

## THINKING ABOUT DOCTORAL STUDIES ...

The prospect of pursuing doctoral studies can be daunting. The following questions may help you in thinking about and shaping your doctoral experience and guide you in some of your early decisions. These same questions may provide a framework for your early conversations with faculty as you gain more information about the doctoral experience at KU.

### *Professional goals and career directions*

- What factors, experiences or questions prompted you to consider pursuing a doctoral program?
- As you think about your long-term professional goals, what contributions to the field of special education do you hope to make in your professional career?
- How does advanced study leading to a doctoral degree at KU help you meet these goals?
- What role do you expect to pursue upon completion of your degree -- college/university faculty (teacher educator), researcher, administrator, professional development specialist, policy analyst? What position do you expect to hold five to ten years after receiving your degree?

### *Exploration of degree option*

- What degree option do you intend to work toward – the Ed.D. or the Ph.D.?
- What is your rationale for selecting this degree?
- How does this degree prepare you for achieving your professional goals?

### *Area of specialization/ Minor area of concentration*

- Which specialization area do you plan to pursue in your doctoral program? What is your rationale for selecting this specialization for advanced study leading to the doctoral degree?
- How has your previous graduate work prepared you for advanced study in this area?
- What are three or four major questions in this area that advanced coursework could help you answer?
- What are your areas of interest in related fields outside special education that support your area of specialization and research interests?

### *Research interests*

- If you completed a thesis for your master's program, what was your research question and what was your rationale for selecting it?

### *Proposed research*

- What are two research questions have you tentatively considered exploring?