



## Ohio Administrative Code

### Rule 3341-3-87 Doctoral requirements in programs with applied culminating experiences.

Effective: April 22, 2026

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#### (A) Policy statement and purpose

This policy describes requirements for doctoral degrees in which the culminating experience is not a dissertation.

It does not pertain to doctoral degrees that include a dissertation as the culminating experience. For those requirements, see the doctoral requirements in research and professional programs with a dissertation policy.

#### (B) Policy

##### (1) Credit hours

A doctoral program must include:

- (a) At least sixty credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the master's degree, or
- (b) Ninety credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree.

In rare cases, deviations from these guidelines may be considered with endorsement from the chancellor's council on graduate studies and approval from the Ohio department of higher education.

Transfer of credit from other institutions is described in the credit transfer - graduate policy.

##### (2) Level of work

A maximum of ten credit hours at the 5000-level may count toward degree requirements.

#### (C) Applied culminating experience

The applied culminating experience serves as the terminal requirement for doctoral degree completion in programs where a dissertation is not required.

It is an integrative component that demonstrates mastery of disciplinary knowledge and professional competencies through applied, practice-oriented work rather than a traditional research dissertation.

##### (1) Forms of applied culminating experiences



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Examples include:

- (a) Applied capstone projects,
- (b) Portfolios,
- (c) Clinical or field experiences,
- (d) Internships,
- (e) Recitals, and
- (f) Other substantial practice-based work.

(2) Requirements

- (a) Must be formally defined as a degree requirement in program materials.
- (b) Must demonstrate alignment with program learning outcomes and professional standards.

(3) External participants in culminating experiences

Programs may include external evaluators (e.g., clinical supervisors, field mentors) in culminating assessments. These individuals:

- (a) Must be vetted and managed at the program level to ensure professional standards and qualifications.
- (b) May provide evaluative input to the program regarding student performance but cannot serve as sole evaluators.
- (c) Do not submit documentation directly to the graduate college.

(4) Evaluation of culminating experiences

- (a) Programs are responsible for submitting evidence of culminating experience completion to the graduate college.
- (b) All culminating experiences must be overseen by faculty with appropriate levels according to the graduate faculty status policy to ensure alignment with program learning outcomes and professional standards.



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(D) Additional program requirements

Programs may require specific experiences in addition to the culminating experience that indicate a student's readiness to progress in the program, and are encouraged to incorporate early readiness indicators or developmental feedback mechanisms to support student preparedness for the applied culminating experience and for practice within the professional, similar in purpose to qualifying examinations or preliminary experiences in dissertation-based programs. These:

- (1) Must be clearly articulated in program materials.
- (2) Must be accounted for in the program's degree audit.
- (3) May include formally defined non-course requirements that are accounted for in the program's degree audit.

(E) Programs must comply with discipline-specific accreditation standards, if applicable.