

Educational Specialist Degree Completion Requirements

The Educational Specialist degree (Ed.S.) is offered by the College of Education and is comprised of a planned program of at least 30 semester hours above the master's degree under the direction of a major professor.

*Students enrolled in an educational specialist program should refer to the program section of this publication and to the *College of Education Graduate Handbook* for specific policies and regulations.

Ed.S. Graduate Committee

Committee Composition

The student's graduate study is directed by a committee composed of a major professor and at least two committee members, one of whom may be a minor professor. The graduate committee is chaired by the major professor who must hold Level 1 or 2 Graduate Faculty status and be from the student's major department/program. At least one-half of the remaining committee members must be from the student's major/disciplinary field and must hold Level 1, Level 2, Associate, or Committee Participant status. No more than one Committee Participant appointee can serve. Any member of the committee can serve as the thesis director. The Committee Request Form (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/committee_request.pdf) is submitted to the Graduate School.

Committee Changes

When the committee composition changes, the student submits the change(s) to the Graduate School on the Committee Change (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/request_for_change_of_committee_members.pdf) form. The form requires signatures of the new and departing committee members, the student, and the graduate coordinator. If, subsequent to the administration of the final or oral/written comprehensive examination, a student's request to remove a member of the graduate committee is not met with the approval (signature) of that member, then the student must submit to the dean of the Graduate School a written request containing suitable justification for removal of the committee member. The dean will then decide if removal is necessary and accordingly inform the student, the committee member, the major professor, and the graduate coordinator.

Ed.S. Program of Study

A minimum of 30 credit hours is required on the program of study. A maximum of 6 credit hours of graduate credit may be earned in DIS courses. A student may be required to take an ESL, LSK, or undergraduate course; however, these courses or an audited course are not permitted on a graduate program of study. Courses taken in previous graduate work that fulfill current degree requirements are not part of the program of study but are listed on the Attachment Sheet (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/grad_prog_of_study_attach_ed.pdf) to show the student has fulfilled those course requirements.

Program of Study Changes

If a program of study must be changed, the student must submit a committee-approved Change of Program Form (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/change_to_graduate_program_of_study.pdf) to effect additions and/or deletions.

Minor

A student is required to complete the minimum number of hours required on the program (Summary Graduate Council 2001-02) and may be permitted to enroll in another area, a minor, to satisfy the remaining credit hours. A minor is a current block of approved coursework derived from a master's or doctoral degree program or concentration other than the major department program and must be approved by the student's committee. A GPA of 3.00 on the minor coursework is required. If a minor is taken, at least 9 hours of current graduate coursework in the approved area are required on the student's program of study with approval of the student's major professor, the minor professor, and the graduate coordinator from the minor area (per Graduate Council, March 2005). Up to one-third of the required hours for a minor may be transferred to MSU. The hours must be current (no more than eight years old) at the time the degree is awarded (per Graduate Council, September 2005). See Transfer Credit below.

Transfer and Sharing of Credit Hours

A total of 9 credit hours can be **shared** between two MSU degrees in which a student is enrolled concurrently (see Dual Degrees in this publication). For those cases other than dual degrees, a total of 9 credit hours can be **shared** or **transferred** to a student's program of study. The three potential sources of credit hours are one or a combination of the following: those earned as a student in a graduate program at another university, whether or not used to satisfy the requirements of a previously earned degree (**transferred**); those earned in another graduate program at MSU, whether or not used to satisfy the requirements of a previously earned degree (**shared**); and those earned as an unclassified student at MSU (**transferred** to a degree program). Credit hours can be shared between or transferred to degrees of the same or different level (Graduate Council, November 2011). See Transfer Credit below for more information on the Transfer policy.

Transfer Credit

Transfer credit hours from other domestic universities, international universities, or military educational programs may be used to fulfill requirements for the educational specialist degree at MSU provided they meet the criteria established in the General Requirements of the Graduate School. At the educational specialist level, transfer credit may constitute up to 9 semester hours of coursework except for programs requiring more than 40 hours, in which case transfer credits may constitute up to 30 percent of the total credit hours. Thesis hours cannot be transferred. Up to one-third of the required hours for a minor (9 hours at the educational specialist level) may be transferred to MSU. Only courses in which grades of B or higher were earned may be accepted for transfer. Transfer credit must fall within the eight-year time limit and must be academically relevant at the time the degree is awarded (per Graduate Council, September 2005 and March 2010). A Transfer Approval (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/transfer_approval_form.pdf) form signed by the student's graduate committee must be submitted to the Graduate School with an official transcript, if the transcript was not submitted with the student's admission application.

Directed Individual Study or Thesis

A maximum of 6 Directed Individual Study (DIS) credit hours may be included on a program of study. Numbered at the 7000 level, these credits may be used to meet the 8000-level course requirement.

