Higher Education and Student Affairs Program

M.S. in Educational Leadership Studies Option: College Student Development


Revised August 2015
A NOTE TO STUDENTS:
It is the responsibility of all students in the Master of Science degree in Educational Leadership Studies, option College Student Development (also referred to here as "the College Student Development (CSD) program") program to know and abide by the rules and procedures in this manual, along with any university regulations/deadlines related to graduate studies at Oklahoma State University. Review resources and information, including the graduation checklist available on the OSU Graduate College website, http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/masters-checklist. This information is provided to help you be successful in the program—if you do not read it, it will not help you.
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GETTING STARTED AT OSU

Once you have been accepted into OSU and made your decision to attend, you are ready to begin with your first steps as a CSD student. Here are some things you will want to do:

Activate your O-Key Account
Go here to activate your account:
https://app.it.okstate.edu/okey/index.php/module/Activate/action/Index

Once you have your O-Key account activated, use this user name and password to access a wide variety of on-line university resources, including your OSU email. You can access your OSU email at http://mail.okstate.edu.

Resolve all registration holds
Before you will be allowed to register for classes in your first semester, you must resolve all holds on your records. These may include:

**Transcript Hold:** You may have a hold on your record if the Graduate College has not received the final transcript, with your degree posted, from your undergraduate institution. Please confirm that this transcript is being sent to OSU as soon as you graduate.

**Advising Hold:** Contact your temporary advisor to discuss your course schedule for the first semester.

**Immunization Hold:** Make sure that your immunization records get to OSU. These go to Health Services (1202 W. Farm Rd).

Contact the College of Education Office Graduate Studies for information about any other holds on your enrollment, and instructions for resolving them.

Contact your Temporary Advisor
Your advisor can give you advice on registering for classes. After discussing classes with you, s/he will remove the advisor hold from your record; this will allow you to register.

A “temporary advisor” is assigned to you when you are admitted to the CSD Program. This person will assist you with academic decision making until you choose a permanent advisor and your advisory committee is in place. You may decide to ask the temporary advisor to chair your committee/be your permanent advisor, or you may choose another Higher Education and Student Affairs faculty member as your advisor/chair.

Register for classes
Once **all holds are removed** you can register for classes! To register for classes got to:  http://prodosu.okstate.edu

Click on **“log in to student services”** – Login with your O-Key information.
You will be asked to update your address and other important contact information. You will also have an opportunity to sign up for the reverse 911 system—this is encouraged.

Once you have completed the mandatory sections you will then select the appropriate courses.

Get your Student ID

When you arrive on campus one of the first things you will want to do is to get your student ID. However, **you must be registered for classes before you can get your ID**! It is generally best to print a copy of your schedule to take with you.

Go to Math Sciences Room 113 to get your ID made. Math Sciences is the 5-story building directly across the parking lot, to the north, of Willard Hall.

Other Important Things To Do

A. If you have a graduate teaching assistantship (GTA) or other paid position at OSU, contact the unit administrator or your supervisor to make arrangements to complete paperwork and sign up for university payroll.

B. Purchase a parking permit if you live off-campus. You can do so here: [http://www.parking.okstate.edu/](http://www.parking.okstate.edu/)

C. Attend the Graduate College Welcome Week activities. See [http://welcomeweek.okstate.edu/index.php/welcome-week-events](http://welcomeweek.okstate.edu/index.php/welcome-week-events) for a calendar of events.

D. Attend the mandatory CSD program orientation.

E. Participate in an orientation session for graduate students at OSU’s Edmond Low Library to get acquainted with using/accessing information resources.
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

College Student Development graduate programs do not have an accrediting agency; the program follows the recommendations of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, also known as CAS. CAS is a consortium of professional associations who work collaboratively to develop and promulgate standards and guidelines representing the agreement of over 40 member associations reflecting the consensus of the student affairs field. CAS has a specific standard for Master’s Graduate Preparation programs, which our program continually consults when making curriculum changes.

Your curriculum requirements in the CSD program are set once you enter the program. Course requirements listed in this edition of the manual apply to students entering in fall 2015. If you entered prior to 2015, see prior manuals for the course requirements applying to you.

Before you register each semester, consult with your advisor. You must have approval for every class and every section in which you enroll for every semester in which you are enrolled. You may request approval via email or through an in person meeting—this is to ensure you take your required classes in the appropriate order and timing.

Completing the CSD Program

The CSD program is designed to be completed by full-time students in two years. To achieve this, students are expected to enroll in nine credit hours during each fall and spring semester and six credit hours during the summer between their two years of enrollment.

It is to a student’s substantial career and financial disadvantage to remain in an assistantship for a third year rather than completing a degree in two years. In highly unusual circumstances, one may wish to extend a program of study beyond the typical two years to complete a degree program. The faculty will work with students on a case-by-case basis to assist them in planning to complete in more than two years. Students should begin their academic program by planning to graduate within two years and stay on course to do so.

The CSD program accepts a limited number of part time students, roughly 10-15% of total program enrollment. Such students, by definition, enroll in fewer than three courses in each fall and spring semester and fewer than two during each summer. The program benefits from the diversity of experiences that our part-time students have to offer and is committed to maintaining a vibrant minority of part time students.

