Ph.D. Program in Urban Education  
2016-17 Assessment Review Report  
Professional Development – Research Ethics Review  
March 6, 2017  
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Introduction
The Curriculum Committee of the PhD Program in Urban Education decided that for the 2016-17 assessment cycle that it would review the goals for student professional development and research ethics. The Curriculum Committee is made up of three faculty, three students, and the Executive Officer.

A. Student Professional Development
The preamble to our institutional learning goals statement (see Appendix A) specifies what we expect to accomplish with our students including their professional development as leaders/scholars in urban education. Quoting the pertinent language in our preamble:

“The Ph.D. Program in Urban Education is designed to prepare leaders in education with strong skills in research and policy analysis and who have a broad understanding of the complex issues facing urban education…[to this end] the Ph.D. Program in Urban Education strives to prepare scholars for the world of educational research and policy analysis and to foster scholarship that produces new knowledge about a mosaic of urban education issues related to social justice, culture, language, race, gender, political economy, science and mathematics, leadership, higher education, technology, teacher education, and the multiple roles that public education plays in a democratic society.”

The goals that align most closely to professional development can be found in Appendix A - Roman Numerals 1A through 1G.

To gather data for this assessment, a report (see Appendix B) was prepared based on a professional development survey conducted by Kylah Torre, a student in our program. The survey consisted of Likert scale and open-ended questions that reviewed several aspects of the Urban Education program’s offerings for student professional development. The survey was distributed to all students of the PhD program in Urban Education. Of those, 33 students responded (a response rate of 36.7 percent of registered students). The vast majority (see Figure 1 in Appendix B) of the respondents indicated that they participated in multiple professional development activities offered by the program.

It needs to be mentioned that our program defines professional development in its broadest sense referring to formal and informal activities designed to assist students in securing positions appropriate to individuals who have earned a Ph.D. The program provides a number of ways to assist students in their professional development including a formal seminar series some of which are built into courses. For instance, the Colloquium required for all students offers a variety of seminars
designed to expose students to current issues in urban education. Urban Education faculty, alumni, and advanced students share their work at these seminars. They provide valuable information and insights for students as they think about their own research and study areas.

In addition to formal coursework, seminars, and professional development workshops, the program also relies heavily on faculty advisement. Advisers are assigned to students upon admission and stay with the student throughout their time in the program. A long-term student-adviser relationship builds that results in a good deal of professional guidance culminating in assistance with career options and placements. The program is extremely proud of the fact that 97 percent of our alumni are employed in positions appropriate for someone with a Ph.D. Of these, not quite 70 percent are employed in academic positions at colleges and universities throughout the world. The remaining 30 percent have positions as education leaders (i.e., principals, directors) and researchers in major organizations. We offer these alumni data as important evidence of the effectiveness of our professional development activities.

A number of faculty also all provide group counseling activities designed to assist students in their professional development specifically related to research and/or writing. These activities generally meet on a regular schedule and provide opportunities for students to learn from one another as well as from the faculty.

Lastly, as concluded by the report written by Ms. Torre:

“While students are clearly taking advantage of many professional development offerings inside and outside of the program, they did have three recommendations. Below are the recommendations and the discussion by the Curriculum Committee.

**Recommendation 1:** A greater commitment on the part of the program to helping all students publish work in peer-reviewed journals before leaving the program.

**Discussion:** The Curriculum Committee discussed the fact that not all graduates would seek employment in academia and that alumni of the program who have sought academic positions have generally found them. It then does not seem critical that students publish in peer-reviewed journals before graduating the program, if the ultimate goal of professional development is employment, especially as the majority of students currently work full time and should be focused more on completing their dissertations. It was suggested that individual advisers could discuss with their advisees whether or not it would benefit them to seek publication before completing the program.

**Recommendation 2:** An attempt to offer professional development events at varying times, although events are now held evenings, so that they are available to people who work during the day but also those who teach evening courses.
**Discussion:** A couple of suggestions were made in regards to this recommendation. One was that the program could survey students to determine what days and times were preferable for scheduling professional development activities. Ofelia Garcia also suggested that the program provide online professional development modules on a variety of topics that students could access at their convenience.

**Recommendation 3:** An effort to publicize available resources (such as the job site created by students on the CUNY Academic Commons) and create resources (such as a calendar of relevant conferences and a list of relevant peer-reviewed journals) that would be useful to students.

