



**Graduate Programs in
Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation
Department of Educational Psychology
Neag School of Education
University of Connecticut**

249 Glenbrook Road, Unit-3064
Storrs, Connecticut 06269-3064

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Welcome

Welcome to the Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation (RMME) program in the Department of Educational Psychology at UCONN!

We have designed an intellectually stimulating and rigorous program that promotes the scientific uses of RMME within the field of education and related disciplines. Coursework focuses on current and emerging topics including classical and modern measurement theory and applications, instrument development, quantitative research methods, program evaluation, educational statistics, and educational assessment. We emphasize the development of professional competencies in these areas.

Our program philosophy is grounded in a commitment to a learning environment that stresses a well-organized and explicit curriculum with clear expectations, exposure to the diverse array of theories and practices within the RMME fields, and student-faculty interaction that encourages the student's professional development and identification with the field.

This handbook serves as the guiding document for the Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation program and outlines program specific procedures and policies. However, unless explicitly noted, this handbook does not replace or supersede the policies and procedures set forth by the UCONN Graduate School (<http://www.grad.uconn.edu/>). The RMME graduate handbook is intended to complement those regulations, introduce our department, and outline the policies and procedures that are specific to students enrolled in one of our graduate degree programs. Additional information is contained on the RMME program website (<http://rmme.education.uconn.edu/>).

Best wishes,

The RMME Faculty

Degree Programs

The Doctoral Degree Program

The Department of Educational Psychology (EPSY) offers a Ph.D. in the area of *Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation* (RMME). The program prepares graduates to become academics, researchers, practitioners, and leaders in educational measurement, program evaluation, assessment, educational statistics, quantitative research methodology, and/or educational research methods.

The Ph.D. program in RMME integrates theory and practice to promote the scientific uses of measurement and quantitative research methodologies within the field of education and related disciplines. Coursework focuses on current and emerging topics including educational statistics, classical and modern measurement theory and applications, item response theory, program evaluation, instrument development, multivariate statistical techniques, multilevel modeling, latent variable modeling, research design, causal inference, educational assessment, and quantitative research methodology.

Individuals with a master's degree who have a strong interest in research methods, measurement and/or evaluation are encouraged to apply. We also consider individuals with a bachelor's degree who have an exceptional educational history and very strong interest in our field.

Generally, at least eight to ten semesters of full time study are required to complete the doctoral degree. A background in statistics is helpful but is not required. Research experiences are available through participation in faculty research grants and projects at UConn as well as in schools and educational organizations.

Contact the program coordinator, Dr. Chris Rhoads (christopher.rhoads@uconn.edu), or visit our website at <http://rmme.education.uconn.edu/> for more information.

The Master's Degree Program

The Department of Educational Psychology (EPSY) offers a Master of Arts degree in Education in *Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation* (RMME). The program is designed for current and future practitioners who wish to acquire foundational skills and knowledge in the areas of research methods, measurement and evaluation. We encourage Master's students to supplement their RMME coursework with courses in other discipline areas that best suit their individual goals and objectives.

Individuals with a bachelor's degree in any major are encouraged to apply. We particularly seek students with a strong interest in Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation issues that affect schools, students, and education policy. The expectation is that graduates will use their training to meet the needs of organizations and schools involved in developing and/or evaluating educational interventions, and/or improving educational programming and practice. A background in statistics is not assumed or required. Generally, three semesters of full time study are required to complete the master's degree.

Contact the program coordinator, Dr. Chris Rhoads (christopher.rhoads@uconn.edu), or visit our website at <http://rmme.education.uconn.edu/> for more information.

Program Philosophy and Goals

The faculty is committed to a learning environment that stresses a well-organized and explicit curriculum with clear expectations. However, there is also a strong commitment to student-faculty interaction that further encourages the student's professional development and identification with the field. In addition, the program is designed to acquaint students with the diversity of theories and practices within the field of Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation, allowing sufficient intellectual freedom to experiment with different theoretical and applied approaches.

Core Program Faculty and Research Interests

Dr. Aarti Bellara

Assistant Professor. Research interests: propensity score analysis, multilevel modeling, measurement, and assessment

Dr. Eric Loken

Associate Professor. Research interests: latent variable modeling, mixture modeling, applications of Bayesian methods, measurement, and assessment

Dr. D. Betsy McCoach

Professor. Research Interests: instrument design, multilevel modeling, structural equation modeling, longitudinal analysis, assessment of school effectiveness, gifted education, underachievement.

Dr. Bianca Montrosse-Moorhead

Associate Professor. Research interests: program evaluation, policy evaluation, validity in evaluation, research on evaluation practice.

Dr. Christopher Rhoads

Associate Professor. Research Interests: hierarchical/multi-level modeling, design of field experiments in education research, non-experimental designs for causal inference, meta-analysis, missing data.

Dr. H. Jane Rogers

Associate Professor. Research interests: Item response theory, large-scale assessments, differential item functioning, Bayesian analysis, scaling and equating.

Dr. H. Swaminathan

Professor. Research interests: item response theory, multivariate statistical analysis, longitudinal analysis, factor analysis and structural equation modeling, Bayesian inference, large-scale assessments.

Admissions

Prospective students applying to the M.A. or Ph.D. program must submit a completed application to the Graduate School. Admission to the Graduate School at the University of Connecticut requires the following:

- (1) completed application form;
- (2) current Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general test scores (*required for Ph.D. applications, strongly recommended for M.A. applications*);
- (3) current Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or equivalent for foreign students (see “A note about English Proficiency” below);
- (4) undergraduate and graduate transcripts;
- (5) three letters of recommendation;
- (6) personal statement;
- (7) processing fee.

Note that unofficial copies of the above documents are sufficient to apply. Official copies will be required in order to finalize admission for accepted applicants. The personal statement explicitly should include 1) the reason for pursuing a degree in the area of research methods, measurement and evaluation; 2) description of any prior experiences or coursework that are relevant to the degree in research methods, measurement and evaluation; 3) post-degree career goals; 4) areas of potential research interest within research methods, measurement and evaluation. There is no specific length requirement for the personal statement, although most are between 2-5 typed, double spaced pages (one inch margins).

After receipt of all required documents, the Graduate School forwards the application to the RMME program for admission consideration.

Our program considers applications each winter for fall admission. Applications should be submitted by **December 1st** for full consideration for admission for the following fall semester, although applications are accepted at later dates if space allows. Applications are reviewed starting in December. Funding (generally in the form of graduate assistantships) may be available to students of exceptional promise. Generally, admissions decisions are made in January-March and funding decisions are made in February-March. All funding notifications are complete by April 1st. Students offered admission must respond by April 15. For program descriptions and further details about the Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation program or the Department of Educational Psychology, please visit our website at <http://rmme.education.uconn.edu/>.