Academic Integrity

Students in the CSD program are required to follow OSU’s Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in Appendix H of this manual, or on the Oklahoma State University website at http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu/
### CSD Program Degree Requirements

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY**

School of Educational Studies – College of Education

M.S. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP STUDIES

Option: **College Student Development**

Required Hours: **42**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMON CORE</th>
<th>24 hours</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NOTE:</strong> These 8 courses must be taken BEFORE you sit for your comprehensive exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>HESA 5173: Introduction to Student Affairs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HESA 5213: Student Development Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>HESA 5233: Advanced Student Development Theory</td>
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<td>HESA 5333: Effective Leadership in Student Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>HESA 5320: Seminar in Student Dev. (Individual &amp; Group Helping Skills)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HESA 5463: Legal Issues in Student Affairs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HESA 6220: Internship in Higher Education Student Personnel (6 hours)</td>
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<tr>
<th>RESEARCH &amp; INQUIRY:</th>
<th>6 hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>REMS 5013: Research Design &amp; Methodology</td>
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**Select ONE of the following courses:**

| REMS 5953: Statistical Methods in Education |
| SCFD 5913: Introduction to Qualitative Research |
| HESA 5320: Assessment in Student Affairs |

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<tr>
<th>ELECTIVE COURSES</th>
<th>12 hours</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Select ONE of the following options:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Option A.</strong> SDEV 5000: Master’s Thesis</td>
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<td><strong>Option B.</strong> SDEV 6580: Creative Component</td>
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</table>

| Possible elective courses: | 6 hours (if option A above) |
| (or others approved by advisor) | 9 hours (if option B above) |
| HESA 5223: Career Development for College Students |
| SCFD 5883: Educational Sociology |
| SCFD 5990: Religion and Education |
| SCFD 6883: Transforming Pedagogies |
| SCFD 6983: Diversity and Equity Issues in Education |
| SCFD 6853: Cultural Anthropology in Education |
| SCFD 6443: Ethics and Moral Education |
| SCFD 5990: Gender and Education |
| SCFD 5990: Pop Culture and Education |
| HESA 6583: The Impact of College on Students and on Society |
| HESA 6233: Critical Issues in Higher Education |
| HESA 5973: Foundations of Higher Education |
| HESA 5983: Administrative Issues in Higher Education |
| HESA 6703: Finance in Higher Education |
| REMS 6003: Analysis of Variance |
| EPSY 5713: Transpersonal Human Development |
| HDFS 5583: Human Sexuality |
The purpose of grades in Graduate School

Throughout your time in graduate school, you will receive feedback about your performance in a variety of ways. One of the ways you will receive feedback is through letter grades. Receiving grades can, for some, be among the most anxiety producing parts of graduate school. It does not need to be. It is important to think about what grades are, and what they are not, prior to receiving grades for the first time.

RECEIVING FEEDBACK THROUGH GRADES

Grades are first and foremost a means of receiving feedback on your academic performance. They are earned, not given. They provide you with a way to quantify where you stand relative to a set of academic standards. These standards are determined by someone with a doctorate and professional experience who can provide you with guidance on what you are doing well and how you can best grow.

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

It is our expectation that all CSD students strive to perform at their highest possible level in all aspects of their graduate experience. To strive for anything less indicates a lack of motivation and interest in one’s work. However, it is unlikely that an entire class will receive the highest grade available on every assignment all of the time. On rare occasions, the strengths of a group of students could all be in one area; in a small class, sometimes all students will receive the highest possible grade on one assignment. However, human variation normally results in variation in performance on assignments based on the strengths of students and the effort students put into their work.

COMPETITION, GRADE COMPARISON, & FAVORITISM

"Her grade is higher than mine . . . you obviously like her more!"

One of the toughest struggles some students have in graduate school is coping with learning their grades and comparing them to the grades of others. When hearing about how other students perform, particularly when other students perform at a level that merits a higher evaluative standard, some students blame the evaluator. This insults both the person who earned the grade and the person who evaluated the work. It also does nothing to help anyone get the feedback they need to grow.

Simple advice: don’t ask others about their grades. Focus on your own progress and keep striving to improve. Your instructors will share feedback with you through grades based on standards of academic performance. Program faculty work very hard to measure student performance against academic standards, and they are committed to supporting your professional growth during your time in the OSU CSD program. If you have a question about your grade on an individual assignment or in a class, ask how your performance was rated against the criteria for the particular grade you earned. Program faculty welcome these discussions.

Each instructor will have her or his own approach to grading and defining/communicating the feedback implicit in each letter grade or point value given for an assignment or a final grade in a class. The standards and approach to grading may be found in the course syllabus; the instructor will also likely discuss
this topic early in the semester with the class. If you have a question or are unclear how a particular instructor evaluates work, you are expected be pro-active, and contact that person in a professional and respectful manner to ask for clarification.

**TIPS FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE IN GRADUATE SCHOOL**

Program alumni and faculty offer these suggestions to improve your performance in graduate-level coursework.

