

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies

Resolution 2021-22A

Resolution to Discontinue the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Research and Evaluation (EDRE)

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| Approved by the Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies: | May 5, 2021 |
| Faculty Senate waived right to comment: | April 24, 2021 |
| Staff Senate waived right to comment: | May 19, 2021 |
| Graduate and Professional Student Senate waived right to comment: | May 8, 2021 |
| Undergraduate Student Senate waived right to comment: | April 21, 2021 |
| First Reading by University Council: | September 20, 2021 |
| Second Reading by University Council: | |
| Approved by the President: | |
| Approved by the Board of Visitors: | |
| Effective: | Fall 2026 |

WHEREAS, the PhD Doctoral degree in Educational Research and Evaluation (EDRE) was flagged by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) in 2020 as being below the minimum quantitative standards for degrees awarded, in accordance with SCHEV guidelines for program viability; and

WHEREAS, the PhD degree in EDRE was established prior to 1992 to create an avenue for preparation to enter the faculty or industry; and

WHEREAS, the EDRE degree has been available to students in the School of Education at Virginia Tech since the organization of the SOE in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the EDRE program will continue to provide courses and certificates to students in the School of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, and other university colleges;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Doctoral degree in Educational Research and Evaluation be discontinued, effective Fall 2026, and the proposal forwarded to the President, Board of Visitors, and State Council of Higher Education for Virginia for approval.

STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA
Intent to Discontinue an Academic Program Cover Sheet

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|---|--|
| 1. Institution Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | 2. Type of Program (Check one): Degree program <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certificate program <input type="checkbox"/> Degree/Certificate Designation <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Program name Educational Research and Evaluation | |
| 4. Degree/certificate designation PhD | 5. CIP code 13.0603 |
| 6. Degree program approval date by Council BCHE | |
| 7. Certificate program acknowledgement date by SCHEV | |
| 8. Date (semester/year) beyond which no new enrollments will be accepted: Fall 2021 | 9. Teach-out date: (semester/year) to (semester/year): Fall 2021 to Spring 2026 |
| 10. Desired termination date for reporting degrees/certificates (semester and year) Fall 2026 | 11. Date approved by Board of Visitors |
| 12. For community colleges: date approved by local board date approved by State Board for Community Colleges | |
| 13. For Critical Shortage Area Only. Check all that apply. Explain in attached narrative <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lack of student demand <input type="checkbox"/> State-wide public program duplication <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of market demand <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of institutional resources </div> </div> | |
| 14. List of constituents impacted by action. Currently enrolled graduate students. | |
| 15. If collaborative or joint program, identify collaborating institution(s). Note: Each collaborating institution must submit a separate "Intent to Discontinue" form. | |
| 16. Name, title, telephone number(s), and email address of person(s) other than the institution's chief academic officer who may be contacted by or may be expected to contact Council staff regarding the discontinuance. <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> Nancy Bodenhorn, Associate Director, School of Education, nanboden@vt.edu, 540-231-8180 Dr. C. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu, (540) 231-7548 </div> | |

Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Proposed Intent to Discontinue | 1 |
| Background | 1 |
| Critical Shortage Area..... | 1 |
| Teach-out Plan | 1 |

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Proposed Intent to Discontinue

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) requests to discontinue the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Research and Evaluation degree program (CIP code: 13.0603). The degree program is located in the School of Education in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences.

Background

The Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation was initiated before the establishment of the Council of Higher Education. Since 2013, enrollment in the degree program has steadily declined. During the course of the 2019/2020 State Council of Higher Education (SCHEV) productivity review process, the Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation degree program was targeted as a program that was not meeting the standards set forth in the Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Program Productivity. Based on the information contained within the productivity review process, administration within the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences determined that the program should be discontinued.

Rationale for Intent to Discontinue

Enrollment and degree completions for the Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation program have steadily declined since 2013 and it has become increasingly difficult to recruit new students into the program. Based on the data and information contained within the productivity review process, the declining enrollment, and input from the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, the institution made the decision to close the degree program.