Evaluation of Program Applicants

General prerequisites for the M.A. and Ph.D. include undergraduate or graduate preparation in education, psychology, statistics, or related disciplines. Admissions decisions are based on the quality of the student’s prior academic and professional career, the fit of his/her research interests with those of the faculty in our program, and the admissions committee’s assessment of the student’s ability to successfully complete doctoral- level work at the University of

Connecticut and make substantial contributions in a methodological and/or substantive area after graduation. To make admissions decisions, we consult all available sources of information, including the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, undergraduate and (if applicable) previous graduate course performance, the personal statement, letters of recommendation, previous relevant work experience, and, whenever possible, an informal personal interview.

Additional information concern minimum qualifications for admission to the Graduate School can be found on UConn's Graduate School website (<https://grad.uconn.edu/admissions/apply-to-uconn/>). The RMME Faculty, the Department of Educational Psychology, and the Neag School of Education are committed to diversity. A copy of the UConn Graduate School *Diversity Commitment Statement* can be accessed at <http://grad.uconn.edu/current-students/a-scholars-life/diversity/>.

A note about English Proficiency: Non- native speakers of English are required to submit evidence of proficiency in the English language. Students who have received a degree in an English speaking University from English speaking country (with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater) generally qualify for a waiver from this requirement. Otherwise, non- native English speaking students must submit the results (*no more than two years old*) from one of the following standardized tests to satisfy this requirement:

- 1.) Receiving a score of 79 (electronic test) or 550 (paper based) or higher on the [TOEFL](#) test.
- 2.) Receiving a score of 6.5 on the [IELTS](#) test.
- 3.) Receiving a score of 53 or higher on the [PTE](#) test.

Please see the [graduate school website](#) for more information about this requirement.

General Program Considerations

After formal admission to the Ph.D. or M.A. program, each student is assigned an initial major advisor who will guide the student in developing the plan of study. For both M.A. and Ph.D. students, during the second semester of the program the student selects an advisory committee chairperson and at least two committee members to advise and direct the student's course of study. We encourage Ph.D. students to re-evaluate their selection of major advisor and advisory committee after completion of the comprehensive exams to ensure alignment of student and faculty research interests.

The Ph.D. is a research degree. Therefore, in addition to developing knowledge and skills through coursework, students should develop and apply their methodological skills through the conduct of authentic research. During the early years of the program, Ph.D. students generally serve under the tutelage of the faculty mentors to develop research skills. However, as students progress toward the dissertation, it is expected that they will develop more independence in their research endeavors.

Students are evaluated with a variety of methods throughout the program. In addition to formal evaluations, such as course grades, the faculty will evaluate the student's progress on research projects. Along with semi-annual planning and evaluation meetings with the major advisor, an annual review of each student's progress by all RMME faculty members is conducted to evaluate

the student's continued progress toward the degree. More information on this process is included in the *Professionalism and Annual Review of Students* section of the handbook.

Although the Research Methods, measurement and Evaluation M.A. and Ph.D. programs are designed so that students are involved full-time in their graduate studies, some students do work part-time in research or teaching. In most cases, these part-time positions are related to the student's graduate program and consequently enhance the student's skills, professional maturity, and overall educational goals. In addition to support from faculty research projects, the Department of Educational Psychology may have a limited number of graduate assistantships and fellowships for Research Methods, measurement and Evaluation students. However, such financial aid is competitive and is typically offered only to Ph.D. students.

Student Housing

The University of Connecticut is situated on a 3100-acre campus in Northeastern Connecticut. Assistance in securing either University or off-campus housing is provided by University agencies (e.g., Department of Residential Life, <http://reslife.uconn.edu/>, or the off-campus housing website, <https://offcampushousing.uconn.edu/>).

Professionalism

To be successful in our graduate programs requires a high level of academic performance, a strong work ethic, and a commitment to research. This section is intended to be as explicit as possible about our assumptions, expectations, and formal student evaluation procedures.

Assumptions of the RMME faculty about our students

We hold two assumptions about our students:

1. Given the rigorous application review process, we only admit students who we believe are academically capable of succeeding in our program.
2. We believe graduate students are responsible for taking an active role in their graduate education. Our role is to provide the conditions necessary to succeed – namely, opportunities, resources, guidance, and encouragement. However, students must actively engage in the program to achieve their educational and professional goals. Maximum benefit from graduate education requires hard work and personal responsibility.

Expectations of the RMME faculty about our students

At the end of each academic year, the RMME faculty review each student's performance and progress in four areas: (1) Course work and grades, (2) Scholarship, (3) Timely progress toward degree, and (4) Personal and professional characteristics. We describe each below.

1. Course work, grades, and class engagement.

We expect our students to perform well academically. Across RMME core courses (those tested on our comprehensive exams), **we expect students to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5.** (Please note that this requirement is substantially higher than the graduate school's requirement

for satisfactory academic progress.) **For all RMME courses, we expect students to earn a grade of B or better in each class.** A student who receives a grade lower than a B (including B-) will be required to repeat the course. Students who fail to maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA, or who receive a grade of C or lower in a required RMME course, will be referred to a student review committee. This committee will develop an action plan for support and remediation. However, chronic or continued poor academic performance is grounds for dismissal from the Ph.D. program. Students who receive two or more grades of C or lower in a required course or a grade of D or lower in other courses may be asked to leave the program. Performing well academically is not the only requirement in terms of course work and grades. We also expect students to engage with coursework and content in the areas of RMME. The quality and intensity of students' inquiry, critical thought, and writing in courses are also criteria used in annual performance reviews.

2. Scholarship.

After the 1st year in the Ph.D. program, we encourage every student to engage in a research project with an RMME faculty member every semester until they are ready to begin their dissertation study. It is not uncommon for students to assume that they should prioritize coursework over research experiences. For Ph.D. students, coursework and research activity should be equally valued, as the Ph.D. is a research degree. Students' progress toward becoming independent scholars is reviewed on an annual basis.

Further, being engaged in a research project means working with a faculty member as part of a sustained effort to engage in inquiry on a weekly basis. What form the research takes will vary by project and faculty member. Ph.D. students begin formally developing their dissertation research after they have successfully passed the RMME Program Comprehensive Exam, which is generally taken the semester following the completion of all core coursework.

We also strongly encourage our graduate students to assist in research dissemination efforts through involvement in annual conferences sponsored by professional associations. Examples of national professional association conferences that the RMME program faculty and students regularly attend include those of the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE), and the American Evaluation Association (AEA). Examples of regional professional association conferences that the RMME program faculty and students regularly attend include those of the Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA), and the Eastern Evaluation Research Society (EERS). Traditionally, proposals are due six to ten months prior to the conference. Conference presentations provide an opportunity to gain feedback on research in progress or to make revisions prior to submission to a refereed journal. Further, conference attendance and presentations are a valuable opportunity for establishing networking with scholars and establishing a professional identity – both of which are important for securing employment opportunities upon graduation. We try to support conference attendance financially whenever possible. Historically, we have been able to provide partial funding for one conference per year for students who are presenting research related to their studies in the RMME program. However, the amount of funding that we offer is contingent upon the availability of funds. Students should also apply for travel funding from the UCONN graduate school.