1. Read/Review thoroughly all assigned readings for each class session.

2. Come to each class session prepared to contribute to a rich discussion of the assigned readings for that session. To prepare for these discussions – after completing the reading assignment – ask yourself questions such as:
   a. What are the 2-3 big ideas of each reading? Of the readings as a group?
   b. What ideas are still fuzzy to me?
   c. What would I like to discuss with the group in more detail?
   d. How do these readings relate to material I’ve read for other classes? To my previous experience as a student leader? As a professional?
   e. What surprised me?

   Write down specific questions/ideas, bring these to class, and contribute them to the discussion during class.

3. During class discussions, critique ideas rather than the people who contribute them to the discussion. Professional behavior standards apply to your interactions with other cohort members, as well as your graduate assistantship.

4. When completing assignments, read and follow (all of) the directions.

5. When writing papers, carefully follow APA (6th edition) format.

6. Carefully edit your papers. Grammatical errors and typos count against you. Write several drafts. Start writing during the first week of classes, put the assignment down, come back to it later with fresh eyes.

7. Ground your arguments in the current/relevant scholarship; avoid sweeping unsupported generalizations and unsupported opinions. Familiarize yourself with APA guidelines for in-text citations and reference list entries so you can cite the scholarship correctly.

8. In your work, focus on reflecting respectful, constructive questioning of perspectives, maintaining clarity of expression, and increasing the persuasiveness of your arguments.

9. Do not cite Wikipedia. Or Google. Ever. While you may choose begin with either of these resources, use them very quickly as a springboard into the scholarship on your specific topic, and see Item 4 above.
10. Study class material all semester – never count on cramming at the end (this is a deadly strategy, especially given that you will be expected to demonstrate your mastery of these concepts in the comprehensive exam).

11. Become familiar with Bloom’s taxonomy of the cognitive domain. Focus your comments in class, on tests, and on papers toward the highest levels by evaluating existing knowledge and attempting to create knowledge by advancing new ideas.

**Maintaining Good Academic Standing**

The Graduate College sets minimum grade requirements to maintain good standing as a graduate student and to meet requirements for a degree. See the current edition of the University Catalogue for a complete copy of these regulations: [http://registrar.okstate.edu/catalog](http://registrar.okstate.edu/catalog)

These regulations state, in part, that a student must maintain a 3.00 GPA on the coursework on their plan of study to receive a degree and must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of a 3.00 to continue enrollment in the Graduate College. Per this policy, grades below a C do not count toward a degree.

The Graduate College permits departments to have more stringent requirements for Academic Standing regulations. The CSD program has the following additional requirements:

1. No more than one grade of “C” may count toward a student’s program of study for the purpose of earning a degree.

2. If a student receives a C or lower in any graduate level course before or during enrollment in the CSD program, that student will meet with his or her committee for the purpose of determining what remedial steps are necessary. With a first C, the possibilities are:
   a. A plan for remediation with steps the student must take to address the issue that led to their lack of performance, to the degree the deficiency was under the student’s control.
   b. Probationary status in the CSD program with conditions set forth by the student’s advisory committee.
   c. Any other action deemed necessary and appropriate by the advisory committee.

3. If a student receives a second grade of C or lower in any graduate level course during enrollment in the CSD program, that student will be required to meet with his or her advisory committee for the purpose of determining what action is necessary at that point in time. The advisory committee will hear the student’s circumstances and determine whether the student is academically fit to remain enrolled in the CSD program.
   a. If the committee believes it is more likely than not that the student will be able to earn a degree from the CSD program, the committee will usually decide to allow continued enrollment by the student on probation with extremely strict standards for a plan for remediation.
b. If the committee believes it is more likely than not that the student will not be able to earn a degree from the CSD program, the committee will usually decide to dismiss the student from the program at that time.

c. If in the judgment of the student’s advisory committee there are extraordinary reasons why they wish to deviate from these standards, they have the prerogative to do so.

4. If a student receives a third grade of C or lower in any graduate level course before or during enrollment in the CSD program, that student will meet with his or her committee. At that time, unless the student’s advisory committee believes that the student shows exceptional academic talent, the reason for poor performance is outside the student’s influence, and the instance before them is so rare and uncommon that it could not have been imagined when this policy was written, the student will be dismissed from the CSD program for unacceptable academic performance. Even if these criteria are met, the Graduate Committee may decide it is in the student and/or the CSD program’s best interest to terminate the enrollment of the student in the CSD program at that time.

**The Plan of Study and your advisory committee**

Before registering for the 17th credit hour of coursework, a student is required to file a Plan of Study (POS) outlining the courses you plan to take to earn you degree. The program faculty strongly recommend that you begin this process in your second semester in the program, thereby allowing for the maximum benefit from your graduate committee’s experience/advice. As part of the POS process, you will select an advisory committee, this committee will approve your plan of study, will meet in the event you face academic, ethical, or legal allegations, if you receive a grade of C or lower, or for any other reasons deemed necessary and appropriate by your advisor.*

Your advisory committee must have at least 3 members: chair/advisor, and two expert faculty members (chosen by you, usually based on topic of your thesis or creative component). Each student is assigned a temporary advisor upon being admitted to the program. This person may continue as your advisor/committee chair; this is not, however, required. Students are encouraged to select an advisor whom they feel will support them in making important decisions about the ultimate direction and content of their coursework and thesis or creative component.