Ed.S. Comprehensive Examination

- An Ed.S. student in the non-thesis option must pass a comprehensive examination to fulfill degree completion requirements during the terminal semester or when within 6 hours of completing the program of study, excluding practica and internships (per Graduate Council, May 2006).
- The student must be enrolled at MSU during the semester in which the exam is administered. A student taking a comprehensive examination during the summer semester can be enrolled in any summer term to fulfill this policy.
- The examination must take place by the deadline found in the Graduate Academic Calendar (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2014-15/graduate/academic-calendar>).
- The student must have a 3.00 GPA on all courses taken after admission to the program (i.e., program and non-program courses).
- The Declaration of Examination/Defense (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/comprehensive_exam_announcement.pdf) form must be submitted to the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of examination.
- The candidate's examination should demonstrate
- the candidate's thorough familiarity with the literature in the major field;
- the relation of the special subject to allied subjects; and
- the level of general knowledge and training, including use of oral and written English.
- One negative vote **will not** constitute failure of a preliminary/comprehensive examination. Two negative votes **will** constitute failure of a preliminary/comprehensive examination (per Graduate Council, October 2005).
- A student who fails the comprehensive exam can apply to schedule another examination after a period of four months has elapsed from the date of the original exam. Two failures result in the student's being dropped as an educational specialist degree candidate.
- Following the examination, whether pass or fail, the student's committee must complete the examination results report and submit both the original and a copy to the Office of the Graduate School by the deadline. **Submission of the report by the student is prohibited.**

Ed.S. Theses

Thesis Defense

- A student in the thesis-option program must submit a thesis to complete degree requirements. Thesis research is subject to review and approval by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- The student must be enrolled at MSU during the semester when the thesis is defended. A student defending during the summer semester can be enrolled in any summer term to fulfill this policy.
- A public presentation of the thesis research and oral defense before the student's graduate committee is required. The presentation is open to any member of the graduate faculty and the dean and associate dean of the Graduate School. The student or a committee member may request that the Graduate School appoint an outside observer to attend.
- The defense should be scheduled no sooner than seven days after the final manuscript has been distributed to all committee members. The defense must take place by the deadline found in the Graduate Academic Calendar.
- The Declaration of Examination/Defense (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/comprehensive_exam_announcement.pdf.html) form must be submitted to the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of examination.
- The student's graduate committee will evaluate content and style of the completed thesis. One negative vote **will not** constitute failure for a student on thesis defense. Two negative votes **will** constitute failure for a student on the thesis defense (per Graduate Council, October 2005).
- Following the defense, the student's committee must complete the examination results report, whether pass or fail, and submit both original and a copy to the OGS by the deadline. **Submission of the report by the student is prohibited.**
- A student who fails to defend the thesis successfully can apply to schedule another defense after a period of four months has elapsed from the date of the original defense. Two failures result in the student's removal as an educational specialist degree candidate.

- Six hours of research credit are awarded for the successful completion and submission of the thesis to the Library, regardless of the number of thesis/research credit hours the student successfully completed.
- A grade of S for satisfactory or U for unsatisfactory is given for thesis credit. A student cannot graduate with a U grade in the final semester.
- The manual entitled *Standards for Preparing Theses and Dissertations* (http://library.msstate.edu/content/templates/level2-dept-otd/docs/standards_6th_ed.pdf) (6th edition, revised 2012) describes the regulations governing thesis preparation and must be followed. The student should access the *Standards* and review the information on the Office of Thesis and Dissertation Format Review (<http://library.msstate.edu/thesis>) website.

Thesis Submission

- The student must meet the Library's initial and final submission deadlines posted in the Graduate Academic Calendar (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2014-15/graduate/academic-calendar>).
- The student must be enrolled for at least one credit at MSU during the semester(s) of both submissions to the Library.
- The student submits the thesis electronically. Submission must be in Portable Document Format (PDF) and uploaded to the Library's electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) database.
- The committee signature page complete with required signatures must be submitted in print to the Library before the thesis will be reviewed. For security reasons, signatures should not be scanned for the PDF document; this page will remain absent of signatures for the electronic version. The Library will retain a copy of the signature page with the original signatures for archival purposes.
- The University has an agreement with ProQuest Information and Learning Company (ProQuest) for the microfilming of all theses. Under this agreement, two microfilm copies of the complete thesis will be made and, if desired, the document will be copyrighted with the copyright in the name of the author. The microfilm will be made available for purchase through ProQuest. The citation and abstract will be published in the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT) electronic database and the full document made available to subscribing institutions. There is no longer a fee for publishing theses. The fee for copyrighting is \$55.00; one may also ask ProQuest to publish the document with open access for \$95.00. As an alternative to ProQuest, copyrighting can be obtained by submitting to <http://www.copyright.gov> for a \$35 fee.

Ed.S. Time Limit

A student must complete the educational specialist program within eight years (per Graduate Council, April 2010). All courses included on the program of study must be current at the time of completion of the degree. A Request for an Extension of Time (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/request_for_extension_of_time.pdf) form must be used to request a one-year extension if needed under well-justified, extenuating circumstances. The approved request must be submitted to the Office of the Graduate School (per Graduate Council, May 2005). A second request must also be approved by the dean of the Graduate School and the Office of the Provost.

Residency Requirement

The residency requirement for the educational specialist degree is a minimum of 30 weeks. No student is permitted to complete the educational specialist degree in two summer sessions or equivalent. The residency credit is computed as follows:

- During a regular semester, a student taking 9 hours or more earns half of the required residency credit or 15 weeks.
- During each term of the regular summer school, a student taking 4 or more hours earns 6 weeks residency.
- A part-time student earns residency in weeks, equivalent to the semester hours scheduled.
- Night classes, Saturday classes, and 3-week short-term courses carry residence credit equivalent to the number of semester hours earned.