Students who wish to collaborate with other non-RMME faculty on research should consult with their major advisor prior to making such commitments and should ensure that the research aligns with research methods, measurement or evaluation research interests. Further, when working with faculty, whether paid or unpaid, it is essential that students behave professionally. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining academic, scientific, and ethical standards, satisfactorily completing assigned duties, fulfilling hourly commitments, and ensuring that no misuse of university or faculty assets occurs (e.g., using data from your GA for a course assignment without permission from your GA supervisor, viewing inappropriate content on a university-owned computer). Students who wish to engage in paid consulting opportunities should consult with their major advisor prior to making such commitments.

3. Timely progress toward degree.

Students' progress toward meeting program requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D. is reviewed on an annual basis. Typically, PhD programs of study are structured to promote completion of all requirements, including the dissertation, within a five-year time period. Master's programs of study are structured to promote completion of all requirements within a two-year time period. In addition, the Graduate School at the University of Connecticut stipulates the following time-limit requirements for M.A. and Ph.D. students:

The student is expected to register for coursework with reasonable regularity and to complete all requirements for the degree within a moderate span of time to assure continuity and adequate familiarity with developments in the field of study. All work for the master's degree must be completed within six years from the beginning of the student's matriculation in the degree program. Work for the doctor of musical arts and doctor of philosophy degrees must be completed within eight years of the beginning of the student's matriculation.

Failure to complete the work within the periods specified or failure to maintain Continuous Registration (see "Continuous Registration") will require re-evaluation of the entire program and may result in a notice of termination.

A one-time extension of the student's terminal date of no longer than two years is considered only when there is substantial evidence that the student has made regular and consistent progress toward completion of degree requirements. A detailed recommendation to extend the terminal date must be signed by the major advisor and submitted in a timely manner to the Dean of the Graduate School. (Retrieved from <https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/grad-school-info/academic-regulations/> .)

Please note that although the Graduate School allows for a one-time extension of the student's terminal date, this is not automatically granted: the student's major advisor determines whether there is "substantial evidence that the student has made regular and consistent progress toward completion of degree requirements." If the student has not made consistent progress toward completion of degree requirements, then the major advisor will not sign a recommendation to extend the terminal date.

Satisfactory Academic Progress. For full-time Ph.D. students, satisfactory academic progress toward the degree is indicated by the following benchmarks. By the end of the first year of study, students should successfully complete the first-year preliminary exam. By the end of the third year of study, students should successfully complete all core coursework and pass the Ph.D. comprehensive exam. By the end of the fourth year, students should successfully defend the dissertation proposal. By the end of the fifth year, students should successfully defend the dissertation.

4. Personal and professional characteristics.

Participation in program affairs. Unless they are in a class at a time that overlaps with program affairs, we expect *all* Ph.D. students to attend RMME-related program meetings and “brown bags”. RMME program meetings and/or brown bags will be announced at the beginning of each semester. Further, during RMME program job searches, students are expected to attend candidate job talks, teaching demonstrations, and time slots when candidates are scheduled to meet with graduate students.

Expected review time for papers. Students should allow at least two weeks for faculty members to review drafts of their theses, independent research projects, or documents associated with other official program requirements (e.g., responses to comprehensive exam questions) (excluding dissertation chapters). For drafts that require more than one review by a faculty member, it is the student’s responsibility to keep the faculty apprised of the anticipated timeline for draft papers to be submitted. Dissertation drafts usually take longer to review and students are encouraged to ask faculty members when they can expect comments when drafts are submitted. Finally, although faculty may elect to review drafts of theses, independent research projects, or other official program requirements during sabbaticals, holidays, and during the summer break, they are not required to do so. Please plan accordingly.

Behavior. Students’ professional activities are expected to conform to the ethical standards outlined by the association they consider to be most aligned with their research interests (e.g., NCME, AERA, SREE, AEA). In addition, students’ professional activities are to be characterized by:

- a) An appreciation of diversity and commitment to service that respects the worth, uniqueness, and potential for growth and development of all individuals.
- b) Ethical behavior including respect for copyright and confidentiality.
- c) The ability to work independently and collaboratively.
- d) Communication skills in writing, speaking, and multimedia formats.
- e) Commitment to developing new skills and knowledge, and continuing professional growth.

Academic Knowledge. Over the course of the M.A. or Ph.D. program, students are expected to develop knowledge and in-depth understanding of the following core content areas:

- a) Theories, Methods and Models for Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation
- b) Research Methodology and Advanced Quantitative Analysis

In addition, Ph.D. students are expected to develop substantial expertise in a specific sub-area within the fields of research methods, measurement and evaluation, broadly defined. The dissertation research should serve to strengthen that expertise.

Scholarly integrity in graduate education and research. Scholarly activity at the graduate level takes many forms, including, but not limited to, classroom activity, laboratory, or field experience, writing for publication, presentation, and forms of artistic expression. Integrity in all of these activities is of paramount importance, and the Graduate School of the University of Connecticut requires that students maintain the highest ethical standards in teaching, learning, research, and service.

Scholarly integrity encompasses “both research integrity and the ethical understanding and skill required of researchers/scholars in domestic, international, and multicultural contexts.” It also addresses “ethical aspects of scholarship that influence the next generation of researchers as teachers, mentors, supervisors, and successful stewards of grant funds” (Council of Graduate Schools, *Research and Scholarly Integrity in Graduate Education: A Comprehensive Approach*, 2012). The Graduate Faculty Council, in accordance with the provisions of its By-Laws, has adopted this policy concerning scholarly integrity in graduate education and research and has approved the procedures set forth herein for addressing alleged violations. All graduate students are expected to review these policies thoroughly and abide by the policies for the duration of their tenure at UCONN (and beyond).

Scholarly misconduct is an offense that RMME faculty take very seriously. Students are responsible for making themselves aware of and understanding the policies and procedures related to *UCONN’s Policy on Scholarly Integrity in Graduate and Post-Doctoral Education and Research* (<http://policy.uconn.edu/?p=3282>), including how scholarly misconduct is defined. Scholarly misconduct violations are dealt with on a case-by-case basis, but at a minimum require the entire RMME faculty to be notified of the offense and documentation of the incident to be filed with the Graduate School.

Annual Review of Students

Near the end of each academic year, all students in the program are asked to complete a review form that describes the progress they have made towards their degree. Each student then meets with program faculty to discuss their progress and any challenges they face. Students will receive a written summary of the meeting that includes an evaluation of their progress in the program.

Annual performance reviews provide an opportunity to evaluate students’ progress toward the degree, to reflect on past successes, to discuss areas of academic and/or professional concern, and to set goals for the coming year. The annual review process is an opportunity to provide feedback about where students are doing well, and if applicable, where they have room for improvement. When areas of concern are noted, it is our expectation that students will work to address those areas during the subsequent year. Serious areas of concern that are not remedied during the following academic year may result in dismissal from the program.

