

Stephen F. Austin State University

James I. Perkins College of Education

Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership



Educational Leadership Doctoral Student Handbook

****Program approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**

May 2023

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Program Vision and Mission	4
Program Learning Outcomes	4
Program Setting	4
Program Faculty	5
Admissions	6
Curriculum	
Degree Sequence.....	8
Concentrations.....	9
Program and Course Information.....	10
Advising.....	13
Dissertation.....	14
Evaluation and Review of Student Performance	16
Additional Resources	
Program Checklist.....	18
University Policies.....	20
Course Listing.....	21
Classroom Expectations.....	26

Overview

Welcome to the educational leadership doctoral program at Stephen F. Austin State University. This program prepares leaders for K-16 settings. The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership is a 100% online, terminal degree offered in a cohort setting by the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership in the James I. Perkins College of Education.

The purpose of this online degree is to provide advanced preparation in educational leadership and a specific focus on the leader as a scholar-practitioner. It is specifically designed to prepare students with advanced knowledge and skills in leadership with topics such as leadership theory and practice; educational research; ethics and philosophy; organizational, system and human dynamics leading change in education; and theory applied to K-16 leadership cultural and societal patterns impacting education. The Doctor of Education in Educational leadership has a required concentration that includes 18 hours of coursework in either K-12 leadership or higher education leadership.

Concentrations (K-12 or higher education):

K-12 Leadership: The K-12 leadership concentration will provide graduates the knowledge and skills to provide leadership and service in K-12 environments. Upon successful completion of the degree, the graduate will be prepared to lead K-12 organizations by engaging in disciplined inquiry and reflective practice, applying theory to educational practice, understanding and practicing ethical and moral responsibilities of leadership, and applying research for school improvement and innovation.

Higher Education: The higher education leadership concentration will provide graduates the knowledge and skills to serve and lead at institutions of higher education. Upon successful completion of the degree, with the appropriate experience, the graduate will be prepared for leadership or service in areas such as student affairs, enrollment management, development or athletic administration. The graduate will have a broad understanding of the roles, functions and responsibilities of administrators/leaders in university settings, which will enable the leader to use data, policy and research to lead transformative change and innovation within the organization.

Application and Information

Currently, our program accepts a new cohort each summer. The application process is competitive but we certainly encourage applications from those interested in being leaders in a K-16 setting that possess the following: high academic achievement in undergraduate and graduate studies, previous and/or current leadership experience, writing and research capability and a passion to lead.

This handbook will provide a plethora of information regarding admission requirements and processes, program mission and vision, degree plan, and much, much more. The material in this handbook should serve as a guide beginning with your application process and continue throughout the entire doctoral program. It is suggested that you use it as your first source of reference for any questions you may have.

Program Vision and Mission

Vision:

The SFA Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership will prepare scholar-practitioners to lead in education.

Mission:

The mission of the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership is to produce adaptable leaders who lead with equity to improve educational practices, policies and systems.

Lumberjack Leaders C.A.R.E.

They are:

- Collaborative
- Adaptable
- Responsive
- Ethical

Program Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership will be able to:

- 1) use data, policy and research to lead continuous improvement and drive transformative change and innovation in P-20 education settings.
- 2) demonstrate knowledge of ethical and moral responsibilities of leadership.
- 3) apply theory and contextual knowledge to educational practice.
- 4) practice analytical and communication skills in leadership roles.
- 5) understand, design, and conduct research in educational leadership.

Program Setting

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program
Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership
P.O. Box 6103
Nacogdoches, Texas 75962
(936) 468-2549

Program Faculty

Name	Rank	Email
Ali Hachem, Ph.D.	Associate Professor	hachema@sfasu.edu
Summer Pannell, Ph.D. Program Coordinator	Associate Professor	summer.pannell@sfasu.edu
Barbara Qualls, Ph.D.	Associate Professor	quallsba@sfasu.edu
Brian Uriegas, Ed.D.	Associate Professor	uriegasb@sfasu.edu

Stephen F. Austin State University

**Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership
Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership**

Admissions

Admission to the doctoral program in Educational Leadership at SFA is a competitive process. While we have many qualified applicants, many times the amount of applications exceeds the number of students the program can accept for the cohort. Therefore, acceptance into the educational leadership doctoral program is not guaranteed. Be sure to carefully and thoroughly complete your application material. Final decisions regarding acceptance are based upon the quality of the application and appropriateness to the program by the educational leadership faculty.

