

## What to Do Before Applying to the Cultural Studies in Education Ph.D. Concentration

We are glad you are considering applying to the USU Cultural Studies in Education PhD Concentration. As you do this, please examine the description of the concentration on the TEAL website to ensure it aligns with your interests. As it states, “The Cultural Studies concentration in Teacher Education and Leadership is an interdisciplinary program that examines social, cultural, philosophical, and historical issues in education and society. The critical nature of this program gives attention to race, gender, class, language, sexuality, and ability in the contexts of schooling, culture, and society” (<http://teal.usu.edu/graduate/phd/phd-cultural-studies1>).

The list below provides advice for potential applicants interested in the Cultural Studies concentration. Your application is enhanced when it is clear that you understand the program well and it aligns with your own interests and goals. It is a good idea to mention these items in your application materials.

- Review profiles of faculty in the CS program (<http://teal.usu.edu/graduate/phd/phd-cultural-studies1>).
- Pick one or two faculty whose research aligns with your interests and review their profiles and a few of their publications in more detail.
- Contact the faculty members that you may be interested in working with and inform them of your potential research interests and background. They will be happy to meet with you and learn more about you.
- Carefully prepare for and take the GRE. Consider using a study guide to help improve your scores.
- Work to understand some broader issues of equity that are inherent to the Cultural Studies Ph.D concentration.
  - Familiarize yourself with practitioner-oriented resources related to cultural studies such as the publications *Rethinking Schools* (<https://www.rethinkingschools.org/>) or *Teaching Tolerance* (<https://www.tolerance.org/>). You could also review curriculum guides such as *Rethinking Ethnic Studies* (<https://www.rethinkingschools.org/books/title/rethinking-ethnic-studies>).
  - You may also review some academic journals in the CS area such as the *International Journal of Multicultural Education* (free and open-access <http://ijme-journal.org/index.php/ijme>), *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, *Urban Review*, or *Theory and Research in Social Education*.
- These materials give you a glimpse of the kinds of things scholars in Cultural Studies in the field of education study. It is possible to combine these kinds of equity-oriented topics with pedagogical areas such as literacy, language education, STEM education, social studies education, and more.

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- Letters of application are enhanced by in depth discussion of your own research interests, your passion for equity, and your desire to be a part of the USU Cultural Studies in Education concentration.
- If your own areas of interest are not reflected in the Cultural Studies concentration description, think about whether this is the right program for you. If you believe it is, be sure to articulate how your own interests connect to the larger program. Help the CS faculty understand how you would be a good fit in the program.

Best of luck with your application. The Cultural Studies faculty look forward to talking with you and reviewing your application.