A copy of the annual student review form follows and should be emailed to the major advisor and the program coordinator one month before the last day of classes for the Spring semester. After all forms have been submitted, the program coordinator will forward student-completed progress evaluation forms to the RMME faculty. After reviewing this form, the RMME program will provide feedback to the student on his or her performance and progress. The process of providing feedback is differentiated for M.A. and Ph.D. students.

For M.A. students: The student's major advisor will review the submitted form, collect feedback from program faculty on the student's performance, and schedule a time to meet with the student (virtually or in-person) to provide annual review feedback. This feedback will be documented in a letter from the advisor to the student.

For Ph.D. students: Ph.D. students who are in the first three years of their program and those who have not successfully completed their comprehensive exam are required to attend a 30-minute meeting in which they will discuss their academic progress with their advisory committee (or, for those who have not filed a plan of study, a sub-set of no fewer than 3 RMME faculty, including their major advisor). The purpose of this meeting is to review the student's academic progress and research goals and interests. Meetings will take place *after* the deadline for all Spring semester final grades to be submitted to the registrar, and students should plan their schedules accordingly. RMME faculty will review submitted materials and provide feedback on the student. This collective feedback will be shared with the student during the meeting. Students are encouraged to bring a copy of their submitted form to the meeting to record faculty feedback. After the meeting, the student's major advisor will draft a letter detailing the student's progress toward the degree, goals and expectations for the coming year, and will outline any areas of concern as well as suggestions for the student to remedy those issues.

For Ph.D. students who have successfully defended their comprehensive exam, the process will be similar for M.A. students. RMME faculty will review submitted forms and provide collective feedback with it. This collective feedback will be given to the student's dissertation chair, who will then schedule a time to meet with the student individually to discuss annual review feedback. After the meeting, the student's major advisor will draft a letter detailing the student's progress toward the degree, goals and expectations for the coming year, and will outline any areas of concern as well as suggestions for the student to remedy those issues.

Graduate Student Annual Student Review Form

Please complete this form and submit it via e-mail to your major advisor and to the program coordinator one month before the last day of classes for the Spring semester.

Name:

Major Advisor(s):

Part 1: Overall progress toward degree description

Directions: Please answer each question below, including evidence to support your claims. (Maximum 250 words per question.)

1. Please briefly describe your progress toward your degree in terms of courses, comps, etc.
2. What progress have you made toward degree completion in the last 6 months?
3. Please describe your current RMME-focused research projects (only required for Ph.D. students).
4. What progress have you made toward completion of those research projects in the last 6 months? (only required for Ph.D. students).
5. What are your career goals? What do you plan to do after you complete your degree?
6. What are your goals for this semester (and for the next 6 months)?
7. How can the faculty help you to reach those goals?
8. Are there any experiences with the program of which we should be aware? Do you have suggestions for the program?
9. List any accomplishments, news, or concerns that you would like to share with the RMME faculty.

Part 2: Annual student evaluation ratings

Directions: Consider your accomplishments listed above, as well as information contained in the Professional section of the RMME graduate student handbook. For each criterion listed below, please provide an overall rating using the following guidelines:

- n/a = Not applicable. Provide a brief rationale in the box.
- 0 = Did not meet program expectations.
- 1 = Met minimum program expectations.
- 2 = Exceeded program expectations.

| Criterion | Your rating |
|---|-------------|
| Coursework & Grades | |
| Academic performance in core RMME courses (i.e., 3.5 cumulative GPA in these courses) | |
| Academic performance in non-core RMME courses (i.e., a grade of B or better in each course) | |
| For this academic year, the quality and intensity of the inquiry, critical thought, and writing you put into your courses | |
| Scholarship | |
| For this academic year, your engagement in research projects with RMME faculty | |
| For this academic year, your conduct in RMME-related research projects | |
| For this academic year, your engagement with RMME-related research dissemination efforts | |
| For this academic year, attendance of annual conferences sponsored by professional associations aligned with RMME | |
| Timely progress toward degree | |
| Timely progress in completing coursework | |
| Timely progress in completing thesis (<i>M.A. students only</i>) | |
| Timely progress in completing 2 nd Year Comprehensive Exam (<i>Ph.D. students only</i>) | |
| Timely progress in completing RMME Program Comprehensive Exam (<i>Ph.D. students only</i>) | |
| Timely progress in completing dissertation proposal defense (<i>Ph.D. students only</i>) | |
| Timely progress in completing dissertation study (<i>Ph.D. students only</i>) | |
| Personal and professional characteristics | |
| Participation in program affairs | |
| Professional Behavior | |
| Development of new discipline-specific knowledge within one of the areas of RMME | |
| Scholarly integrity in graduate education and research | |

Procedures for student dismissal

While rare, it is sometimes necessary for RMME graduate students to be dismissed from the program. The UConn graduate catalog outlines circumstances that may lead to termination of status or academic dismissal from the Graduate School. Current language on this topic may be found at the following webpage (scroll to the bottom): <https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/grad-school-info/academic-regulations/>. RMME follows all the listed guidelines from the Graduate School, and also has additional requirements. For all graduate students this includes:

1. Meeting the requirements detailed in the “Professionalism” section of this handbook.

For Ph.D. students only, it also includes:

2. Passing the 1st year preliminary exam by the end of the 3rd semester of enrollment.
3. Passing the general/comprehensive exam by the end of the 10th semester of enrollment.

Should the faculty have concerns about the academic progress of a graduate student these will typically be addressed as part of the annual review process outlined above. These concerns may include, but are necessarily not limited to, failure to meet one of the benchmarks outlined in the graduate catalog or in this handbook. A remediation plan will be developed as part of the annual review and will be communicated to the student in the form of a letter from the advisor to the student. Should the student not meet the requirements of this remediation plan, the student’s academic advisor may submit a recommendation for academic dismissal to the Graduate School, following the procedures outlined in the graduate catalog.

In extraordinary cases it may be necessary for issues to be addressed prior to the next scheduled annual review. In such cases a subset of no fewer than 3 RMME faculty (one of whom will be the student’s major advisor) will call a meeting with the student in question to develop a remediation plan. The outcome of this meeting, including the required remediation plan will be communicated to the student in the form of a letter from the advisor to the student. Should the student not meet the requirements of this remediation plan, the student’s academic advisor may submit a recommendation for academic dismissal to the Graduate School, following the procedures outlined in the graduate catalog.

Required, Recommended, and Optional Courses for the Ph.D. Program

The minimum total number of credits for the Ph.D. is 75. This includes a minimum of 54-57 credits of coursework, 3-6 credits of independent study, internship or practicum credits, and 15 credits of dissertation preparation (required by the graduate school). If a student has already taken required courses at another University or as part of another degree program here at UCONN, the requirement to complete 54 credits can be decreased if the major advisor and the advisory committee agree to the reduction or substitutions. However, it is expected that all Ph.D. students in RMME will complete at least 48 credits of doctoral coursework at the University of Connecticut. Ultimately, the student’s major advisor, in consultation with his/her advisory committee and the RMME program faculty, determine the degree requirements for each Ph.D.

student. In addition, we encourage doctoral students to pursue summer internship and academic year internship and practicum opportunities to enhance their professional skills.