*By default, if your committee needs to meet at any point prior to your formal selection of its members, the current program coordinator of the HESA program and all tenured/tenure track faculty teaching in the College Student Development degree program will serve as committee members.*
Completing Required Internships

Students in the OSU CSD Program complete two internships; this opportunity is one of the outstanding aspects of the OSU CSD program. Through your internships you have the opportunity to gain valuable skills and experiences, as well as make important relationships. Internships are definitely an area in which you want to be intentional.

Students completing an internship will enroll in HESA 6220, and participate in class discussions and other activities with all internship students in both the Higher Education Administration and the College Student Development programs; some classroom hours may also be counted toward the 150-hour requirement. The student must have a prospectus, signed by her/himself, the site supervisor, and the course instructor, on file prior to beginning internship hours. If you choose to go this route, please discuss this with the instructor of HESA 6220 well in advance.

HESA 6220 is offered twice each year, in the spring and summer semesters. Typically, the first internship is completed during the summer between Year 1 and Year 2, and the second is completed in the spring semester of Year 2. Each internship will require exactly and no more than 150 documented hours at the work site.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

Students are responsible for obtaining professional liability coverage to indemnify themselves in the event of mishap or misfortune during their internship experience. Students enrolled in HESA 6220 will be assessed a premium as part of the fees associated with the class.

SELECTING AN INTERNSHIP LOCATION

Students are responsible for securing placement for each internship by the end of the semester BEFORE the internship will be completed. Please work closely with your advisor to generate ideas, select specific offices and, as appropriate, make contact with those offices.

Students may complete their internship at Oklahoma State University, or at another institution. Some national organizations, such as the National Orientation Directors Association (NODA) and the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I) offer assistance with placement at member institutions.

Internship sites must provide students with experience in a student affairs or student affairs-related function, broadly construed. These areas include, but are not necessarily limited to:

• Student Activities
• Student Leadership Programming
• Campus Programs
• Athletics
• Campus Ministry
• Fraternity And Sorority Life
• Health Education
• Women’s Centers
Discuss any other possible internship sites with your advisor before finalizing internship placement. For more information about the internship process, see Appendix G and speak with your advisor.

The Master’s Thesis Option

Writing a master’s thesis presents an opportunity for a student to investigate a particular topic in student affairs which s/he finds interesting by designing and implementing an original research project. Typically, the student will identify a particular aspect or specific question relating to a broader topic in student affairs; perhaps a personal issue they have long wondered about, or a question which arises from the coursework of a class, or any number of other sources. Completing the master’s thesis option gives a student an opportunity to not only answer a question they are interested in, but also allows the student to demonstrate mastery of various research skills that are part of any master’s thesis process.

Why Write a Thesis?

A. Writing a thesis provides an outstanding opportunity for students in the program to gain practice in conducting original research and contribute to the general body of knowledge in student affairs.

B. If you want to pursue a doctorate at some point in the future, you are particularly encouraged to write a thesis. Although not writing a thesis will not preclude you from applying to a doctoral program in the future, completing the thesis option will be a very good opportunity to become familiar with the process of conducting independent research. Students who have experience designing and conducting research move more easily and sometimes more quickly through the dissertation process in the doctoral degree.

Read through the following sections to see if a thesis is something for you to consider. Additionally, there is more information about the content and sections of
a thesis in Appendix A; more information regarding Graduate College requirements in Appendix C; and some wise and useful bits of advice in Appendix D.

Please be aware that starting as early as possible with the thesis process is essential to facilitating an on-time graduation. If there is any chance that you will choose this option, consult with your advisor during the second semester of your program to begin discussing potential research ideas.

**THESIS REQUIREMENTS**

If you choose the thesis option, you will conduct an original study, which will involve (among other things) a comprehensive review of the relevant literature, the collection and analyze of empirical data, and an oral presentation of your results and implications of your findings. Two documents will demonstrate your work:

- The Thesis Proposal (Chapters 1-3 of the thesis: introduction, literature review, and methodology)
- The (final) Thesis

Formally, students who pursue a thesis will enroll in a total of six (6) credit hours of HESA 5000. Typically, these credits are taken three at a time during each of your final two semesters. However, you should start thinking about a topic for your thesis as soon as you arrive at OSU; and plan to start work on your literature review by the second semester of coursework to facilitate an on-time graduation.

Students might initially choose the thesis option, and decide later to switch to the Creative Component option. Typically, the topic of the project can remain the same as that chosen for the thesis; the creative component will require a different approach, outlined in the following section on The Creative Component.

**THE THESIS PROPOSAL**

The Thesis Proposal comprises the first three chapters of the thesis: Introduction, Review of the Literature, and Methodology. The proposal should also include a reference list, and any necessary Appendices, such as data collection instrument/interview protocol, IRB approval (if necessary); your thesis advisor will assist you in identifying necessary appendices. There are some specific guidelines for what content should be included in each of these sections (see Appendix A). This includes formatting of the document.

