

# PhD in Leadership Program Handbook



School of Education  
La Sierra University  
Riverside, CA

# PhD in Leadership Program Handbook

## Introduction

Welcome to the PhD in Leadership degree program. It is my privilege to introduce you and the doctoral program to each other. We have designed this degree with you in mind. We are looking forward to meeting each one of you and getting better acquainted. Our *Leadership Orientation* begins this process and our journey together through the years of doctoral study will deepen our friendship. This program handbook will carry the introduction further. In it you will find glimpses of our hopes and dreams for you, of what you will do in the program, how you will grow and who you will become. This is an exciting moment. So, here in this handbook is the program outline.

We have put together some exciting elements and opportunities. Since we value research, we have included several PhD-specific courses and increased the focus on research in all courses. Doctoral seminars and colloquia provide on-going opportunities to present and evaluate your ideas. Active and regular meetings of doctoral students with their faculty advisers, particularly at the dissertation stage, will contribute significantly to your development and growth as a researcher. During your studies, you will find opportunities to participate with faculty in their research and you will be encouraged to reach out to others researching your particular interest at other universities for opportunities for collaborative research. You will have other opportunities to present your research at conferences and professional meetings at regional and national conventions. Important in your life as a research student, but perhaps less profiled is the peer-to-peer support you will find on an informal basis through personal friendships and in the workings of the affinity support groups where doctoral students encourage one another in their degree journey and where in their final year they help mentor beginning doctoral students. Your life as a student in the doctoral program will be transforming, a fitting point in our introduction.

This handbook is your primary source for information regarding the policies and procedures relating to the PhD in Leadership degree. Some of the material covered here appears in other publications of La Sierra University and the School of Education, \* but there is no attempt to replicate the details of all the policies and procedures. For a more complete understanding, you will find the La Sierra University Graduate Bulletin and other policies readily available on the La Sierra University website.

Let me wish you all the best as you set out on your educational journey with us. May God bless you with good ideas, quiet study times and an abundance of opportunities to learn.

Chang-ho Ji

Chang-ho Ji  
Dean, School of Education  
La Sierra University

\*This document contains in many places wording that has been reviewed and published in other documents relating to the PhD in Leadership degree program, such as the voted proposal to the Board of Trustees and the WASC accreditation documents. The relevant sections have been brought into this document to provide a useful guide and starting point for students and faculty involved in this academic degree program. It does not take precedence over the La Sierra University Graduate Bulletin or any actions taken by the School of Education faculty subsequent to the publication of this handbook.

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*Graduating in absentia*

## **SECTION I: STUDENT, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES**

### **Student Ownership of the Academic Experience**

Here is a word of advice that will make all the difference in the value of your educational experience, “*You own your degree.*” It is true that there are program requirements, faculty expectations, final examinations and the dissertation defense, but in the end, these are only containers in which your education takes place. Given the time, money and effort invested in achieving the doctorate, it only makes sense to participate in such a way as to gain the best degree possible. You can hurry through, perform at the minimum standards, and be satisfied with that level. Once you graduate, no one will ever ask, but you will know. On the other hand, if you personally own the degree, if you put in your greatest effort, if you rise to the level of highest professional attainment, it will come to represent some of the best work of your life. Sometimes it may seem that you are doing your work simply to please the professor or to meet an obscure requirement, but settling for that goal will be small reward in comparison to accomplishing the best that you can attain. The first step in receiving a quality degree is to step up and own the work that you do.

While there are basic requirements that must be met, there is much more that can be accomplished. Think of the degree journey as liminal space (a time of transition)\* in which you move from who you have been to who you will be, from where you were to where you will be. It is at this stage, with the past behind you and the future not yet here, that you are most open to new information, fresh ideas, inventive ways of doing and, under a host of at times conflicting influences, a new way of being. In other words, living in the liminal space allows you to grow, to experience, to change, and to become. This requires both intentionality and time. Although some change occurs serendipitous, it is best when intentional and planned. The process needs the right kind and appropriate amounts of time to mature.

In this program, we work toward this in two ways. First, your work is paced. You are surrounded by boundaries, as it were, to protect you from prematurely breaking out of this valuable space. There are boundaries of requirements, expectations of faculty members, and the long traditions of doctoral study. They may feel like restrictions, but they are there for your protection against the current pressures of time demands from personal and work commitments that would draw your attention away from becoming your best. Secondly, you are the key to making most of this liminal space. If your doctoral journey is simply a forced march with your head down, you will miss the sunrise insights, the vista stretching far beyond your own knowledge horizon, and the beauty in both the grand view and the small detail. Take time to savor the journey. Determine to own your experience. You are becoming.

You are not in this journey alone. The university is a place of large dreams and high expectations. This is true not only for students but for faculty, staff and administrators as well. Each one is here to raise your sights, challenge your mind with new and sometimes difficult ideas, and to help you succeed. You will find many occasions, both in class and out, to interact with faculty, staff, and administrators. Students who own their degree will engage with others – faculty and fellow students – making every opportunity a potential learning experience.

