The colloquia doctoral competencies and learning outcomes are embedded in the colloquium curriculum. Academic sessions highlight the competencies in titles, in content, and in the learning activities that you will engage with. The competencies we focus on at colloquia are reflected in the University Doctoral Outcomes and therefore, are aligned with what you will accomplish in your coursework, during the comprehensive examination and finally, as you focus on the independent research phase of the program (the dissertation).  

At colloquium, learners address specific competencies at increasingly complex levels of application as they progress through coursework and complete the colloquia requirement. For example, in the early phase of the doctoral program, academic skill competencies associated with library research and academic writing are applied to coursework on a daily basis. As required coursework is completed and specialization courses are taken, application of competencies reflects advanced application to concepts, theory, and research within specialization specific coursework. Finally, as coursework is completed, the competencies accrued over this phase of the program position the learner to progress to the comprehensive examination capstone requirement.

At colloquium, the doctoral competencies and correlated learning outcomes are achieved through multiple channels of experience delivered by faculty, by the curriculum itself, through participation in the learner/learning community, and through support provided by learner support resources. Four doctoral competencies are addressed in the teaching, on site mentoring, and learning activities offered at each colloquium.

- Scholar practitioner
- Critical thinker
- Researcher
- Professional communicator

It is essential to note, when reviewing the colloquia doctoral competencies, that these are core competencies supported by the literature on doctoral education. It is this set of competencies that is central to successful completion of the doctoral degree and to the learner’s doctoral transformation of becoming a scholar practitioner.

1 (Note: Refer to the Glossary of Colloquia Terms for definitions of words used in this presentation.)
The doctoral transformation: Doctoral learners pursuing the degree will be changed, transformed by the experience as they acquire mastery of these competencies through engagement with academic coursework, personal reflection, interaction with faculty, and completion of a structured yet flexible colloquia curriculum. This highly personal journey, referred to as “Becoming Doctoral”, unfolds in individual ways. The colloquia provide the in-person, real time opportunities for faculty and staff to engage with learners in an academically challenging yet supportive environment geared around supporting learners in development of the competencies. Concurrent with this evolving learner experience is identification with one’s specialization and acquiring a professional identity within the discipline. Sensitivity to how this unfolds within each discipline is incorporated into the colloquium experience.

1. Scholar Practitioner Competency
   The scholar practitioner competency focuses on a model of professional behavior and capabilities that blends the attributes of scholarship and practice. Learners at colloquia directly experience this model in sessions that describe their discipline and afford opportunities for application. Additional opportunities to explore one’s emerging professional identity are provided by interaction with faculty, observing faculty professional behavior, through interaction with peers, participation in elective and specialization colloquium sessions, communication with staff, and through insights gained by identifying needs for continuing development.

   The colloquia curriculum contains scholar-practitioner content sessions for each Track that include a defined set of activities that enable application and competency development.

   Learning objectives:

   1.1 Learners will assess their own knowledge and level of understanding of the scholar practitioner role;
1.2 Learners will be able to define the attributes and dispositions of the scholar practitioner within their respective disciplines;
1.3 Learners will develop a plan to strengthen or refine their knowledge and academic skills related to the scholar practitioner within their discipline;
1.4 Learners will demonstrate their ability to apply the concept of scholar practitioner to a professional problem or opportunity;
1.5 Learners will interact with scholar-practitioner faculty, peers and University learner resource staff as a developing scholar-practitioner;
1.6 Learners will consider refining coursework plans based on self-assessment of their scholar-practitioner knowledge and skills.

2. Critical Thinker Competency
Within the parameters of becoming doctoral, the critical thinker/analyst competency is an aspect of the scholar-practitioner role. Developing the capacity to think critically and analyze information represents an academic skill set that is vital to success as a doctoral learner. The colloquia curriculum, faculty, and learner support resources are dedicated to contributing to the learner’s understanding of what critical thinking and analysis is and how it can be applied to every aspect of the doctoral journey. In addition, the critical thinker competency is developed within the context of the learner’s discipline/field and specialization through participation in sessions and activities that are presented by each school.

