# Doctoral Dissertation Research: EDUC 999

**Guidelines**

All students must satisfactorily complete a doctoral dissertation.

A Ph.D. in Education dissertation culminates doctoral study. Such a work must clearly demonstrate Ph.D. in Education candidates' abilities to apply principles of education to education-related problems in a chosen area of specialization. It must integrate knowledge of various disciplines with knowledge of relevant educational practice and theory. The dissertation must also make a significant contribution to existing knowledge or practice in education.

To be acceptable, a Ph.D. in Education dissertation must:

1. Address a clearly identified major societal or educational need or address a major educational issue as derived from the testimony of experts, analysis of research, projection of trends, and other accepted sources;
2. Have potential implications for education beyond local school audiences, clients, or settings;
3. Be unique -- it should not be a repetition of something that already exists or that has been accomplished in a student's earlier study;
4. Be scholarly -- it should be grounded in critically evaluated research and theory presented in a form consistent with the highest standards of organization and writing or other appropriate form of communication;
5. Be clearly in the field of education;
6. Have a conceptual, analytical component;
7. Furnish tangible evidence that the student is able to produce new knowledge or a new product for use in educational practice in a school, industrial, or governmental setting; and
8. Demonstrate that the student has improved or can improve the "state of the art" in educational practice, as opposed to only producing or adding to educational theory.

A Ph.D. in Education dissertation must be original, new work and not replicated research or work completed prior to entering the Ph.D. in Education Program or undertaken while in the program. It must also meet the standards of doctoral level scholarship and research. If a dissertation expands on some prior research or work of a student, it must go significantly beyond that research or work and must do so in a manner appropriate to doctoral level research.

It is the responsibility of a student's doctoral dissertation committee to ensure that a dissertation does not duplicate previous work by the student. In those instances where there appears to be duplication or where a dissertation or a proposed dissertation does not meet the stated standards of a doctoral dissertation, the Ph.D. in Education Committee shall determine the acceptability of the proposed dissertation and the final dissertation. Any GMU faculty member may request such action, in writing, by the Ph.D. in Education Committee. The Committee will act only after consultation with the faculty and student involved and after any other inquiry it deems appropriate.