### Drop/Add or Changes of Schedule

"During the first four days of classes, individual courses may be added, dropped, or sections of a course changed. Students are financially liable for all courses appearing on their schedule after the fourth day of classes. To add courses after the first four days of classes may require the academic dean's approval. Courses dropped during this period do not appear on the student's transcript. Individual courses may be dropped through the seventh week of classes with the exception of courses involved in allegations of academic dishonesty; however, tuition charges remain. Approval by the student's academic dean is required to reduce the academic load below twelve semester hours or increase an academic load above fifteen
semester hours (to a maximum of twenty-one semester hours). Dean's approval[*] for an overload or underload must be submitted to the Office of the University Registrar. If the student is appointed as a graduate assistant or is supported on a fellowship, an underload request form must be completed and submitted to the Dean of The Graduate School for approval.

"After the seventh week of classes, courses may be dropped only in exceptional circumstances. Approval is required by the advisor and the academic dean. Such courses will appear on the student's transcript with the notation 'WD.' Students who register for courses but who do not attend the classes will receive grades of 'F' if the courses are not officially dropped." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., page 88)

*This must be done through OASIS for all College of Education students.

Guides for dropping a class:

**Leave of Absence**

"Under special circumstances, graduate students may apply for a leave of absence from the University for a specific period of up to three consecutive semesters (includes Summer term). The circumstances justifying a leave include but are not limited to: personal or family medical conditions, call to active military duty, parental leave, death in immediate family, or completion of an off-campus internship. The student must provide appropriate documentation and a rationale for the leave request." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., page 93)

For more complete details regarding the process of taking a leave of absence and applying for readmission, please refer to the FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site. (pages 93–94).

**Withdrawal**

"All graduate, law, or medicine (MD degree) students who wish to leave the University after the close of the drop/add period for a term must formally withdraw. Dropping all classes does not constitute formal withdrawal. Students who do not attend classes and fail to withdraw will be assigned grades of 'F' for each course.

"Withdrawal requests are not automatically approved but must be requested. Withdrawals are initiated in the withdrawal services section of the Dean of Students department in the University Center. The statement 'Withdrew from the University' will appear on the transcripts of students who properly withdraw within the first seven weeks of class. Under documented exceptional circumstances (beyond the student’s control), as determined by the appropriate academic dean, a student withdrawing from the University may receive 'WD' grades in all courses taken that term." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., page 94)

For more complete details regarding the process of withdrawing from the university and applying for readmission, please refer to the FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site. (pages 94–95).
Section 7. Program of Study

For questions related to your program of study, please contact your major professor.

"As early as possible during the first term of graduate work, students should prepare a program of courses with the help of their major professor or supervisory committee. This program must be approved by the major professor and the chair of the major department. A copy of the approved program is to be kept on file in the department." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, page 100)

Students must submit a signed program of study to The Office of Academic Services and Intern Support (OASIS) by the end of the third semester after admission to the program. Program of study templates may be found on the OASIS "For Graduate Students" website.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they have met all degree requirements.

Tentative Program Plan for ISLT PhD Students

You should confer with your assigned major professor to formulate a schedule for your first semester.

By the end of your second semester, you should prepare a plan for all of your remaining course work and submit an official Program of Study (POS). When you review the list of course requirements (see Curriculum and Course requirements), please be aware that there are some courses that should be taken in a proper sequence to ensure that you proceed efficiently and have completed prerequisite courses at the appropriate times.

Focus Area for ISLT PhD Students

Your focus area should consist of a set of at least four courses (12 credit hours) related to your research interests within Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies. The focus area must include at least one doctoral research seminar. Doctoral research seminars are offered on a regular basis, with different topics depending on the instructor.

Some example focus areas may include courses related to: instructional design/development, learning sciences and technology, human performance technology, and program evaluation.

Consult with your major professor to develop your program of study.

Curriculum Overview for ISLT PhD Students

The set of courses listed below meets all Program, College, and University requirements. The required coursework, inclusive of dissertation hours, totals 81 credit hours. However, the actual number of credit hours needed to successfully earn the degree can vary depending on individual circumstances and doctoral committee guidance. If you enter the doctoral program with a previous Master's degree, you might be able to apply all or part of your previous work toward reducing the credit hours, depending on its relevance to the
required courses and elective options in this curriculum. Approvals of prior coursework or waivers for specific course requirements are decided by your doctoral advisory committee based on the recommendations of your major professor. The minimum number of credit hours earned at FSU for the ISLT Ph.D. degree is 48 (24 in coursework and 24 dissertation hours). The maximum number of credit hours that may be completed for this degree is 150. These extremes are very rare; most students should anticipate completing 81 credit hours at FSU to earn their Ph.D.

Specific Courses Needed to Fulfill the ISLT Curriculum Requirements

Please note that the following curriculum is the guide for incoming ISLT Ph.D. students beginning in Fall 2022 and beyond. Students who enrolled prior to Fall 2022 should continue to follow their existing, approved Program of Study and be in conversation with your major professor.

- **Instructional Systems Foundations** (15 credits)
  - EME5601 Introduction to Instructional Systems (3 credits)
  - EME5603 Introduction to Systematic Instructional Design (3 credits)
  - EME6677 Advanced Instructional Design & Development (3 credits)
  - EDP5216 Theories of Learning & Instruction (3 credits)
  - EME5608 Trends and Issues in Instructional Design (3 credits)

- **Inquiry and Research Core** (18–28 credits)
  - EDF5400 Basic Descriptive & Inferential Statistics Applications (4 credits, if needed)
  - EDF 5401 General Linear Model Applications (3 credits)
  - EDF5464 Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods (3 credits)
  - EME6064 Application of Research Methods in Learning Design & Performance Technology (3 credits)
  - EME6635 Collaborative Research in Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies (3–6 credits)
  - EME6665 Synthesis, Analysis, and Argumentation in Instructional Systems Research (3–6 credits)
  - EDG6363 Research on Learning, Instruction, & Performance Systems (3 credits)

- **Focus Area** (12 credits, at minimum)
- **Dissertation** (24 credits, at minimum)

Research Paper & Apprenticeship Requirement for ISLT PhD Students
The required Research Apprenticeship provides an opportunity for you to complete the Research Paper requirement and to develop research/inquiry skills under the direction of a faculty member within the ISLT program. To complete the apprenticeship, you must find a faculty member within the ISLT program who will work collaboratively with you on an empirical study.

Request for Direct Independent Study (DIS) or Supervised Research Form can be found at https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students.

The purpose of the Research Paper requirement is to develop your ability to conduct an empirical study and write a peer-reviewed manuscript. This requirement must be completed prior to enrollment for dissertation work.

To meet the Research Paper requirement, you must have a paper reporting an empirical study accepted by a peer-reviewed conference or a peer-reviewed journal. If the paper is a conference paper, it must be a complete manuscript (i.e., not an abstract or extended abstract).

You must be the first or second author on the paper. If you are the second author, the first author must certify in writing that your contributions to the paper were substantial. In either case, your doctoral committee (Instructional Systems & Learning Technologies members) will determine whether the paper meets the criteria.

**Section 8. Academic Policies**

For questions related to ISLT Ph.D. academic policies, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

For a listing of other important University academic regulations and policies, visit http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/information/academic_regulations.

