

# Educational Researcher Option

## Program Objectives

Students who complete the Educational Researcher option of the Curriculum & Instruction Master's degree are expected to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of a professional researcher.

### Graduates will exhibit:

1. Deep understanding of student development, diversity, and learning processes;
2. Content mastery of the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students;
3. Skill in managing, monitoring, and assessing student learning;
4. Systematic reflection regarding their professional practice and experience; and
5. Commitment to membership in a community of learners.

## Program of Study

<b>Signature Content - 9 credits; choose from the following</b>		<b>9</b>
EDCI 501	Educational Statistics I	
EDU 602	Educational Statistics II	
EDCI 506	Applied Educational Research	
EDU 610	Qualitative Educational Research	
EDU 607	Quantitative Educational Research	
<b>Core Content - 12 credits</b>		<b>12</b>
Four courses appropriate to student's area of specialization and approved by graduate advisor		
<b>Thesis - 9 credits</b>		<b>9</b>
EDCI 590	Master's Thesis	
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

**Note: Even though the Educational Researcher option is an on-campus program, all EDCI core content courses are offered as online only.**

## Master's Thesis

Students pursuing the Educational Researcher option of the Curriculum & Instruction Master's degree will complete a Master's Thesis. See the Graduate School's Defense of Thesis ([http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/policy/degreq\\_masters.html#degreq\\_mast\\_def](http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/policy/degreq_masters.html#degreq_mast_def)) website.

## Written Comprehensive Exam - Thesis

As MEd students in the Educational Researcher option approach the end of their first year of study, they will contact their committee chair to discuss the format, content, and time frame of their Master's Thesis. The content of the Master's Thesis will be an original research project determined by consultation between the chair and the student and must be approved by the student's Master's Committee. Students are required to complete the Master's Thesis using APA format.

The completed Master's Thesis will be submitted to the student's committee for evaluation. Committee members will have approximately two weeks to read and evaluate the content and written competency (quality, thoroughness, and completeness of the research) of the thesis.

## Oral Comprehensive Exam - Thesis Defense

Following the Written Comprehensive Exam, the student will give an oral presentation and defense of the thesis. Students can be queried about all areas of program content during the oral presentation and thesis defense. The presentation will be evaluated for research content and oral competency.

The committee chair will facilitate the meeting and the order of questioning. Committee members can ask follow-up and clarifying questions in all areas. At the completion of the questioning and in the absence of the student, the entire committee will discuss their evaluation of the oral presentation and thesis defense. The chair will lead the committee to a determination regarding the passing or failing of both the written and oral components of the thesis.

The thesis defense is graded with either a passing or failing grade - determined by a majority committee vote. The student will officially pass the written and oral components of the thesis by demonstrating evidence of knowledge of pertinent literature, academic and theoretical grounding, development of professional skills, and the ability to conduct effective educational research.

A "fail" occurs when a majority of the committee determines that a student has not demonstrated sufficient evidence of knowledge of pertinent literature, academic and theoretical grounding, development of professional skills, or the ability to conduct effective educational research. A failure on either portion of the thesis is considered to be a failed exam. A failed defense may be repeated once. At least two months must elapse before the second defense takes place.

Failure to pass a second thesis defense results in termination of graduate study and dismissal from the academic program. Students who are dismissed from the program due to a failed thesis are ineligible to reapply to the same degree program at any time.

Note: The comprehensive exams must be completed by the posted Graduate School deadlines. Students should refer to the Graduate School's web page at: [http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/policy/degreq\\_doctoral.html](http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/policy/degreq_doctoral.html) and the Department of Education Graduate Handbook at <https://www.montana.edu/education/grad/handbook/index.html> (<https://www.montana.edu/education/grad/handbook/>) for more detailed information on comprehensive exams.