



**Tennessee State University Educational Leadership  
Doctor of Education  
Higher Education**

**Comprehensive Examination Study Guide**

Below are some general guidelines to help prepare for the written examination.

- 1) This is a comprehensive examination-students need to demonstrate a culmination of their learning in Doctor of Education Program.
- 2) Evaluation will be based on five areas 1. Quality & Quantity of Detail, 2. Complexity of Ideas, 3. Organization, 4. Fluency and Length of Response, and 5. Correctness in Grammar, Word Usage and Punctuation.
- 3) Students are expected to appropriately cite different scholarly sources. Full references will not have to be memorized, only name and date of citation will be needed (e.g., “Smith (2015)”.
- 4) Make sure you respond to all questions. It is recommended that students utilize headings and sub-headings to add clarity and organization to their responses.
- 5) Make sure you answer all parts of each question.
- 6) Make sure responses are thorough and comprehensive. Shallow or surface level responses are not appropriate.
- 7) Begin preparing for your examination early. Dedicate considerable time for studying.

**REVIEW AREAS**

You will be tested in six areas: (1) Foundations of Higher Education, (2) Organization and Administration, (3) Research (4) Curriculum, Faculty, and Students, (5) Legal Aspects of Educational Administration, and (6) Financial Aspects of Educational Administration.

**Area A: Foundations of Education**

- 1) Understanding of the five major eras of Higher Education:
  - a. Colonial Period
  - b. Emergent Period
  - c. Mass Higher Education Period
  - d. Consolidation Period
  - e. Contemporary Period

- 2) Understanding of the Coleman Report
- 3) Understanding of the Yale Report
- 4) Understanding of the German University

## **Area B: Organization and Administration**

- 1) Understanding of Organizational Theory
  - a. The Roles of Different Institutions,
  - b. Organizational Designs,
  - c. Organizational Structures, and
  - d. Institutional Mission, Goals, and Structures.
- 2) Understanding of Governance Models
  - a. Model Differentiations: Political, Collegial, and Bureaucratic
- 3) Understanding of Campus Climate and Culture
  - a. Know the difference between culture and climate
- 4) Understanding of Management Principles, such as recruitment and hiring.
- 5) Understanding of Institutional Change and Assessment (Strategic Planning).

## **Area C: Research**

- 1) Quantitative vs. Qualitative – Define and discuss characteristics of each paradigm.
- 2) Process of conducting educational research.
- 3) Ethical practices to observe
- 4) Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches
- 5) Quantitative Research Design and its Data Collection Methods.
  - i. Quantitative – Non-experimental and Experimental (purpose is measurement)
  - ii. Descriptive (Survey) – NE
  - iii. Correlational – NE
  - iv. Causal-Comparative (Ex post facto) – NE
  - v. Quasi-Experimental – E
  - vi. True Experimental (or Single Subject) – E
- 6) Qualitative – understanding of Qualitative Research Design and its Data Collection Methods.
  - i. Case Study – an individual or a single situation
  - ii. Ethnography – investigation into cultural influences.
  - iii. Phenomenological- These studies examine human experiences through the descriptions provided by the people involved. The goal is to describe the meaning that experiences hold for each subject.

- iv. Grounded Theory- data are collected and analyzed and then a theory is developed that is grounded in the data
  - v. Historical – understanding something from the past
  - vi. Action Research – localized study, without generalization
- 7) Mixed Methods Research Design and its Data Collection Methods.
- i. The Triangular Design- to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic to best understand the research problem.
  - ii. The Embedded Design- one data set provides a supportive, secondary role in a study based primarily on the other data type.
  - iii. The Explanatory Design- the purpose of qualitative data helps explain or build upon initial quantitative results.
  - iv. The Exploratory Design-two-phase design is that the results of the first method (qualitative) can help develop or inform the second method (quantitative).
- 8) Problems in Education
- i. Statement of the Problem This should include (a) a clear statement that the problem exists, (b) evidence that supports the existence of the problem, (c) evidence of an existing trend that has led to the problem
  - ii. Real problems that are researchable
  - iii. Focused in the dependent variable (the effected condition)
  - iv. Focused on independent variables (the causes for the condition or resolution) and any intervening variables that may impact the condition defined by the literature review)
- 9) Literature Reviews
- i. Extensive examination of the literature concerning the problem
  - ii. Identifies the gap in the Literature
  - iii. Is a review of “related” literature
  - iv. Involves database searches – both hard copy and electronic
- 10) Purpose of the Study –a clear and accurate statement of the scientific purpose/objectives of the research.
- 11) Sampling Methods – probability and non-probability methods
- i. Must truly represent the targeted and accessible populations to be a probability sample.
  - ii. Should consider the paradigm and purpose before considering the sampling method.
  - iii. Probability Sampling
    - 1. True Random Sampling – every individual has an equal chance of being selected...
    - 2. Stratified Sampling – represents unique characteristics in the population

3. Cluster Sampling – selects in-tact groups to represent the population
4. Systematic Sampling – takes every “nth” member of the population
- iv. Non-probability Sampling - only a few methods are recorded here
  1. Convenience Sample – selecting only those easily accessible to the researcher.
  2. Purposive Sample – selecting those who meet the criteria and known to the researcher.
  3. Snowball or Chain Sample – selecting those who are recommended to the researcher.
  4. Intensity Sample – selecting those who manifest the phenomenon intensely.
  5. Volunteers – not recommended; they bring uncontrolled problems to research.