It is imperative that you format your thesis correctly. The CSD Program, like all fields of study in education, follow the American Psychology Association’s (APA) Style Manual, 6th edition. You will be given ample opportunities in your courses to become familiar with and practice this style. The OSU Graduate College also maintains a formatting template for graduate master’s theses on their website here: [http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis/templates.htm](http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis/templates.htm). Formatting the final thesis can take considerable time if you do not start out correctly, so you are encouraged to consult both these resources early in your work on the proposal.
Important deadlines, required forms, and useful information relating to your thesis can be found in Appendix C of this handbook, and also on the Graduate College website: [http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis/default.html](http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis/default.html)

**THE PROPOSAL MEETING**

Once you have written your Thesis Proposal and your committee chair has approved that 1) all the required sections are present, 2) the research design is thoroughly outlined; and 3) the document is formatted correctly, you will submit your Thesis Proposal, in writing, to your advisory committee. Then, normally 1-2 weeks after they have received your proposal (and had adequate time to review its content), you will meet with your advisory committee to discuss the proposal and finalize your plans for the research project. The conversation at this meeting will begin with you making a 10-15 minute presentation of the key components of the proposed research design. Taking REMS 5013/Research Design is intended to prepare you for this experience.

Once your advisory committee approves your Thesis Proposal, which may include conditionally approving your proposal provided you implement revisions suggested by the committee during the proposal meeting, the Thesis Proposal becomes a contract between you and your advisory committee.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Your committee must approve your Thesis Proposal BEFORE

- You submit your study to the OSU Institutional Review Board.
- You begin data collection; you must receive IRB approval for your research BEFORE collecting any data.

**THE THESIS FINAL REPORT**

The Thesis Final Report is typically composed of (at least) five chapters: Introduction/Problem Statement; Review of Literature, Methodology, Findings, Conclusions/Implications/Recommendations; final Reference List, and any necessary appendices. Chapters 1-3 (the thesis proposal, should be revised to reflect any changes requested by the committee during your proposal meeting, and to use past tense, reflecting research that has been completed. See Appendix A for more in-depth descriptions of the sections you must write for the Thesis Final Report.

**THE FINAL DEFENSE**

After you have written your Thesis Final Report and your committee chair has approved that 1) all the required sections are sufficiently complete, and 2) the document is formatted correctly, you will submit your Thesis Final Report, in writing, to your advisory committee. Then, normally 1-2 weeks after they have received your report, you will make a 20-30 minute presentation of your research, focusing on the findings and recommendations, to your advisory committee. At this defense, your committee will, in essence, determine if you have followed the contract set out in your thesis proposal—and will approve or suggest revisions accordingly.
After your Thesis Final Report has been approved, the OSU Graduate College requires a number of forms and submissions, which can be found here: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/student/thesis/default.html

A calendar of thesis-related Graduate College deadlines can be found at the Graduate College Registrar’s Website: http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/current_student/calendar.html

THE ROLE OF YOUR ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN THE THESIS PROCESS
The advisory committee has considerable impact and importance concerning your master’s thesis, if you choose to write one:

Your committee is an **invaluable source of guidance and consultation** in deciding to write a thesis, and selecting a thesis topic

Your committee will **approve your Thesis Proposal**

Your committee will **approve your Thesis Final Report**

There are hundreds of members of the Graduate Faculty at OSU who can serve on your advisory committee. For a list of potential members with expertise and familiarity with our field, see Appendix B. To see the most current list of Graduate Faculty eligible to serve on your committee, go to: http://graduatefaculty.okstate.edu/Default.aspx. Consult with your chair before asking a person to be on your committee.

The Creative Component Option

The Creative Component is intended to give students a hands-on and in-depth experience in a specific area of interest in college student development. Think of this as a “master’s project” compared to the “master’s thesis.” Where the thesis option involves designing and conducting independent research, the creative component emphasizes the integration of research, theory and application, and requires a strong assessment component.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CREATIVE COMPONENT
Students pursuing the creative component option will propose a project that:

1. Provides experience in integrating theory, research, and application; and,
2. Includes a substantive written component.

Students can choose to emphasize certain elements in their creative component:

1. Theory or model development;
2. Development and investigation of a research question; or
3. Application of theoretical and research scholarship to a program, project, area of policy, or activity in the area of student affairs practice.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE CREATIVE COMPONENT
Students who select a creative component project are expected to produce a substantive written product. Though there is no absolute number of pages for this document, 30 pages is minimal under normal circumstances.
For more information regarding the creative component, check Appendix E and then talk with your advisor as you develop ideas for this project.

Typically, a student can complete the creative component in 1-2 semesters. You are encouraged to have identified the topic/focus for your project by the beginning of your second year in the program. Contact your advisor if you have any more questions.

The CSD Comprehensive Exam

The CSD comprehensive examination, or – in student jargon – “comps”, is a thorough test covering the coursework taken by CSD program students. The CSD comprehensive exam is required for graduation from the CSD program. No individual will receive a degree from the CSD program without passing comprehensive exams. See the next section for more information about the consequences of failing the exam. The comprehensive exam is offered once each year, in January. Students sit for the comprehensive exam after completing the CSD course requirements outlined on the degree sheet included in this manual. Typically this occurs during their second year of coursework.

The comprehensive exam includes three essay questions, and one case study. See below for more details on the individual sections and the parameters for administering the comprehensive exam.

The exam is evaluated by the three members of the student’s advisory committee; therefore, students must have their advisory committee in place well in advance of the comprehensive exam test date. More information regarding the evaluation of the exam can be found below.

