1. Program Description and Goals

The Doctor of Education program in Curriculum and Instruction prepares students to be leaders in research and the development of new knowledge and applications in the field of education. Program alumni are employed in positions of leadership as academicians, administrators, curriculum directors, professional development coordinators, content specialist coordinators, teacher leaders, and educational policy makers. Building on the competencies of practice acquired at the master's degree level, emphasis is placed on developing a unified grasp of the knowledge, skills, and theory inherent in the field of curriculum and instruction as the basis for original research. Specializations within the Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction include the following: Curriculum Leadership; Literacy Education; and Science, Social Studies, and Environmental Education Integration.

The goals for students enrolled in the Ed.D. program in Curriculum and Instruction stress competence, application, and originality. Students completing the program demonstrate skills and abilities related to the application of curriculum and instruction theory to an authentic setting. Whereas master's graduates may correctly follow and apply methodologies and models, doctoral graduates are able to develop theories and conduct research using appropriate methodologies. The following skills summarize the department's expectations of all graduates in the doctoral program:

- **Outcome #1** – Synthesize and evaluate current and historical scholarly literature and research in curriculum, instruction, and professional development;
- **Outcome #2** – Identify trends, issues, and changes in society and educational policy that impact curriculum, instruction, and professional development;
- **Outcome #3** – Apply concepts and theories in curriculum, instruction, and professional development in authentic P-20 settings or non-formal education settings;
- **Outcome #4** – Conduct original scholarly research, including completion of a dissertation.

2. Assessment Activities

Data sources that inform the evaluation of the program include the following:
1) **Course-embedded measures.** Students complete course projects and assignments with an appropriate level of competency as assessed by course instructors. Course objectives and associated course requirements listed on adopted course outlines are reviewed regularly by C & I faculty, department, and college curriculum committees. Since the last program review, program faculty have redefined many of the courses to ensure that the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in doctoral work (specifically dissertation completion) and beyond are embedded in each course. For example, students in the TLCI 703 practice initial research skills by conducting interviews and synthesizing the qualitative findings. Additionally, in TLCI 704, students write substantive drafts of Chapters 1 and 3, and their work is evaluated based on rubrics created by program faculty. Our course-embedded measures are reported to the university each year as part of the annual assessment process.

2) **Candidacy examination.** The candidacy examination is generally completed during the last semester of course work. It encompasses the area of professional knowledge within the student's specialization, the common requirements, and, as appropriate, the cognate. Review of passing rates and analysis of areas of strength/weakness occur on a yearly basis by program faculty and as a data source for our annual assessment plan. The candidacy exam has been refined to provide students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills gained through the program and to help them to narrow the focus of their dissertation research. Feedback from students who have completed the candidacy exam has been highly favorable, and since the last review cycle, the pass rate has been 92% (47 out of 51), far exceeding the 80% target.

3) **Dissertation.** Student performance in the dissertation defense (including feedback from the Graduate School Dean's Designee at the defense) and dissertation completion data are reviewed by program faculty.
   - Internal review by Dean's Designees
     The Dean of the Graduate School has designates faculty from across the university to evaluate the quality of dissertations as part of the defense process. Designee reports consider the depth of the literature review (Program Goal #1) and the conduct of research (Program Goal #4). In regard to the expectation that a dissertation is to be a "substantial contribution to knowledge," 29 of 33 responses (88%) were positive (i.e., Strongly Agree/Agree), thus exceeding the 80% target. (Not all Dean's Designee reports are returned to the Graduate School or to the program area following the doctoral defense. Thus, a discrepancy exists between the total number of dissertations completed and the number of reports completed and submitted by Dean's Designees.)

4) **Post-graduation surveys.** The NIU Alumni Survey provides data from the program's graduates about their perceptions of program effectiveness in enhancing their professional development as educators. As noted in Section II(E) above, in alumni surveys, graduates of the program responded positively in terms of satisfaction.

5) **Feedback loops.** Regular meetings by program-area faculty are held to discuss student performance. Findings from those meetings have included faculty reporting concerns about candidates' ability to frame problem statements and the conceptual/theoretical framework in Chapter 1 of the dissertation. As such, specific mention was added to TLCI 702 and 704 about the construction of a problem statement. Additionally, emphasis on identifying and/or selecting conceptual/theoretical frameworks was added to a variety of...
courses throughout the program (e.g., TLCI 702, 703, 704, 706, 708).

3. Evaluation timelines, responsibilities, and processes as related to program goals are summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsible Person(s)</th>
<th>Program Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course-embedded measures</td>
<td>Ongoing course assessments; regular revision of adopted course outlines</td>
<td>Faculty, Program Coordinator, Department/College Curriculum Committee</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candidacy exam</td>
<td>Annual review and analysis of pass rates and performance</td>
<td>Faculty, Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>Ongoing defense feedback from Graduate School Dean's Designees; yearly review of dissertation completion rates.</td>
<td>Dissertation Directors, Program Coordinator</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduation surveys</td>
<td>Conducted annually</td>
<td>Chair, Institutional Research</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback loops</td>
<td>Annual faculty feedback</td>
<td>Program-area faculty</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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