# Steps to Graduating and Participating in Commencement
### (See the next page for an overview of important dates.)

**Step 1:  Apply for Graduation**
After Graduate Studies receives and approves your Program of Study Form, you will receive an e-mail directing you to complete the Application for Graduation.  The current Application for Graduation form is available on the WKU Educational Leadership Doctoral Program website *Program Profession and Forms* page (http://edtech.wku.edu/programs/doctorate/program-prog_forms.htm) under "Graduation and Commencement Information and Forms."  When completing the Application to the Office of the Registrar, please be prepared to pay the $200 doctoral graduation fee.  *In order to be eligible to graduate (and participate in the upcoming commencement, if applicable), you must complete the Application for Graduation by February 1 (spring graduation, May commencement), May 15 (summer graduation, December commencement), or September 25 (fall graduation, December commencement).*

**Step 2:  Schedule and Successfully Defend Your Dissertation**
With your dissertation chair, complete and submit your EDD Form 5 to schedule your dissertation defense. *Your successful defense must occur no later than March 18 in order for you to complete in a timely manner the remaining steps described below.*

**Step 3:  Complete the Commencement Participation Confirmation Form**
*After you have successfully defended your dissertation*, complete the Commencement Participation Confirmation Form (also available on the website under "Graduation and Commencement Information and Forms").  Be sure to heed the other important dates and information provided on the form you must follow to be able to participate in commencement.

**Step 4:  Submit Printed and Electronic Dissertation Copies to Doctoral Studies for Final Reading**
At your dissertation defense, your committee will likely instruct you to make various changes to your dissertation before it is considered final.  After the dissertation chair has approved these changes, your document must receive final approval by the Director of Doctoral Studies before you may submit it to Graduate Studies.  Doctoral Studies will review your document to ensure that it meets the formatting described in the Graduate Studies Thesis/Dissertation Guidelines.  *Your dissertation must be submitted to Doctoral Program office no later than April 1*.  If the dissertation is relatively error free, Doctoral Studies will inform you of any last edits to be made and provide documentation for you to take to Graduate Studies that your dissertation has been reviewed and approved.  *Please note that multiple formatting or other errors in your dissertation may delay your ability to move on to Step 5*.

**Step 5:  Submit Your Finalized Dissertation to Graduate Studies**
You must submit your finalized dissertation to Graduate Studies no later than April 22.  Review the information provided by Graduate Studies about Depositing Theses, Specialist Projects and Dissertations to ensure that you are ready to submit.

**Step 6:  Await Final Approval from Graduate Studies Regarding Graduation**
Upon receiving your finalized dissertation, Graduate Studies will review your Program of Study Form and other documents submitted to verify that you have successfully completed all aspects of your program.

**Important Final Note:**  Although we do not anticipate that students who comply with all the steps described above will be delayed in graduating, it is still within the Dean of Graduate Studies' discretion to delay your graduation date.  However, with rare exceptions, you should still be able to participate in commencement.

**IMPORTANT GRADUATION DEADLINES FOR WKU DOCTORAL STUDENTS**

Note:  Deadlines may fluctuate from year to year.  In any given year, dates that fall on a weekend should be moved _back_ to the previous Friday.

| EVENT | SPRING 2016 |
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| **Visit WKU Store**<br>(_Purchasing_ **Regalia**) | N/A |
| **Apply for Graduation no later than** | February 1 |
| **Attend Grad Fair**<br>(_Renting_ **Regalia**) | N/A |
| **Schedule Defense By** | March 11 |
| **Successfully Defend** | March 18 |
| **Complete Commencement Participation Confirmation Form** | March 18 |
| **Submit Dissertation to Doctoral Studies** | **April 1** |
| **Submit Dissertation to Graduate Studies** | **April 22** |