**Transfer Credit**

"Transfer of graduate courses not counted toward a previous degree from another regionally accredited U.S. graduate school (or comparable international institution) is limited to six semester hours, and transfer of graduate courses not counted toward a previous degree within Florida State University is limited to twelve semester hours, except when the departmental course requirement exceeds the thirty hour University-wide minimum requirement. In the latter case, additional transfer credit may be allowed to the extent of the additional required hours. In all cases, the majority of credit must be earned through Florida State University or its official consortial institutions. All transfer credit must: 1) be recommended by the major department; 2) be evaluated as graduate work by the Records Audit and Analysis in the Office of the University Registrar at Florida State University; and 3) have been completed with grades of 3.0 ('B') or better.

"Grades earned at another institution cannot be used to improve a grade point average or eliminate a quality point deficiency at Florida State University."
"The University does not accept experiential learning or award credit for experiential learning. Transfer credit based on experiential learning from another institution will not be accepted." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., page 100)

**Academic Standing: Probation, Dismissal, and Reinstatement**

"Students in graduate or professional degree programs, excluding College of Law students and MD candidates in the College of Medicine, whose cumulative grade point average for graduate courses (5000 and above) taken at Florida State University falls below 3.0 at the end of a term (not counting courses for which 'S' or 'U' grades may be given) will be considered not in good standing by the University and will be placed on academic probation. If a 3.0 cumulative grade point average is not attained by the end of the next full term of enrollment, the student will be placed on academic dismissal. Academic dismissal constitutes a separation of the student from the University for academic reasons. Students on dismissal will not be permitted to register for courses, including registering as a non-degree student. However, at the time of dismissal, the major professor and/or department chair/director may petition the academic dean for consideration of special circumstances that the professor thinks constitute justification for an exception to this regulation, but under no circumstances will a student be allowed more than one additional term of probation after reinstatement. Owing to the differential uses of the designation, 'academic probation' shall not appear on permanent records of regular graduate students. After one probationary period, however, a student whose average falls within the probationary range will receive automatic dismissal. Statuses of 'academic warning,' 'probation,' or 'reinstated from dismissal' do not specifically prohibit a student from participating in extracurricular activities unless otherwise specified by University policy, rules, or by-laws governing the activity or organization. Consideration of the academic dismissal takes priority over any readmission application and must be resolved first. Students on dismissal are not eligible for readmission or the readmission appeal process unless they have first been reinstated by the academic dean. The academic dean is the final authority for reinstatement considerations." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., page 93)

**Time Limit for Completion of Degree Requirement**

"All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within five calendar years from the time the student passes the preliminary examination and is admitted to the candidacy. If the student's major professor and/or Department Chair does not choose to either approve an Extension of Time (EOT) or require the student to take the preliminary exam and/or coursework again for readmission to candidacy, then the student may no longer be enrolled in that program or at Florida State University." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., page 105)

**Grade Appeals System**

"The purpose of the grade appeals system is to afford an opportunity for an undergraduate or graduate student to appeal a final course grade under certain circumstances. Faculty judgment of students' academic performance is inherent in the grading process and hence should not be overturned except when the
student can show that the grade awarded represents a gross violation of the instructor's own specified evaluation (grading) statement and therefore was awarded in an arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory manner. The evaluation (grading) statement utilized during the grade appeals process is the one contained in the instructor's syllabus at the beginning of the semester. This system does not apply to preliminary or comprehensive exams or to thesis or dissertation defenses; these issues are reviewed by the Student Academic Relations Committee via the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, page 83)

The specific steps of the Grade Appeals System are detailed in the FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23 (pages 83–84) and on the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement website.

Academic Honor Policy

"The Academic Honor Policy is an integral part of the FSU academic environment. The policy outlines the University's expectations for students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty throughout the process. New students are introduced to the Academic Honor Policy at Orientation and pledge to uphold it at New Student Convocation. In surveys, students have indicated that the strength of an individual instructor's message about the importance of academic integrity is the strongest deterrent to violating the Academic Honor Policy. Thus, instructors should remind students of their obligations under the policy and fully communicate their expectations to students. If an instructor encounters academic dishonesty, they should follow the procedures detailed below to resolve the alleged violation in a timely manner while protecting the personal and educational rights of the student." (FSU Office of Faculty Development and Advancement (Links to an external site.))

The complete, up-to-date FSU Academic Honor Policy is available online.

FSU Academic Honor Pledge

"I affirm my commitment to the concept of responsible freedom. I will be honest and truthful and will strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University. I will abide by the Academic Honor Policy at all times." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, page 78)

Academic Honor Violations

"Note: Instructors are responsible for following and reinforcing the importance of the Academic Honor Policy in their courses and for clarifying in writing their expectations regarding collaboration and multiple submissions of academic work. Examples have been provided for the purpose of illustration and are not intended to be all-inclusive.

1. Plagiarism. Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). Typical examples include: Using another's work
from print, web, or other sources without acknowledging the source; quoting from a source without citation; using facts, figures, graphs, charts
or information without acknowledgement of the source; or utilizing ghostwriting or pay-for-paper services; submitting another's work through online thesaurus software.

2. **Cheating.** Improper access to or use of any information or material that is not specifically condoned by the instructor

for use in the academic exercise. Typical examples include: Copying from another student's work or receiving unauthorized assistance during a quiz, test, or examination; using books, notes, or other devices (e.g., calculators, cell phones, or computers) when these are not authorized; procuring without authorization a copy of or information about an examination before the scheduled exercise; or unauthorized collaboration on exams. This includes unauthorized actions taken on any social media platform.

3. **Unauthorized Group Work.** Unauthorized collaborating with others. Typical examples include:

- Working with another person or persons on any activity that is intended to be individual work, where such collaboration has not been specifically authorized by the instructor. This includes unauthorized actions taken on any social media platform.

4. **Fabrication, Falsification, and Misrepresentation.** Unauthorized altering or inventing of any information or citation that is used in assessing academic work. Typical examples include: Inventing or counterfeiting data or information; falsely citing the source of information; altering the record of or reporting false information about practicum or clinical experiences; altering grade reports or other academic records; submitting a false excuse for absence or tardiness in a scheduled academic exercise; or lying to an instructor to increase a grade.

5. **Multiple Submissions.** Submitting the same academic work (including oral presentations) for credit more than once without instructor permission. It is each instructor's responsibility to make expectations regarding incorporation of existing academic work into new assignments clear to the student in writing. Typical examples include: Submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without instructor permission; or making minor revisions in a credited paper or report (including oral presentations) and submitting it again as if it were new work.

6. **Abuse of Academic Materials.** Intentionally damaging, destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resource material. Typical examples include: Stealing or destroying library or reference materials needed for common academic purposes; hiding resource materials so others may not use them; destroying computer programs or files needed in academic work; stealing, altering, or intentionally damaging another student's notes or laboratory experiments. This refers only to abuse as related to an academic issue.

7. **Complicity in Academic Dishonesty.** Intentionally helping another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Typical examples include: Knowingly allowing another to copy from one's paper during an examination or test; distributing test questions or substantive information about the material to be tested before a scheduled exercise; or deliberately furnishing false information.

8. **Attempting to commit any offense as outlined above.**

*(FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., page 78–79)*
Section 9. Doctoral Supervisory Committee

For questions related to forming your doctoral supervisory committee, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

The supervisory committee should be formed within the first semester. When selecting members of the supervisory committee, the student needs to discuss with and have the consent of the major advisor. The supervisory committee must consist of a minimum of four (4) members of the faculty who have Graduate Faculty Status, one of whom is the university representative of the faculty. The university representative is drawn from outside the student’s department. For interdisciplinary programs the university representative is drawn from outside the student's department and degree program. The university representative must be a tenured member of the faculty with Graduate Faculty Status and should be free of conflicts of interest with other members of the supervisory committee.

