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.
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
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

   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.
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?
8) Understanding of Economic and Fiscal Trends that Impact an Academic Institution.