College of Education "Lifeline"

Frequently Asked Questions by Graduate Students

### First Term Enrollment

Validating Admission: Graduate

Major Professor: Upon admission to an Education Specialist or doctoral program, students are required to meet with the department's Graduate Program Coordinator or other program advisor in their first semester to select a Major Professor and form a supervisory committee. The Major Professor will serve as the student's primary academic advisor throughout the course of their program.

Planned Program of Study: The Planned Program of Study form lists the coursework that students must take in order to complete their degree program. Any changes to this document must be formally reviewed and approved by the student's program and the College. The Planned Program of Study is not official until the student, their program advisor, and the Department Chair have signed, and the form is reviewed and approved by the Graduate Support Office.

> Rule of thumb for submission: Master's and Specialist students should submit their Planned Program of Study with all required signatures by the end of their first semester of study. Doctoral students may take a semester or two longer to choose committee members and identify a research focus; they should plan to submit their Planned Program after they have completed 18 hours of coursework, or before they apply for the Qualifying Exam.

Change of Graduate Major

Change of Major: Students may file a Change of Graduate Major Application only after they have validated their admission by completing coursework in their first semester of study. You must also be in good academic standing with a GPA of at least 3.00. Students can only change to a new major at the same or lower degree level as their current major (ex: a Ph.D. to an Ed.S., or an M.A. to an M.Ed.). A Change of Graduate Major restarts the degree time limits and the Catalog year; students will have to meet the **new** Graduate Catalog requirements in place at the time they begin their new major.
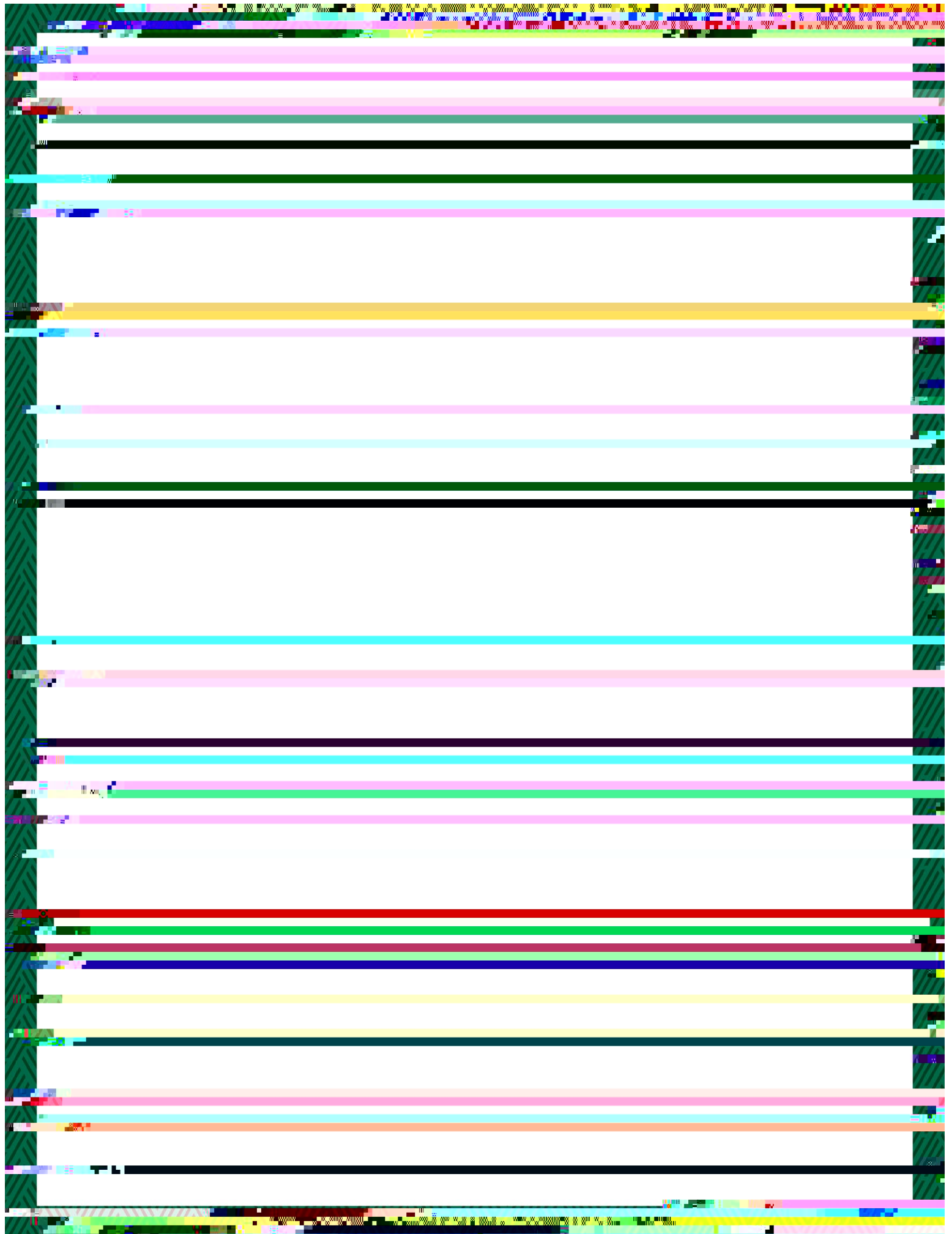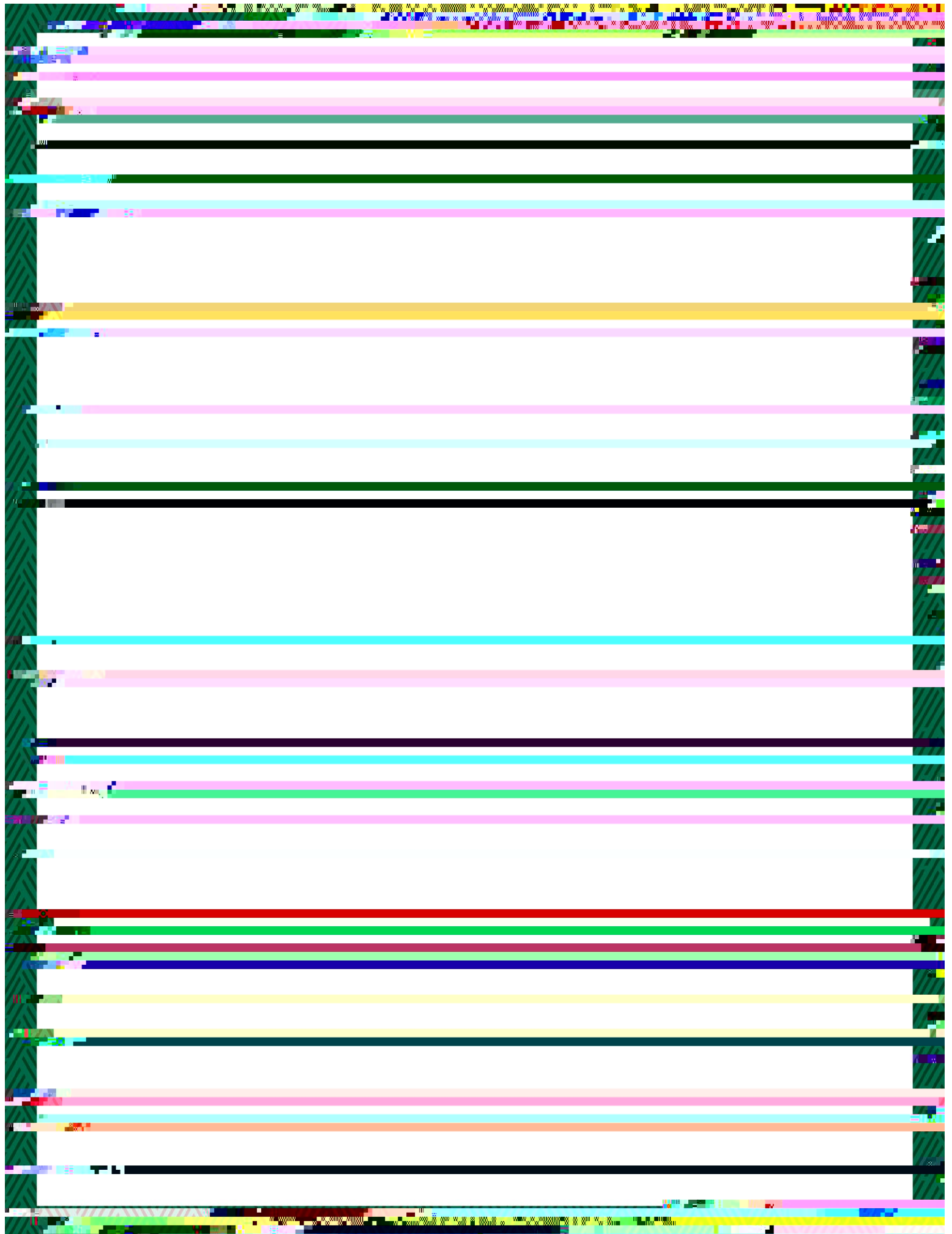
Florida Teacher Certification Requirements

State Certification Programs: Some programs in the College of Education lead to Florida Teaching Certification or state-level endorsement in a specific subject area. To determine what additional courses and/or state exams are required in a state certification program, please contact the program advisor.