**Discussion:** Some resources are already linked to the Urban Education website. It may also be possible to publicize resources via the student social media outlets.

In general, students are taking advantage of and seem to be satisfied with the professional development offerings of the program.

**B. Research Ethics**

The goal that aligns most closely to research ethics can be found in Appendix A - Roman Numeral 1H. It states that:

“Throughout the program students will demonstrate appropriately ethical conduct in their interactions with faculty and peers and in the production of high quality original scholarship. All research with human subjects will be approved by the Institutional Review Board and will be enacted to incorporate high standards of ethical conduct.”

The program takes this goal most seriously and has integrated activities related to it into the first course that students take upon entering the program. In 2010 and 2011, as a follow-up to an External Review in 2009, the Curriculum and Examinations Committee undertook a careful analysis of our core course requirements. As a result, a new core course, *Introduction to Research in Urban Education*, was designed and is required for students to take and complete in their first semester in the program. One of the modules of the course focuses entirely on the issue of ethics in educational research (see Appendix C for course description). An assignment requires students to write a 1,000 word review essay on one of the reading assignments related to ethics. In addition, in all phases of the Second Exam as well as the Dissertation Development and Defense, students review with their chair and committee any aspects of their research that relate to ethics especially with regard to the study of human subjects.
All students must all seek IRB approval for all dissertations and research involving human subjects. This is carefully monitored.

**Conclusion**

The Curriculum Committee is pleased to submit this assessment review report on the student professional development and research ethics. It welcomes any questions or comments.
Appendix A

Ph.D. Program in Urban Education
Program Overview and Student Learning Goals

Overview

The Ph.D. Program in Urban Education is designed to prepare leaders in education with strong skills in research and policy analysis and who have a broad understanding of the complex issues facing urban education. The unique focus of this program is located at the intersection of two principal research agendas: (1) research on issues of curriculum and pedagogy in urban schools; and (2) policy analysis research on broader social, political, historical and economic issues that are associated with the context of urban education. Key issues considered in the program include the diversity, complexity, and scale that frame “urban education.”

Urban education embraces diversity as a critical element from which schools derive their greatest strengths as well their greatest challenges. Race, gender, ethnicity, language, culture, and students with special needs permeate and inflect many urban education issues, especially in the context of globalization, migration, and the expansion of digital technology and media that have opened up and reshaped the world.

The complexity of urban schools requires knowledge resources drawn from a variety of academic disciplines including but not limited to sociology, psychology, economics, political science, history, and anthropology. Issues that benefit greatly from being viewed through multiple lenses and interdisciplinary perspectives include: learning and achievement; identity change; difference in social categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender; school restructuring and transformation; education in non-school settings such as museums, zoos and prisons; school leadership; teacher preparation and professional development; and school finance.

In sum, the Ph.D. Program in Urban Education strives to prepare scholars for the world of educational research and policy analysis and to foster scholarship that produces new knowledge about a mosaic of urban education issues related to social justice, culture, language, race, gender, political economy, science and mathematics, leadership, higher education, technology, teacher education, and the multiple roles that public education plays in a democratic society.

I. Student Learning Goals – Upon Successful Completion of the Program

A. Graduates will demonstrate advanced knowledge of the historical, pedagogical, philosophical, epistemological, methodological, and policy foundations of urban education.

B. Graduates will show deep understanding of the major issues facing education in general, and urban education in particular, and be able to articulate
contrasting views and interpretations of the issues, frame and reframe debates about the issues, and propose possible solutions.

C. Graduates will be able to conduct and write a major critical literature review on a topic or issue relevant to urban education.

D. Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of research methods relevant to urban education, understand the salience of the researcher’s standpoint, critically review alternative value stances and notions of truth, and employ appropriate forms of inquiry that apply to empirical, narrative and theoretical research genres.

E. Graduates will demonstrate a high level of fluency in writing for publication and dissemination of scholarly products in urban education for a variety of audiences (e.g., researchers, policy makers, school leaders, and the public at large).

F. Graduates will be able to design and implement a major research project, worthy of publication in a peer-reviewed source, on a scholarly topic or issue relevant to urban education.

G. Graduates will demonstrate a high level of oral fluency in presenting and discussing topics and issues relevant to urban education.

H. Throughout the program students will demonstrate appropriately ethical conduct in their interactions with faculty and peers and in the production of high quality original scholarship. All research with human subjects will be approved by the Institutional Review Board and will be enacted to incorporate high standards of ethical conduct.

