



“Creating new and innovative educational and social systems which address the need for each world partner to foster positive change in their world”

Doctoral Students

Guide & Handbook

KEISIE - Asia Graduate School

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY BY DISSERTATION ONLY

Introduction

KEISIE – Asia is proud to offer an effective pathway to individuals currently involved in their career, and who do not have the time to spend at an onsite campus of Higher Education. The doctoral programs are designed for career professionals who have completed a minimum of Master's level study in their field, and who also have considerable career experience within their respective professions. The principal objective of the PhD by Dissertation only program is to provide career professionals who enroll with a simplified way of producing a high quality academic dissertation under the guidance and direction of a program tutor as well as a graduate committee of four qualified members of the KEISIE faculty.

As an Institution of Higher Education, KEISIE not only understands and supports the need for research, but it actively promotes opportunities for its students to explore and experience a wide range of topics and subjects within the following fields of study: arts and humanities, business, health and science, political science and religion, just to name a few. With a seamless approach to providing academic opportunities, each student's scope of research should reach from a closely personal viewpoint to a more open and eclectic worldview, recognizing the depth and nature of the human psyche as members of a global community. So, in this way, KEISIE – Asia functions as an incubator of sorts for creating new and innovative educational and social systems which address the need for each world partner to foster positive change in their world. KEISIE - Asia's global mission, initiative and philosophy is to create and organize new leaders who will be prepared to take education to much higher levels than ever thought prior to this time.

Qualified Areas of Study

Upon the approval of the KEISIE – Asia Administrative Board, the following areas of study have been approved and authorized for the purpose of entering study in pursuit of a Doctor of Philosophy by Dissertation only program:

- Business Administration
- Community, Economic, and Social Development
- Community Health Education
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine
- Education (Including Leadership and Administration)
- Executive Management
- Environmental Studies
- Healthcare Administration
- International and Cooperative Relations
- Public Health
- Political and Social Sciences
- Psychology
- Religion and Theology

Admission to Program

The information in this section shall apply to all individuals seeking admission to a KEISIE- Asia degree program. All students seeking to enroll into a Doctoral level program must, as a prerequisite to acceptance, have completed a minimum of a Master's level degree from a recognized and accredited Institution of Higher education. In addition, it is assumed that the individual seeking admission has several years of verifiable and meaningful professional experience within an appropriate career field. Applicants to the program must be proficient in English and possess appropriate language skills necessary for carrying out the work they are assigned. Finally, applicants must have access to a computer, appropriate software, email and Internet, and academic library resources for the purpose of conducting their research study. The following list outlines the procedures and approximate time for applying and enrolling at KEISIE – Asia (all application and enrollment is done electronically via the Internet and/or email):

- Formal Application:1 day
- Submit Personal Letter of Purpose and Intent:1 day
- Submission of all Required Documents:1 day
- Acceptance from KEISIE – Asia: up to 10 business days
- Payment of Tuition and Fees:1 day
- Selection of Doctoral Advisor: 3-5 days
- Begin study

Program Requirements

Individuals seeking their Doctoral degree using the Dissertation only program are required to fulfill the research requirements leading to their successful completion in an academic process called Study in Traditional Educational Proficiencies (STEP), which is nine-featured academic process. The required study activities associated with the STEP are equivalent to 60 credits above the Master's degree and considered equal to the credit requirements of a traditional, brick and mortar doctoral programs. The STEP schedule includes: one introductory module focused on Doctoral Study, three methods modules focused on Doctoral Research, two modules focused on Readings and Comprehensive Assessment, two modules focused on the Dissertation Project, and one module on Dissertation Defense.

The purpose of STEP and the associated activities are intended to ensure that doctoral students have the necessary skills, knowledge, and academic abilities to examine existing scholarly literature, properly design an appropriate proposal, carry out advanced research study for the desired concentration area, solicit project data using an appropriate collection model, analyze data and present findings in a Dissertation manuscript for publication. At the conclusion of the STEP process, doctoral candidates are subject to a comprehensive review of their work which

includes both written and oral exams that allow faculty to determine if the candidate has sufficiently prepared research that is of the highest standards and quality.

