



Developing a humanizing and authentic assessment: Critical thinking, critical consciousness, and the M.A. Comprehensive Exam

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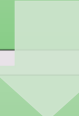
M.A. IN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
APPLIED & ADVANCED STUDIES IN EDUCATION

M.A. in Educational Foundations Program Overview

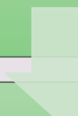
- Cal State LA EDFN program only M.A. in Foundations in SoCal CSU system
 - *Educational Foundations serves an important role in the broader field of education by offering a space for analysis, contemplation and intellectual development toward the goal of improving the lives and learning of other humans. At Cal State LA our program is committed to a loving critique of formal schooling institutions and to being a part of collective change.*
- Mix of K-12 educators (credential students and in-service teachers), higher education professionals, and community educators
- Typically about 30-40 students enrolled in program, currently two full-time faculty plus additional instructors

Timeline of Program Updates

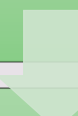
2020: M.A. in Educational Foundations approved as standalone degree program (previously Option)



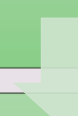
2021-2022 AY: Revision of PLOs and core / elective courses (Curriculum review process)



2022-2023 AY: Development of new comprehensive exam to align with curriculum



Spr. 2023-Fall 2023: Piloting and revision of new comprehensive exam



Spring 2024: New comps exam implemented, planning for next steps

Program Learning Outcomes (implemented Fall 2023)

- **PLO 1.** Students produce graduate-level writing using a variety of formats from the social sciences and humanities, including written summaries, reflections, personal narratives, literature reviews, research reports, and other forms of analytical writing.
- **PLO 2.** Students demonstrate content knowledge constitutive of the field of Educational Foundations through writing assignments, oral presentations, and dialogue with others that draw upon extensive reading and interaction with various forms of media.
- **PLO 3.** Students interpret and discuss contemporary and historical issues relevant to urban schooling, their own experiences with schooling, and educational equity using theories, concepts, ideas, and evidence from research and data sources relevant to the field of Educational Foundations.

Program Learning Outcomes (implemented Fall 2023)

- **PLO 4.** Students develop and articulate normative stances on issues relevant to urban schooling or educational equity informed by theories, concepts, ideas, their own experiences with schooling, and evidence from research and data sources relevant to the field of Educational Foundations.
- **PLO 5.** Students critique contemporary issues relevant to urban schooling, their own experiences with schooling, and/or educational equity using theories, concepts, ideas, and evidence from research and data sources relevant to the field of Educational Foundations and propose alternatives.
- **PLO 6.** Students evaluate and synthesize educational research that incorporates various epistemological and methodological approaches.

Overview of new paper format

- Papers 25-30 pages in length, not including cover page and references list.
- Follow APA formatting guidelines for references and style elements.
- Students encouraged to use first person writing throughout the paper, along with citations from other authors.
- Four Part Paper
- Rubric included in student guidelines

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Part 1: Introduction (~5 pages, 1250 words)

The purpose of this section of the paper is to articulate how you are able to read and study the world with intention and purpose, and how your M.A. has prepared you to be able to use particular theoretical lenses or perspectives. Throughout the rest of the paper, you will demonstrate how you can apply these lenses to your work as an educator.

Guiding Questions for Part 1:

- What framework, methodology, or inquiry strategy will you use to organize this section of your paper? Sample approaches may include (but are not limited to) testimonio, autoethnography, counter-story, or narrative storytelling.
- What epistemological stances or theoretical roots will guide your use of this approach in this section and throughout the rest of the paper (e.g. Indigenous methods, Chicana feminism, CRT)?
- What specific examples from your individual educational trajectory will you select for reflection using these lenses?
- How does your use of these frameworks give you different insights as you reflect on these examples?

Part 2: Analysis of a selected topic in urban education

(8 pages, ~2000 words)

In this section, you will expand your analysis beyond your own educational experiences and select a specific urban educational issue to examine. This might be a pedagogical practice, an educational policy, an aspect of curriculum or school requirements, or a social condition or circumstance that impacts schools, teachers, and learners.