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\* Arnold Van Gennep introduced the idea of liminal space in *Les rites de passage* (1909). This was defined as the transition period between separation and reassimilation in such social rites of passage as coming-of-age rituals and marriage. Victor Turner focused and expanded on this middle stage in “Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*,” (*The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967).

You are also on this journey with other doctoral students. In class, you will exchange ideas with fellow students, raising insightful questions and providing new perspectives, and you will be there to support each other with encouragement and understanding. Frequently doctoral students who have graduated look back at the support and encouragement of fellow students as one of the key factors in completing their degree. Learning partners and study groups help develop depth and texture to the degree experience. Take this degree and make it your own. You will thank yourself for making the effort.

### **Academic Advising, Research Supervision, and Mentoring**

At La Sierra University, there is a network of support for you. Both the Dean of the School of Education and the Director of Leadership Studies provide academic advice and support before, as well as during, the program. Upon entering the program, you are assigned a faculty advisor from your area of specialization who helps you plan for and progress through the program. During the didactic portion of the program, other faculty will also support you. In the research and dissertation phase, your chair and committee are there to guide you.

In preparation for writing the dissertation, the research design courses (*RSCH 754* and *RSCH 755*) are designed to help you with planning for the dissertation and writing the dissertation proposal. At the dissertation stage itself, you will work specifically with your committee chair (and other committee members as needed) on a regular and ongoing basis, seeking advice and providing drafts and rewrites. The course *RSCH 799 Dissertation Research Colloquium* also provides additional support and advisement during the dissertation phase. Throughout the degree program, staff members in the library are also available to help you access a full-range of print and electronic resources. A final review of the dissertation after successful defense by the School of Education editor serves as a quality control to ensure that La Sierra University School of Education standards are met.

### **Administration of the Program**

The administrative structure of the program is designed to help you through the various stages of your degree.

*Dean of the School of Education.* The Dean of the School of Education is responsible to the University and Board of Trustees for the effective delivery of the PhD in Leadership degree. She oversees the administration of the program to ensure both quality and fairness, and cares for the welfare of the students enrolled. The dean can also help resolve conflicts either by helping you directly or in pointing you to the right place and process.

*Director of Leadership Studies.* The PhD is a school-wide degree and is not housed in any of the academic departments. It is part of the dean's office and administered by the Director of Leadership Studies who oversees the administrative aspects of the program, advises and mentors leadership students, and helps ensure the quality and effectiveness of the degree program. All departments in the School of Education contribute to, and are part of, the program through the specialization clusters built within the PhD requirements. Faculty members who teach leadership courses are members of one of the academic departments.

*Director of Research.* The PhD emphasizes research throughout the program. To help you, the Director of Research is there to guide you through the research requirements of the degree and to choose appropriate research methodologies to support your research efforts.

*Leadership Studies Committee.* The Leadership Studies Committee is established to provide guidance to the PhD in Leadership program. The committee oversees the operations of areas unique to the program, including admission, curriculum, scheduling, and student program approvals and reviews; and oversees the contributions of other schools/departments to the program. Some actions of the Leadership Studies Committee must also be voted through the School of Education Graduate Council.

*Faculty Advisors.* You will be assisted throughout the program by a number of advisors. The Dean, Director of Leadership Studies and the Director of Research all play their role as advisor as needed in the areas of their responsibilities. In addition, you will be assigned an academic advisor, at the beginning of your studies, who is also the chair of the department in which you are doing your specialization. Later in the program, the dean will approve a chair for your dissertation committee as well as members of your dissertation committee. They serve as advisors for the dissertation stage of the degree.

## **SECTION II: PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

### **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the Doctor of Philosophy degree program is to provide advanced education in the theory, practice and research of Leadership across a broad range of organizational and community settings. The program focuses on the development of fresh, innovative ways to think about models, issues and problems in the field of leadership, and on adding to the body of research-based knowledge in the field. It is designed to serve your needs whether you are already in a leadership role or aspiring to such. We welcome everyone who has an interest in developing a better understanding of leadership and who desires to make a positive difference through research and action.

Within the program, you will find opportunities to explore and critically analyze various areas of leadership as it relates to a range of organizational contexts from a research-oriented, theoretical and professional perspective. Particular focus in core studies is given to the foundational notions of a socially just community and the implications of moral and personal care perspectives for leadership theory and practice. You will also be able to develop a somewhat specialized study program based on your research interests and career needs through a personalized and collaborative mentorship with faculty advisors, administrators and other university staff. An emphasis on methods of inquiry will assist you in the development of new understandings in the field, leading to a major research-based dissertation.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

The following learning outcomes have been developed for the PhD in Leadership degree. It is anticipated that upon completion of the program you will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to address complex topics systematically, creatively and critically and in oral and written communication support a sustained argument to communicate ideas, issues, and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Demonstrate a conceptual understanding and methodological competence in research and the ability to work both collaboratively and independently in developing new understanding and knowledge in the field of leadership.
- Demonstrate an understanding of resource management principles and a self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses and strategies for the acquisition and enhancement of the personal skills necessary for the practice of successful leadership.
- Demonstrate a high cultural competence in interacting effectively with people of diverse cultural and international backgrounds.
- Be critically conversant with the literature, theories, concepts and current research findings and generally regarded best practices in the disciplines related to leadership and the underlying philosophic foundations of a socially just society.
- Understand and critically reflect on the moral/ethical dimensions of the practice of leadership and management theory in a global environment.
- Demonstrate an understanding of research design through the ability to frame a major original research question, develop an appropriate methodology of research inquiry, implement the inquiry and write an extended report on the findings in a document of publishable quality to advance the field of leadership.