Admission Process

Applicants must possess

- a master's degree from an accredited college or university;
- a 3.5 (4.0 scale) GPA for all completed graduate coursework; and
- leadership experience.

Applicants must submit

- Graduate School Application online at <https://www.applytexas.org> (includes an application fee and official transcripts)
- Program Application (email documents to: edd@sfasu.edu)
 - Informational Page
 - Resume (including list of 3 references)
 - Leadership Profile (writing sample)
 - 3 minute video presentation

Note: An applicant from a foreign country must meet the same requirements for admission as a student from the United States. If any applicant's primary language is not English, the applicant must present satisfactory scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Admissions Review Process

- Once the Graduate School receives all documentation and requirements outlined for the Graduate school have been met, the Graduate School Notice of Application (NOA) is sent to the doctoral program coordinator.
- Simultaneously with the first bullet above, the applicant should email all program application material to edd@sfasu.edu.
- The program admissions committee uses the program admissions rubric to assign point value to the application material.

- Then, the committee submits the recommendation to the unit head for the admission of the applicants.
- Once a decision has been reached, all applicants are notified in writing regardless of the admission decision.

**Stephen F. Austin State University
Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership
Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership**

	Summer	Fall	Spring
Year 1	EDLE 6341 Leadership Theories and Application in Education EDLE 6344 Strategic Planning and Organizational Improvement	RSCH 6311 Methods in Educational Research EDLE 6342 Ethics and Philosophy of Educational Leaders	EDLE 6343 Curriculum Leadership Education EDLE 6346 Education Law and Policy
Year 2	EDLE 6348 Cultural and Societal Patterns Impacting Concentration #1	RSCH 6312 Qualitative/Mixed Methods Research Concentration #2	RSCH 6313 Quantitative Research Concentration #3
Year 3	EDLE 6345 Leading Change in Education Concentration #4	RSCH 6314 Applied Research in the Educational Setting Concentration #5	Concentration #6 **Comprehensive Exams
Year 4	EDLE 6199 (minimum 9 total for degree)	EDLE 6199 (minimum 9 total for degree)	EDLE 6199 (minimum 9 total for degree)

*****Course Sequence may possibly change at any given time.**

As noted in the plan above, the Doctor of Education in educational leadership has a required concentration that includes 18 hours of course work in either K-12 leadership **or** higher education leadership. On the next page, you will find additional information about each concentration as well as the course work included in each concentration.

Concentrations

K-12 Leadership Concentration

The K-12 leadership concentration will provide graduates the knowledge and skills to provide leadership and service in K-12 environments. Upon successful completion of the degree, the graduate will be prepared to lead K-12 organizations by engaging in disciplined inquiry and reflective practice, applying theory to educational practice, understanding and practicing ethical and moral responsibilities of leadership, and applying research for school improvement and innovation.

Note: (There is no prior certification required for this degree; however, there are some things to think about prior to your concentration selection.)

- If a student has a valid Texas principal certification successfully passes all of the K-12 course, the student should be eligible to take the Texas superintendent certification exam. Of course, all TEA requirements must be met.
- If a student does **NOT** have a valid Texas principal certification, they may still select the K-12 concentration but they will **NOT** be able to gain their superintendent certification at SFA or count those courses as superintendent courses (at SFA or any other institution) at any time since they do **NOT** have a valid principal certification **PRIOR** to taking the classes.
- A student **MUST** be admitted to the Educator Preparation Program (EPP) prior to taking the first superintendent course. **This is the responsibility of the student NOT the program.** The student must contact the program coordinator of the superintendent program. The doctoral program coordinator can help facilitate this process.
- The Texas superintendent certification is not a guarantee from this program. It is a possibility but all of the items mentioned above must be kept into consideration.

Coursework

Year/Semester	Course Number	Course Name
*	EDLE 6311	The Superintendency
*	EDLE 6347	Public School Finance and Business Administration
*	EDLE 6351	School Asset/Capital Management
*	EDLE 6394	Superintendency Seminar
*	EDLE 6396	Internship for the School Superintendent
	EDLE 6331	Instruction & School Effectiveness

*The superintendent program coordinator will schedule these classes.