Core competencies and Ph.D. credit requirements are listed in Table 1 on the next page. Each student's individual program of study is planned with the major advisor and centered on the particular needs and interests of the student. Students are encouraged to take additional courses in substantive areas of their choosing with the understanding that taking additional electives could increase the time that it takes to complete the degree program but that it does not increase the number of semesters of funding that is available to the student.

For most students, the Ph.D. degree will require five years of full-time study, although for students with an M.A. in a highly relevant area, such as statistics, it may be possible to complete the Ph.D. in less time. On the next several pages (i.e., after Table 1), we outline typical course sequences for students who enter in either an odd (2019, 2021, 2023) or an even (2018, 2020, 2022) year, given that several of our advanced or specialized courses are only offered on a bi-annual basis.

Table 1. Core Competencies and Ph.D. Credit Requirements for the RMME Program

Competency 1: Research Methodology and Quantitative Expertise. (24 credits or 8 courses)

Courses for which students must show competency, but do not count toward PhD credits---

| | |
|-----------|---|
| EPSY 5601 | Introduction to Educational Research Methods* |
| EPSY 5605 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods I * |
| EPSY 5607 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods II * |

Required:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| EPSY 5610 | Applied Regression Analysis |
| EPSY 5613 | Multivariate Analysis in Educational Research |
| EPSY 6601 | Methods and Techniques of Educational Research |
| EPSY 6611 | Hierarchical Linear Models |
| EPSY 6615 | Structural Equation Modeling |
| EPSY 6619 | Advanced Modeling Using Latent Variable Techniques |
| EPSY 6651 | Methods for Causal Inference from Educational Data |
| EPSY 6655 | Advanced Methods for Causal Inference from Data |

** Expected (equivalent or competency exam required to be waived), but do not count towards 24 credits in this area.*

Competency 2: RMME: Theories, Methods and Models. (24 credits or 8 courses)

Required:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| EPSY 5602 | Educational Tests and MEAsurements |
| EPSY 5621 | Construction of Evaluation Instruments |
| EPSY 6621 | Program Evaluation |
| EPSY 6194 | Advanced Program Evaluation |
| EPSY 6636 | MEAsurement Theory and Application |
| EPSY 6637 | Item Response Theory |
| EPSY 6638 | Advanced Item Response Theory |
| EPSY 6194 | Advanced Techniques for Psychometric Research (or a suitable alternative) |

Competency 3: Professional Knowledge. (3 credits or 1 course)

Required:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| EPSY 5510 | Learning: Its Implications for Education** |
|-----------|--|

*** Students may request to have this requirement waived if they have taken a graduate-level Educational Psychology or Learning course from another university and earned a B or better.*

Additional Coursework. (9+ credits)

Students must take a combination of elective courses and independent study/practica which total at least 9 credits. At least 3 of these credits must be from coursework and at least 3 of these credits must be from independent study/practica. So, students must complete 3 credits of

additional coursework and 6 credits of independent study or practicum OR they must complete 6 credits of coursework and 3 credits of independent study/practicum. We encourage students to pursue additional electives in areas of interest.

Students must choose at least one of the following elective courses (or an alternative elective course that is approved by your advisory committee). We strongly recommend that students complete at least one qualitative research course during their graduate program.

EPSY 6103 Grant Writing
EPSY 6194 Advanced RMME Seminar (in any topical area)
EPSY 6469 Single Subject Research
EDCI 6000 Qualitative Methods of Educational Research
HDFS 5005 Qualitative Research Methods

In addition, at least three credits of independent study, internship or practicum, or pro-seminar are required. We encourage doctoral students to pursue summer internship and academic year internship and practicum opportunities to enhance their professional skills. Students may take any combination of these classes totaling 6 credits.

Courses fulfilling these 6 credits include:

EPSY 5494 Practicum (1-6 credits)
EPSY 6494 Doctoral Practicum (1-6 credits)
EPSY 5199 Independent Study (1-6 credits)

Dissertation Research Preparation:

Students must also register for 15 credits of dissertation research (required by the graduate school). The course number for the dissertation credits is GRAD 6950. A student may enroll in up to 9 credits of GRAD 6950 per semester. Therefore, students must complete at least two semesters of GRAD 6950. GRAD 6950 is graded S, I, U. Unsatisfactory progress on the dissertation research may result in a grade of U in GRAD 6950.

Typical Course Sequence (assuming EPSY 5601, 5605, 5607 need to be completed) for a student who begins the PhD in an even year (e.g.- Fall 2016, Fall 2018)

| YEAR 1 | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------|---|
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 5605 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods I* | EPSY 5607 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods II* |
| EPSY 5601 | Introduction to Educational Research* | EPSY 5621 | Construction of Evaluation Instruments |
| EPSY 5602 | Educational Tests and Measurements | EPSY 6601 | Methods and Techniques of Educational Research |
| | | | |
| YEAR 2 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6651 | Methods of Causal Inference in Educational Research | EPSY 6636 | Measurement Theory and Application |
| EPSY 5610 | Applied Regression | EPSY 5613 | Multivariate Analysis in Educational Research |
| EPSY 5510 | Learning: Its Implications for Education** | EPSY 6655 | Advanced Methods for Causal Inference from Data |
| | | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Techniques for Psychometric Research |
| | | | |
| YEAR 3 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6621 | Program Evaluation | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Program Evaluation |
| EPSY 6637 | Item Response Theory | EPSY 6638 | Advanced Perspectives on Item Response Theory |
| EPSY 6615 | Structural Equation Modeling | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Modeling Techniques |
| EPSY 6611 | Hierarchical Linear Models | | |
| | | | |
| YEAR 4 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| | COMPLETE COMPS EXAM | XXX | Elective 1/Independent Study |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |
| | | XXXX | Elective 2/Independent Study |
| | | | |
| YEAR 5 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |
| XXXX | Elective 3/ Independent Study | | |

**Expected – equivalent or competency exam are required to be waived – but does not count towards 24 credits in Competency 1.*

*** Students may request to have this requirement waived if they have taken a graduate-level Educational Psychology or Learning course from another university and earned a B or better.*

Typical Course Sequence (assuming EPSY 5601 and 5605 are completed) for a student who begins the PhD in an even year (Fall 2016, Fall 2018)

| YEAR 1 | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------|--|
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 5602 | Educational Tests and Measurements | EPSY 5621 | Construction of Evaluation Instruments |
| EPSY 5607 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods II* | EPSY 6601 | Methods and Techniques of Educational Research |
| EPSY 5510 | Learning: Its Implications for Education** | EPSY 5610 | Applied Regression Analysis |
| YEAR 2 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6611 | Hierarchical Linear Models | EPSY 6636 | Measurement Theory and Application |
| EPSY 6651 | Methods for Causal Inference for Educational Data | EPSY 6655 | Advanced Methods for Causal Inference for Educational Data |
| EPSY 6615 | Structural Equation Modeling | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Techniques for Psychometric Research |
| | | EPSY 5613 | Multivariate Analysis in Educational Research |
| YEAR 3 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6637 | Elective 1/Independent Study | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Modeling Techniques |
| | Item Response Theory | EPSY 6638 | Advanced Perspectives on Item Response Theory |
| EPSY 6621 | Program Evaluation | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Program Evaluation |
| YEAR 4 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |
| | COMPS EXAM | | Elective 2/Independent Study |
| | | | Elective 3/Independent Study |
| YEAR 5 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |

*Expected – equivalent or competency exam are required to be waived – but does not count towards 24 credits in Competency 1.