### **Course of Study**

The PhD in Leadership is an 87-quarter unit (post-masters and inclusive of dissertation) scholarly research-oriented degree offered in a traditional face-to-face classroom setting and supported by the faculty of La Sierra University, particularly those in the School of Education. The didactic portion is designed so that it might be completed in three years, followed by the qualifying examination and advancement to candidacy. The dissertation and its successful defense follow as the culmination of the degree program. For those who progress on less than a full-time basis, there would be some flexibility in completing the coursework and dissertation. As part of the graduation requirements, you are also required to present a scholarly paper at two or more professional meetings and to submit at least one scholarly article for publication.

The program may typically be completed over a period of 4-5 years of study by taking a minimum of two courses each quarter, and two courses during two 2-week intensive summer sessions. This assumes that all prerequisites are completed before starting the program. It is expected that you would complete their degree requirements within the seven-year limit. Given unforeseen circumstances, a policy does allow you to petition an extension of time but not to extend it to more than a total of ten years. The Leadership Studies Committee must approve programs extending for longer than the seven years, and approval may include the requirement of additional coursework to update earlier courses completed.

### **Curriculum**

A number of central principles from the mission and philosophy of La Sierra University provide the themes which shape the composition of the core courses and the structure of the various components of the PhD degree program. The core of the PhD program draws you into thinking about and researching the area of leadership, while a broad and multifaceted preparation is sought through the lenses of the specialization and diversification perspectives. You are encouraged to hold in creative tension those contradictions and conflicts that will be perceived within and among the various areas of knowledge and experience.

This core of leadership courses provides you with the opportunity to learn, reflect, integrate and apply these perspectives to organizations or communities, in a collaborative team setting or as the creative and visionary leader of a unique initiative. Congruent with La Sierra University's mission, the concepts of inquiry, reflection, and transformation in the context of a fast-changing society are brought into specific focus as you progress through the leadership program core.

The PhD in Leadership degree program is committed to the ideal of graduating people who have studied and chosen to espouse high moral and ethical standards. The Christian ethic and the values of personal spirituality are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum as a way of undergirding this important commitment. In particular, this theme is dealt with in the course *LEAD 688 Moral Leadership*. Learning is approached from within the context of the Christian perspective, and students reflect critically on the implications that arise from this. Because of the centrality and foundational nature of this emphasis, the course *Moral Leadership* is a core course for all students, and is recommended to be taken in the first year.

The teaching and learning strategies in this program focus on the development of your individual reflective, critical, integrative, analytical and communication skills. Where appropriate, opportunities will also be given for teamwork in problem solving. Teaching includes lectures and seminar-type presentations and discussions, but other strategies are also used to develop independent learning and

stimulate your ability to question and reflect on previous learning, educational theory, practice and personal experience. Specific methodologies employed may include but are not limited to:

Seminars and structured tutorial sessions	Discussion groups
Small group workshops	Guided reading assignments
Case studies	Individualized learning contracts
Simulations	Socratic method
Problem solving exercises	Reflective journaling exercises
Writing assignments	Oral presentations

An emphasis on the facilitation of student inquiry, analysis and reflective thought will be a priority. Team teaching arrangements may be used to facilitate interaction. Assignments or projects will form a large part of the assessment in individual subjects. As a general principle, assignment work will include a component focusing on applications, with the objective of facilitating the integration of theoretical foundations with specific practice and the problems of the workplace context. Signature assignments are uploaded into the required LiveText portfolio software, where they are evaluated and the data analyzed for purposes of program assessment.

### **Program Description**

The PhD in Leadership courses are organized into four clusters, (a) required core leadership courses common to all, (b) a sequence of research and writing courses that create a foundation for the entire degree (c) specialization courses chosen by each student in consultation with their advisor to create depth, and (d) a smaller grouping of diversification courses allowing for breadth. Courses indicated with one asterisk (\*) are required courses. Those with two asterisks (\*\*\*) are also required and must be taken at La Sierra University (no transfer credits allowed).

### ***Leadership Core (21 units)***

The core develops depth and breadth in your understanding of leadership, with a focus on leadership theory, research and applications. Normally, you will take *LEAD 704 Leadership Orientation* as the first course after admission to the PhD program and *LEAD 794 Seminar in Leadership and Change* at the end of the didactic coursework. All courses in the following 21-unit core are required:

**Introduction to the degree:** (this is where the degree begins)

\*\*\**LEAD 704 Leadership Orientation* (1)

**Leadership courses required** (may be taken any time during the degree)

\**LEAD 650 Readings in Leadership* (2-3)

\**LEAD 687 Leadership in the Organization* (3)

\*\*\**LEAD 688 Moral Leadership* (3)

\**LEAD 690 Communication in the Organization* (3)

\**LEAD 695 Organizational Systems & Culture* (3)

\*\*\**LEAD 744 Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives on Leadership* (3)

**Final course** (the last course in the didactic portion of the degree)

\**LEAD 794 Seminar in Leadership and Change* (3)

### ***Research Sequence (30 units)***

The research courses introduce you to the understanding of and critical skills required for effective research, undergirding not only your success in critically reading research literature, but also your success in pursuing your own scholarly research.