WHEN WILL I TAKE THE CSD COMPREHENSIVE EXAM?
The master’s comprehensive examination is offered one time per year, customarily the second Saturday in January. This date is subject to change without notice; however, as much notice as is feasible will be given. In light of the content covered by the comprehensive examination, CSD students typically sit for comps during their second year.

WHAT IS THE FORMAT FOR THE CSD COMPREHENSIVE EXAM?
Your comprehensive exam will take a full day to administer. Typically you will complete Part I on Saturday morning, take a break for lunch, and then complete Part II on Saturday afternoon.

Below are the sections of the exam. In Appendix F you will find guidelines on how to structure your answers and a sample case study. You will have ample practice with this structure and preparing case studies throughout your coursework, beginning in your first semester in SDEV 5173/Introduction to Student Affairs.

PART I OF THE CSD MASTER’S COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
This section consists of several essay questions. Typically, students must answer three essay questions. At least one of the essay questions will be mandatory for all students; students are invited to choose two of the remaining questions.
You are allowed four hours to answer these three questions.

**PART II OF THE CSD MASTER’S COMPREHENSIVE EXAM**
This section consists of a single case study. Students must analyze the case presented, connect relevant theories, and develop recommendations for action.

Three hours are provided to respond to the case study scenario.

For students entering in fall 2015, material covered on the comprehensive exam can come from **any part of the coursework** required in the CSD Common Core and Research & Inquiry section. As a reminder, that includes the following courses:

- HESA 5173: Introduction to Student Affairs
- HESA 5213: Student Development Theory
- HESA 5233: Advanced Student Development Theory
- HESA 5333: Effective Leadership in Student Services
- HESA 5320: Seminar in Student Dev. (Individual & Group Helping Skills)
- HESA 5463: Legal Issues in Student Affairs
- HESA 6220: Internship in Higher Education Student Personnel*
- REMS 5013: Research Design & Methodology**

*Material from the internship course is not specifically covered, as there isn’t a textbook or any original scholarship presented in the same way each time this course is taught. However, experience in the internship will be helpful to have before comprehensive exams (preparation of the case study will likely require basic practical understanding and knowledge of student affairs departments and University functions).

**Only the introductory REMS class is on this list because REMS 5013 is the only REMS class taken by all students in the program.

**CSD COMPREHENSIVE EXAM GRADING GUIDELINES**
Your comprehensive exam answers will be assessed by the three members of your advisory committee. Allow 6-8 weeks for exam results to be announced.

**INDIVIDUAL ANSWER GRADE**
Each exam answer can receive a grade of: Outstanding, Pass, or Fail. See the following criteria for each grade.

**OUTSTANDING**
- Answers the question in a logical, complete, organized, thorough and accurate manner
- Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of the subject matter
- Response exhibits high level of reflection upon professional scholarship and theory
- Evidence supporting the thesis of essay incorporates critical analysis and synthesis of theory and research
- Avoids vague generalities and clichés
- Flawless or nearly flawless grammar
- Analysis is relevant, sophisticated, and original
- Thesis of essay is specific and complex
- Well chosen evidence (research or theory) used strategically
• Response is clearly written
• A super essay, meritorious in quality

**PASS**
• Answer is basically logical, reasonably complete, has a sense of organization, reasonably thorough and mostly accurate
• Demonstrates an acceptable degree of knowledge of the subject matter
• Response exhibits reflection upon professional scholarship and theory
• Mostly avoids vague generalities and clichés
• Analysis is relevant
• Response can be understood with little need for interpretation of writing
• Responds adequately to the question
• May have some minor factual, interpretive, or conceptual errors or irrelevancies
• Thesis could be a bit general
• Provides some evidence, could be variable in its relevance, sufficiency and evenness; includes appropriate research and/or theory
• May have occasional grammar errors (e.g., agreement, tense, prepositions); awkward syntax; wordiness
• A decent essay

**FAIL**
• Answer does not directly answer the question
• No discernible thesis
• Evidence for responses extremely brief, repeatedly inaccurate, and/or mostly opinion and not research/theory
• Response lacks logic
• Answer does not convey acceptable knowledge of the subject matter
• Shows lack of insight or original thinking
• Answer does not incorporate analysis or synthesis of central concepts
• Answer relies on vague generalities and clichés
• Unacceptable

**OVERALL COMPREHENSIVE EXAM GRADE**
After all of your comprehensive exam answers have been graded by your advisory committee, you will receive an overall grade for your comprehensive exam.

Typically, the program coordinator will email with your exam results approximately six weeks after you took the exam, but there is no exact timeframe for receiving results. Your overall grade can be: Pass with Honors, Pass, or Fail.

**PASS WITH HONORS**
If, in the judgment of the faculty members grading the comprehensive exam, each essay response and the response to the case study is particularly meritorious, the distinction of “Honors” will be awarded to the student by the CSD program. A student will receive honors on comprehensive exams if they score a “Outstanding” by two of three general assessments or if they score a “Outstanding” on all four questions (including the case study).
The distinction of “Honors” is awarded to the student by the CSD program. This is not a designation conferred by the University, nor is it noted on the student’s transcript. What is customary is for the student to note on a resume just beneath their Master’s degree is “Received Honors on Comprehensive Exams.” In the field of Student Affairs this is the equivalent of graduating with honors from a graduate program.