During STEP students will conduct a designated research project which is based on the formal dissertation proposal. Upon the completion of the dissertation project, and preparation of the Dissertation manuscript for review by the Doctoral Committee, candidates complete an oral review of the Dissertation as a conclusion of the degree process. A minimum requirement of enrollment at KEISIE - Asia for between one to three calendar years must be fulfilled before candidates are allowed to graduate. However, candidates who are unable to complete their research study within the designated time are allowed a maximum period of five years to complete the program. On average, most doctoral candidates are capable of finishing their degree program within three years. Because of the highly focused nature of Dissertation only programs, KEISIE – Asia does not allow for transfer credit from other Institutions. KEISIE – Asia relies on the STEP quality process as the primary means of ensuring the completion of all doctoral study by enrolled students.

Attendance Policy

While there are no residency requirements for enrolled students. It is expected that students will be making regular contact with their academic advisors during the duration of their doctoral study. The reason for this is to ensure the students maintaining a high level of focus on their research related activities. At the completion of each portion of the STEP process, academic advisors will be required to submit documentation indicating the actual amount of contact time with each of their respective students. This information is collected and kept as part of the student's permanent academic records. To remain in good standing, students must demonstrate effective progress toward achieving quality standards at each portion of the academic process. In order for a student to progress to the next part of their study, written approval by the academic advisor and the KEISIE – Asia Administration is required. Upon successful completion of the entire STEP process, doctoral candidates are awarded the Doctor of Philosophy degree in their field of designated study and research.

Understanding the STEP Process

STEP is an effective and seamless way for doctoral students to progress through their study and research. It is designed to allow candidates a number of opportunities for gaining the necessary knowledge and experience needed to carry the rigorous activity which will be required in order to achieve the Doctor of Philosophy degree they are seeking. Why STEP? STEP is an acronym which means, Study in Traditional Educational Proficiencies. The term is derived from a basic understanding of how higher education works, and then customizing the academic and research functions normally used to provide students with a well-rounded education in a given area of study. In short, STEP does not cut corners, it simply rounds them so students are less inclined to experience difficult transitions from one portion of their doctoral research study to another.

Each portion of the STEP process is designed to maximize the amount of study and research, while reducing the overall ‘down time’ students typically experience when taking classes in a brick and mortar Institution. The following outline highlights all of the primary functions of the STEP process, with a brief description and recommended schedule of completion for working through the degree program:

STEP 1: Understanding Study as a Doctoral Student (1 – 2 Weeks)

Total 1 – 2 weeks

Actually, few students are really prepared for the type of academic challenge they have set out to accomplish. For this reason, the first academic module instructs students on the foundational theories, principles, and practices which are specific to their proposed dissertation research. It is at this time that students must clarify the underlying principles, standards and justifications that support their concept for doctoral research.

During this module, students will be asked to complete a suitable number of activities designed to help them determine an appropriate area and focus of research. Upon the completion of this portion of study, students must pass a quality review examination conducted by the graduate school. Should the student be deemed ‘deficient’ in a particular area of the examination, they will be asked to complete additional research methodology coursework to satisfy this portion of the process.

STEP 2: Working through the Dissertation Proposal Process (4 – 6 Weeks)

Total 5 – 8 weeks

It may appear to be an easy task, however, the creation of the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal may in fact be the most difficult task of the entire study experienced by the student. Why? During this phase of the academic process, students are required prepare a formal proposal related to their area of research. Of interest is the fact that the proposal for Doctoral Dissertation submissions should outline a topic of study that offers something “new” and “unique” to a given field of study. It is not a ‘review’ or ‘addition’ to an existing field, but it is something that is entirely new, and something that has never been considered before.

During the time spent in this portion of the STEP process, students are encouraged to make frequent contact with their advisor. This will ensure that all of the potential possibilities for research can be explored. Once the official proposal has been completed, it must then be forwarded to the advisor and the doctoral committee which will review it and determine if the student can proceed. All proposals must be prepared according to published KEISIE - Asia guidelines, which shall be provided to the student during the STEP 2 portion of study.

STEP 3: Guiding Principles for Developing a Solid Dissertation (6 – 8 Weeks)

Total 9 – 15 weeks

Once students have completed the proposal portion of their research, they will begin their formal research. There are many ways of actually conducting the dissertation research. It may take the form of a traditional research project, involving latitudinal or longitudinal study, or it may focus on a scholarly project that is appropriate to their particular discipline. Regardless of the type and approach to the dissertation, each student's final project must not only demonstrate mastery of a body of knowledge in the field, it must also represent a meaningful and original contribution to the betterment of the profession as a whole.

During this portion of research study, students will begin their writing. An Introduction to the research paper will be written and should range between five to ten pages of the total work. The introduction should be designed to provide readers with a quick overview of the contents contained within the Dissertation. Formal writing should remain first person neutral. The introduction will become the guide for readers who want to go through the entire work.