**Prerequisite:** (if not taken earlier)

*RSCH 504 Research Methods & Material (3)*

**Introductory Level** (6 units)

\**RSCH 604 Statistics I (3)*

\**RSCH 605 Qualitative Research I (3)*

**Intermediate Level** (3 units – one of the following)

\**RSCH 704 Statistics II (3)*

\**RSCH 705 Qualitative Research II (3)*

**Advanced Level** (3 units – one of the following)

*RSCH 722 Factor Analysis & Latent Modeling (3)*

*or*

*RSCH 723 Evaluation Research (3)*

*or*

*RSCH 733 Mixed Research Methods (3)*

*or*

*RSCH 743 Standardized Test Development (3)*

**Application Level** (6 units)

\*\**RSCH 754 Quantitative Research Design (3)*

*or*

\*\**RSCH 755 Qualitative Research Design (3)*

*and*

\*\**RSCH 775 Research Project (3)*

**Dissertation** (12 units)

\*\**RSCH 798 Doctoral Dissertation (12)*

\*\**RSCH 799 Dissertation Colloquium (0)*

*SECE 910 Dissertation Continuation (1, if needed)*

***Specialization (27 units)***

In preparing your course of study, you will, in consultation with your faculty advisor, choose your specialization and identify a minimum of 27 units in that area. These courses should be chosen with intent. Rather than simply taking a random selection of courses to fulfill the unit requirements, you should use this opportunity to develop a strong area focus in which you want to become an expert. The specializations within each area are comprised of courses, which address theoretical frameworks, specialized knowledge, aptitudes and competencies in that discipline. They range across key theories to skill areas, and in some cases, provide a short sequence moving from introductory level graduate study in a specialized area to a more advanced level of inquiry.

Specializations are available in Educational Administration, Instructional Leadership and Educational Psychology. The following course lists serve as illustrations from which to build your specialty. Other courses may be appropriate for your focus. This is your opportunity to craft a well-balanced and valuable specialization.

**Educational Administration** (list of sample courses):

*EDFO 645 History of Educational Thought (3)*

*EDFO 606 Sociology of Education (3)*

*EDAD 676 School & the Community (3)*

*EDAD 677 Student Life Administration (3)*

*EDAD 680 Admin of Educational Programs & Evaluation (3)*

*EDAD 674 Supervision & Evaluation of Instructional Personnel (3)*

*EDAD 645 Legal Aspects (3)*  
*EDAD 640 Professional Development Design (3)*  
*EDFO 791 Contemporary Issues in Education (3)*  
*EDAD 675 Administration of Higher Education (3)*  
*EDAD 686 Administration of School Systems (3)*  
*EDAD 699 Directed Study in Leadership (3)*

**Instructional Leadership** (list of sample courses):

*EDCI 628 History of Curr Design and Development in Higher Educ (3)*  
*EDCI 630 Pedagogy & Practice in Higher Educ (3)*  
*EDCI 645 Supervision of Instruction (3)*  
*EDCI 646 Development & Implementation of Curriculum (3)*  
*EDCI 647 Religion in Curriculum Planning (3)*  
*EDCI 660 Comparative Curricula (3)*  
*EDCI 664 Emotional & Social Intelligence (3)*  
*EDCI 677 Directed Readings in Curriculum & Instruction (3)*  
*EDCI 711 Biological Foundations of Education I (3)*  
*EDCI 712 Biological Foundations of Education II (3)*

**Educational Psychology** (list of sample courses):

*EDPC 607 Dynamics of Personality (3)*  
*EDPC 610 Human Sexuality (3)*  
*EDPC 620 Marriage and Family Systems I (3)*  
*EDPC 631 Psychopathology (3)*  
*EDPC 640 Neuropsychology (3)*  
*EDPC 650 Mental Exceptionality (3)*  
*EDPC 651 Emotional and Social Intelligence (3)*  
*EDPC 661 Academic Assessment & Intervention (3)*  
*EDPC 663 Neuropsychological Assessment & Intervention (3)*  
*EDPC 666 Intervention Methods and Consultation (3)*  
*EDPC 667 Assessment of Learning Development (3)*  
*EDPC 694 Individual and Cultural Differences (3)*  
*EDPC 701 Politics and Issues in Educational Testing (3)*

***Diversification (9 units)***

You can customize your programs further through the development of a 9-unit area of diversification. Diversification courses are typically taken from a specialization other than the one you chose as your primary specialization. It is also possible for you to develop an area of diversification by choosing appropriate graduate courses in the La Sierra University School of Business or Divinity School. The goal of the diversification segment is to provide you with yet another lens for understanding the study of leadership.