Higher Education Leadership Concentration

The higher education leadership concentration will provide graduates the knowledge and skills to provide leadership and service at institutions of higher education. Upon successful completion of the degree, the graduate will be prepared for leadership or service in areas such as student affairs, enrollment management, development, or athletic administration. The graduate will have a broad understanding of the roles, functions and responsibilities of administrators/leaders in university settings which will enable the leader to use data, policy and research to lead transformative change and innovation within the organization.

Coursework

Year/Semester	Course Number	Course Name
Y2/Summer	HEDL 6321	Organization and Administration of Higher Education
Y2/Fall	HEDL 6323	Academic Affairs in Higher Education
Y2/Spring	HEDL 6322	University/Student Affairs in Higher Education
Y3/Summer	HEDL 6326	Internship in Higher Education
Y3/Fall	HEDL 6325	Critical Issues in Higher Education
Y4/Spring	HEDL 6324	Business/Development Affairs in Higher Education

*****Course Sequence may possibly change at any given time.**

Program and Course Information

Cohort Membership

The educational leadership doctoral program is offered as a cohort design, which precludes self-selection into any required course related to the program of study. All students granted admission to the degree program will be members of a cohort and must complete all coursework as a member of the cohort for which they were admitted in the related academic year of admission. In the event of withdrawal from the cohort program by the student, and upon election by the student to seek re-entry to the program, a student will provide a written request for continuance in the degree program which will be reviewed and considered by the faculty of the doctoral program prior to the reapplication process. Readmittance to the program is not guaranteed.

Beyond the master's degree

Beyond the master's degree, a student must complete a total of at least 60 semester hours of graduate coursework. This will include work in areas such as leadership, research, philosophy and ethics, policy and politics, change theory, cultural and societal issues, field-oriented internship, and dissertation research.

Transfer of Credit on Doctor of Education with Emphasis in Educational Leadership

The degree program requires that each student enter the program with a completed master's and that each student must complete 60 hours of advanced graduate coursework. Transfer from another university up to twelve (12) hours for doctoral **concentration** credit as approved by the

doctoral program coordinator is available to the student. Most often, the transfer work is in the concentration only. In all matters pertaining to the degree program, the program faculty will review individual student cases in accordance with the program and Research and Graduate Studies policy and procedures. A transfer grade lower than a B will not be accepted. The transfer work must meet the time limitation as discussed below.

Time Limits

There is a time limit for obtaining a doctoral degree of ten (10) years. If a student has not graduated in that time limit, a petition for extension of the time limit with justification may be sent and approved by the unit head and academic dean of that college as well as the dean of the graduate school. There must be justification on why an exception is needed. The Educational Leadership faculty strongly encourage students to complete the degree in less than five (5) years.

At the time of student's admission to candidacy, all completed course work included in her/his degree program must have been taken within the sequence of courses for the cohort group. Additionally, residency requirements should have been met along with successfully passing comprehensive examinations. If the degree is not completed within one year (summer, fall and spring) after admission to candidacy, the candidate's work is subject each semester thereafter to a review by a program faculty committee (including and led by the program coordinator), at which time a recommendation will be made concerning any new requirements adopted in the interim, additional course work, termination of candidacy or dismissal from the program. Simply stated, significant and successful progress should be made each semester while enrolled in dissertation writing. If not, a student may be dismissed from the program.

English Proficiency

A candidate for the Doctor of Education with emphasis in educational leadership degree must demonstrate an acceptable level of verbal and written proficiency with the English language to the satisfaction of the dissertation research committee and Doctoral Faculty Council. Included in this requirement is the criteria that each candidate must satisfy the requirements of scholarly writing as determined by the assessment of the student's written assignments. In the case of a student (either international or from within the United States) failing to meet the requirements for spoken and written English and scholarly writing, the Doctoral Faculty Council will determine a course of action that may include a separate course in English as a second language, writing and/or successful completion of the TOEFL examination prior to advancing to candidacy for the Doctor of Education degree.

Internship

Field studies and internships are integral components of the program. Each student will be required to successfully complete an internship experience. The internship experience will be a field-oriented experience related to policy studies, practical inquiry and authentic activities related to educational leadership within the concentration, K-12 or higher education. The student, and her/his doctoral advisor and/or professor, will work together in the design of each internship experience. The internship experience will be linked to the doctoral studies curriculum and the

student's professional goals. At such time when it is appropriate, the doctoral advisor and doctoral student will contact the field-based entity who will host the interning doctoral student and establish necessary linkages to support the internship. At no time will the student make arrangement for an internship experience prior to the doctoral advisor's approval.