Program Internship/Practicum: Students whose programs require an internship or practicum course should check with their program advisor regarding its requirements and deadlines. Some programs require students to submit their application for an internship or practicum one to two semesters in advance.

Test Scores: Some programs require students to complete and pass state teaching exams, including but not limited to the General Knowledge Test (GKT), the Professional Education Exam, and/or Subject Area Exams in your chosen area of study. Check with your advisor at least two semesters prior to graduation to see if any of these exams are required for your program.

Graduation and Commencement

Enrollment in Final Semester: Students must be enrolled in a minimum of **two (2)** credit hours of graduate-level coursework in the semester they apply for graduation, unless they have already completed all of their program's course requirements (including thesis/project or dissertation hours) and required exams like the comprehensive exam.

Applying for Graduation: Students must formally apply to graduate through Student Self-Service. The graduation application must be submitted by the priority application due

Program-Specific Information

Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Programs

Internship: All MAT programs have a required teaching internship that students must complete in order to graduate. Students must apply for Internship at least two semesters in advance. For more information, see the [Clinical Education — Internships](#) page on the College of Education website.

Teacher Certification Exam Scores: All MAT students must take and pass both the state Subject Area Exam (in their selected area of study) and the Professional Education Exam as two of their requirements for graduation. Please contact the MAT program office for more information.

Doctoral Programs: Qualifying Exam and Admission to Candidacy

Doctoral Supervisory Committee: Doctoral students will need to meet with their Program Coordinator in their first few semesters of study to select a Major Professor and form a supervisory committee. Doctoral committees must have a minimum of four (4) members: this includes the student's Major Professor, at least two other members from the student's area of study, and at least one member external to the major or department. Once students have selected their Major Professor and committee members, they must complete and submit a Supervisory Committee Appointment Form to the Graduate Support Office.

> Note: Doctoral students must have an approved supervisory committee form on file to be cleared for program milestones like the Qualifying Exam and admission to candidacy.

Qualifying Exam: Doctoral students must complete the Doctoral Qualifying Exam when they have no more than nine (9) hours of coursework (excluding dissertation hours) left in their program. Students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) credit hours in the semester they take the exam. The College of Education offers both college-wide and program-specific exam options; check with your Major Professor to determine which Qualifying Exam options are available in your program and to obtain additional information regarding the exam.

Applying for Doctoral Candidacy: Once a doctoral student has completed all of their coursework and passed the Qualifying Exam, they must apply for Candidacy before they may begin taking dissertation hours. Students must file an Admission to Candidacy Form in the semester they take and pass the Qualifying Exam, or in the following semester once their exam results are verified. Additionally, students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) credit hours in the semester they submit their application for candidacy.

Doctoral Programs: Dissertation and ETD Submission

Dissertation Hours: Doctoral students who have been admitted to candidacy must register for a minimum of two (2) dissertation hours each semester they work on the dissertation until they reach the minimum number of required dissertation hours for their program. This includes the semester the student defends their dissertation and the semester they submit the dissertation to the ETD Office for publication. Please check with your program advisor or review the Graduate Catalog for the minimum dissertation credit hours required in your program.

Dissertation Defense Sessions: All doctoral students must complete a Proposal Defense and a Final Defense of their dissertation research. Students may not defend their final dissertation in the same semester or within 90 calendar days of the date on which they successfully defended their proposal. Students will need to submit a formal Request for Proposal/Final Defense at least two weeks before they plan to defend their dissertation. To view the Request for Defense forms and other required dissertation paperwork, please visit the Doctoral Dissertation Process webpage.

Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Submission: The Office of Graduate Studies requires all doctoral students to submit their final dissertation to the USF Electronic Thesis & Dissertation (ETD) Office. The final approved dissertation and all required forms and surveys must be uploaded to the ETD website by the semester deadline. Students who miss the final submission deadline will not be approved to graduate in that semester and will need to defer to the next one. For more information on the entire ETD process and current deadlines, please visit the USF Electronic Thesis & Dissertation website.

USF Web Resources

All information in the COEDU Lifeline has been adapted from the resources listed below. Please refer to