COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION:
Master’s Degree in Special Education: Research Emphasis

General Information

All students seeking a Master’s Degree in Special Education: Research Emphasis are required to successfully complete a written comprehensive examination. This examination contains questions that address both the general field of special education and the student's area of concentration (e.g., emotional/behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, mental retardation/intellectual disabilities, early childhood special education, and severe disabilities). Students will obtain a list of three (3) general special education questions and three (3) questions from the concentration area to prepare for the examination, resulting in a total of 6 questions given in advance. At the time of the exam, students will be given a combination of general special education and concentration area questions selected by the faculty. All students must answer the four (4) questions chosen for them by the faculty. Concentration area questions will be selected in keeping with the student's academic preparation and career professional pursuits. Special accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. Students who wish to complete the exam using a computer must request the option in writing three (3) weeks prior to the exam.

Administrative Procedures

Questions will be provided to the students in sets of two. The first two questions will be given to the student at 8:30 am and must be returned at 10:30 am. After a 20-minute break, the second two questions will be given to the student at 10:50 am and returned at 12:50 p.m. Books and/or other materials must be left at the front of the room. You will be allowed to refer to a reference list for citations. This list will be submitted with your comprehensive exam. See example APA reference sheet (salmon colored sheet) for specific directions regarding preparation of the references.
**Evaluation Procedures**

Procedures for evaluating the Comprehensive Examination in Special Education are as follows:

**Content**

1.1 Content is accurate, up-to-date, and reflects knowledge of the professional literature, including at least three (3) appropriate references.

1.2 Content is comprehensive and reflects knowledge of and treatment of various perspectives on the subject.

Subtotal: 8

**Organization and Presentation**

1.1 Content is organized offering introductory statement(s), well-integrated discussion, and a summary/conclusion.

1.2 Content is well written and reflects graduate-level quality (e.g., clear, concise, proper grammar, syntax, spelling and marks of punctuation).

Subtotal: 2

**Per Question Total: 10**

Comprehensive exams will be scored by at least two (2) faculty members; the sum of these evaluations will determine if the student passes each of the comprehensive questions. A minimum of 16 of 20 points must be earned on each question of the examination. In the event that a student earns 15 or fewer points on one question, she/he should contact the graduate program director to arrange to re-take the question from the area failed. If a student fails two (2) or more questions, then she/he may elect to repeat the exam process in accordance with the university schedule for comprehensive examinations.

Following the initial administration, a student is limited to one (1) reexamination. If a student fails the written comprehensive examination twice, that student will be unable to receive the master's degree.

Revised January 2010