II. Goals for the Second Exam

A. Students will demonstrate written and oral fluency and in depth knowledge of a broad range of scholarship in their chosen field of study.

B. Students will initiate and sustain a dialogue with their supervisory committee about salient academic work relevant to their chosen field of study (as the field is agreed to by the student’s supervisory committee).

C. Students will demonstrate high levels of written and oral competence regarding theories, methods, and research that are germane to their dissertation topic.

D. Students will initiate and sustain a dialogue with their committee regarding the salient values, ethics and morals associated with the research they propose to undertake for the dissertation. Through written and oral comments a student will demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the tenets of informed consent and the necessity to conduct research involving human subjects to provide participants with a sense of autonomy, beneficence and social justice.
III. Dissertation Development and Defense

A. Students will initiate and sustain a dialogue concerning a written proposal for dissertation project research that they will present to their committee in partial fulfillment of the requirements for receiving the doctoral degree in urban education.

B. Students will be required to complete a dissertation research project in written form to their committee and to participate with their committee in an oral dialogue about their research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for receiving the doctoral degree in urban education.
Appendix B

Urban Education Program Professional Development Survey Report
Kylah Torre
Cohort 11 (6th year)
Urban Education PhD program

Survey Overview and Respondents

The professional development survey consisted of Likert scale and open answer questions that reviewed several aspects of the Urban Education program’s offerings for student professional development, including activities and resources offered by the program and by students and/or faculty of the program. The surveys were distributed to all students of the PhD program in Urban Education. Of those, 33 students responded (a response rate of 36.7 percent of registered students). Of those who responded, 24 students (72.7 percent) indicated that they currently were seeking or participating in professional development activities. It should be noted that the 2016 cohort, made up of 16 students, may not yet be seeking many professional development resources (although they do participate in the Colloquium Lecture Series as part of their core courses).

Activities and Resources Offered by the Program

Activities offered by the Urban Education Program that were surveyed included the Colloquium Lecture Series of 2015 and 2016 and various Career Nights. 69.2 percent of students currently seeking professional development activities participated in the Colloquium Lecture Series in 2015 and/or 2016. Of those who participated, 88.8 percent said that they found the events to be helpful. A small percentage of the respondents indicated that they had participated in one of the Career Night events. Of those, 50 percent indicated that they found the Blended and Online Learning event helpful, while 66.7 percent found Teaching in Universities helpful and 66.7 percent found the IRB event to be useful. See Figure 1 on page 4 for a summary of results for all events and resources surveyed.

Other resources surveyed included the Urban Education website. 42.3 percent of respondents said that they used the website and 63.6 percent of those users indicated that it was helpful, while 27.2 percent found it unhelpful. No students elaborated on their use of the website in their comments.

Students also indicated on the survey that they took elective courses, such as Educating Educators, in a number of disciplines (in and outside of Urban Education). A few took non-credit professional development seminars offered through the

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1 In addition, two (2) students indicated that they were not currently seeking or participating in professional development activities, but went on to answer the other questions on the survey. Their responses are included in the results for those questions.
Graduate Center. Of those who responded to the question of whether elective courses were helpful, 75.0 percent found that they were.

**Activities and Resources Offered by Students and Faculty**

Most students who responded depended on conversations with their adviser (88.5 percent), other students (96.2 percent) and/or alumni (61.5 percent) in order to further their professional development. These conversations were the most consistently used resource among respondents. The vast majority of students found these conversations to be helpful – 84.6 percent in the case of conversations with their adviser, 100 percent in the case of conversations with other students and 95.0 percent in the case of conversations with alumni. All students are assigned an adviser upon admission to the program as of 2010.

More than half of the respondents participated in the online student-led journal of Urban Education (*Theory, Research, and Action in Urban Education*) and 81.2 percent of those who did found their participation to be helpful. Almost a third of the respondents (30.8 percent) indicated that they had published with faculty and 62.5 percent found that experience to be useful to them, however, several others indicated in comments that they would appreciate more support from the program and faculty around publishing, presenting at conferences and applying for grants and other funding.

All professional development events offered by the program are held in the evening (4:15pm or later), however a few students mentioned that that their work schedules made it difficult to attend available activities. A number of students mentioned that the Saturday USER-S workshops had also been useful to their professional development and one said that having USER-S on Saturdays was particularly helpful. A few students also mentioned the importance of student-led writing groups in furthering their professional development.