**PASS**

A student will pass comprehensive exams as long as grades of two “pass” or higher are received for each particular question and/or the case study.

**FAIL**

If two “fail” grades are received for a particular question, the student will have failed that particular question. If a student fails any particular question in Part I or the case study in Part II, it will be considered a failed exam.

However, your advisory committee may provide you one retake on the failed question or Part I. If the student fails the retake, they will be dismissed from the program and placed in “special student status” according to Graduate College regulations.

**WHAT IF I DO NOT PASS THE CSD COMPREHENSIVE EXAM?**

In the event that a student does not pass comprehensive exams, s/he will be given an opportunity to re-write some or all the exam; the retake will be scheduled at the discretion of the program faculty. If the student does not pass the retake of comprehensive exams, the student’s master’s degree program is terminated immediately at that time.

Because comprehensive exams are a program area exam, results are not under the purview of the Graduate College. Criteria for grading the comprehensive exams are not appealable. A student may request a review of the process by which scores were determined by a third party. Any concerns should first be brought to the School Head of the School of Educational Studies. The SES School Head will determine whether there were any errors in the process followed to determine the grade (pass, fail or honors) a student received on comprehensive exams. If the School Head determines that there were no errors in the evaluation process, the advisory committee’s decision will stand.

The student may request a review of the School Head’s assessment of the evaluation process, by contacting the Dean of the College of Education or that person’s designee. The Dean/designee will evaluate only the PROCESS followed to determine the student’s grade (pass, fail, honors) on the comprehensive exam. S/he will not evaluate the criteria used for that evaluation, which is solely under the purview of the program faculty. If there were no errors found to have been made in the evaluation process, the decision of the advisory committee who assessed the
comprehensive exam will stand. The decision of the Dean or his/her designee is final and not appealable.
POLICIES ON GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Both the OSU Graduate College and the CSD Program have rules regarding the number of graduate assistantship hours a student in the CSD program may work.

OSU Graduate College Policy

The OSU Graduate College’s policy is as follows:

An offer of an assistantship is a commitment by a department or school to provide financial support to admitted graduate students. Assistantships are an investment made by a school or department and are granted primarily to enable the student to pursue an advanced degree. Accepting an assistantship brings with it a professional obligation to fulfill all of the responsibilities associated with the assistantship assignment. Included in this professional obligation is the expectation that students who have accepted an assistantship will diligently pursue their degree to completion in the department or school providing the assistantship. In recognition of this commitment, and to provide adequate time for students holding assistantships to devote to study, employment as a graduate assistant is limited to a total, from all University sources (including external grants and contracts), of 0.50 FTE (an average of 20 hours per week) in the Fall and Spring semesters, and 0.75 FTE (an average of 30 hours per week) between the end of the Spring semester and the beginning of the Fall semester. Exceptions to this limitation may be requested by the department head to the academic college dean.

CSD Program Policy for Graduate Assistantship Hours

In compliance with the letter and spirit of the above policy, students in the OSU CSD program are encouraged to hold assistantships that exceed an average of 20 hours per week in the fall and spring semesters and an average of 30 hours per week during the summer.

Selection and Hiring of Graduate Assistants

When students are admitted to the CSD program, CSD faculty will share resumes of admitted students with OSU offices offering assistantships that are in compliance with letter and spirit of this policy. Out of concern for the academic success of our students, the CSD program will not share resumes of admitted students, nor will the program accept students into the CSD program, who work in offices with assistantships not in compliance with the letter and spirit of the above policies.

In extraordinary circumstances, the CSD program coordinator and your supervisor may, after you have discussed the circumstances with them, request that the Graduate College allow you to work more than 20 graduate assistantship hours per week. This request is initiated by the hiring department, and the final decision remains with the Graduate College; the Higher Education and Student Affairs program faculty will fully support whatever decision is reached.
To reward exemplary student performance, the College Student Development program bestows several awards per year upon graduating students who have achieved unusual distinction in their academic endeavors during the M.S. program.

**The Outstanding Graduate Student Award**

- Student performs with distinction in all aspects of their performance in the CSD program, effectively prioritizing their academics.
- Exemplary performance on internship worksites with deep, thoughtful reflection of the experience in related coursework tying theory to practice.
- Student demonstrates academic excellence as determined by a high cumulative grade point average.
- Student enhances the reputation of the CSD program and contributes to the profession through such things as statewide, regional, or national conference presentations and case study competitions.
- Student goes above and beyond expectations in the rigor and making progress toward their thesis or creative component.
- Classroom and test performance is consistently within the highest levels of Bloom’s taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
- Student writes papers that are particularly insightful, original, and thought provoking.
- Shows an uncommon ability to develop meaningful connections with students, effectively challenging and supporting them to promote their success.
- Has a mastery of student development theory and applies that to coursework, internship, assistantship, and other professional venues.
- Models a strong scholar/practitioner work ethic.
- Other noteworthy characteristics or achievements that fit with the philosophy of the College Student Development graduate program.