The selection of a supervisory committee should reflect the proper composition of expertise needed to direct the student’s dissertation with particular attention to the selected dissertation topic. The student should make the selection of the supervisory committee with the assistance of the major professor.

If the student wishes to revise the supervisory committee at any time after a program of study is submitted, a COE Graduate Supervisory Committee Revision form must be submitted to The Office of Academic Services and Intern Support (OASIS). The form can be found at https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-studentsLinks to an external site..

Section 10. Doctoral Scholarly Engagement Requirement

For questions related to ISLT Ph.D. Scholarly Engagement Requirement, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

"The purpose of the Scholarly Engagement requirement is to ensure that doctoral students are active participants in the scholarly community. To meet the Scholarly Engagement requirement, doctoral students should interact with faculty and peers in ways that may include enrolling in courses; attending seminars, symposia, and conferences; engaging in collaborative study and research beyond the university campus; and utilizing the library, laboratories, and other facilities provided by the university. The goal is to prepare students to be scholars who can independently acquire, evaluate, and extend knowledge, as well as develop themselves as effective communicators and disseminators of knowledge."

Scholarly engagement is an important part of being a successful doctoral student in the ISLT program. Coursework is an essential part of scholarly engagement, and in particular doctoral research courses are foundational to a student's development as a scholar. However, meeting course requirements alone does not satisfy the program's requirements for scholarly engagement. ISLT doctoral students are expected to participate in a combination of program, college, university, and professional activities.
Engagement should be appropriate to one’s progress within the program. For example, first year doctoral students might focus primarily on attending events and establishing relationships with their advisors, the rest of the faculty, and their peers. Second year doctoral students will begin to be actively engaged in research projects with their advisors and peers, provide service at FSU and within the local community, and explore ways to be involved in both professional organizations and the dissemination of scholarly work. Doctoral candidates will likely focus most heavily on assuming leadership positions, disseminating research findings, and maintaining an active presence in professional organizations.

Each year, ISLT doctoral students will work with their advisors to set goals for scholarly engagement. Progress toward those goals will be assessed during the ISLT annual evaluation of doctoral students in the spring semester.

Sample activities in which students may participate include:

- **Program Level**
  - Participate in regular meetings with ISLT faculty and students (e.g., join a research group)
  - Conduct collaborative research and development work with ISLT faculty and students
  - Participate in events sponsored by the ISLT program
  - Serve the ISLT program via participation in the Instructional Systems Student Association and volunteer work in support of ISLT initiatives and events

- **College/University Level**
  - Attend college events (e.g., COE Week, Marvalene Hughes Conference)
  - Attend campus professional development events (e.g., Preparing Future Faculty, PIE, library-sponsored events, graduate school events, Digitech)

- **Profession/Community**
  - Attend and present at conferences
  - Submit to and review for academic journals
  - Attend events sponsored by local and national professional organizations
  - Volunteer for local education-related events
  - Serve on a committee or hold an office in a professional organization

### Section 11. Doctoral Student Annual Evaluations

For questions related to ISLT Ph.D. Student Annual Evaluations, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, **Dr. Bret Staudt Willet**, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

"Each year, the supervisory committee, the major professor, or the student's advisor prior to selection of a major professor will assess the progress of the student in writing and will make available copies of the annual review to the student, the departmental chair, and the academic dean." *(FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, page 103)*
The annual evaluation form can be found at [https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students](https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students) Links to an external site. Each year, the form must be signed by the student and the major professor(s), and the the form must be submitted to OASIS by **July 1**.

## Section 12. Doctoral Diagnostic/Qualifying Exam

For questions related to the qualifying exam, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, **Dr. Bret Staudt Willet**, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

Details of the ISLT Ph.D. Qualifying Exam are also available through the ISLT Community Site: [https://canvas.fsu.edu/courses/40363/pages/phd-qualifying-exam](https://canvas.fsu.edu/courses/40363/pages/phd-qualifying-exam).

### Timing

All full-time doctoral students will complete the qualifying exam during their second term in the program (i.e., Spring). Part-time doctoral students will complete the qualifying exam the semester after they have completed 15 credit hours in the program.

The timeline for qualifying is non-negotiable. The exam may not be deferred to a later term with the exception of truly exceptional circumstances. Permission to defer must be approved by a majority faculty vote at the faculty meeting prior to the qualifying exam. In the event of deferral due to last-minute emergency, the student must provide appropriate documentation related to the emergency and the exam will be rescheduled for later in the same semester.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Qualifying Exam is to provide an early, holistic assessment of student progress in the ISLT doctoral program.

Students who are not making adequate progress in the program at this time may either be counseled out of the program or may be asked to complete certain coursework (e.g., intensive English courses) or gain certain experiences (e.g., complete an internship or participate in a research group) and return for re-assessment the following term.

### Exam Components

The Qualifying Exam consists of two components:

1. Portfolio Creation
2. Portfolio Defense

The portfolio will be submitted to the faculty in electronic form (preferably a PDF file) two weeks prior to the defense date.
The portfolio should consist of:

1. **Program of study**, completed to show all intended coursework (it is okay if you later need to make changes so long as your advisor approves the changes)

2. **CV**

3. **Statement of research interest** (1-2 page statement indicating your specific research interests and your short-term (i.e., next 1-2 years) plan for working toward your research goals)

4. **Statement of career interest** (1-2 page statement of your future career objectives and how you plan to achieve that goal)

5. **Self-assessment** (1 page self-assessment of strengths/weaknesses related to program areas: instructional design skills, research skills, writing ability, technology skills; also identify how you might work on your weak areas)

6. **Summary of research activities to date** (completed and planned; indicate participation in research groups, projects worked on, projects planned, conferences and publications for which you are currently preparing submissions)

7. **Proposed timeline for degree completion**. Indicate each major milestone (last semester of coursework, preliminary exam, prospectus defense dissertation defense)

**Exam Procedures**

Portfolio defenses will be scheduled on 1-2 dates (depending on the number of students completing the qualifying exam) toward the end of the term. Defenses will last 20-30 minutes each.

Defenses will be structured as follows:

1. 5-10 minute student presentation to faculty, providing overview of:
   1. Research interests
   2. Research activities (to date and planned)
   3. Career interests
   4. Self-assessment

2. 15-20 minute discussion of progress with faculty

3. 5 minute faculty deliberation

4. Oral communication of results to student

Post-defense, a formal, written summary of results will be provided to the student and placed in the student's academic record file.

**Exam Outcomes**

There are three possible outcomes of the Qualifying Exam:

1. **Pass**. The faculty recommend that the student continue in the ISLT doctoral program. Faculty may provide formative feedback to help students strengthen skills and engage in ongoing professional growth.
2. **Return for Reassessment.** In the event that there is a major but readily addressed concern about student skills or professional abilities and disposition in one or more areas, the faculty will make recommendations to the student for how to improve in this area. The student will then return for reassessment during the QE process during the next term. The student will either pass or fail during the next term.

3. **Fail.** In the event that there is a significant concern about the student's ability to succeed in the ISLT doctoral program or with the student's professional disposition, the student will be counseled out of the program. If the student is returning for reassessment, having taken the Qualifying Exam during the previous semester, and does not pass during this second try, the outcome will be fail.

**After Qualifying**

After taking the Qualifying Exam, please complete and return the Diagnostic/Qualifying Examination form Links to an external site. to OASIS, Graduate Support, Stone Building.