The doctoral program coordinator and the program faculty will review procedures and requirements for the internship experiences, and the doctoral advisor/professor will have primary responsibility for final approval of the internship experience. The internship proposal will be submitted to the doctoral program coordinator for review. Students must complete the internship in a field-oriented setting prior to admission to candidacy.

Grades

Throughout the program, the student must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Per the [Graduate Bulletin](#), "During any semester or summer session that the grade point average falls below a B, the student with clear admission to graduate study will be placed on academic probation; the student with probationary admission will be placed on academic suspension." If a student receives a C in any class, he or she will be placed on academic probation. Then, the student will be required to repeat the course in which the C was earned during the next semester the course is offered and make a minimum of a B. Should the student earn another C, the student will be dismissed from the program. If a student makes a grade below a C (i.e., D or F), the student will immediately be dismissed from the program. **This includes failing dissertation hours.**

Assessments

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are evaluated throughout the program. Specifically, there are a minimum of five evaluations throughout the courses that are required for program completion. Program evaluation data is kept to provide information and analyses for programmatic data-informed decision making. Students must complete all program assessments.

Withheld Grade (WH)

The program will defer to university policy 5.5, Course Grades, regarding a grade of a WH. There must be unavoidable circumstances for a student to receive a WH and the student must submit the request in writing using the appropriate paperwork PRIOR to grades being submitted. If a WH is given, there must be a written contract with the instructor of the course on what is expected and the timeline for completion. The contract must be signed by the student and the instructor then it must be filed with the program and unit head. Additionally, if the work is not completed by the designated time, a grade of an F will replace the WH on the student's transcript. If the student completes the work in the allotted time, the instructor will complete the necessary paperwork for the grade change.

Advising

Degree Plan

A degree plan is a plan of study developed prior to admission in the doctoral program. You will find the degree plan course sequence listed on page 8 of this document. The sequence of courses may change but the specific courses are described in this handbook and will not change. Any changes to the degree plan must be approved by the faculty advisor and the program coordinator. The new degree plan change form must be submitted to the Dean's Office.

Faculty Advising

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor upon admission to the educational leadership doctoral program. The advisor will support the student in a variety of ways including course scheduling, corrective intervention, career advice, residency requirements, etc.

Residency Requirement

As far as a residency requirement, the student will need to meet two specific requirements. One is related specifically to enrollment while the other is associated with professional development and growth as a practitioner. First, the student will be continuously enrolled for a minimum of six hours for a Summer, Fall and Spring semester preferably in the first year using the cohort model. Secondly, the student must work collaboratively with his/her advisor to develop a professional development plan. With approval from the advisor, this plan may include the student presenting at a student-friendly conference, co-authoring a journal article, attending a conference and presenting at the poster session, etc.

Interim Examinations

The program faculty of the Educational Leadership doctoral program retain the discretionary right to administer interim, cumulative or other types of examination at any time during the degree program.

Comprehensive Examinations

Prior to advancement to candidacy, the student must demonstrate competence in successful completion of both written and oral comprehensive examinations. The faculty within the doctoral program consider comprehensive exams (written and oral) as a critical point of consideration for admission to candidacy. The student will take comprehensive exams during the Spring semester of the third year. The student must be enrolled at the university the semester completing comprehensive exams. The program coordinator will provide information the semester prior to comprehensive exams.

Admission to Candidacy

After the student has successfully completed all required coursework, successfully passed written and oral comprehensive examinations, the program coordinator will notify the student of her/his admission to candidacy for the Doctor of Education in educational leadership degree with the

appropriate paperwork. Grades of WH or below program expectation present specific consequences for doctoral program students. The grade below program expectation and that of WH could delay or deny the student acceptance to candidacy since completion of all coursework is a requirement for such advancement. The student must have been admitted to candidacy at least one semester before her/his degree is conferred. The student should be admitted to candidacy prior to enrolling in dissertation hours.