Learning objectives:

2.1 Learners will be able to assess their own knowledge and level of understanding of critical thinking at the doctoral level;
2.2 Learners will be able to analyze the characteristics of advanced critical thinking skills;
2.3 Learners will develop a plan to strengthen or refine their abilities to acquire critical thinking skills;
2.4 Learners will demonstrate their ability to think critically and analytically through interactions and applications with faculty, peers, and learner support resource experts;
2.5 Learners will be able to prepare for or refine application of academic coursework linked to developing critical thinking at the doctoral level;
2.6 Learners will be able apply critical thinking skills during discipline specific colloquium sessions and meetings.

3. Researcher Competency
The capacity to understand, consume, interpret, produce, and use research is a core element of the scholar-practitioner role. Learners are expected to acquire this capacity as they progress through academic coursework that focuses intensely on research methods and as they prepare to conduct original research for the dissertation. At colloquia, the multiple contexts provided for learner development of this competency include opportunities to explore research methods, design and skills; acquire research knowledge and understanding; and learn about and practice certain research skill sets. The content sessions contained in the curriculum include a significant number of sessions that are
designed to affirm and extend understanding of research methods that have been the subject of coursework. For other learners, these sessions provide opportunities to review research concepts in preparation for academic research coursework requirements. In addition, through participation in research sessions on various quantitative or qualitative methods and designs, for example, learners may be motivated to pursue coursework that covers the content in greater depth.

Other research focused colloquium activities provide learners with an opportunity to gain insights about the research process that can clarify the stages of research, normalize the psychological or emotional aspects of the researcher’s experience, provide insights into management and organization of the research activity, and expose learners to skills and tools that will support research activities. This developmental progression is fostered at colloquium as learners are introduced to research, gain competence in using research, and ultimately focus on the research skills necessary to conduct independent research. Discipline specific research qualities and characteristics are also explored through specialization specific sessions offered by the schools that support learner identification with the profession.

**Learning objectives:**

3.1 Learners will assess their own knowledge and level of understanding of research and how it is applied to doctoral research activities;
3.2 Learners will be able to analyze and evaluate their own academic research skills;
3.3 Learners will be able to develop a plan to strengthen or refine their research skills;
3.4 Learners will demonstrate the ability to engage with peers and interact with faculty regarding research and the role of researcher within their respective disciplines;
3.5 Learners will be able to prepare for or refine application of academic coursework linked to developing research skills and proficiencies;
3.6 Learners will be able to apply research analysis skills and understanding to capstone doctoral requirements (i.e., comprehensive examination and dissertation).

4. **Professional Communicator Competency**
The scholar-practitioner role includes capabilities to communicate professionally using diverse methods. The Capella University doctoral graduate is expected to demonstrate advanced mastery of scholarship that is presented in written, text-based formats. Opportunity to develop this aspect of the professional communicator competency is evident in requirements associated with completion of online coursework and through interaction via electronic or telephonic means with faculty and learner support resource experts. At colloquium, learners engage in self-assessment activities and demonstration of communication proficiencies including but not limited to scholarly writing, proper use of referencing for scholarly writing, and oral presentation or interaction. Aspects of self-assessment will be discipline specific in order to reflect the professional
communication requirements within the various fields of practice and scholarship. The content and learner support sessions dedicated to professional communicator proficiencies provide learners with a real time, in person experience leading to deeper self understanding and practice opportunities to apply this competency.

**Learning objectives:**

4.1 Learners will assess their own knowledge and level of competence with professional communication skills appropriate to the scholar-practitioner;

4.2 Learners will be able to analyze and evaluate the interface of the professional communicator competency with their discipline;

4.3 Learners will be able to demonstrate aspects of the professional communicator competency through specific colloquia activities;

4.4 Learners will be able to develop a plan to refine or strengthen professional communication skills;

4.5 Learners will demonstrate the ability to access professional communication resources at colloquium;

4.6 Learners will demonstrate the ability to apply professional communication skills while participating in colloquia and through interaction with faculty, peers, learner support resource experts, and School staff.

**Summary Comment**

When describing the doctoral colloquia competencies, we are careful to acknowledge that the doctoral transformation, that development of these competencies reflects, is not easily categorized into discrete stages when viewed from the perspective of each individual learner. Therefore, faculty view this doctoral competencies framework as a “work in progress” that seeks to be sensitive and mindful of the dynamic nature of the learning experience across the doctoral program.