### Section 13. Doctoral Preliminary Exam

For questions related to the preliminary exam, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

**Preliminary Examination Policy**

"Satisfactory completion of a preliminary examination shall be required for admission to candidacy for the PhD degree. No student may register for dissertation hours prior to the point in the semester in which the preliminary examination was passed. An admission to candidacy form must be completed and filed in the Office of the University Registrar prior to registration for dissertation hours. After completion of the admission to candidacy process, the student may retroactively add dissertation hours for that semester in which the preliminary examination was completed. Retroactive changes are only permitted if the preliminary examination is passed by the end of the seventh week of the semester. For term specific deadline dates, please refer to the 'Academic Calendar' in the Registration Guide.

"The preliminary examination is designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge and to afford the examiners the basis for constructive recommendations concerning the student's subsequent formal or informal study. The form and content of this examination will be determined by the department, college, school, or examining committee (typically, but not necessarily the same composition as the supervisory committee) administering the degree program. Prior to the examination, the student's examining committee will determine whether the student 1) has a 3.0 average, and 2) has progressed sufficiently in the study of the discipline and its research tools to begin independent research in the area of the proposed dissertation.

"The chair of the major department, the academic dean, and the Dean of The Graduate School may attend any session of the supervisory or examining committee as nonvoting members. A member may be
appointed to the examining committee at the discretion of the academic dean or Dean of The Graduate School or on recommendation of the major professor. Normally, the examining committee will be identical with the supervisory committee.

"The examining committee will report the outcome of the examination to the academic dean: passed, failed, additional work to be completed, or to be re-examined; the report following the reexamination must indicate the student either passed or failed. The results of the examination will be reported to the Office of the University Registrar for inclusion in the student's permanent record.

"If a student fails the preliminary examination before being admitted to candidacy, then the student is ineligible to continue in the degree program unless a re-examination of the preliminary examination is offered by the student’s supervisory committee or other relevant decision-making body within each department or unit, per that department or unit’s doctoral student handbook. The Academic Dean’s office should be notified of the outcome of any preliminary exam attempt.

"Students can take the preliminary examination for admission to candidacy a maximum of only two times. A second failure on the preliminary exam makes the student ineligible to continue in the degree program. The second attempt at the preliminary exam shall occur no sooner than six full class weeks after the results of the first attempt are shared with the student. For the purpose of this policy, a 'full class week' is defined as a week with five days during which classes are held at FSU. Students must be registered separately for their first and second attempt, if necessary, within the same semester, and must receive either a 'pass' or a 'fail' grade for each attempt.

"An exception request regarding the timing of the re-examination can be submitted for consideration to the Academic Dean’s Office by either the student or the supervisory committee. Students who allege that academic regulations and/or procedures were improperly applied for the re-examination of their preliminary exam may have their grievances addressed through the general academic appeals process. The full preliminary exam policy as listed here must be added to all doctoral student handbooks." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, pages 104–105)

Preliminary Examination for ISLT PhD Students

Purpose and Goals of the Preliminary Exam

The purpose of the Preliminary Exam is for you to demonstrate your ability to synthesize knowledge from required instructional systems courses, apply knowledge and skills from research design and methods courses, and demonstrate your ability to conduct independent research. Satisfactory completion of the Preliminary Exam is required for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree.

The goals of the ISLT Ph.D. Preliminary Examination include:

1. Assess student ability to synthesize knowledge and skills from six required Instructional Systems Foundations courses (EME5601, EME5603, EME6677, EDP5216, EME5608, and EME5602).
2. Assess student ability to apply knowledge and skills from Inquiry and Research Core courses.
3. Move students forward in the process of preparing to write a dissertation prospectus.

**Exam Components**

The preliminary exam has three components. Each component must reflect a student's independent work; peers, advisors, and other faculty may not give feedback prior to official review. Each component must be passed before moving to the next one.

1. Core Question
2. Concept Paper
3. Oral Defense

**Component 1. Core Question**

The Core Question is a take-home exam.

The prompt for the Core Question component will be given to you on a Friday at noon. You will then have the entire weekend to compose your response to the core question. Your response will be due back the following Monday at noon.

The basic parameters for responding to the Core Question prompt include:

- You may NOT discuss the prompt with anyone or seek assistance. You will be required to sign an honor code statement attesting that your work is your own and that you have not shared or discussed it with anyone.
- You may use written or electronic resources. That is, this is an open-book test.
- Your response should be 2500–3000 words (single-spaced pages, 1-inch margins, following APA style). This word count does not include references, figures, appendices, etc.
- Do NOT include your name in your response paper because your response to the Core Question will undergo an anonymous review by two ISLT faculty members.
- The exam proctor will coordinate the two anonymous reviews and help reviewers reach consensus regarding the outcome of the Core Question component.
- Possible outcomes of the Core Question component are Passed, Failed, Additional work to be completed, or To be re-examined.
  - **Passed**: You advance to the Concept Paper stage.
  - **Failed**: You are ineligible to continue in the degree program.
  - **Additional work to be completed**: You need to revise your initial response based on reviewer feedback.
  - **To be re-examined**: You will need to retake the Core Question component when the preliminary exam is offered again, usually the following semester.

**Component 2. Concept Paper**

After passing the Core Question component of the exam, you will write your Concept Paper.
The Concept Paper is a short (no more than 12 pages, double-spaced, not including references, figures, tables, and other materials) research proposal describing your current ideas for your dissertation study.

The Concept Paper must contain Introduction, Literature Review, and Method sections outlining initial plans for conducting the proposed study.

Although the Concept Paper is not expected to be a fully developed proposal, it must be defensible. That is, the three major sections (Introduction, Literature Review, and Method) must be complete, well-written, and well-aligned. It is expected that you will make updates to the Dissertation Prospectus following the conclusion of your Preliminary Exam, but in order to pass this assessment, you must write and defend a coherent initial attempt at designing a dissertation study.

Your committee members will review the paper with respect to its clarity, internal consistency, meaningfulness, feasibility, and relevance to your interests and to your major area of study.

Basic expectations and requirements for writing the Concept Paper include:

- You may receive general guidance from your advisor prior to beginning the Preliminary Exam process, but your advisor will not be able to edit, or make suggestions for the content of your paper.
- You may seek editing help from the writing center to ensure that the concept paper is clearly written and free of grammatical errors.
- You should append one page to the end of your concept paper that indicates your anticipated timeline for completing your dissertation (major milestones such as prospectus, data collection, final defense) and resources needed to complete your dissertation.

Component 3. Oral Defense

The Oral Defense is a presentation and discussion of your Concept Paper. The steps involved include:

1. Schedule a 90-minute meeting with your dissertation committee.
2. The first 30–45 minutes of this meeting are considered the oral exam. During this time, your committee may ask for clarifications related to things written on the oral exam, or they may ask you about other core issues related to instructional systems and research.
3. The second 45–60 minutes of this meeting will be focused on a forward-looking discussion of the concept paper and your planned dissertation.
4. At the end of these two discussions, the student will be asked to leave the room while the committee deliberates about the student’s preparation to advance to candidacy.
5. Upon the conclusion of this deliberation, the student will return to the exam room and be informed of the final outcome of the preliminary exam.
6. Possible outcomes of the Oral Defense component are Passed, Failed, Additional work to be completed, or To be re-examined.
   - **Passed:** You advance to candidacy in the ISLT Ph.D. program.
   - **Failed:** You are ineligible to continue in the degree program.
   - **Additional work to be completed:** You need to revise your initial Concept Paper based on
committee feedback.

- **To be re-examined**: You will need to retake the Concept Paper and Oral Defense components when the preliminary exam is offered again, usually the following semester.

### Timing and Registration

Preliminary Exams begin in the early part of either the Fall or Spring semester, and the three components span much of the semester. The entire examination process will conclude by the end of the 11th week of the semester.