Guiding Questions for Part 2:

- What is the scope of the problem, issue, or topic you have identified?
- What relevant contextual or background details are important for the reader to be familiar with to understand your analysis?
- What theoretical perspectives or frameworks have you learned about during your studies that help you understand this issue?
- What have you learned about the history of U.S. schooling that helps you understand the current circumstances?
- What local, state, or federal policies impact this issue? How do these policies impact the lived experiences of students and educators in schools?
- What is a specific element / impact / aspect of this issue you believe should be changed?

Part 3: Proposing a change (8 pages, ~2000 words)

At the end of Part 2 you identified something you think should be changed. In this section, explain why and how you believe this change can occur. Your proposed solution or alternative(s) should reflect an understanding of praxis and critical change. Include citations to support your claims with evidence.

Guiding Questions for Part 3:

- What is the context for this change? (You might describe details that identify the scope of your proposal, including specific locations or length of time needed)
- Who will be most directly impacted by this change (e.g. specific communities, populations of learners, etc.)?
- What are potential unintended consequences of this change?
- What resources are needed to enact this change? ("Resources" can include material needs like money, time, or access but can also include collectivity, cooperation, and forms of community labor)
- Most social problems involve inequitable distribution or assignment of power. How does your proposed change redistribute or dismantle power in a way that promotes equity and justice?
- What interventions are you capable of contributing to in pursuit of the change goals you identify in this section?

Part 4: Reflection and Next Steps (~5 pages, 1250 words)

In this final section of the paper, you will connect your call for change in education to your plans for growth and development on a personal level. Use this closing section to synthesize and tell the story of how your reflection and growth during your M.A. studies relate to your future as an educator and learner. Explain how you will use the theories, epistemological stances, and methodologies learned through your studies to see and participate in the world differently. Citations included in this section maybe include references to theorists whose work informs your own personal philosophy.

Guiding Questions for Part 4:

- What theories and frameworks have helped you clarify your own guiding philosophy or ideology of education?
- How do you describe your personal ethical commitments as an educator?
- Based on what you have learned from reflecting on your own experiences and embodiments, what do you envision for yourself as an educator in the future?
- How will you live out your personal educational philosophy or ideology in practice?
- Beyond your professional work, how have your studies influenced the way you work with and are in relationship with other humans?
- What professional position do you currently hold or are working to enter soon? How have your studies in Educational Foundations helped you understand this role and how you can contribute toward goals of educational equity and justice?
- What professional positions might you pursue in the future? What steps would be needed to achieve these goals? What areas of study do you hope to continue to pursue, either formally or informally? What learning experiences, readings, or dialogues have helped you imagine your future educational and professional trajectory?

Implementation Spring 2023-Spring 2024

- Students who entered under “old” program plan given option of selected updated or previous comps exam

<i>Semester</i>	# of students following “new” format for EDFN M.A. Comps Exam	# of students following “old” format for EDFN M.A. Comps Exam
Spring 2023	4	7
Fall 2023	1	3
Spring 2024	7	1

Highlights from Student Work

- Examination of CSU Enrollment Target and Budget Reallocation Plan through critical race spatial analysis and decolonial perspectives
- Call for universal TK/early childhood education to focus on Freirean problem-posing pedagogies rather than adopt standardized assessments from K-12; used neoliberalism as analytic tool
- Analysis of district induction programs for new K-12 teachers to “clear” their credentials through lens of culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogies, proposes specific changes to support new educators that move away from external influence of TPAs

Next Steps

- Continue to develop signature assignments in core courses and commonly offered electives, such as:
 - **Research Proposal Paper** in EDFN 5050 (Qualitative Research in Education)
 - **Policy Brief Paper** in EDFN 5520 (Policy Studies in Education)
 - **Community Engaged Praxis Paper** in EDFN/WGSS 5090 (Queer Studies in Education)
 - **Historiography** in EDFN 5070 (History of Education)
 - **Autoethnography** in EDFN 5111 (Anthropology of Education)
 - **Testimonio/ personal narratives** in EDFN 5500 (Contemporary Urban Edu. Theory)
- Develop guidelines for students to engage in peer writing group support