Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy (Ed.D) Requirement-Part II
Qualifying Paper (Dissertation Prospectus)

Purpose:
The purpose of the qualifying paper (dissertation prospectus) is to provide students the
opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to undertake independent research that can culminate
in an original and high quality dissertation. The prospectus should be structured as a precursor to
the formal dissertation proposal (not to exceed 6,000 words/20-25 pages), and should reflect a
students ability to:

(1) formulate an interesting and important research question;
(2) write an analytical review of existing literature that can justify the research question;
(3) mobilize existing literature to establish how the proposed research will make a
   contribution to existing knowledge, and pinpoint why previous research efforts have
   failed to satisfactorily fill the gap addressed by the research question;
(4) provide an initial discussion of research design options.

Evaluation:
Two faculty members will evaluate each qualifying paper. Choice of one will be initiated by the
student based on negotiations between the individual faculty member and the student. The
negotiating process must include a 1-page proposal to the faculty member suggesting a topic or
researchable question that the student would like to pursue for the qualifying paper. The second
faculty member must come from among the full-time faculty of the program, and should be
chosen at random and irrespective of the concentration in which the faculty member most
frequently teaches. Any faculty member who does not believe he or she is competent to evaluate
a particular qualifying paper for reasons of its content or methodology may request that another
reader be chosen. Each reviewing faculty member will evaluate the qualifying paper
independently based on a rubric devised to meet requirements established by the program. All
areas of the rubric will be graded using the categories of “pass” and “fail.”

To be considered for advancement to candidacy a student is expected to receive a “pass” from
each of the two reviewing faculty members on the majority of the rubric’s criteria. A doctoral
student who does not achieve a “pass” from both reviewing faculty will be asked to rewrite the
qualifying paper. The student may also be asked to complete additional learning experiences
(e.g., additional methods courses, deeper review of the literature, writing seminars) before being
considered for advancement to candidacy. The program faculty as a whole will make judgments
about which additional requirements (if any) the student will be asked to meet on a case-by case
basis after a holistic review of the student’s performance. One option is that the entire faculty
recommend that the doctoral student be asked to take a terminal masters degree.
### Teachers College, Columbia University
### ORLA Scoring Guide for Qualifying Paper
### APPROVED COPY 01/29/04

Qualifying papers will be holistically scored by two faculty according to the following rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Standards</th>
<th>Does Not Meet High Standards</th>
<th>Meets High Standards</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grasp of Theory</strong></td>
<td>His a poorly developed description of the theory in which the research problem is embedded.</td>
<td>Articulates a clear description of theory in which the problem is embedded.</td>
<td>Articulates a clear description of theory in which the problem is embedded, compares with competing theories and explains why the theory chosen is superior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis of the Problem</strong></td>
<td>Missing or weak description of the problem, identification of issues of practice or policy, and/or major challenges is missing, incomplete, or superficial (i.e. does not include an analysis).</td>
<td>Description of the problem, identification of issues of practice or policy, is comprehensive, accurate, and referenced to appropriate theory. Analysis places issues of practice/policy including major challenges to them within appropriate contexts, (e.g., historical, political, social, legal, economic).</td>
<td>Analysis of the setting, issues of practice/policy, &amp; major challenges is comprehensive, accurate, and referenced to appropriate theory. Analysis places issues of practice/policy &amp; major challenges within appropriate contexts, e.g., historical, political, economic, social, legal. Analysis is referenced to implications for multiple levels of the problem, e.g., district, state &amp; national policy initiatives. Analysis articulates/models the relationships among the factors that create the current challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature Review</strong></td>
<td>The literature fails to represent the knowledge base. The literature is poorly organized. The links between the literature and the research are not made explicit.</td>
<td>The literature represents the knowledge base of the problem, is well organized and summarized. Has selected effectively from existing research to focus on critical studies that are defining or shaping the research agenda.</td>
<td>The literature represents the knowledge base of the problem, is well organized and summarized and goes beyond synthesis to speculate about ill-defined features of the problem, novel considerations or speculative perspectives that arise from the literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mastery of Quantitative and/or Qualitative Research Studies</strong></td>
<td>Does not document, report, understand, or use quantitative and qualitative research appropriately. Does not report or use qualitative or statistical outcomes of research or uses them incorrectly. Conclusions exceed data.</td>
<td>Documents research sources. Interprets research appropriately. References statistical outcomes, effect sizes, scope and significance of research correctly. Reviews qualitative research using appropriate methods, terminology and analytical concepts. Conclusions do not exceed data.</td>
<td>Documents data sources &amp; analyzes validity &amp; reliability. Describes process for interpreting data. Interpretation flows logically &amp; persuasively from the data analysis. Describes plausible alternative interpretations of the data when appropriate. Uses triangulation. References statistical outcomes, effect sizes, scope and significance of research correctly. Reviews qualitative research using appropriate methods. Conclusions do not exceed data but speculate at implications of research reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analytic &amp; Persuasive Writing Competence</strong></td>
<td>Writing style is less than competent. Arguments may not be persuasive. Mechanical errors are numerous and may be distracting.</td>
<td>Writing style is engaging &amp; persuasive. Audience is clear. Supporting points are specific &amp; flow logically. Organizational structure is appropriate. Minor technical errors do not interfere with understanding.</td>
<td>Persuasive purpose &amp; sense of audience are clear &amp; consistently maintained. Supporting points are specific &amp; flow logically. Details are concrete and counterarguments are anticipated &amp; considered. Organizational structure is appropriate &amp; flows in an inductive or deductive pattern. Free of mechanical errors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Content Themes: leading learning/institutional analysis, organizational behavior, management science, policy & politics.
Component Sections of the Qualifying Paper in the Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy Process

1. Title page (containing your name and the names of the advisor and second reader; word count (not to exceed 6000 words); submission date).

2. Executive Summary (not to exceed 1 page). What you are proposing to study, why it is important, what the literature says about it, and overview of the proposed methodology.

3. Table of Contents.

4. Statement of the problem and rationale for tackling it.

5. Background analysis of the problem.

6. Review of the literature.

7. Proposed methodology.

8. References.

9. Appendices (if any).