



UT Tyler COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & PSYCHOLOGY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Ed.D. in School Improvement

EDSI 6161 – Dissertation

Fall 2025

Instructor: Julie Delello, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Zoom Wed. 9am-Noon* (*By appointment outside of normal office hours)

Course Description

The course is intended to guide Ed.D. students through the dissertation process, including the identification of a problem related to school improvement, the preparation of a proposal for approval by the dissertation committee, a protocol for review and approval by Institutional Review Board and writing of the dissertation.

Students must enroll in this course starting in their second semester of the program and continue to register in a dissertation course until completion of the dissertation.

Program Goals

- a) Produce the next generation of educational leaders who understand the philosophical and historical perspectives of school reform, diversity, learning opportunities for all, and can address educational issues using a variety of strategies.
- b) Develop critical reasoning and a deep understanding of change theory to address challenges in school improvement contexts. This will include the skills to provide transformative leadership to schools that are failing to meet academic, social, and emotional standards.
- c) Provide opportunities to develop doctoral students' ability to approach challenges in innovative data-driven ways, including the use of interdisciplinary teams, as well as expand their problem solving, creative design, communication, and collaboration skills.
- d) Challenge the norms within educational systems using data and the engagement of other educators and stakeholders in professional learning to lead disruptive change through interdisciplinary work with experts in other educational fields.
- e) Conduct research of practice and responsiveness to improve teaching and learning experiences, counseling and support services, school leadership, educational organizations and structures, and all other educational disciplines.
- f) Prepare the next generation of educators with the knowledge, skills and tools to utilize data to guide school improvement and policy and to improve learning outcomes leading to college and career readiness.
- g) Prepare educators with a deep understanding of assessment and accountability systems.
- h) Produce scholar practitioners that have a P-20 perspective of the education system to address school improvement in the broader perspective including educator preparation, teaching and learning.

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Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

- a) Document ongoing research related to the dissertation.
- b) IRB Submission and Modifications
- c) Complete Chapters 1-3 (Cohort 1); Chapters 1-2 (Cohort 2)
- d) Continue Annotated Bibliography
- e) Present the status of the research project to colleagues.
- f) Prepare Literature Review Manuscript for Journal Submission by end of Summer

Required Textbook

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 7th Edition

Course Content and Evaluation

Assignment	Description
IRB	IRB Approvals and Modifications
Weekly Updates/Consultations	Canvas Update and Phone/Zoom Consultation (3)
Annotated Bibliography	Submit Running Annotated Bibliography
Chapter 1: POP-Intro	Submit Draft Chapter 1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	Submit Draft Chapter 2
Chapter 3: Evaluation Study	Submit Draft Chapter 3
Chapter 4: Evaluation of Intervention	Submit Draft Chapter 4
Manuscript Review	Most recent manuscript draft(s)

Grading Criteria: (IP or NP).

- **IP** reflects that you met the course expectations and will earn credit once you have successfully defended your dissertation.
- **NP** is Failing

Unicheck/Turnitin are tools that will be used to check a document for plagiarism. The tool provides feedback as to whether the text in a document is a close match with other documents on the Internet, in journal databases, and submitted to Canvas. If a student is caught plagiarizing, a grade of zero will be given as well as a disposition for cheating.

The Use of Artificial Intelligence: Generative artificial intelligence (AI) like the software ChatGPT is now widely available to produce text, images, and other media. It is important to keep the following in mind: (1) An AI cannot pass this course; (2) Intellectual honesty is vital to the academic community and for my fair evaluation of your work, all work submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the University's academic regulations; (3) You must obtain permission from me before using AI composition software (like ChatGPT) for any assignments in this course. Using these tools without my permission puts your academic integrity at risk. When content is produced by an artificial intelligence tool, it must be cited appropriately.

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Resources

TEA Websites

Comparison Groups

<https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/account/2019/group.srch.html>

Texas Academic Performance Reports

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/texas-academic-performance-reports>

Accountability

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/2019-accountability-rating-system>

Other Useful Sites

www.eval.org The website for the American Evaluation Association, the leading professional association for evaluators. See also, www.eval.org/hstlinks.htm, which is AEA's chronicle of state-based activities on high-stakes student testing.

www.wmich.edu/evalctr

Western Michigan University's Center for Evaluation, which is one of the premier sites for thought and practice in evaluation.

<http://ericae.net>

The ERIC Clearinghouse for Assessment and Evaluation. Also chronicles education news from media outlets around the country.

<http://oerl.sri.com>

The Online Evaluation Resource Library catalogues plans, data collection instruments and evaluation reports.

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) reviews the existing research on different programs, products, practices, and policies in education. Our goal is to provide educators with the information they need to make evidence-based decisions.