Critical Shortage Area

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Research and Evaluation degree program is not a critical shortage area.

Teach-out Plan

A total of 12 are currently enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Research and Evaluation degree program. Six (6) students have completed required coursework for the program, are currently in the research and dissertation phase of the program, and are expected to graduate by spring 2023. Four (4) students will complete the required coursework for the program in the Spring 2021 semester, will then begin the research and dissertation phase of the program, and are expected to graduate by Spring 2024. The remaining two (2) students in the program are currently in the process of developing Plans of Study and will be offered the opportunity to complete the Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation or switch to another program of their choosing.

Should a current student in the Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation degree program leave the university and not complete the program by the Fall of 2026, the School of Education is committed to working with the students to identify a path for completion in another program within the university that meets their needs.

“Stopped Out” Students

The nine (9) students that have “stopped out” since 2010 have been considered. Seven (7) of the students have completed the required coursework for the degree program but have not completed the research and dissertation phase of the program. Two (2) students have not completed the required coursework or developed Plans of Study. There is a 5-year period in which students may return and complete the Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation degree program. This group of students will be notified in writing about the discontinuation of the degree program. The School of Education faculty will assist students through the transition process.

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies
Resolution 2020-2021F
Resolution to Discontinue the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Research and
Evaluation (EDRE)

Recommended by the Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies

First Reading:

Faculty Senate:

Staff Senate:

Graduate Student Assembly:

Student Government Association:

Second Reading:

Approved by University Council:

Approved by the President:

Effective: Fall 2026

WHEREAS, the PhD Doctoral degree in Educational Research and Evaluation (EDRE) was flagged by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) in 2020 as being below the minimum quantitative standards for degrees awarded, in accordance with SCHEV guidelines for program viability; and

WHEREAS, the PhD degree in EDRE was established prior to 1992 to create an avenue for preparation to enter the faculty or industry; and

WHEREAS, the EDRE degree has been available to students in the School of Education at Virginia Tech since the organization of the SOE in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the EDRE program will continue to provide courses and certificates to students in the School of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, and other university colleges;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Doctoral degree in Educational Research and Evaluation be discontinued, effective Fall 2026, and the proposal forwarded to the President, Board of Visitors, and State Council of Higher Education for Virginia for approval.

STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA
Intent to Discontinue an Academic Program Cover Sheet

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| 1. Institution Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | 2. Type of Program (Check one): Degree program <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certificate program <input type="checkbox"/> Degree/Certificate Designation <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Program name Educational Research and Evaluation | |
| 4. Degree/certificate designation Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) | 5. CIP code 13.0603 |
| 6. Degree program approval date by Council Before Council of Higher Education | |
| 7. Certificate program acknowledgement date by SCHEV | |
| 8. Date (semester/year) beyond which no new enrollments will be accepted: Fall 2021 | 9. Teach-out date: (semester/year) to (semester/year): Fall 2021 to Spring 2026 |
| 10. Desired termination date for reporting degrees/certificates (semester and year) Fall 2026 | 11. Date approved by Board of Visitors |
| 12. For community colleges: date approved by local board date approved by State Board for Community Colleges | |
| 13. For Critical Shortage Area Only. Check all that apply. Explain in attached narrative <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lack of student demand <input type="checkbox"/> State-wide public program duplication <input type="checkbox"/> Other </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of market demand <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of institutional resources </div> </div> | |
| 14. List of constituents impacted by action. Currently enrolled graduate students. | |
| 15. If collaborative or joint program, identify collaborating institution(s). Note: Each collaborating institution must submit a separate “Intent to Discontinue” form. | |
| 16. Name, title, telephone number(s), and email address of person(s) other than the institution’s chief academic officer who may be contacted by or may be expected to contact Council staff regarding the discontinuance. | |

Nancy Bodenhorn, Associate Director, School of Education, nanboden@vt.edu, 540-231-8180, or C. Noel Byrd, AVP for Degree Innovation & SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu, 540-231-7548.



