



Dedication

In late 2006, shortly after I got married, I told my husband that I was thinking about returning to school. At that time, I wanted to start the Certificate in Advanced IB Studies Program at George Mason, beginning with EDUC 621. I suspected that I would finish that program and earn a certificate. However, upon meeting Dr. Beverly Shaklee and learning about the PhD in Education Program at George Mason and specifically about the international education concentration, I knew that I had found what I had been seeking for many years, a doctoral program that encompassed all of my interests in education, policy, social justice, and culture as well as my recently developed interest in the International Baccalaureate.

When I entered the program in spring 2008, I knew that I would be working and going to school full-time. I had done that before, when I earned a second bachelor's degree in 1996 and again, when I earned a master's degree in 1997. It was hard at times but also fulfilling. I could not have done any of it without the support systems I had in place at the time as well as my own determination to be successful.

As I have been working on this doctoral program, I have worked continuously until this semester. My husband, Jeremiah, has been an endless source of support and strength to me. I will be the first to admit that I don't always make it easy but I do appreciate both his love and willingness to "let me be" when I have a deadline to meet or am just stuck in my head. He has no idea how much I love him and how much I owe my ability to stay sane to his capacity to balance out my madness. All of my work is dedicated to him.