**The Outstanding Scholar Award**

- Student produces a master’s thesis (or creative component that is of the quality of a master’s thesis) that achieves a particularly meritorious level of:
  - Originality
  - Depth
  - Significance to the Student Affairs field
  - Clarity of Expression
  - Methodological Sophistication
  - Overall Quality
- Student demonstrates academic excellence as determined by a high cumulative grade point average.
- Student enhances the reputation of the CSD program and contributes to the profession through such things as statewide, regional, or national conference presentations and case study competitions.
- Classroom and test performance is consistently within the highest levels of Bloom’s taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
- Student writes papers that are particularly insightful, original, and thought provoking.
The Outstanding Emerging Professional Award

- Student performs with distinction in all aspects of their performance in the CSD program, effectively prioritizing their academics.
- Shows mastery of advising and helping skills, particularly in the areas of providing support, direction, feedback, critique, and guidance to individuals and groups.
- Shows proficiency with assessment, evaluation and research. Adept with both quantitative and qualitative techniques.
- Understands and applies ethical standards to one’s work.
- Understanding and applies knowledge of legal issues to one’s work environment and relationships.
- Understands, can effectively distinguish between, and appropriately apply principles of effective leadership, management, and administration.
- Works to become a more multicultural competent individual and to promote the multicultural competence of others. Works to understand diverse groups, is civically engaged, socially responsible, and has a keen understanding of the importance of culture.
- Understanding of concepts and principles of student development theory and shows the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs practice.
- Knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles of teaching, learning, and training theory and how to apply these theories to improve student affairs practice and education.
- Student demonstrates academic excellence as determined by a high cumulative grade point average.
- Student enhances the reputation of the CSD program and contributes to the profession through such things as statewide, regional, or national conference presentations and case study competitions.

CSD Program Hooding Ceremony

These three awards are presented at the CSD Hooding Ceremony, held each May on the afternoon of OSU’s Graduate College Commencement ceremonies. Family, friends and loved ones are invited to attend, along with the first year cohort and others in the OSU Student Affairs community who come together to celebrate the accomplishments of the graduating students.
PROBLEMATIC OR UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

College Student Development graduate programs do not have an accrediting agency; the program follows the recommendations of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, also known as CAS. CAS is a consortium of professional associations who work collaboratively to develop and promulgate standards and guidelines representing the agreement of over 40 member associations reflecting the consensus of the student affairs field. CAS has a specific standard for Master’s Graduate Preparation programs, which our program continually consults when making curriculum changes.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education’s Standards and Guidelines for Master’s level student affairs professional preparation programs states as follows:

Graduate program faculty members must evaluate annually all students’ progress and suitability for entry into the student affairs profession. Evaluation of students' ethical behaviors must be included. Faculty members must keep students informed about their progress toward successful program completion. Through continual evaluation and appraisal of students, faculty members are expected to be aware of ethically problematic student behaviors, inadequate academic progress, and other behaviors or characteristics that may make a student unsuitable for the profession. Appropriate responses leading to remediation of the behaviors related to students' academic progress or professional suitability should be identified, monitored, evaluated, and shared with individual students as needed. Faculty members are expected in cases of significant problematic behaviors to communicate to the student the problems identified and the remediation required to avoid being terminated from the preparation program. After appropriate remediation has been proposed and evaluated, students who continue to be evaluated as being unsuitable for the profession, making poor academic progress, or having ethically problematic behaviors should be dismissed from the preparation program following appropriate due process procedures. If termination is enforced, faculty members are expected to explain to the student the grounds for the decision.

Pursuant to these requirements, if full-time CSD program faculty evaluate students as unsuitable for entry into the student affairs profession for ethical reasons, academic reasons, or for reasons due to other behaviors or characteristics that in their view make a student unsuitable for the profession, a meeting of the student’s committee will be held to follow the spirit of the standards set forth above and to take the action necessary up to and including dismissal from the CSD program. In these cases, students will be afforded due process procedures.

In a case in which the Program Coordinator becomes aware of a potential significant problematic or unethical behavior, s/he will meet with the student and any other relevant parties to discuss the matter in whatever configuration deemed necessary or appropriate at the time. If it appears that there is behavior present that could require remediation beyond a developmental conversation, a meeting of the students Graduate Committee will be called for the purpose of determining the nature of the problematic or unethical behavior and the sanctions appropriate to the situation. These sanctions can include any remediation, evaluation, probationary status, dismissal from the program, or any other sanction within the authority of
the students Graduate Committee that this committee wishes to invoke at the time. The Graduate Committee should particularly consider whether the student’s behavior reflects someone who is suitable for the student affairs profession.
ABOUT THIS MANUAL

The original draft for this manual was written by CSD alumna Amanda Mollet as her Creative Component project.

Significant revisions have been made by subsequent program coordinators, including John Foubert and Jesse Mendez. The current draft of this manual was written by CSD alumnus Andrew Rizzo and program coordinator Tami Moore.

If you have any suggestions, or think that a part of this manual is inaccurate, please contact the current CSD Program Coordinator.

We hope this manual has been helpful—and good luck with your studies at OSU!

SUGGESTED READINGS/RESOURCES


For more on Bloom’s Taxonomy:

http://ww2.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm
http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/educ/teaching-guides/pedagogica/blooms-taxonomy/