Office of the Executive Vice
President and Provost

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August 2, 2021

Dr. Belle Wheelan
President
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033

Dear Dr. Wheelan,

Virginia Tech seeks approval to discontinue the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program in Educational Research and Evaluation (EDRE). This program is offered in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and has suffered declining enrollments since 2013. During a recent degree productivity review conducted by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), the degree production of this program was cited as not meeting the standards set by the Council in the Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Program Productivity. Given the difficulty the program has experienced in recruiting new students to the program, the leadership team within the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences determined that the program should be discontinued.

It is expected that this proposal will be approved by the faculty via the internal governance process and is likely to be submitted to the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors at the November 2021 meeting.

Substantive Change Cover Sheet: The substantive change cover sheet is attached.

Closure date: We anticipate that the approval from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) will be granted with a closure date of Fall 2021. No students have contacted the program director with an interest in enrolling in the program in Fall 2021.

How affected students, faculty, and staff will be informed of the impending closure: Students and their advisors were informed via email of the issues with the low degree production and the likelihood of closing the program as a result. Each student was assured that plans would be put in place that would enable the student to complete their EDRE degree should the degree program be closed.

Students who have "stopped out" since 2010 will be notified in writing about the discontinuation of the degree and their options for completing the degree.

Faculty members who teach in the EDRE met with the Director of the School of Education to discuss the productivity review findings and to discuss the possibility of closing the program.

How all affected students will be helped to complete their programs of study: Instruction in the program will continue to be offered through 2026 with the intent of providing sufficient time for all students to complete the program. The Associate Director of the School of Education's Office of Academic Program has reviewed the Programs of Study for the current students and will be working with faculty to ensure that all of the required courses needed by the students will continue to be offered in a timeframe that will allow students to complete the program by 2026. Currently, there are 10 students in the PhD program. All ten have established timelines that will allow them to complete their degrees by the end of Spring 2026. If any of these students find that they are unable to complete the PhD in Educational Research

and Evaluation and are in good academic standing, they will also be afforded the opportunity to switch to another program of their choosing.

Should a current student in the program leave the university and not complete the program by the Spring of 2026, the School of Education is committed to working with that student to identify a suitable path for completion in another program within the university.

Nine students that have stopped out have been considered. There is a 5-year period in which students may return and complete the PhD in EDRE degree program. As indicated above, this group of students will be notified in writing of the discontinuation of the degree program. The School of Education faculty will assist students who express interest in completing a degree.

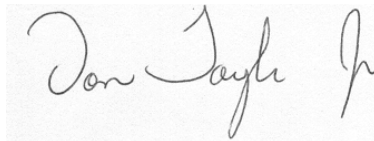
Students subject to the teach-out plan will not incur additional charges: Not applicable. Students will not incur any charges related to the closure of this program.

Copies of signed teach-out agreements with other institutions, if applicable: Not Applicable.

A description of how faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment: Faculty and staff associated with this program were not assigned exclusively to this program and will continue to work with other programs at the university. Specifically, the EDRE faculty have been assured that they will be retained as faculty, and these faculty are discussing how they might collaborate with other degree programs at the university.

If you need additional information regarding this closure, please feel free to contact me (taylorgd@vt.edu) or Dr. Kristen Bush (khbush@vt.edu).

Sincerely,



G. Don Taylor, PhD
Virginia Tech Liaison and Executive Vice Provost

Attachment: 1

Cc: Dr. Cyril Clarke, Executive Vice President and Provost
Dr. Laura Belmonte, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences
Dr. Nancy Bodenhorn, Assistant Program Director, School of Education
Dr. Karen DePauw, Vice President and Dean of Graduate Education
Mr. Rick Sparks, University Registrar
Dr. Kristen Bush, Assistant Provost, Regional Accreditation



VirginiaTech

College of Liberal Arts
and Human Sciences

Office of Academic Programs

School of Education (0313)

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

540/231-8180 Fax: 540/231-3717

www.soe.vt.edu

To whom it may concern:

January 26, 2021

I approve of the request for the discontinuance of the PhD degree in Educational Research and Evaluation (EDRE) as of 2021. As explained in the attached material, no additional students will be enrolled in the degree program, and all students will complete the degree by 2026.