Normally, the dissertation project involves the collection of data quantitatively, qualitatively, or through the use of action research. The total length of the academic work must be a minimum of 160 double spaced, typewritten pages using the APA or appropriate style format for the type of topic the candidate is studying. During this portion of the STEP process students will be challenged to understand the specific formats and types of writing styles which are appropriate for their field of study. Upon the completion of this STEP students will take a second examination for the purpose of demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of completing the Dissertation project. The examination is Pass/Fail, and once a student has passed the exam, they will be allowed to begin formal work and research.

STEP 4: Literature Review and What Its Purpose in the Dissertation Really Is (8 – 10 Weeks)

Total 17 – 25 weeks

The literature review section of the Dissertation is one of the most important portions of the research project. During this module of study, students will be guided through the process of conducting a thorough and effective search for scholarly literature in relation to a project designed for a particular type of research. This portion of study is not intended to go quickly, so candidates will be asked to thoroughly examine the quality of existing scholarly literature in their field of research study. Normally, literature is collected for the purpose of addressing the research questions, which are listed at the end of the Dissertation introduction. Once the literature review has been completed, students should plan a meeting with their advisor and members of the Doctoral Committee to discuss any questions related to the literature, and also to participate in a quality review session under the guidance of the entire Doctoral Committee.

STEP 5: The Dissertation Research Project – Design and Implementation (10 – 12 Weeks) Total 27 – 37 weeks

The design and implementation of the research project is considered the ‘meat’ of the research. This is the portion of research study that is used to collect empirical data that will be used to draw reasonable and accurate conclusions regarding the Dissertation questions. This portion of the Dissertation is focused on designing a tool or instrument that will make it possible to retrieve meaningful data that can analyzed, evaluated and reported. Students are encouraged to work closely with their advisor during this STEP.

STEP 6: Data Collection, Analysis, Findings (4 – 6 Weeks)

Total 31 – 43 weeks

Presenting the data, analysis and findings in the Dissertation is a straight forward process involving a lot of specific calculations used to help produce quantifiable research results. The information in this section of the Dissertation will be used by professionals reading through the study for the purpose of verifying and validating what the overall project proposes. This section of the Dissertation should be designed to present specific details related to the claims of the author regarding the study. Students should have a good understanding of how to use special software such as SPSS or some other type of statistical software to complete this STEP.

STEP 7: How to Organize a Publishable Dissertation (8 – 10 Weeks)

Total 39 – 53 weeks

This portion of the Dissertation project is designed to guide the doctoral candidate through the procedures needed to gain a better understanding the requirements for producing an effective written document. During this STEP students will work on referencing, citations of the scholarly literature, and presenting the findings from research in written form. The information in this portion of the Dissertation will be used to answer research questions as well as draw conclusions from the formal study. Upon the completion of this portion of the process, students may be required to participate in a third quality review under the guidance of the advisor and Doctoral Committee.

STEP 8: Fine Tuning the Final Dissertation Project (4 – 6 Weeks)

Total 43 – 59 weeks

Once all the specific portions of the Dissertation have been completed it is time to proofread and edit the final project. This will take some time, and it is recommended that sufficient copies of the Dissertation are prepared for editors to use when reviewing the work. This process will happen again when the Dissertation is defended, but it is a good way to ensure that fewer mistakes are found when presenting the Dissertation to the Doctoral Committee. Since the total time for the

research has taken between 40 – 60 weeks to complete, there is no need to rush this stage of the process. Students should realize that their work towards the Doctor of Philosophy Degree is only a short period of time away at this point.

STEP 9: Defending the Dissertation (6 – 10 Weeks)

Total 49 – 69 weeks

Once the candidate has successfully completed all of the STEP procedures and prepared the Dissertation manuscript, the advisor will contact the members of the Doctoral Committee to schedule a formal review of the Dissertation. The advisor will act as the moderator and lead faculty in both the formal review of the project manuscript, and the oral review of the Dissertation project.

Following receipt of the project manuscript, it usually takes the four member Doctoral Committee between six to ten weeks to complete the physical review, and prepare questions and comments for later discussion. Candidates should expect more than one scheduled meeting with the Doctoral Committee during this time. First, the oral review is carried out by personal conference and is designed to allow the Committee to make a detailed investigation of the underlying review of the literature, dissertation methodology and mechanics of the project, presentation of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Upon the successful completion of all scheduled meetings, a set of final expectations directing the candidate through the remaining tasks for completing the Dissertation manuscript.