**Delivery**

Courses in the PhD degree are offered in the traditional manner, that is face-to-face in a classroom, and scheduled for times Monday through Friday. The academic calendar is based on a standard 10-week quarter system. Credit is granted in terms of the quarter unit, which represents a minimum of 10 clock hours of graduate-level instruction during a quarter, plus out-of-class preparation for planned learning experiences (such as requisite study, completion of assignments, and study group work). For a regular

graduate course, for example, an academic load of 3 units represents approximately 30 in-class hours per course, plus approximately 60 hours of academic work outside of class times, for a total investment of approximately 90 hours. Some variation to this configuration may be expected in advanced level seminars.

Summer classes are taught in shorted, concentrated courses. These courses include 10 hours of class time plus 20 hours of preparation time per academic credit hour. Doctoral-level summer courses have pre- and post-session assignments. Course syllabi for summer courses reflect the condensed schedule but retain the same level of expectations as those taught during the regular quarters.

### **Other Program Requirements**

There are several other program requirements built into the degree, here are three examples.

*Dissertation Colloquium.* While no academic credit is given for this course, *RSCH799*, is provided for support and guidance during the writing and research phase of your dissertation. You will register for this in conjunction with *RSCH798 Doctoral Dissertation*.

*Professional Presentations.* During the course of your degree, you are encouraged to actively participate in the professional areas appropriate to your degree focus and career trajectory. Along the way, you must make at least two presentations at professional meetings at the regional or national level. While these may be related to the research you are doing in conjunction with your dissertation, it is important not to put them too late in your program.

*Publishable Paper.* The challenge to write something, new, relevant and research-based may appear daunting. So it is important to begin thinking about this early in your program. To get started, talk with your advisor, mentors and other researchers. Read widely and get acquainted with the types of papers professional journals publish and what their requirements are for submission and publication. Search for other research being done in your area of interest and see if there are areas you can build on. Join a group of fellow students or get a research partner. It is always good to test your ideas with others early on in the process.

Sharon Nancekivell (2004) gives some good advice on this point: “*Ultimately, to get your paper published, you need to persuade the journal editor that your study makes a unique contribution, that it has a ‘discernible point,’ as one journal editor labels it. This discernible point should be the thread that stitches your paper together – from Abstract to Introduction through Methods and Results to Discussion. If you keep in mind that everything in your paper should contribute in some way to making or clarifying this point, whether information from the literature, or methods or data from your study, you should enjoy the great pleasure of adding a new publication to your CV.*”

### **Grading System for Graduate courses**

Coursework subjects will be graded according to La Sierra University’s Graduate Study grading policy. For details in the various policies related to grading, please see the relevant sections of the Graduate Bulletin and Faculty Handbook available online). Of particular note, all degree applicable courses for the PhD in Leadership must receive a grade of B- (2.70) or above. When practical and appropriate, writing rubrics are used in the evaluation of student written work and in some cases cross-marked by more than one faculty member.

Letter Grades	Grade Points	Definition
A	4.00	Outstanding performance
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	
C+	2.30	Unsatisfactory (does not count toward degree, and if required, needs repeating)
C	2.00	
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	
F	0.00	Failure

#### Special Grades

AU Audit

S Satisfactory: Passing

U Unsatisfactory: No credit

W Withdrew from class before date specified by Academic Office.

I Incomplete: Work not completed

IP In Progress Grade: Course extends beyond the quarter with approval

XF Failure for major academic integrity violation

To withdraw from a course, complete a *Change of Program Form* (available online) and follow the procedure as outlined on the form.

#### **Ethical and Professional Conduct**

Because scholars communicate, consider ideas, and contrast understandings in writing, it is important to be able to rely on each other in an atmosphere of openness, trust, and clarity. When writing or presenting, the proper use of references and citations allows colleagues to double-check your interpretation of someone else's work, or to follow-up in greater depth if interested in a particular idea. For this reason, academic honesty is of critical importance. In written work, the standard is APA style. In joining La Sierra University, you pledge to uphold the following academic integrity statement: *"I will act with integrity and responsibility in my activities as a La Sierra University student or faculty member. I will not participate in violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism, cheating, or fabricating information. I will not stand by when others do these things. I will follow the academic integrity policy"* (for more details, see the full policy at [www.lasierra.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.lasierra.edu/academic-integrity)). A purposeful or careless breach of academic integrity will result in academic discipline, in some cases, being dropped from the program.

### **SECTION III: STEPS TO PROGRAM COMPLETION**

#### **Application**

You begin the application process by completing an online application. Your MA transcripts, GRE scores, evidence of research (thesis, paper, other) and statement of purpose are collected and attached. The completed application is then forwarded to the Director of Leadership Studies.

#### **Admission**

The number of students admitted to the PhD in Leadership is limited. Students are admitted at only one point each year. To be considered for the next intake of students, you must have your application completed by February 1. Interviews are held in February and admission lists are finalized in March. The Director of Leadership Studies, the Director of Research and at least one other faculty member interviews the candidates and then, working in consultation with Leadership Studies Committee members, evaluates the application file and makes a decision on admission. Topics such as visa requirements and other issues relating to the needs of international students are described elsewhere. The Leadership Studies Committee approves all exceptions. The orientation for the PhD in Leadership occurs in the summer quarter.

