Writing Comprehensive Exams in Educational Research or Foundations of Education

- **PhD students in EDL or T&L** choose ONE question from the Educational Research exam. Return the question and response with references via email within **four weeks**.
- **EdD students in EDL or T&L** choose ONE question from the Foundations of Education exam. Return the question and response with references via email within **four weeks**.
- **PhD students in EFR** answer a question in Educational Research AND a question in Foundations of Education. For each question, you may take **four weeks** to answer via email.
- All students have the option of writing the exam on campus, usually the first Fridays of March and November. Please see additional information listed below.*

The comprehensive exam in Educational Research asks the student to integrate his or her knowledge base in research methodologies together with a familiarity with journals and books in a variety of areas of research so that they can demonstrate their facility in addressing some research issue(s). The choices from the literature should demonstrate an understanding of the multifaceted approaches to a particular area of controversy. Present the controversy (if one exists) so that the various actors are incorporated faithfully to the views in your response.

The comprehensive exam in the Foundations of Education and the intellectual preparation involved serve an important function. Issues, problems and theoretical formulations which are part of the Foundations perspective assist professional educators in thinking about education from a more comprehensive perspective and in education decision-making. The comps help assess whether students are able to conceptualize and think about issues on a theoretical level and to apply theoretical understandings to current issues and problems, both essential capabilities of successful graduate students and professional educators. Here, too, multiple perspectives, including from the literature, should be incorporated into student answers.

**Objectives and Instructions**

Students are expected to meet the following four objectives:

1) Student demonstrates the ability to integrate and synthesize ideas.
2) Student demonstrates the ability to think critically.
3) Student demonstrates scholarship.
4) Student demonstrates effective writing skills, including appropriate use of APA citations.

Please create a cover page for your exam, number your pages, and list the following information:

1) Indicate whether the exam is in Educational Research or Foundations of Education
2) Student’s name, student I.D. number, email address, and telephone number (Please do not include these in the main text.)
3) Name of student’s advisor
4) Graduate program (e.g., EFR, EDL, or T&L)
5) Indicate degree: EdD or PhD
6) Date submitted

Please save your document under your last name and first initial and list research or foundations comp and due date. (e.g. Doe.J.research.comp.JULY2016 or Doe.J.foundations.comp.JULY2016.)

Return your answer (including the question and a list of references) via email to:

Dr. Robert Stupnisky, EFR Graduate Director
robert.stupnisky@und.edu

Your advisor will be notified of the results usually within four weeks of receiving the comp. The exception would be comps submitted in May, June, and July, which will be reported in late August.
Please see the schedule on the web and plan your dates in advance to meet any deadlines for advancing to candidacy.

*EFR In-House Comprehensive Exam Procedures
Contact EFR Graduate Director to make arrangements.

EFR offers students the option of taking their comprehensive examination(s) on campus during a specified time (usually the first Friday in March and November). Students must apply for the exam at least four weeks in advance so that they will have the questions for four weeks prior to writing the comprehensive exam in-house.

Students have four hours to write an answer to one of a list of questions (usually three or four to choose from). Exams must be started and finished between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM.

Students can bring only one sheet of paper containing bibliographic references; no outlines, quotations, etc., are permitted. Students are expected to reference scholarly sources in their answers.

A computer without Internet access is provided, and a quiet space will be reserved. No cell phones, iPads, or other Internet-connected devices are allowed.

Results should arrive to your advisor four weeks after the exam is taken, except when that date falls during a UND break period.