This change should not impact a variety of opportunities for students and faculty. The EDRE faculty will continue to teach research methods courses for doctoral students in the School of Education and across the university. Additionally, the faculty will continue to provide a certificate in EDRE, which will allow doctoral students to present their expertise in research methodologies. The faculty will also continue to provide methodological expertise on dissertation committees as members or co-chairs.

No new resources will be needed for the School of Education due to this degree discontinuance.

Nancy Bodenhorn, Associate Director

Office of Academic Programs

School of Education

Virginia Tech

nanboden@vt.edu 540-231-8180

Invent the Future

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Educational Research and Evaluation

PhD degree discontinuance

Teach-out plan

Justification: SCHEV flagged the Educational Research and Evaluation (EDRE) PhD degree for low quantitative degree production in 2019. The degree has produced 1 – 2 students annually for the past five years. The College determined that the degree should be discontinued due to the number of graduates and enrolled students.

Number of students: As of December 2020, 12 students were enrolled in the EDRE degree. Six of these students have completed their coursework and are working on dissertation hours. Four students have completed all but three courses, all of which will be completed in Spring 2021. Two students have newly enrolled in the degree and do not yet have Plans of Studies. The Plans, once developed, will be honored to be able to provide the education in which these students enrolled. Other students across the university enroll in individual EDRE courses, so offering these courses is consistent with the continued mission of the program. Program faculty will also continue to offer a graduate certificate program.

Last term to enroll in the program: No students will be enrolled in the degree after Spring semester 2021.

Last term to graduate in the program: Fall 2026

Communication: Current students and faculty in EDRE were notified in writing or in person in November 2020, within two weeks of notification from the College. School of Education non-EDRE doctoral students were notified in December 2020. All faculty and staff in the School of Education were notified in January 2021.

Consideration given to “Stop-outs”: The nine (9) students that have “stopped out” since 2010 have been considered. Seven (7) of the students have completed the required coursework for the degree program but have not completed the research and dissertation phase of the program. Two (2) students have not completed the required coursework or developed Plans of Study. There is a 5-year period in which students may return and complete the Ph.D. in Educational Research and Evaluation degree program. This group of students will be notified in writing about the discontinuation of the degree program. The School of Education faculty will assist students through the transition process.

Transitioning returning students: A different degree would not likely work for a returning student, as the courses are specific to this degree. School of Education faculty and administrators will work with returning students as needed to provide appropriate suggestions and support.

2021.xx.x

**RESOLUTION TO DISCONTINUE THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.)
DEGREES IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION (EDRE),**

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Approved, Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies | [date] |
| Approved, University Council | [date] |
| Approved, President | [date] |
| Approved, Board of Visitors | [date] |
| Effective Date: | [Fall 2026] |

WHEREAS, the PhD Doctoral degree in Educational Research and Evaluation (EDRE) was flagged by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) in 2020 as being below the minimum quantitative standards for degrees awarded, in accordance with SCHEV guidelines for program viability; and

WHEREAS, the PhD degree in EDRE was established prior to 1992 to create an avenue for preparation to enter the faculty or industry; and

WHEREAS, the EDRE degree has been available to students in the School of Education at Virginia Tech since the organization of the SOE in 2005; and

WHEREAS, the EDRE program will continue to provide courses and certificates to students in the School of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, and other university colleges;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Doctoral Degree in Educational Research and Evaluation be discontinued, effective Fall 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

That discontinuation of the doctoral degree in Educational Research and Evaluation be approved.