** Students may request to have this requirement waived if they have taken a graduate-level Educational Psychology or Learning course from another university and earned a B or better.

Typical Course Sequence (assuming EPSY 5601, 5605, 5607, and 5602 need to be completed) for a student who begins the PhD in an odd year (Fall 2017, Fall 2019)

| YEAR 1 | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 5605 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods I* | EPSY 5607 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods II* |
| EPSY 5510 | Learning: Its Implications for Education** | EPSY 5621 | Construction of Evaluation Instruments |
| EPSY 5601 | Introduction to Educational Research* | EPSY 6601 | Methods and Techniques of Educational Research |
| EPSY 5602 | Educational Tests and Measurements | | |
| YEAR 2 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 5610 | Applied Regression Analysis | EPSY 5613 | Multivariate Analysis in Educational Research |
| EPSY 6637 | Item Response Theory | EPSY 6638 | Advanced Perspectives on Item Response Theory |
| EPSY 6621 | Program Evaluation | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Program Evaluation |
| | | | |
| YEAR 3 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6615 | Structural Equation Modeling | EPSY 6655 | Advanced Methods for Causal Inference from Data |
| EPSY 6611 | Hierarchical Linear Models | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Techniques for Psychometric Research |
| EPSY 6651 | Methods for Causal Inference from Data | EPSY 6636 | Measurement Theory and Application |
| | | | |
| YEAR 4 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |
| | COMPLETE COMPS EXAM | EPSY 6619 | Advanced Modeling using Latent Variable Techniques |
| | | XXXX | Elective 1/Independent Study |
| YEAR 5 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |
| XXXX | Elective 2/Independent Study | XXXX | Elective 3/Independent Study |

*Expected – equivalent or competency exam are required to be waived – but does not count towards 24 credits in Competency 1.

** Students may request to have this requirement waived if they have taken a graduate-level Educational Psychology or Learning course from another university and earned a B or better.

Typical Course Sequence (assuming EPSY 5601, 5605 are completed) for a student who begins the PhD in an odd year (Fall 2017, Fall 2019)

| YEAR 1 | | | |
|---------------|--|---------------|--|
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 5607 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods II* | EPSY 6636 | Measurement Theory and Application |
| EPSY 5510 | Learning: Its Implications for Education** | EPSY 5621 | Construction of Evaluation Instruments |
| EPSY 5602 | Educational Tests and Measurements | EPSY 5610 | Applied Regression Analysis |
| YEAR 2 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6615 | Structural Equation Modeling | EPSY 6619 | Advanced Modeling using Latent Variable Techniques |
| EPSY 6611 | Hierarchical Linear Models | EPSY 6601 | Methods and Techniques of Educational Research |
| EPSY 6637 | Item Response Theory | EPSY 6638 | Advanced Perspectives on Item Response Theory |
| EPSY 6621 | Program Evaluation | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Program Evaluation |
| YEAR 3 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6651 | Methods for Causal Inference from Data | EPSY 6655 | Advanced Methods for Causal Inference from Data |
| XXXX | Elective /Independent Study 1 | EPSY 6194 | Advanced Techniques for Psychometric Research |
| XXXX | Elective /Independent Study 2 | EPSY 5613 | Multivariate Analysis in Educational Research |
| YEAR 4 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |
| | COMPLETE COMPS EXAM | XXXX | Elective /Independent Study 3 |
| YEAR 5 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits | GRAD 6950 | Dissertation Credits |

*Expected – equivalent or competency exam are required to be waived – but does not count towards 24 credits in Competency 1.

** Students may request to have this requirement waived if they have taken a graduate-level Educational Psychology or Learning course from another university and earned a B or better.

Required Courses for the M.A. Program

Students enrolled in the Master's program are expected to complete 30 credits. Course requirements are included below.

Competency 1: Research Methodology and Quantitative Expertise. (12 credits or 4 courses)

- EPSY 5601 Introduction to Educational Research Methods*
- EPSY 5605 Quantitative Methods in Research I*
- EPSY 5607 Quantitative Methods in Research II*
- EPSY 6601 Methods and Techniques of Educational Research

**For students who can demonstrate competency based on previous coursework or exam results these requirements may be waived and replaced with elective courses at the discretion of the major advisor.*

Competency 2: RMME: Theories, Methods and Models. (6 credits or 2 courses)

- EPSY 5602 Educational Tests and Measurements
- EPSY 6621 Program Evaluation

Required Additional Coursework/Independent Study (12 credits)

Students must choose twelve credits from the following courses (or alternative courses that are approved by your advisor). For students who choose the Plan A (thesis) option (for details see *Degree Requirements for M.A.* section below) nine of these twelve credits must be:

GRAD 5950 Master's Thesis Research.

- EPSY 5195 Introduction to SPSS (1 credit)
- EPSY 5195 Introduction to R (1 credit)
- EPSY 5610 Applied Regression Analysis
- EPSY 6469 Single Subject Research
- EDCI 6000 Qualitative Methods of Educational Research
- PP 5379 Principles and Methods of Survey Research
- PP 5377 Qualitative Methods in Public Policy
- EPSY 5510 Learning: Its Implications for Education
- EPSY 6623 Advanced Program Evaluation
- EPSY 5621 Construction of Evaluation Instruments

For students choosing the Plan B (exam) option three credits of independent study or practicum are strongly recommended. The independent study may be used to prepare to take the masters' level comprehensive exam. The program evaluation practicum may be used to fulfill this requirement as well. The course numbers for these courses are:

- EPSY 5199 Independent Study (3 credits)
- EPSY 5494 Practicum (3 credits)

Possible course sequence for a student who begins the M.A. in an even year (Fall 2020, Fall 2022, etc.)

| YEAR 1 | | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|--|
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 5601 | Introduction to Educational Research | EPSY 5607 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods II |
| EPSY 5605 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods I | XXXX | Elective 1/Thesis research |
| EPSY 5602 | Educational Tests and Measurements | EPSY 6621 | Program Evaluation (online) |
| | | EPSY 6601 | Methods and Techniques of Educational Research |
| YEAR 2 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| XXXX | Elective 2 | | |
| XXXX | Elective 3/Practicum/Thesis research | | |
| XXXX | Elective 4/Ind. Study/Thesis Research | | |
| | | | |