12) Instrumentation – modes of measurement (collecting data for research)

- i. Tests – multiple types of tests should be considered; validity and reliability a must; locally constructed or standardized; norm or criterion referenced; measurement styles; etc.
- ii. Performance Tests – intelligence, aptitude, achievement, diagnostic, etc.
- iii. Personality Tests – attitude, inventories, projective, self- concept, etc.
- iv. Self-Report Measures – values, interests, learning styles, traits, etc.
- v. Questionnaires (Survey) – scales, true/false, short answer, open-ended – to measure opinions, attitudes, efficacy, perspectives, etc.
- vi. Observation Instrument-Structured and Unstructured Instruments
- vii. Interviews – individuals, focus groups, time-series, etc.; structured, semi-structured, unstructured, informal, etc.; use of multiple interviewers (thus, training for proper recording and analyzing)

13) Data Collection Procedures:

- i. Based on Population and Sampling methods;
- ii. Approvals – District, Institution, IRB;
- iii. Informed Consent – by individuals within the sample;
- iv. Procedures based on setting – mailing surveys and follow-up; soliciting responses with an instrument in a faculty meeting or other face-to-face setting; retrieval of archived data;
- v. Recording data through observations or interviews; etc;
- vi. Anonymity and Proper storage of data – release summative information only; kept locked away; and
- vii. Ethics in Research – refer to your Human Subjects training

- 14) Statistics – proper use of statistical measurements based on purpose of study and data collected
- 15) Descriptive Statistics – used to describe the sample
  - i. Measures of Central Tendency – Mean, Median, Mode
  - ii. Measures of Variability – Range, Interquartile Range, Variance, Standard Deviation
  - iii. Measures of Relationship – Correlation Coefficient (Pearson R, Spearman Rho, Etc.)
- 16) Inferential Statistics – used to make generalizations to the population
  - i. Tests of Comparison – T-Tests, ANOVA, ANCOVA, MANOVA, Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis, Wilcoxon, Chi-Square, etc.
  - ii. Tests of Relationship – Various Forms of Regression, Hierarchical Linear Modeling, Etc.

#### **Area D: Curriculum, Faculty, and Students**

- 1) Define curriculum in the higher education context.
- 2) Discuss how the curriculum is used to create change and relevance in the teaching-learning process.
- 3) Discuss curricular innovations that have led to shifts in emphasis on learning goals requiring students to: (a) demonstrate mastery or competency in a specific course of study, (b) integrate learning through a comprehensive and cohesive curricular plan, (c) engage in the application of innovative instructional methodologies, and (d) assess learning in light of curricular objectives.
- 4) Discuss curricular models that promote and advance: (a) critical thinking and problem solving skills, (b) multiple ways to instill systematic and logical inquiry, (c) relevance and integration of the curriculum within a structured program of studies, and (d) the acquisition of the basic skills of interpersonal competence, teamwork, ethics, leadership, and use of technology in the learning environment.
- 5) Discuss the process and policies associated with curricular development, implementation, oversight, and approval by institutional- and system-level administrators.
- 6) Discuss the range of arguments associated with the assessment of student learning when engaging in the departmental curriculum revision process.

## Area E: Legal Aspects of Educational Administration

Please refer to Class Notes

- 1) Understanding of the Legal System:
  - a. The Nature of Public School Law (Constitutions, Statutes, Court or ‘Case’ Law, and Common Law.),
  - b. Power and Functions of Courts (Applying Principles, Interpreting Statutes, Determining Constitutionality,
  - c. The Purpose of Law, Stare Decisis, Rule of Law, Understanding Judicial Decisions, The American Court System (State Courts, Federal Courts),
  - d. Understanding of the role of the constitution, federal, and state government in the schools, and
  - e. Understanding of Due Process.
- 2) Understanding of Employment laws.
- 3) Understanding of Academic vs. Common Core in Pre-K-12 Education.
- 4) Understanding of Contract Rights and Duties.
- 5) Understanding of discrimination and segregation in educational settings.
- 6) Understanding of FERPA laws, Public Forum Doctrine, and Drug Testing of Employees and others.
- 7) Understanding of the Dream Act and Immigration.
- 8) Understanding of the Roles and responsibilities when working with disabled students in PreK-12 Education or in university setting.
- 9) Legal issues regarding guns in K-12 schools and on campuses.
  - a. Understanding of safety in dorms and classrooms.
- 10) Understanding of Search and Seizure. Understanding how it relates to lockers, dorm rooms, personal belongings, etc.).
- 11) Understanding of religion in the classroom and on campus: Church and State Relations.
- 12) Understanding of First Amendment Issues: Speech, Association, Privacy, etc.
- 13) Understanding of Harassment in and out of the educational setting.
- 14) Understanding of Title IX: Sexual Discrimination and Sexual Assault.
- 15) Understanding of Sexual Diversity and Gender Issues.
- 16) Understanding of Public Records, Open Meetings, and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- 17) Understanding of Copyright, Distance Education, and Educational Property Rights.

## **Area F: Financial Aspects of Educational Administration**

- 1) Discuss the historical and current status of public school funding and the major equity issues associated with school resource distribution.
- 2) Describe how the costs of government activities are distributed.
- 3) Understanding of four budgeting models (Zero-Based, Performance-Based, Activity Based, Incremental).
- 4) Understanding of how programs are evaluated.
- 5) Fiscal Trends in State Funding (Performance Funding, Funding Formula, FTE Funding vs. Graduation funding).
- 6) Understanding of Institutional Resources Budgets.
  - a. Understanding of various Budget Models.
  - b. Who should pay and who benefits?
  - c. How should cost be apportioned?
- 7) Understanding of the Budget Planning Process.
- 8) Understanding of Economic and Fiscal Trends that Impact an Academic Institution.