

# Adult Learning and Leadership



## Tips for Successful Certification



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## What is it all about?

There are two goals of certification:

- Assessment.
- Integrating strands of knowledge in a holistic way.

There are two parts of certification:

- Written exam—demonstrates knowledge of theoretical foundations, the ability to draw on that knowledge, and to think critically about prominent issues and controversies in the field.
- Qualifying Paper—demonstrates capability in integrating theory, research, and practice, as well as an ability to complete a dissertation.

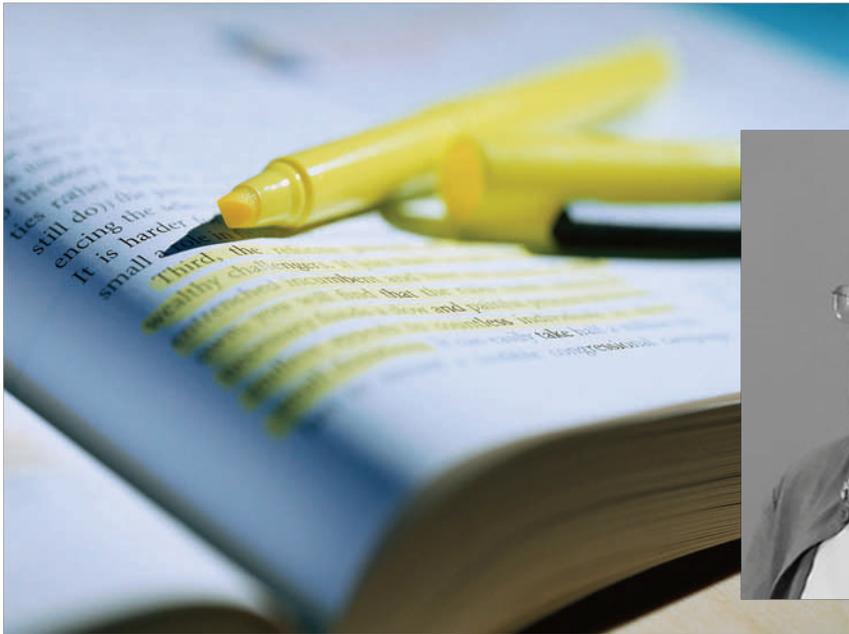
### What they're saying...

“The exam was very fair.”

“You know more than you think you do!”

“I actually had fun writing the exam!”

“The QP was an amazing process!”



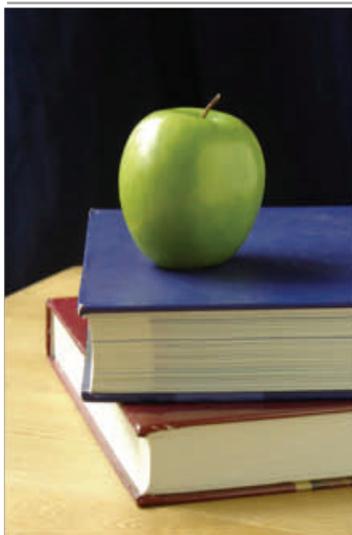
Professor Marsick



## The Certification Exam: Scope and Nature of the Questions

“The three required questions are drawn from the following content areas: 1) transformative learning, 2) self-directed learning, 3) learning through experience), 4) adult development, 4) social action (and related work on critical theory, power and positionality), and 5) program development. Optional questions come from the following content areas: 1) leadership, 2) organizational learning, and 3) postmodernism as it relates to learning.

Each question typically has several parts, and asks you to draw on your knowledge of the theory as it applies to the work of adult educators in settings and contexts of their choice. You will always have some choice about the theorists you write about and the context in which you apply these ideas. There typically are several parts to each question, but we have revised the exam so that the focus of each question is limited in scope. You won't be asked to compare and contrast several theorists, for example. But it is not unusual to be asked to think about the appropriateness, value, and use of a theory of your choice in a particular setting of your choice. It is important that you answer all parts of the question” (Advisement Guide: Program for Adult Learning & Leadership: Guide to the Certification Process, 2008, p. 3).



### The Qualifying Paper—

**Did you know the guidelines are posted on the department website?**

[http://www.tc.columbia.edu/i/a/document/7952\\_CertGuide10-1-08.pdf](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/i/a/document/7952_CertGuide10-1-08.pdf)

#### Favorite Tools:

- Have highlighter...
- Comparison tables
- Mindmaps
- Flash cards
- Post-it notes
- Timed writing and critique
- Talking with others about...



# The Big Day



## Being Strategic

### Arrive early enough to:

If you have a preference for a computer (MAC or PC), be sure to let ODS know in advance.

### Things you can bring inside:

1. A dictionary
2. A beverage
3. Ear plugs

### The examination begins:

**PROMPTLY at 9:00 AM**  
AM Session—Two questions from 9:00 to 12 noon  
PM Session—Two questions from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM

### Things to Think About:

1. Your life leading up to the exam date. Are you planning and prioritizing your time?
2. Workload. Course load. Are you taking on too much?
3. What are your family obligations?
4. Assembling, dividing, summarizing & synthesizing readings.
5. Your practice setting—what is it?
6. Classic and *Current* Research.
7. Learning Styles.
8. Availability
9. Experience
10. Knowledge base
11. Motivation

## Essentials:

Read the question and answer it fully “in a well crafted essay....”

Address every part of the question (multipart)

Time management is critical...balance your time amongst the questions...

How much can you write in 75 minutes? Leave time to go back and edit your work

How much did we write? About 3 to 4 double-spaced pages per question

Remember, you will also have to print your work!

# You can do this!

### Important Paperwork:

- File your Doctoral Course Plan (DCP) and Statement of Total Plan with ODS—requires your advisor’s signature!
- DCP is filed at or before you make Application for Doctoral Certification Exam. Check with ODS.

\*Use this as a Guide Only! Always check with ODS & Registrar

How will you know when you’re ready? While everyone differs, almost everyone we have talked with mentions dreaming about holding conversations with the theorists, or, in their dreams debating or talking with people about the theories and research. Really!