Dissertation

The student must present a dissertation that demonstrates an approved research study in educational leadership or a related area of educational study. The scope and breadth of the program originates from an emphasis on the leader as a scholar-practitioner. A student must complete a minimum of 9 credit hours in dissertation writing. Once enrolled in dissertation hours, the student must continuously enroll in dissertation hours until graduation (Summer, Fall and Spring). Moreover, the student must be making satisfactory progress in order to receive a WH. Please see the section on “Evaluation and Review of Student Performance” regarding a student failing to be continuously enrolled.

Prior to beginning the dissertation process, the student should become familiar with the SFA Office of Research and Graduate Studies [website](#).

Dissertation Chair

The dissertation chair will be decided upon with input from the student, faculty and program coordinator.

Dissertation Committee

Upon appointment of the dissertation committee chair, each student will meet with her/his respective chair and begin the selection of the dissertation research committee members. Per the [Office of Research and Graduate Studies](#) website, “The committee is to be composed of four total members: a chair, at least two other members, and one member outside of the program, with all holding graduate faculty membership at SFA.” For the educational leadership doctoral program, the committee will consist of a maximum of five members with no fewer than two members of the Educational Leadership faculty (including the committee chair). One member of the committee must be from outside the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership. All committee members must qualify for graduate faculty status. If an exception is needed for the makeup of the committee, it must be approved by the program coordinator, unit head and dean. Throughout the student’s dissertation work, each committee member is responsible for supervising the student and initiating conversations and guidance concerning the dissertation, including APA.

The dissertation research committee will function as a formal research team, guiding the design, development and implementation of the student’s dissertation research study. The committee as a whole and individually will facilitate the student in each step of the dissertation research process. The dissertation committee chair, who will hold primary supervisory responsibility for the

student's research and dissertation, through the Final Dissertation Defense, will work in concert with all members of the committee to ensure successful completion of all elements of the student's program, research and dissertation. The student, with approval of the dissertation committee chair, will be responsible for completing all forms related to the doctoral program required by the department, college and university. The student, under the supervision of the dissertation committee chair, will meet all requirements for proposing her/his research to the Institutional Review Board for review and approval prior to implementation of the research. It is the responsibility of the student to remain in contact with the professor during dissertation hours. This contact should be a minimum of one time per month but normally, the dissertation chair may require more frequent meetings/communication.

Dissertation and Final Defense

Required of every candidate for the Doctor of Education in educational leadership, the dissertation is a significant contribution of research which reflects the beliefs undergirding the degree program of the leader as a scholar-practitioner, responsible and disciplined inquiry in the candidate's major area of study, and an authentic contribution to scholarship. The minimum number of dissertation hours is 9. The format of the dissertation must be acceptable to the program faculty, unit head, PCOE Dean and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. A dissertation guide will be provided and additional information is on the website of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. While enrolled in a dissertation course, the student will propose and defend the dissertation. The proposal and defense must occur in two different semesters. Also, the student must have been admitted to candidacy at least one semester before the degree is conferred. By the date set each semester by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and Perkins College of Education as the deadline for defense, the candidate for the Doctor of Education with emphasis in educational leadership must successfully pass the final dissertation defense conducted by the student's Dissertation Defense Committee. This defense must not be scheduled until after each committee member has had sufficient time, no less than 10 working/business days, to examine the dissertation. The final dissertation defense will be limited to the research area of study for which the student has completed her/his research and to the dissertation document submitted for defense. After the final dissertation defense, the Dissertation Defense Committee will complete the Report of the Dissertation Defense.

If the candidate has passed the final dissertation defense, an electronic copy of the dissertation will be presented with the Report of the Final Dissertation Defense to the dean of Research and Graduate Studies. The Report of the Final Dissertation Defense, when signed by the Dissertation Defense Committee, is the committee's guarantee that the candidate has completed the work assigned by the committee; passed all examinations, defenses, reviews and assessments required by the department, including comprehensive exams; completed a dissertation that is a significant contribution of research that reflects the undergirding foundation of the leader as scholar-practitioner; and submitted for publication in dissertation abstracts an abstract approved by the committee.

It is the student's responsibility to submit all forms and paperwork associated with the dissertation. This includes paperwork/electronic files to the library, Office of Research and Graduate Studies, and the academic Dean's office.

Graduation Application for the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Graduation application for the Doctor of Education in educational leadership must be filed in the graduation office by the deadline indicated in the current Graduate Bulletin. A student must be formally registered at SFA for the semester or summer session at the end of which the degree is to be conferred. All requirements must be met in order to graduate.