Typical course sequence for a student who begins the M.A. in an odd year (Fall 2019, Fall 2021, etc.)

| YEAR 1 | | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|--|
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 5601 | Introduction to Educational Research | EPSY 5607 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods II |
| EPSY 5605 | Introduction to Quantitative Methods I | XXXX | Elective 1/Thesis research |
| EPSY 5602 | Educational Tests and Measurements | EPSY 6601 | Methods and Techniques of Educational Research |
| | | XXXX | Elective 2 |
| YEAR 2 | | | |
| Fall | | Spring | |
| EPSY 6621 | Program Evaluation (face-to-face) | | |
| XXXX | Elective 3/Practicum/Thesis research | | |
| XXXX | Elective 4/Ind. Study/Thesis research | | |

Degree Requirements for M.A.

In addition to completing 30 credits of coursework, Master's students must either (Plan A) complete a Master's Thesis or (Plan B) pass a comprehensive Master's exam. The Master's Degree comprehensive exam contains questions related to content covered in EPSY 5601, EPSY 6601, EPSY 5602, EPSY 5605, EPSY 5607, EPSY 5621, and EPSY 6621. The student's advisory committee may recommend oral defense of the exam. Students who fail the exam can retake the exam once. A passing grade on the exam is 70 or higher.

During the first year, M.A. students should complete the M.A. Plan of Study form. The student's advisor can provide guidance and approval of his/her committee is required. Copies are to be placed in both Department and Graduate School files.

Master's students must maintain registration continuously each semester (except summer/winter sessions) until all requirements for the degree have been completed. Failure to maintain continuous registration will automatically result in the student being discontinued from the academic program. For information regarding the continuous registration requirements, refer to the "Registration" section of the Graduate School Catalog. If you have further questions, please contact gradschool@uconn.edu.

Degree Requirements for Ph.D.

As mentioned earlier in this document, the total number of credits for the Ph.D. is 75. This includes a minimum of 54 credits of coursework, 3 credits of independent study, internship practicum credits, and 15 credits of dissertation preparation (required by the graduate school).

At the end of the first year, per graduate school requirements, the Ph.D. plan of study should be completed, signed by the student and advisory committee members, and submitted to the Graduate School for approval. More information can be found in the Graduate Catalog (<https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/>).

Ph.D. Exams

Two gateway exams are administered to students in the program. Each is described below.

1st Year Preliminary Exam.

The 1st year exam is taken after completing the sequence of "first year" and prerequisite courses within the RMME program and must be taken at the end of the first full year in the PhD program. The questions on this exam are related to content covered in EPSY 5601, EPSY 5602, EPSY 5605, EPSY 5607, EPSY 5621, and 6601. All students are expected to answer questions on the content of these 6 core courses, regardless of whether or not they completed the coursework in our program. This exam ensures that students demonstrate mastery of foundational RMME content. Students must score at least 70% on the first year exam to pass. Students who fail a section of the exam will be asked to retake that section during the following administration of the exam. A student who fails a section of the exam twice will not be permitted to continue in the Ph.D. program.

Please note that these 6 courses are also required for the Master's Degree in RMME. However, Program Evaluation is required for the MA in RMME, but it is not on the first year comprehensive exam. Therefore, Ph.D. students who wish to earn a Master's degree en route to the Ph.D. have three options:

- 1) the first year preliminary exam may be substituted for the Master's comprehensive exam with the following addition: students must also complete the Program Evaluation class and complete the Program Evaluation section of the Master's comprehensive exam.
- 2) Students may complete a Master's thesis.
- 3) After passing the RMME general/comprehensive exam (see next section), students may apply for a Master's degree in RMME without any additional requirements.

RMME Program General/Comprehensive Exam Procedures.

The RMME program comprehensive examination is the final step before students begin to work on their dissertation research. It is anticipated that by the time that students sit for this exam, they will have acquired considerable knowledge in RMME. It is also the time when they should be able to make connections between content covered across courses, and develop their own perspective on the knowledge they have acquired. Finally, by this point, students should have formed their own opinions on varying perspectives found in the field. The focus, then, is on knowledge integration, critical appraisal of key ideas, and the ability to communicate verbally and orally.

Students must complete all required coursework listed in Table 1 prior to taking the comprehensive exam. The RMME program comprehensive examination must be taken within 1 calendar year of completing all of the required coursework. However, students may elect to take the exam sooner (i.e., immediately after finishing all required coursework). Further, the comprehensive examination must be passed in its entirety within five years of the beginning of the student's matriculation in the degree program. Failure to complete the work within the periods specified or failure to maintain continuous registration will require reevaluation of the student's entire program and may result in a notice of dismissal from the degree program. In any event, the student may not take the general examination before the plan of study has been filed with the graduate school. **In addition, the RMME program requires that students have no incomplete coursework on their transcripts when they sit for the comprehensive exam.** (Please note: this requirement includes both coursework in the courses that are required for the comprehensive exam as well as coursework in any other elective courses.)

Exam questions relate to the six core areas in our Ph.D. plan of study:

1. Educational Statistics (including regression and multivariate statistics)
2. Educational Measurement and Assessment (including instrument design and Measurement theory)
3. Item Response Theory
4. Program Evaluation
5. Modeling (including multilevel modeling and structural equation modeling)

6. Research Design (including general techniques of educational research and techniques for making causal inferences from educational data)

The comprehensive exam will consist of a series of questions that span these six areas of study. The questions will be given in a take home format, and the student will have one week to complete each question. Although the six core areas span several key classes that student's take as part of the RMME program, the questions that are asked in the comprehensive exam may not have been directly covered in the course. However, the knowledge and skills that students developed in the courses should allow them to be able to successfully answer the questions. Questions may require students to discuss theoretical issues in RMME, discuss current issues or controversies within RMME, design or critique a study, carry out data analyses, interpret research results, or integrate and synthesize research in a particular area. Students may use online materials or books, but may not consult any other people, including professors, current or former students, or any other experts, in the preparation of their responses. The comprehensive examination is turned into the exam committee, which consists of at least 5 core RMME faculty. The exam committee shall have at least two weeks to read and evaluate the exam questions. The committee will then schedule an oral comprehensive exam defense at a mutually convenient time. At the oral defense, the student will be asked to clarify or elaborate on responses to his or her exam questions and could be asked additional questions from one or more of the six core areas. Typically, the oral exam lasts 90-120 minutes. The full comprehensive exams will be administered twice a year. The first exam period begins in July and the second exam period begins in January. Given the schedule of the Spring comprehensive exam, we recommend that students take very little other coursework during the semester that they are completing the comprehensive exam. Students may enroll in an independent study course to receive academic credit for the completion of the comprehensive exam. However, independent study credits for the comprehensive exam do not count toward the nine credit requirement outlined on pages 17-18 of this document.