Once the final project manuscript is approved, the candidate will submit the formal document to an approved publisher, and arrange for the bound dissertation to be shipped to KEISIE - Asia headquarters for permanent archival storage. Upon the candidate's completion of the final tasks, and receipt of the needed records and documentation, KEISIE - Asia will issue a letter of completion to the participant. It will then make preparation for issuance of the official transcript of record and Degree Diploma.

Dissertation Committee

Doctoral candidates are encouraged do their best while working through their degree programs under the advisement and mentorship of the academic advisor and a four-member Doctoral Committee, composed of qualified KEISIE - Asia graduate faculty. The Committee is comprised of a primary, secondary and two tertiary members, each with assigned roles in directing the doctoral process.

Doctoral candidates are expected with the same Doctoral Committee members throughout their entire research program. However, if a candidate requests a change in a Committee member, they must do so by submitting a formal petition to the KEISIE - Asia Administration. Requests for changes and petitions must include a special fee. Also, any change in the composition of the Doctoral Committee may result in a readjustment of research expectations, as the Committee works to incorporate the ideas and advisement of the new Committee member. This may also result in extending the completion date of the degree.

Formation of Dissertation Committee

Doctoral students have a Dissertation Committee consisting of an academic advisor and four qualified graduate faculty appointed to oversee and govern the student's research program. The duties of the Committee focus on the structure, progress of studies, comprehensive examinations, and Dissertation project. The formal Committee includes a Chair, a Secondary Chair and two Tertiary Members.

Responsibilities of Dissertation Committee

The responsibilities of the Dissertation Committee, under the leadership of the Committee Chair, are as follows:

- Directing the preparation and approval of the student's plan for study, clarifying the timeline for study and the assignment of faculty to provide instruction and to assist with the functions of the Dissertation Committee.
- Providing direction regarding the student's foundational studies, core studies, specialization, and research preparation coursework.
- Providing leadership by integrating appropriate research preparation coursework or assignments within the plan for study, distributing the coursework to appropriate faculty for instruction and advisement.
- Providing leadership for the written and oral components of the student's comprehensive final examination, in unity with the other Committee members
- Providing oversight, direction, and mentorship during the conduct of the student's research project and manuscript preparation, in unity with the other Committee members
- Providing leadership for the physical and oral reviews of the research manuscript, in unity with the other Committee members.
- Assist the student in making formal changes in the plan study and timeline for completion, by written addendum, as needed to assure effective progress throughout the program of study.
- Providing final approval for the student's Dissertation and overall degree program and cooperate fully in building the appropriate archival records.

Committee Appointment Schedule

The Committee Chair is appointed immediately following the Doctoral student's registration and continues in charge of the student's program until final completion is recorded at the school of record. While the secondary member of the Dissertation Committee are identified and confirmed at the onset of the program, and listed in the plan of study, they become active later, just prior to the activities for which they are asked to participate.

The Secondary Committee Member becomes active one month prior to the commencing of the written component of the Doctoral student's Final Comprehensive Examination and continues with the student's program until final completion is recorded.

The Candidate's Plan for Study

Immediately following registration, Doctoral students begin work with their assigned Committee Chair in structuring their formal plan for study. The process determines and formalizes the elements of the student's Doctoral program and the timeline for completion. The plan for study includes the following essential elements:

- The designation of the degree major for the Study Plan.
- The identification of the school contacts and contact information for the schools participating in the delivery of the Doctoral program.
- Identification of the required array of coursework for each element of the program.
- Identification of the secondary and tertiary members of the Dissertation Committee.
- Appointment and notification of the course module instructors.
- The timeline for completion of the degree program.

These activities require active participation by the student in program planning and may take considerable time to complete the dialogue and exchange of information. Students are strongly advised to discuss in detail the elements in the plan for study including the coursework, the examinations, and elements of research including the manuscript guidelines.

Once all of the decisions have been made concerning the plan for study, the student and Committee Chair sign the formal document. Copies of the document are sent to KEISIE - Asia headquarters for approval and entry to the permanent student record. The plan for study becomes the document that determines effective progress toward the degree. When the expectations laid out in the plan for study have been successfully accomplished, the student is recommended for the degree by the Committee Chair.

Students are advised that KEISIE - Asia can make no commitment to inclusion of course modules and assignment of instructors to a student program until after the plan for study has been fully processed and approved.