**Activities and Resources outside of the Program**

Many students indicated that they attended conferences (AERA was mentioned several times) for professional development. A number of students also attended workshops and other events at the colleges for which they are adjunct teaching. In addition, students take advantage of the many resources available at the Graduate Center. Some that were mentioned included ARC, ITP and TLC events, as well as offerings through the library.

**Recommendations**

While students are clearly taking advantage of many professional development offerings inside and outside of the program, they did have a few suggestions to improve the program’s professional development offerings:
• A greater commitment on the part of the program to helping all students publish work in peer-reviewed journals before leaving the program.
• An attempt to offer professional development events at varying times, although events are now held evenings, so that they are available to people who work during the day but also those who teach evening courses.
• An effort to publicize available resources (such as the job site created by students on the CUNY Academic Commons) and create resources (such as a calendar of relevant conferences and a list of relevant peer-reviewed journals) that would be useful to students.

While students seem to be generally satisfied with the professional development offerings of the program, the above listed recommendations could be put in place by the program in order to further support the professional development of students.
Figure 1: Summary of available events/resources and survey responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Resource</th>
<th>Number of students who attended event/used resource</th>
<th>Percentage found activity/resource helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colloquium Lecture Series</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Nights</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective courses</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Education website</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAUE</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing with faculty</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations with adviser</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations with other students</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations with alumni</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job site on CUNY Academic Commons</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

U ED. 70600 - Introduction to Research in Urban Education

The course examines research design and methods appropriate for studies in urban education. Ethical issues pertaining to the conduct of research are examined, including issues of informed consent involving research with human subjects. Also, the course examines theoretical research and research designed to test innovations in education as ends of a continuum in which the methods studied are appropriate for addressing questions/issues at multiple levels (e.g., macro, meso, micro levels of society). The theory and methods included in the course are: historical, philosophical, ethnographic, hermeneutic/phenomenological, narrative inquiry, auto/ethnography and action research, discourse analysis, descriptive statistical, and inferential statistical (parametric and non-theory (i.e., logics), procedures associated with the methods, and ways in which each the methods has been applied in urban education. In relation to all of the methods studied in the course, the potential of mixed methods will be studied….

Goals
Students will understand how a range of social, psychological, and cultural theories have been used as methodologies in research in urban education.

Students will evaluate research in urban education in terms of the quality of the methodologies and methods employed.

Students will use qualitative and quantitative reasoning to analyze and interpret problems in urban education.

Students will review, use and evaluate software for analyzing qualitative and quantitative data resources applicable to urban education.

For a particular specialization within urban education, understand the key works/contributions of leading individuals and institutions.

Use databases, including the Web of Science, Publish or Perish, SCOPUS, Google Scholar, and Dissertation Abstracts, to identify research literature that is relevant to a given topic, research networks based on citations, schools of study, and research trends.

Explicate research interests in terms of focus areas, research questions, assertions, pervasive problems, and priorities for improving practice (e.g., in policy, teacher education, teaching and learning, and theory).

Design research to address articulated purposes.

Create research designs that: protect against threats to external validity; are internally consistent; and cohere with explicated methodologies.
Evaluate research designs and enacted research, highlighting strengths and weaknesses and identifying strategies for improvement.

Evaluate written and oral representations research designs and enactments in terms of methodologies and outcomes. Warrants will be examined in terms of coherences and contradictions.

For a specified focus area in urban education describe the history of research through the lenses of methodologies used, research trends and priorities.

Critically review the ethics of research in urban education with human subjects.

For a specific interest area critically review the dissemination of research in urban education.

Connect your research interests to completed and ongoing doctoral studies in urban education.

Identify potential collaborators from the Urban Education program, the Graduate Center faculty, CUNY faculty, researchers in New York City, the US, and the international research communities.

Design and critique research of a given publication in terms of validity, reliability, and generalizability. If one or more of these criteria is not applicable to an evaluation, specify undertake a critique using salient, identified quality criteria.

For a given research design and/or enacted study, understand its relationships with theoretical frameworks to be employed and previously undertaken empirical research.

Review studies in terms of poly/mono-phonia and poly/mono-semia.

Analyze research in terms of epistemology, ontology, and axiology.

Module - Introduction to Research in Urban Education.

Weeks 2 & 5: Research with human subjects

Reading Assignments:


Review Essay: Write a 1,000 word review essay on one of the reading assignments above.

By week 5, all students should complete the CITI certification required for research in CUNY.