Video Resources

IES Evaluation Overview <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluation/> Types of Program Evaluations <https://youtu.be/XNR3KZzDoGQ>

Program Evaluation 101 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGsNJ1jIJD0> Logic Models https://youtu.be/2HrG5ButP_g

IES Logic Models in Education <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DAAjgc4YYo> IES From Logic Model to Program Evaluation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhbPd2dyXOQ>

Impact Evaluation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEJIT8t5ezU> Program

Evaluation Standards <https://evaluationstandards.org/program/>

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University Policies and Information

Withdraw from Class

Students may [withdraw](#) (drop) from this course using the [Withdrawal Portal](#). Withdrawing (dropping) this course can impact your Financial Aid, Scholarships, Veteran Benefits, Exemptions, Waivers, International Student Status, housing, and degree progress. Please speak with your instructors, consider your options, speak with your advisor, and visit the One-Stop Service Center (STE 230) or email enroll@uttyler.edu to get a complete review of your student account and the possible impacts to withdrawing. We want you to make an informed decision. UT Tyler faculty and staff are here for you and often can provide additional support options or assistance. Make sure to carefully [read the implications for withdrawing from a course and the instructions](#) on using the [Withdrawal portal](#).

Texas law prohibits students from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career*. The six courses dropped includes those from other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress and other areas, such as financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and Enrollment Services for additional guidance. **CAUTION #1:** Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the [Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule](#). **CAUTION #2:** All international students must check with the [Office of International Programs](#) before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms. **CAUTION #3:** All UT Tyler Athletes must check with the Athletic Academic Coordinator before withdrawing from a course. **CAUTION #4:** All veterans or military-affiliated students should consult with the [Military and Veterans Success Center](#).

* Students who began college for the first time before 2007 are exempt from this law.

Artificial Intelligence Statement

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. *Refer to the About This Course section of the UT Tyler Syllabus Module for specific information on appropriate use of AI in your course(s).*

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Final Exam Policy

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the Dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members must maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

Incomplete Grade Policy

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in place of a grade *only when **all** of the following conditions are met:* (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all coursework or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor, and (c) the student presents these reasons before the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average. The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to meet all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has yet to be assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F, or NC. If the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis, this may adversely affect the student's academic standing.

Grade Appeal Policy

Disputes regarding grades must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade by filing a Grade Appeal Form with the instructor who assigned the grade. A grade appeal should be used when the student thinks the final course grade awarded does not reflect the grades earned on assessments or follow the grading scale as documented in the syllabus. The student should

provide the rationale for the grade appeal and attach supporting document about the grades earned. The form should be sent via email to the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member reviews the rationale and supporting documentation and completes the instruction section of the form. The instructor should return the form to the student, even if a grade change is made at this level. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the department from which the grade was issued. In situations where there is an allegation of capricious grading, discrimination, or unlawful actions, appeals may go beyond the Chairperson to the Dean or the Dean's designee of the college from which the grade was issued, with that decision being final. The Grade Appeal form is found in the [Registrar's Form Library](#). NOTE: The Grade Appeal Form is different from the Application for Appeal form submitted to the Student Appeals Committee, which does not rule on grade disputes as described in this policy.

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Disability/Accessibility Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical, and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler/> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <https://www.uttyler.edu/disability-services>, the SAR office located in the Robert Muntz Library, LIB 460, email saroffice@uttyler.edu, or call 903.566.7079.

Military Affiliated Students

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. The [Military and Veterans Success Center \(MVSC\)](#) has campus resources for military-affiliated students. The MVSC can be reached at MVSC@uttyler.edu or via phone at 903.565.5972.

Students on an F-1 Visa

To remain in compliance with Federal Regulations requirements you must do the following:

- Traditional face-to-face classes: Attend classes on the regular meeting days/times.
- Hybrid Classes: Attend all face-to-face classes convened by the instructor according to the schedule set for your specific course.
- Online course: Only one online course can count toward your full-time enrollment. Students are expected to be fully engaged and meet all requirements for the online course.

Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the [Student Conduct and Discipline policy](#) in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

FERPA

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in [University Policy 5.2.3](#). The course instructor will follow all requirements to protect your confidential information.

Absence for Official University Events or Activities

This course follows the practices related to [Excused Absences for University Events or Activities](#) as noted in the Catalog.

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Absence for Religious Holidays

This course follows the practices related to [Excused Absences for Religious Holy Days as noted in the Catalog](#).

Absence for Pregnant Students

This course follows the requirements of Texas Laws SB 412, SB 459, SB 597/HB 1361 to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting students. Part of the supports afforded pregnant students includes excused absences. Faculty who are informed by a student of needing this support should make a referral to the Parenting Student Liaison. NOTE: Students must work with the Parenting Student Liaison in order to receive these supports. Students should reach out to the Parenting Student Liaison at parents@uttyler.edu and also complete the [Pregnant and Parenting Self-Reporting Form](#).

Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY (CEP) VISION AND MISSION

Core Purpose of College of Education and Psychology

To prepare competent, caring, and qualified professionals in the fields of education, psychology and counseling, to foster discovery and to advance the knowledge base in our respective disciplines.

Vision

The CEP will be a global leader in responding to needs in the fields of education, psychology, and counseling, with a focus on the East Texas region, by creating innovative academic and scholarly pathways and partnerships.

Mission

The mission of the CEP is to prepare competent and passionate professionals in the fields of education, psychology, and counseling; to advance knowledge and expertise; and to impact these fields locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally

UT TYLER'S SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

[Texas Education Standards](#): The School of Education are committed to teaching and implementing the Texas Educator Standards at the highest level. The School of Education faculty use the Texas Education Standards, along with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards used by educator preparation programs throughout the United States.

The list of [Texas Education Standards](#) can be accessed [here](#). Access the [Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators](#).