#### **Leadership Orientation**

As a beginning point in your degree program, you are required to start with *LEAD 704 Leadership Orientation*. This one week intensive course is designed to help you visualize the possibilities within doctoral study. It serves to help orient you to the nature and requirements of the degree program and how the study of leadership, the practice of research, and the areas of specialization and diversification can provide a solid balance for your career and future.

#### **Academic Plan and Progress**

The Academic Plan forms the general guidelines for completion of the degree. It is prepared at the beginning of the program and helps you stay on track to completion (see appendix for sample form).

*Completion and Submission of the Academic Plan.* During the first quarter in the doctoral program, you will, with the guidance of your academic advisor, prepare an academic plan indicating how you plan to register for the remainder of the program. It also asks you to begin thinking in terms of meeting additional requirements such as the professional presentations and publishable paper. This plan is reviewed and approved by the Leadership Studies Committee and must be on record no later than the beginning of the winter quarter of your first year in the PhD program. Changes in the program can be made at the time of the annual review by submitting an addendum to the Leadership Studies Committee.

*Transfer Credits, Advanced Standing and Waivers.* As part of your academic plan, you may request transfer a maximum of 18 units from other accredited graduate studies programs where courses are similar in content to those required. Before these are officially entered into your academic record for degree purposes, transfer credits must be first approved by the Leadership Studies Committee. This committee also considers any requests for advance standing and requirement waivers.

*Quarterly and Annual Progress Reviews.* The Leadership Studies Committee will review your grades at the end of each quarter and assess your overall progress in the spring quarter of each year. If for some reason, satisfactory progress is not maintained, the committee may make recommendations for changes in your Academic Plan.

*Academic Probation, Withdrawal and Termination.* When satisfactory academic progress is not maintained your status will be changed to that of Academic Probation. You, along with your faculty advisor, will prepare a plan to move you back to regular status. If during the course of the degree, you find that your plans have changed, you may withdraw from the program by alerting the Leadership Studies Committee of your intentions. Termination may occur if there are serious academic violations, such as those outlined in the *Academic Integrity Policy*, or if you repeatedly fail to make satisfactory academic progress.

*Residency and Leave of Absence.* To maintain residency in the program, you must register for a minimum of six quarter credits per quarter for at least three quarters per year. A minimum of 42 credits of the doctoral program must be earned in residency at La Sierra University after admission to the program. At the dissertation stage, you may choose to take up to three credits per quarter but must take a minimum of one credit per quarter until 12 credits are recorded. To maintain their status after that, you must register for SECE 910 Dissertation Continuation.

If needed, you may request a temporary leave of absence for up to four quarters. A longer absence may result in an administrative withdrawal from the degree program and necessitate reapplication should you seek to reenter the program. You are then subject to the requirements in effect at the time of readmission. The Leadership Studies Committee considers the request for leave of absence and reinstatement.

*Completion of Course Work.* An important step in the process is the completion of the degree coursework as outlined in the Academic Plan and recorded in La Sierra University's *Degree Works*. You should review your Academic Plan at least a quarterly with your faculty advisor. All coursework must be completed with a grade point average not less than 3.50. All courses that count toward the degree must have a grade of B- (2.70) or above. A maximum of two repeated courses is permitted. Satisfactory completion of the coursework entitles you to apply for your Qualifying Examination.

### **Qualifying Exam**

During the final quarter of coursework, you must arrange with the Director of Leadership Studies to take a Qualifying Examination. The Qualifying Examination is not only a comprehensive examination that calls for a demonstration of mastery in the specialized field of study, it also is an indicator of fluency in the discipline, analytical and writing skills, and ability to reference and apply key theories and research to practice. The Qualifying Examination provides the School of Education with important evidence that you are prepared to progress to the dissertation phase with a reasonable probability of success.

The Qualifying Examination is composed of several sections and the sections are distributed over several concurrent dates. You are encouraged to attend special workshops several quarters prior to taking the Qualifying Examination that help prepare you for taking the exam. While it is tempting to take the examination earlier in the program, experience has shown that you will do better if you complete your coursework (or are in the final stages of your last course) before attempting the exam. Familiarity with



relevant literature is also advised. During the exam, you will be asked to answer a number of questions and analyze at least one case study.

After you have completed the written exam, the Leadership Studies Committee coordinates the marking of the answers and reviews the results. Your exam will be marked by at least two faculty members and your answers will be evaluated on a several criteria including, (a) skillful application of scholarly literature; (b) understanding of concept and theory; (c) ability of expression; and (d) quality of written communication.

When you have successfully completed the examination, you will then petition for advancement to candidacy, which allows you to proceed to the dissertation stage of the program. If you fail to satisfactorily answer the examination questions you will be given one opportunity to retake one or more portions of the examination. Unsatisfactory performance at that stage may result in additional required coursework or even discontinuance in the doctoral program.

