

Research and Evaluation (R&E) Program Objectives

Mission:

The mission of the Research and Evaluation (R&E) specialty within the IDP is to prepare candidates with the research and evaluation knowledge and skills necessary for developing and validating new programs, comparing the strengths and weaknesses of alternative programs, and revising, updating, and possibly redirecting established programs. Research and evaluation professionals must address questions about a wide variety of issues such as the effectiveness of specific curricular modules, the adequacy of students' knowledge about career opportunities, the feasibility of year-round schools, the desirability of extramural athletic programs, or the effectiveness of state-wide math initiatives.

The EdD program, designed primarily for students who are practicing educators, typically focuses on research and evaluation methodologies needed in educational settings.

The PhD program typically focuses on research and evaluation methodologies that will prepare candidates for university or college teaching or research assignments that emphasize program evaluation.

The R & E specialty in the IDP was developed in response to a growing need at local, state, and national levels for professionals with expertise in evaluating the quality of educational programs. Subject area expertise is also important. The R & E faculty recruit students who have strong backgrounds in subject areas such as instructional technology, math, science, computer science, and speech-language pathology.

Objectives:

1. Candidates will acquire knowledge and demonstrate proficiency in applying that knowledge to the measurement, design, and analysis of educational data.
2. Candidates will acquire knowledge in the foundations of education, including a comprehensive understanding of teaching and learning practices.
3. Candidates will develop expertise in designing and conducting evaluations of educational programs. Evaluation skills will focus on such activities as proposal development, contract negotiations, instrument design, report writing, data collection techniques, and alternative evaluation methodologies.
4. Candidates will acquire an in-depth understanding of sophisticated research methodologies including; multivariate analysis, categorical data analysis, structural equation modeling, qualitative data analysis, and latent variable models.
5. Candidates will synthesize their core research and evaluation expertise within one of several specific content areas (elementary education, secondary education, instructional technology, communicative disorders, special education, or educational psychology).
6. Candidates will gain practical experience within the above domains through required internships in research and/or evaluation. After completing such internships, candidates will be able to (a) independently conceptualize and design a research and/or evaluation study, (b) network with appropriate stakeholders, and (c) present research and/or evaluation results in a manner commensurate with educational needs and policies.
7. Candidates will develop skills in communication and teaching which will allow them to successfully teach others how to conduct research and evaluation studies.
8. Candidates will identify and pursue a specific line of educational research and/or evaluation, including developing a study proposal, defending a study design, collecting and analyzing data, and writing results for national dissemination.