Generally speaking, factors that are considered when assessing a student's written and oral responses include:

1. The student's grasp of knowledge and in-depth understanding of theories, methods aligned with the seven core areas of the RMME program. Although the emphasis is not on rote memorization, it is assumed that students will have committed to memory a significant amount of knowledge in these core areas.
2. The student's ability to integrate accumulated knowledge, draw connections between content, and relate knowledge to concepts, theories, and historical and current trends.
3. The student's ability to use existing knowledge and apply it to new content or scenarios. The ability for students to engage in critical thought will be key here.
4. The student's ability to critically examine information and express their own view on key ideas, including controversies, in the six core areas.

5. The student's ability to write and speak with clarity and confidence. Students should communicate clearly what they know and do not know.

There are three potential outcomes for each of the six exam questions. A student can "pass" the question, which means that no additional revisions are required. A student may be asked to "revise" his or her response to the question. In such a scenario, the student will be given a deadline for completion of the revised response. If the revisions is not received by the deadline (which shall be no later than one month weeks prior to the beginning of the subsequent comprehensive exam period), then the student automatically fails that section of the comprehensive exam and must sit for that section during the next exam period. Finally, a student may "fail" the section. If a student fails a question, he or she must complete a new question on that section of the comprehensive exam during the next administration period. A student who fails one or more sections of the exam twice will be dismissed from the Ph.D. program. Failing to turn in a section of the exam by the due date and time is deemed a failure.

Although this exam is likely to be stressful for students, we wish to reinforce that the faculty have a stake in students' success. As such, faculty try to provide every opportunity available for students to demonstrate their level of competence.

Obtaining a Master's Degree en route to a Ph.D.

Students admitted to study for the degree of Ph.D. may earn a M.A. by completing traditional M.A. degree requirements (see degree requirements and required, recommended, and optional courses for the M.A. program sections of this document). Students may also apply for this degree if they have a fully approved doctoral plan of study including at least 30 completed credits of suitable content course work taken at this University and have passed a master's final examination (or completed a Master's thesis). They also may apply for this degree if they have completed at least 30 credits on an approved Ph.D. plan of study, have passed the doctoral general examination, and have been recommended by their major advisor or by the Dean of the Graduate School for award of the M.A. degree. A student who wishes to earn a M.A. Degree as a part of the Ph.D. program can do so, and should inform his/her major advisor early on in the program of this desire.

Advisory Committee Formation

Each Ph.D. student is assigned a major advisor upon admission to the Ph.D. program. During the first year of the program, the major advisor works with the student to choose appropriate coursework, helps the student to develop and pursue research interests, and generally helps the student to navigate graduate study. **At the end of the first year, students must complete and file their Ph.D. plan of study with The Graduate School.** In doing so, students will need to choose an initial advisory committee of three RMME members.

As students begin to hone their research interests, it is not uncommon for them to want to modify advisory committee members to help with the design and preparation of the dissertation proposal and dissertation. If this is the case, the RMME program strongly supports students choosing the most appropriate advisory committee members for their research interests and modifying their advisory committee accordingly. The faculty sees the ideal time for such changes occurring at

the completion of doctoral coursework, just prior to the completion of the doctoral comprehensive exams.

The advisory committee consists of the major advisor and at least two other advisory committee members. Regardless of how many advisory members are on a student's dissertation committee, the majority must be comprised of RMME faculty. (So a three-person committee must contain at least two RMME faculty and a five-person committee must contain at least three RMME faculty.) Occasionally, it may be desirable or appropriate for a student to have co-major advisors (not more than two). Each co-major advisor must hold an appropriate appointment to the graduate faculty in the student's field of study and area of concentration (if applicable). In addition, regardless of the number of advisory committee members, at least two external readers must read and evaluate the dissertation proposal. External readers may be from inside or outside the RMME program, or they may be outside the university.

For the final defense of the dissertation, at least five faculty members must participate in the event as advisory committee members, readers, or external participants in the oral defense. It is common for RMME faculty members who serve as external readers for the dissertation proposal to become advisory committee members prior to the final defense of the dissertation. Again, regardless of how many advisors are on the PhD committee, the majority must be comprised of RMME faculty.

Additional Advisory Committee Policies (from the Graduate School catalog)

The advisory committee of a doctoral degree student is formed after consultation between the student and the major advisor and shall include at least two associate advisors with suitable academic or scientific credentials. The major advisor and at least one associate advisor shall be members of the graduate faculty appointed to advise doctoral students in the student's field of study and area of concentration, if applicable. In addition to the three or more members chosen in the usual way, another member, ordinarily a member of the graduate faculty outside the student's field of study but in a related field, may be appointed by the Dean. If the committee consists of three members, committee decisions must be unanimous. If the committee consists of four or more members, committee decisions are considered adopted if there is no more than one negative vote, although the major advisor must always vote in the affirmative. Committee decisions involving the outcome of the General Examination, approval of the dissertation proposal, oral defense of the dissertation, or approval of the dissertation itself, however, must be a unanimous vote.

If a major advisor decides that it is not possible to continue as a student's major advisor and wishes to resign, the Graduate School must be notified in writing as soon as possible. The student is then provided with a reasonable opportunity to arrange for a new major advisor. If a new major advisor is not identified within six weeks of the resignation of the former major advisor, the student's graduate degree program status is terminated. A student whose status has been terminated may request a hearing before the Associate Dean by filing a written request within 30 days of receipt of the letter of termination.

Continuous Registration

Ph.D. students must maintain registration continuously each semester (except summer/winter sessions) until all requirements for the degree have been completed. Registration may be

maintained either by taking course work for credit or by registering for one of the four non-credit Continuing Registration courses. These include Special Readings at the master's (GRAD 5998) or doctoral (GRAD 6998) level, Master's Thesis Preparation (GRAD 5999), and Doctoral Dissertation Preparation (GRAD 6999). Other zero-credit courses may be substituted, if appropriate. Failure to maintain continuous registration will automatically result in the student being discontinued from their academic program. For information regarding the continuous registration requirements, refer to the "Registration" section of the Graduate School Catalog. If you have further questions, please contact gradschool@uconn.edu. Students who fail to maintain continuous registration and are discontinued from their academic program may need to reapply for admission to the PhD program- readmission is not automatic.

Focus of the Dissertation Study

While students occasionally have a secondary focus of their dissertation research (e.g., STEM, equity and social justice, educator preparation), the *primary* focus of the dissertation should be a study designed to contribute to the knowledge base associated with research methods, measurement and/or evaluation. Dissertations may also contribute to more than one area of these areas. The major advisor works with the student to help craft a study that fulfills this requirement. Students should begin conversations about the scope, content, and context of the dissertation study as early as possible to ensure that the students' dissertation ideas and interests will serve to fulfill the dissertation requirement within RMME.