If you have completed, or have nearly completed, all required coursework in your program of study, you may enroll in **EDF8964** (for 0 credit hours) to take the preliminary examination. In addition, you must comply with University requirements regarding GPA. You should enroll in EDF8964 under your major professor, because they will oversee each component of the exam and complete all associated paperwork.

For questions related to registration, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, **Dr. Bret Staudt Willet**, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Semester</td>
<td>Register for EDF8964 for 0 credit hours. Email Ph.D. Program Coordinator (<a href="mailto:bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu">bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu</a>) with your name, FSU ID, and advisor name to gain access to Preliminary Exam Canvas site. If you need to convert DIS hours to dissertation credits later in the semester, form your committee for the concept paper defense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Receive Core Question prompt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Submit Core Question response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Receive results on Core Question response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Submit Core Question revision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Receive results on Core Question revision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 6–9</td>
<td>Schedule date, time, and location for a 90-minute meeting for the Oral Defense of the Concept Paper defense (after passing Core Question). Send Concept Paper to Committee (at least 2 weeks before the date for Oral Defense).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 8–11</td>
<td>Complete Oral Defense.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exam Procedures

1. Review description of preliminary exam and timeline in the **Ph.D. Handbook**.
2. Register for EDF8964 for 0 credit hours.
3. Email Ph.D. Program Coordinator (bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu) with your (a) name, (b) FSU ID, and (c) advisor name to gain access to Preliminary Exam Canvas site.
4. Log into the Preliminary Exam Canvas course site by the second week of class to view updated information and detailed procedures for the exam.
5. Complete Core Question component of the exam.
   1. Access/download the Prelim Core Question from the web site at noon on the designated Friday and submit your response to the question before noon on the following Monday via the same Canvas web site.
   2. Check for plagiarism by submitting your document via Canvas (TurnItIn) as many times as you like until the due date and time. Each time you submit the document, you can check the TurnItIn report to see if there are problem areas that need to be addressed.
   3. You will be informed of your results about 1–2 weeks after completing this component of the exam.
   4. Revise the Core Question and resubmit, if necessary.
   5. You must pass the Core Question component before submitting the Concept Paper.
   1. The concept paper will be no more than 12 pages, double-spaced, not including references, figures, tables, and other materials.
   2. You must have a program of study on file and committee formed before submitting the concept paper.
   3. Send your Concept Paper (in Microsoft Word file format), Turnitin report, and review form to your advisor and the full committee at least 2 weeks before the date you scheduled for the Oral Defense.
   4. You must complete this step before the end of the 9th week of the semester.
7. Complete the Oral Defense component of the exam.
   1. After passing the Core Question, schedule a date and time (90-minute duration) with your advisor and committee members to present an oral defense of your Concept Paper.
   2. Tip: Before sending out a scheduling poll, find out when committee members (especially your major professor) are teaching and thus unavailable.
   3. The Oral Defense must be scheduled before the end of the 11th week of the semester.
   4. After the Oral Defense, revise the Concept Paper and resubmit to the committee, if necessary.
8. Note that any updated information on the Preliminary Exam Canvas course site shall prevail.

Important Notes About the Preliminary Exam

Carefully read the updated information on doctoral preliminary exams in the FSU Graduate Bulletin (pages 104–105) for the official examination policy, and check with OASIS for any additional updated information.

A few additional details may be helpful to keep in mind:

- Satisfactory completion of a preliminary exam is required for admission to candidacy for the doctoral
degree. A student may not register for dissertation hours until they pass the preliminary exam.

- If you pass the preliminary exam within the first 7 weeks of the semester, you will be allowed to swap DIS hours in that semester for an equal number of dissertation hours.
- You must register for preliminary examination. If a student registered for the preliminary exam in a previous semester and received an Incomplete ("I"), they MUST drop the course and register for it again in the term in which the requirement is completed.
- The form and content of the preliminary exam will be determined by the department and/or committee (be it supervisory or examining).
- Prior to the exam, the student's committee will confirm that the student has a 3.0 average and has progressed sufficiently to begin independent research in the area of the proposed dissertation.
- Results of the preliminary exam must be provided to OASIS via the Doctoral Preliminary Exam Results form along with an Admission to Candidacy form.

Section 14. Admission to Candidacy

For questions related to admission to candidacy, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

"A student who has passed the preliminary examination and has been certified by the Office of the University Registrar (with an admission to candidacy form) is considered a candidate for the doctoral degree and is eligible to register for dissertation credits.

"A student must be admitted to candidacy at least six months prior to the granting of the degree. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure a minimal lapse of time for effective work on the dissertation after acquisition of the basic competence and after delineation of the problem and method of attack. More realistically, the student should expect to spend a year or more of work on the dissertation." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, page 105).

Section 15. Dissertation

For questions related to the dissertation, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

"A dissertation must be completed on some topic connected with the major field of study. To be acceptable it must be an achievement in original research constituting a significant contribution to knowledge and represent a substantial scholarly effort on the part of the student.

"It is the responsibility of the major professor to supervise the preparation of the prospectus and the dissertation. The manuscript must be prepared according to the style and form prescribed by the department.
and must conform to the University requirements regarding format.

"Before writing the dissertation, the student should become familiar with the University's manuscript formatting and clearance requirements. Academic courtesy requires that the dissertation be submitted to each member of the supervisory committee at least four weeks before the date of the oral examination. At the same time, the dissertation should be submitted electronically to the Manuscript Clearance Advisor in The Graduate School so that the clearance advisor can provide the student with a critique of the manuscript with respect to the Graduate School's formatting requirements. Electronic submission instructions can be found on The Graduate School's website under Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertations.

"As a condition of undertaking a dissertation program, the student agrees that the completed dissertation will be archived in the University Libraries system. The electronic dissertation will also be archived by ProQuest. The student will make the electronic dissertation available for review by other scholars and the general public by selecting an access condition provided by The Graduate School. Publication of the dissertation through standard media for scholarly work is also encouraged. For more information about available access conditions, please see the 'Guidelines for Restrictions on the Release of Theses, Dissertations, and Treatises' section of the Graduate Bulletin.

"Prior to degree conferral, all doctoral students must have completed a minimum of twenty-four credit hours of dissertation. For more information on enrollment requirements related to dissertation hours, including during the final-semester registration, see the 'Student Course Load' section of this Graduate Bulletin.

"For more specific information on final-semester registration, see the section 'Registration for Final Term.'" (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., pages 105–106)

Dissertation for ISLT PhD Students

The design of dissertation work should be done with particular attention to feasibility. It is not uncommon for students to propose goals that would require excessive time, unavailable equipment, overly extensive space, or scheduling commitments when committee members are not available. For example, many faculty members are not available during the summer. Select your dissertation topic with the advice and concurrence of your committee. Legitimacy of the topic is determined by the committee according to the following criteria:

- Sufficient faculty expertise on the committee to provide adequate guidance, supervision, and
- Dissertation must (1) be based on appropriate empirical data and (2) contribute substantively to knowledge in an area that is subsumed under the interdisciplinary area of instructional systems. A variety of research approaches may be employed depending on the demands of the proposed
- Dissertation proposals that depart from these criteria may be proposed (for example, historical analysis). Such instances, when considered worthy by the student's committee, must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the ISLT faculty. Should a dissertation topic be chosen which does not match the major professor's professional interests or areas of expertise, a request should be made for change of the major professor. Similar considerations apply to changes in the other members of the student's
committees.