### **Advancement to Candidacy**

Your advancement to candidacy is approved after successfully passing the Qualifying Examination. You must request advancement to candidacy at the appropriate time and file the necessary form for processing by the School of Education. The purpose of the advancement to candidacy and qualifying examination process is for the Leadership Studies Committee and School of Education to review your progress toward and eligibility to undertake the rigor of the research and writing sequence of studies required to complete the program. The Leadership Studies Committee recommends successful candidates to the School of Education Graduate Committee where your candidacy is approved. You must be accepted into candidacy prior to requesting a dissertation committee and completing your dissertation proposal.

### **Dissertation**

The dissertation process represents the culminating experience of your doctoral studies, in which you have opportunity to undertake independent, original research and apply critical thinking and research skills to address issues in leadership. PhD dissertations explore issues having implications for policy or practice, contributing new knowledge or understandings which will help educational personnel or organizations to more effectively accomplish their mission.

Prior to beginning your work on the dissertation, your focus will have been completing courses required for your program of study. Preparing a dissertation moves you into a new and unique experience that requires self-discipline, strong organizational skills, the integration of all that has been studied, attention to new and heavier demands on writing and research capabilities, and the ability to work in close communication with the dissertation committee chair over an extended period of time. Your internal motivation and commitment and your willingness to persist in the face of challenges, are keys to successful and timely completion of the dissertation. Unfortunately, this has proven to be a critical point in the doctoral process, leaving some students with an “ABD” (All But Dissertation) rather than a PhD.

Each dissertation follows a logical organizational structure, which becomes clear as you formulate the inquiry and design the study to explore the problem. Your chair and the members of your dissertation committee help guide you through this process. While their consultation is invaluable, ultimately it is your responsibility to successfully complete the dissertation.

*The Process.* Several steps move the initial idea for a research topic through to approved proposal.

The proposals are begin to be developed during the final stages of the sequence of research courses, but the final proposal is not official until it is presented and approved by your dissertation committee.

Once that is completed and approval has been voted, your work will focus on the research and writing phase of the dissertations.

At this stage, you are guided by your dissertation chair and as needed, by your dissertation committee members. It is important to work closely with the chair as your research grows and the writing takes place. The dissertation requires approval of the dissertation committee prior to defense. This is accompanied/preceded by a 'mock defense' in which your fellow doctoral students enact the oral defense of the dissertation. This is a great opportunity for both you and your fellow students to sharpen your presentation and dissertation defense.

You must maintain continuous registration until the manuscript has been accepted. If you have registered for all 12 credits of dissertation but have not completed the research and dissertation, you must register for *SECE 910 Dissertation Continuation* (1) each quarter (excluding summer) until the dissertation is completed. Credits earned for *SECE 910 Dissertation Continuation* do not apply toward the degree minimum.

*Steps to Completion.* The following points outline some of the major steps from the forming of the committee to the successful defense of the dissertation.

1. Upon completion of the Qualifying Examination, you will identify a faculty member to chair your dissertation committee. This must be approved by the dean of the School of Education whose role is to ensure a balanced workload for the proposed faculty chair, adequate support of the student, and appropriate resources available for the study.
2. Working with this approved supervisor, you chose a topic and report the topic to the Leadership Studies Committee for their approval and record. The topic must be leadership-related and must connect to an area of study in which the School of Education faculty has appropriate expertise.
3. In counsel with your dissertation supervisor, you will identify a dissertation committee. Names are submitted to the dean's administrative assistant where the proposed members are contacted for interest. Factors to be considered include availability and balanced workload of proposed faculty members, a variety of perspective to support the student, and the potential contributions that could add value to the study by the external member. The dean of the School of Education must approve the final composition of the dissertation committee.
4. Under the direction of your dissertation committee chair and the general guidance of your dissertation committee, you will prepare the dissertation proposal (some will have prepared a preliminary proposal in an earlier research course).
5. A formal presentation of the proposal is made to your dissertation committee. The dissertation committee chair sets the date and facilitates the meeting. The committee may approve the proposal as presented, may ask you to make changes and in some cases, may request to meet again to review the updated proposal. Once it has been approved, a copy is sent to the dean's administrative assistant.
6. At this point, you must submit the proposal to the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval to begin research. You may not begin collecting data until this approval is granted.
7. Once the proposal is accepted, you begin the research and writing phase of the dissertation. Needless to say, it is important to keep a good working relationship with your dissertation supervisor (and committee as needed) and to confer with them on a regular basis.