**IRB Approval**

"Students are reminded to seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval prior to commencing any research involving human or animal subjects. The student’s name must appear on the IRB approval and/or application form as a PI or associate/ co-investigator for the period of time when the student’s research was conducted (i.e., data collections and analyses). Students must be listed on an ACUC protocol in order to conduct any animal research. Failure to be listed or obtain the required approvals may result in the dissertation being permanently embargoed and unpublishable in any form." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., pages 105)

Students must complete and submit the COE IRB Verification Form [Links to an external site.] to the Office of Academic Services and Intern Support (OASIS) within 60 days of the defense of the prospectus. Failure to submit this form within 60 days of the prospectus defense will result in a registration hold. The academic dean will not approve the final manuscript clearance forms if the required IRB approvals are not obtained.

**Continuous Enrollment in Dissertation Hours**

"A doctoral student who has completed the required coursework, passed the Preliminary Examination and submitted an Admission to Candidacy form to the Office of the Registrar, and continues to use campus facilities and/or receives faculty supervision, but has not been cleared by the Manuscript Clearance office shall include in the required full-time load a minimum of two credit hours of dissertation per semester, including Summer terms, until completion of the degree." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., pages 154)

**Doctoral Prospectus**

College of Education prospectus content and clearance procedure information can be viewed at [https://education.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/upcbnu3146/files/ProspectusContentandProcedures2020_21_0.pdf](https://education.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/upcbnu3146/files/ProspectusContentandProcedures2020_21_0.pdf). Students should consult with the major professor regarding program specific prospectus requirements.

Upon prospectus approval, the student must submit a [Prospectus Clearance Form](https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students), [Prospectus Title Page](https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students), [Prospectus Signature Page](https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students), and copy of the prospectus to OASIS. These forms and the IRB Verification form can be found at [https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students](https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students).

A student cannot defend his/her dissertation earlier than four months from the date of the department chair’s signature on the Prospectus Clearance Form.

**Dissertation Prospectus Defense for ISLT PhD Students**
After passing the Preliminary Exam, you are required to submit to the major professor, supervisory committee, and department chair a prospectus on a research project suitable for a dissertation. Your prospectus will describe the rationale, problem, procedure, and expected nature of results for your dissertation. It is reviewed by your major professor, and when approved, is submitted to your other committee members for review and approval. A copy of the prospectus is filed in your folder and one copy forwarded to the department head and a PDF copy of the prospectus should be sent via email to the Graduate Director in the Office of Academic Services and Intern Support (OASIS). A meeting (1.5 hours in duration) of the committee is then scheduled for review of your prospectus.

The prospectus represents a general agreement between you and the committee as to the nature of the study to be conducted. It is understood that while developing and implementing the study, circumstances might necessitate changes to what was proposed. Normally, it is best to discuss changes to your conceptual foundation, hypotheses, and method with your major professor to determine if they are acceptable and if they will require explanation during your oral defense.

The format of the prospectus is not rigid but generally covers the statement of the problem, background literature, and research method. The primary emphasis should be on presenting a strong conceptual basis and describing the proposed research method. The literature review should reflect the general background of the problem and a sampling of the various literature sources that will appear in the dissertation. The statistical procedures to be used should be indicated. In many cases, additional analyses, which are not anticipated in the prospectus, will be employed in the dissertation.

Upon prospectus approval, the student must submit a Prospectus Clearance Form, Prospectus Title Page, Prospectus Signature Page, and copy of the prospectus to OASIS. The Prospectus Clearance Form must be approved by the Academic Dean at least four months prior to the defense of the dissertation.

More information on Dissertation Prospectus Guidelines and the necessary forms can be found at https://education.fsu.edu/oasis/graduate-students.

Conducting the Dissertation for ISLT PhD Students

In accordance with the approved prospectus, you independently design the specific procedure, develop materials, collect data, and analyze and interpret results. The major professor has the primary responsibility for providing advice to ensure that all aspects of dissertation work are conducted appropriately and adequately. The student may seek the advice of other committee members when required.

Writing the dissertation is an important part of the process and adequate time needs to be allocated for reviewing and revising. The final draft, prepared in accordance with the latest current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), is formally submitted to the committee and serves as the basis of the oral defense. Final revisions are made following the defense. Determining and enforcing standards of quality for dissertation research are the prerogative and duty of the committee.
Examination in Defense of Dissertation

"The defense of the dissertation will be oral. Responsibility for suggesting the time, designating the place, and presiding at the examination rests with the major professor. It is recommended that students defend no later than the eighth week of classes in the semester of intended graduation. Students must meet all manuscript and online forms deadlines set by The Graduate School in the semester of graduation or within 60 days of a successful defense (whichever is earliest). Manuscript/forms submission deadlines can be found on The Graduate School’s website under Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertation.

"Academic courtesy requires that the dissertation be submitted to each member of the supervisory committee at least four weeks before the date of the oral examination. At the same time, the dissertation should be submitted electronically to the Manuscript Clearance Advisor in The Graduate School so that the clearance advisor can provide the student with a critique of the manuscript with respect to The Graduate School’s formatting requirements. Electronic manuscript submission instructions can be found on The Graduate School’s website under Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertation.

"The supervisory committee will conduct the examination. All members of the graduate faculty are invited to attend. At least two weeks prior to the date of the examination, the student will submit an announcement of the dissertation title, date, and place of the examination to The Graduate School. The announcement must be submitted electronically on The Graduate School’s Manuscript Clearance Portal and will be posted on the Defense Calendar on The Graduate School’s website. Electronic forms submission instructions can be found on The Graduate School's website under Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertation.

"All committee members and the student must attend the entire defense in real time, either by being physically present or participating via distance technology. Individual departments may impose stricter requirements on physical attendance, e.g., all members must be physically present. Departments and other degree-granting programs must publicize their policy on defense attendance in their Graduate Student Handbook and in the relevant section of the Graduate Bulletin. If exceptional emergency circumstances, e.g. medical or other emergency situations, prevent the participation of a committee member, then it may be necessary to arrange for an additional appropriately qualified colleague to attend the defense. If the University representative is unable to attend in real-time, then a new, appropriately qualified University representative must be selected to attend the defense. A minimum of four members with Graduate Faculty Status must participate." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23, Links to an external site., pages 106)

Defense Decision Definitions

"Each member must sign the online Defense Decision Form to substantiate the results of the defense. The oral examining committee will certify the results of the defense. The oral examining committee will certify the results of the examination as one of the following: Pass, Pass with Major Revisions, Re-Examine, or Fail.

"Pass. To receive a Pass, the dissertation must be in its final form or require only minor revisions (e.g., grammar, typographical, clarifications, minor changes not requiring review by full committee) at the time of the defense, AND the student passed their oral defense. A decision of Pass for the defense of dissertation
requires at least a majority approval of the committee. Individual departments may impose stricter requirements for what constitutes a Pass. Departments and other degree-granting programs must publicize their policy on this issue in their Graduate Student Handbook and in the relevant section of the Graduate Bulletin.

"Pass with Major revisions. This decision indicates that the dissertation requires major revisions (e.g., additional chapters, major restructuring, significant changes needing approval by either the major professor/chair or the full committee), AND the student passed their oral defense. Revisions must be completed and approved within 60 days of a successful defense, or a re-examination will be required per The Graduate School's 60-Day Deadline.

"Re-Examine. The committee may determine a re-examination is necessary if the dissertation had significant flaws and major revisions are need (i.e., the current research will take a substantial amount of work/time to correct), AND/OR the student's oral defense was unsatisfactory. This decision can only be given once. If the student completes a re-examination and does not pass with only minor revision required to the dissertation, they should be given a Fail.

"Fail. In the case of a Fail, the dissertation had significant flaws to the point at which the committee believes the student should discontinue the program, or that a new research direction is required; AND/OR the student's oral defense was unsatisfactory, and another defense of the existing project will not be allowed. This decision should only be given when a committee/academic unit does not believe the student should continue in the program, or if the student will be required to move in an entirely new direction for their research. It is the committee's goal to prevent students from defending if their work is substantially flawed when they are reviewing it prior to defense. This decision is required if a student completes a re-examination and does not earn a Pass.

"After approval by the oral examining committee (which includes or may be the same as the supervisory committee) and completion of the Final Content Approval Form in the Manuscript Clearance Portal, the student should electronically submit the post-defense, final content-approved version of the dissertation to the Manuscript Clearance Advisor. This submission must occur by the semester deadline or within 60 days of successful defense (whichever is earliest). The degree cannot be awarded until the required forms have been completed on The Graduate School's Manuscript Clearance Portal and the final version of the manuscript has been submitted to and approved by the Manuscript Clearance Advisor. If the appropriate deadline is missed, the student's semester of graduation may be delayed and/or they must be re-examined. Electronic manuscript/forms submission instructions and deadlines can be found on The Graduate School's website under Thesis, Treatise, and Dissertation." (FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23Links to an external site., pages 106)

Dissertation Defense for ISLT PhD Students

Schedule for Dissertation Defense

When the semester arrives during which you will complete your dissertation and undergo an examination in
defense of it, register for EDF8985. For questions related to registration, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

You must schedule and complete the dissertation defense by the deadline set by the FSU Graduate school for that term.

An oral defense of the dissertation is conducted at a time and place suggested by the major professor, who presides at the examination. You need to submit a defense announcement to the Graduate school at least 2 weeks prior to your scheduled defense. An announcement of the examination is published in an official University publication at least 2 weeks before the date of the examination based on information supplied by the major professor. In addition, the defense will be publicly announced on the ISLT program listserv. The defense is open attendance by all members of the graduate faculty, graduate students, and other guests (in other words, it is a public examination) and should be held in a large enough room. Plan to schedule a 2-hour period for your defense.

Preliminary Draft

After receiving approval from your major professor regarding the content and format of your dissertation, you will submit printed and/or electronic copies as requested to all committee members at a designated time (at least 4 weeks) prior to the defense. If revisions are required following the defense, the final revised version of the dissertation must be reviewed and approved by your committee members, or by designated members as agreed upon at the meeting.

Dissertation Defense Result

Following the defense, the student must submit a Manuscript Signature Form Final Term Degree Clearance FormLinks to an external site.and to OASIS. The final dissertation version approved by the supervisory committee must be submitted electronically to the manuscript clearance advisor in the Graduate School within 60 days of the defense date or by the term-specific manuscript clearance deadline (whichever is sooner), or the student must defend anew. The examining committee completes and signs appropriate forms certifying to the Dean and the Graduate School the results of the examination: passed, failed, or to be re-examined. The report following a re-examination must be pass or fail. A Pass requires the approval of the majority of the committee.

Section 16. Graduation

For questions related to graduation, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

Students are required to apply for graduation whether or not the student intends to participate in the University Commencement Ceremony. Applying for graduation is quick and easy using the Student Central Graduation Application. If a student is eligible to graduate, follow the steps in the link below to begin the process. Students must apply for graduation online prior to the stated deadline for the term in which they
plan to graduate. Instructions on how to apply for graduation are found at https://sc.my.fsu.edu/students/how/apply-graduate (Links to an external site).

Students who wish to participate in the Commencement Ceremony must arrange for cap and gown orders through the University Bookstore. The online order form is available at http://colleges.herffjones.com/college/_fsu/ (Links to an external site.)

An approved Program of Study must be on file in OASIS in order to receive degree conferral approval from the College of Education. The Program of Study must be signed by all committee members, the department chair and the academic dean.

Section 17. Funding

For questions related to funding, please contact your major professor and/or the ISLT Ph.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Bret Staudt Willet, at bret.staudtwillet@fsu.edu.

The application window for College of Education scholarships changes each year. Apply online at education.fsu.edu/scholarships (Links to an external site.).

Assistantships and Fellowships

A limited number of graduate assistantships are available to qualified doctoral students who enroll full-time. Graduate assistants are expected to contribute their time and energy to research, teaching or service projects associated with the Department, affiliated centers, individual faculty grant projects, as well as various college and FSU offices or off campus agencies.

Additionally, highly selective doctoral fellowships and scholarships are available within the College of Education and the University. Consult the FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23 (Links to an external site.) for information on University scholarships, fellowships and assistantships. Go to the following website for additional information on University fellowships and scholarships: https://gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards (Links to an external site.).

Florida State University requires graduate students to be enrolled full-time to qualify for assistantships or fellowships. A graduate assistant with a one quarter-time (ten hours or more) per week assistantship must carry a minimum of nine credit hours to qualify as full-time.

Graduate students financing their education through loan programs should note that most lenders require students verify that they are carrying a full-time credit load.

Tuition Waivers

The College of Education has a policy regarding the length of time doctoral students and candidates can be funded by tuition waivers. The policy reads:
For doctoral students, completion of all pre-dissertation course work within 3 academic years; for doctoral candidates, maximum of 54 dissertation credits, or 6-semesters with a 2-semester warning at 36 credits.

Questions about tuition waivers and deadlines for registration and waiver applications should be directed to Bryan Richards, the Department's tuition waiver coordinator, in the Educational Psychology and Learning Systems departmental suite (Stone 3210A), by email (brichards@fsu.edu), or by phone (850-645-7976.). Full or partial tuition waivers are often available with qualifying graduate assistantships. These waivers are awarded on a semester-by-semester basis and may vary depending on the funding source of the assistantship.

**Fall and Spring Semesters**

Nine hours of coursework is the minimum required to receive a tuition and fee waiver in the fall or spring. Students must be registered for at least nine hours by the time early registration closes or will lose the tuition and fee waiver. If you have questions about waivers, hours, or deadlines, ask Bryan Richards.

**Summer Semester**

Summer tuition and fee waivers are determined each spring prior to the summer term. The FSU Graduate School makes this determination. In past years, the number of hours needed for full-time enrollment depended on the summer session or sessions in which courses are taken. Allocations in recent years are shown below to help students plan the program of study for the degree:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Minimum Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>9 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>7 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>7 hr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combination of above 9 hours (e.g., A and B credits).

**Additional Funding Information**

The College of Education Scholarships webpage [Links to an external site.] provides a central location for information on distinguished scholarships, assistantships, fellowships, and university financial aid available to College of Education students. All students are encouraged to submit a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)](https://www.fafsa.gov) regardless of their income. International Students from select countries, should consider applying for the [Linkage Institutes' Out-of-State Tuition Exemption](https://www.fsu.edu) .

**College of Education Foundation Scholarships**
The application window for COE scholarships is December 1 – January 15 annually.

**Graduate School Fellowships and Grants** [Links to an external site.]

**Minority Scholarships**

Information on the following minority scholarships can also be found at [https://education.fsu.edu/scholarships](https://education.fsu.edu/scholarships) [Links to an external site.].

- The Florida Fund for Minority Teachers (FFMT)
- McKnight Doctoral Fellowships
- Ford Foundation Diversity Fellowships
- American Association of University Women Dissertation Fellowship
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Fund
- Latin American – Caribbean Scholars
- Leslie N. Wilson - Delores Auzenne Fellowship

**Funding Info for ISLT PhD Students**

**Types of Financial Assistance**

Financial assistance for qualified students may be available in the form of university and college fellowships, departmental scholarships, graduate teaching and research assistantships, and out-of-state tuition waivers. Priority will be given to applicants who submit their applications by the November 1 deadline.