8. The dissertation should be presented in proper APA formatting (see the latest edition). You should also consult the *Standards for Written Work, La Sierra University* for any special style or formatting regulations.
9. The dissertation committee members are valuable mostly for their guidance and input but should not be relied on for editorial details. It is your responsibility to ensure proper composition, grammar and spelling. Should you feel the necessity of additional editorial help (not content changes) external editors are available (for a fee).
10. The dissertation may be completed at any time. Generally, PhD dissertations take two to five years to complete. In any case, if you want to participate in the June graduation ceremonies (with robe, music and official photographs), all chapters of the dissertation must be completed by the end of winter quarter of the year you plan to graduate.
11. When the dissertation is completed to the satisfaction of the dissertation supervisor, the dissertation committee meets with you to consider approval of the dissertation as 'ready for defense'.
12. A 'mock defense' is organized by your dissertation supervisor. It may be scheduled before or after your committee has reviewed the completed dissertation (see 11 above). At this time you will, in front of your supervisor and fellow students, 'defend' your dissertation as if in a regular oral defense.
13. When the committee has approved your document (see 11 above), you and your supervisor will apply to the dean for a date for the dissertation oral defense (if June graduation is planned, no later than May 1). You will also submit an abstract of your research consisting of no more than 350 words. This will be submitted to University Microfilms, Inc., and will be used as the description on the student's oral defense program..
14. At the appointed time, the dissertation committee, along with the Dean, the Director of Research, the Director of Leadership Studies and interested faculty, students and friends will join you for the oral defense of the dissertation. The agenda and stages of the defense itself are described in the *La Sierra University School of Education Dissertation Handbook*, but at the end, the committee makes a decision (approval as presented, approval subject to minor changes, approval subject to major revisions, non-approval of dissertation as presented).
15. You may be asked to make appropriate changes in your dissertation in response to the comments of the dissertation committee. After the changes are made, the document is reviewed by the chair of the dissertation committee (and members of the committee, if so requested) for completeness and accuracy of the changes.
16. After the requested changes are made, the document is submitted to the dean's administrative assistant who coordinates its final review by the School of Education editor to ensure that APA formatting is followed correctly throughout the dissertation and that the final document is free from grammar and style errors. Keep in mind that this review may take time, especially if the School of Education editor has several dissertations to examine. For those wishing to participate in the June graduation ceremonies, this process of review must be completed by May 31.
17. The results are sent to the Graduate Council of the School of Education and to the University Records Office. The dissertation chair changes the IP grades to S.
18. The dissertation abstract is then published in the appropriate journals and the dissertation is made available through the University library. You are also encouraged to publish your dissertations.
19. Celebrations follow. A feeling of loss occurs and you are left wondering what to do with all your free time. You will be thrilled when being addressed as 'Doctor.' Congratulations in anticipation of this moment!

## **SECTION IV: GRADUATION, CONFERRAL AND COMMENCEMENT**

### **Degree Completion and Petition for Graduation**

Toward the end of the dissertation phase and at least two quarters before completion, you must petition the School of Education Graduate Committee for permission to graduate with a PhD in Leadership degree. The degree will be awarded based on fulfillment of the following requirements. They are included here as a short checklist for your reference.

1. Completion of an approved program of study with no less than 132 quarter units post baccalaureate, including a minimum 87 units beyond the master's degree, and fulfillment of all prerequisite and specialization requirements
2. Completion of all units with no grade below B- (2.70), and a grade point average not less than 3.50 (a maximum of two repeats of courses is permitted)
3. Successful completion of the qualifying examination
4. Submission of at least one paper for publication
5. Delivery of at least two presentations at national or regional professional meetings
6. Satisfactory oral defense of the dissertation
7. Submission of the approved and signed dissertation to the dean of the School of Education in its final form ready for binding
8. Recommendations for the conferral of the degree by the Leadership Studies Committee and by the School of Education Graduate Committee

### **Conferral and Commencement**

The final steps and celebration take place generally at the time of graduation.

*Conferral.* Degrees are conferred when the legal requirements for graduation are completed. Participation in graduation is not necessary for the degrees to be conferred. In either case, your name will be listed in the next commencement bulletin and included in the list of those who officially received their degrees. At that graduation ceremony the President will, using the appropriate legal phases, announce that the degrees are now conferred, yours included.

*Commencement.* Technically commencement is the last of the official ceremonies of graduation weekend. For doctoral students at La Sierra University, it is also the time to be recognized for your research as well as for completion of the program. As you march forward and your name is read, you will also participate in the hooding ceremony in which your doctoral hood will be added to your other regalia. This is a special moment of recognition as you are invited to enter the academic world with the title of 'Doctor'. Your robes will be La Sierra University's navy blue with three black stripes with gold piping on each sleeve (indicating doctoral degree). Your doctoral hood will be dark blue to signify Doctor of Philosophy (EdD degrees have light blue hoods) with La Sierra University's colors of navy blue and gold in the center. Your cap will be a tam with short gold braid worn on the left side. There are other events planned for the weekend and you are encouraged to participate in them, too. Graduation regalia is ordered at the same time as you petition for graduation. Unless you specifically purchase the regalia described here, you will receive a generic PhD 'one-tripper' cap and robe.

*Graduating in absentia.* If you are unable to be present at the graduation ceremony, you may petition the dean to allow you to graduate *in absentia*. This allows you to be recognized even though you are not there to participate. As with other students who are graduating, you will, after caring for any financial obligations remaining, be given your official diploma.

As you read this document, you are probably not in the graduation line. More likely you are at the starting line or somewhere along the track. Opportunities abound in the PhD in Leadership program as you open your mind to new knowledge, new ways of thinking and being. There are also challenges ahead but consider them additional opportunities. Even now, if you listen closely you may hear the distant sound of the graduation march. Good luck! Bonne chance! And God bless. You can do it.