One doctoral student is selected each year by the admissions committee to receive either the Gagne-Briggs Endowed Fund Scholarship or the Ruby Diamond Endowed Scholarship.

To serve as an assistant to a faculty member:

- SPEAK Test score of 45 or higher OR IBTOEFL speaking score (26 or higher)

To teach your own undergraduate class:

- SPEAK Test score of 50 or higher OR IBTOEFL speaking score (26 or higher)
- 18 or more graduate credit hours in the area of instruction

**Applications**

Applications for university and college scholarships and fellowships must be received by January. Graduate assistantships might be available depending on the availability of funding. Admitted students are encouraged to contact their advisor regarding availability of assistantships relevant to their research interests.

**Additional Information**
More information on financial assistance can be found at [http://gradschool.fsu.edu/Funding-Awards](http://gradschool.fsu.edu/Funding-Awards) and [https://education.fsu.edu/scholarships](https://education.fsu.edu/scholarships).

Appendix A. Sexual Misconduct Resources

For a full list of resources, please visit the FSU kNOw MORE website: [https://knowmore.fsu.edu](https://knowmore.fsu.edu).

"We listen. We learn. We care. We respond. Florida State handles sexual misconduct complaints sensitively and discreetly; we are all responsible for providing a supportive environment for those in need and for reporting misconduct. If you have experienced sexual misconduct or know someone who has, FSU is committed to providing support and resources to assist. We do not tolerate sexual misconduct."

Appendix B. Office of Accessibility Services

Florida State University is committed to providing a quality education to all qualified students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veterans' status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or any other legally protected group status. Providing services to more than 5000 students, the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) is committed to ensuring universal access for each Florida State University student. The OAS creates an environment of success through the provision of academic, housing, & dining accommodations, testing support, assistive technologies, and space for students to feel they are part of the FSU community.

Appendix C. Student Resources

There are numerous opportunities and activities on and off campus that are available to graduate students throughout the year. Visit the following links to view the numerous events, activities, and resources that are available to graduate students.

See also the New Graduate Student Orientation Resources webpage.

Career Services/Workshops

FSU Recreation/Events

Funding Resources
Health & Wellness Services

Housing Options

Instructional Support

Leadership & Diversity

Research Support

Tallahassee Community

Transportation

Tips for FSU Grad Students

Advice from The Graduate School. (consult the FSU Graduate Bulletin 2022–23 for campus policies and program requirements)

- Find out about the Health Insurance requirement for all graduate students - https://studentinsurance.fsu.edu/Links to an external site.
- Participate in Professional Development Workshops from The Graduate School on topics like job preparation, research, and publishing - https://gradschool.fsu.edu/professional-development/professional-development-workshopsLinks to an external site.
- Contact the Program for Instructional Excellence for training as a Teaching Assistant (TA) - https://pie.fsu.edu/Links to an external site.
- Enhance your academic portfolio through the Preparing Future Faculty Program - https://gradschool.fsu.edu/professional-development/preparing-future-faculty-pfLinks to an external site.
- Compete for Graduate School Awards - https://gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awardsLinks to an external site.
- Craft applications for off-campus awards with The Office of Graduate Fellowships & Awards - https://ogfa.fsu.edu/Links to an external site.
- Receive training in standards for the Responsible Conduct of Research - https://www.research.fsu.edu/research-compliance/rcr/Links to an external site.
- Seek approval before starting research on Human Subjects or Animals from the FSU Research Administration Management Portal (RAMP) - https://ramp.research.fsu.edu/Links to an external site.
- Attend workshops to learn how to prepare your Thesis or Dissertation well in advance - https://gradschool.fsu.edu/academics-research/thesis-treatise-and-dissertationLinks to an external site.
Appendix D. ISLT PhD Candidate Student Progress Policy

Expectations

The ISLT program faculty expect that upon being admitted to doctoral candidacy, all students will actively make progress each term on their dissertation projects. All doctoral candidates (those who successfully complete preliminary exam) must be registered for dissertation credit hours each term until they graduate. Registration implies that the student will work on their dissertation project at a level commensurate with the number of credit hours for which the student has registered. A minimum of 2–3 hours of work per week per credit hour is considered reasonable.

Barring significant problems (e.g., a project falling through or serious medical conditions), full-time students are expected to defend a prospectus within one year of being admitted to candidacy. Part-time students are expected to meet this milestone within two years of being admitted to candidacy.

The length of time required to collect, analyze, and report data will naturally vary by project, but once a prospectus has been approved by the committee the student is expected to make continual progress each term. Once data collection is complete, the student is expected to submit drafts of their findings to the advisor for review. Full-time students should have a draft of findings submitted to their advisor by the end of the term after the one in which data collection was completed. Part-time students are expected to share early findings from the analysis during the term after data collection has been completed, and to have a draft of findings submitted by the end of the second term after the one in which data collection is completed.

Goal Setting and Reporting

All doctoral candidates (those who successfully complete preliminary exam) are required to submit to their advisor the following items each term: (1) By the end of week 2: Semester goal form; and (2) By Monday of the last week of classes: Semester progress report, including evidence that goals have been met. These forms will become a part of the student's official progress file, and information from these forms will be used in the annual review process and taken into consideration in the event that visa extensions or extensions of FSU's time clock are requested.

Additionally, all doctoral candidates are expected to set up and adhere to a regular reporting schedule with their advisors. These updates may be submitted via email, provided during face-to-face meetings, or in another format agreed upon by the student-advisor pair. Note that during the summer term students may be registered for dissertation credit hours under another advisor for administrative purposes. However, all goal setting and reporting activities will take place between student and advisor. During summer term, the advisor will report the grade to the faculty member on record.

Grading

There are 3 possible grades that may be assigned for dissertation hours.

S – student has made satisfactory progress. Student has achieved at least 2/3 of the semester goals* and
has provided satisfactory evidence of achieving those goals to the advisor for assessment purposes.

U – student has made unsatisfactory progress. Student has achieved less than 2/3 of the semester goals[*] and/or has not provided satisfactory evidence of achieving their goals to the advisor for assessment purposes. Failure to regularly communicate with advisor also will result in a U grade. U grades will not be changed to an S when the goals are attained.

I – incomplete. Incompletes will only be recorded in two instances: (1) the student submits evidence of progress to the advisor very late during the term for which the I is being awarded and the advisor is unable to sufficiently assess the quality of work before the grading deadline, and (2) the student has experienced exceptional circumstances (e.g., seriously illness or injury) toward the end of the term that made it difficult for the student to submit evidence of goal attainment to the advisor.

*In some instances, circumstances beyond the student's control will delay progress (e.g., loss of a participant site or difficulties attaining IRB approvals). In these circumstances, so long as the student provides sufficient documentation of reasonable attempts to meet the semester goals (e.g., copies of dated correspondence with research sites and/or the IRB) the student will receive a grade of S.

Other Consequences of Failure to Progress or Slow Progress

Students who fail to meet their program milestones and goals in a timely manner and/or who do not report their progress to their advisors will become ineligible to receive funding (e.g., GA/TA/RA stipend and/or waiver) from ISLT/EPLS until such time that the student has caught up and is making adequate progress. For example, students who do not defend a prospectus within one year of being admitted to candidacy will not be eligible for funding until successfully defending a prospectus. Also, failure to progress or slow progress will be noted in the student's annual review, conducted during the Spring semester.

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