Evaluation and Review of Student Performance

Retention

To remain in good standing in the program, the student must:

- Make no grade lower than a B. If a “C” is earned, the student must retake this course and must earn an “A” or “B” and if not, the student will be dismissed from the program. Moving forward, if the student earns any grade lower than a B, the student will be automatically be dismissed from the program.
- Maintain appropriate professionalism in courses and internship settings.
- Maintain academic integrity
- Receive successful annual reviews.

Formal Student Performance Review Process

Student progress is reviewed on an ongoing basis. For example, student grades are checked each semester. However, per the graduate bulletin, **“A formal review of each doctoral student’s academic progress will be conducted subsequent to three years of full-time enrollment by the appointed graduate advisor within the department and/or respective college. In all cases, the review process will be initiated within the program/department and follow the guidelines developed by the program/department. Each review will result in a progress profile to be shared with the student...”** Therefore, a formal academic review will be conducted by a committee consisting of a minimum of three educational leadership faculty members (excluding the program coordinator). The members will be decided upon by the program coordinator. The review will result in one of the following:

- If the student is on-track making adequate progress, the student will electronically acknowledge the review comments sent by the program coordinator. If the student wants to meet with the committee, they will notify the program coordinator and the meeting will be arranged.
- If the academic review results in academic deficiencies. The program coordinator will facilitate a meeting between the committee and the student. While the program coordinator will be facilitating the meeting, they will not vote on the outcome.

When necessary, the faculty will work in collaboration with the student to develop an “Improvement Plan” which will be designed to improve the overall student performance in the program. In other cases, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Leave of Absence

Students must register each semester unless they have been granted an approved leave of absence. A leave of absence is approved due to unavoidable and extreme circumstances. Requests for a leave of absence should be made in writing to the program coordinator who will seek approval from the unit head and dean of the college and the dean of the graduate school. Requests must be made prior to the beginning of the semester in which the leave would occur. Failure to register without a leave of absence approval will result in being dismissed from the program. This dismissal would be at the discretion of the educational leadership faculty.

Inactive Status

The expectation is that each doctoral student will be enrolled each semester until completion of the degree. If a student does not request a leave of absence and does not enroll in coursework (including dissertation hours), the student is considered inactive. Inactive status without the pre-approval of a leave of absence will result in the student being dismissed from the program. If the student wishes to return to the program, they must reapply during the next admission process with justification on why they failed to meet the university guideline on continuous enrollment. Automatic admission is not guaranteed and is decided upon at the discretion of the educational leadership faculty.

Dismissal

If a student is dismissed from the program, the student will be notified by a letter sent via email from the program coordinator. Acknowledgement from the student will be required. Failure to acknowledge the receipt of the dismissal letter will not alter the dismissal decision.

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Checklist

Throughout the doctoral program, there are many requirements and guidelines that must be followed. Many of these requirements have official deadlines either set by the program, department, college or university. This is a helpful guide for many of those requirements and a possible timeframe. It is the student's responsibility to know and follow all guidelines and university policies related to the completion of this degree. Note that the list begins AFTER admission to the program.

_____ **Degree Plan**--The program coordinator will complete a degree plan for each student. Then, the student will be sent the degree plan. The plan should be reviewed, signed and returned.

_____ **Residency Requirements**--Develop and file your residency plan prior to the Spring semester of your first year. Throughout the program, students will work with the program coordinator and/or advisor to make sure residency requirements are met. The residency requirements must be met prior to comprehensive exams.

_____ **Preparation for Comprehensive Exams**--Generally speaking, comprehensive exams will be taken in the Spring semester of the third year. Therefore, during the Fall semester of the third year, the program coordinator will provide the necessary information regarding comprehensive exams.

_____ **Take Comprehensive Exams**--Comprehensive exams are taken during the spring semester of the third year. The student will be notified in writing of the results.

_____ **Admission to Candidacy**--A student may be admitted to candidacy after successfully completing the following: 1) passing all classes following the program grading expectations, 2) meeting residency requirements, and 3) passing comprehensive exams. Students may NOT begin work on their dissertation PRIOR to admission to candidacy.

_____ **Appointment of Dissertation Chair**--The program coordinator will appoint a dissertation chair based upon the expected dissertation topic and methodology. The program coordinator will work faculty members and the student prior to the appointment.

_____ **Enroll in Dissertation Writing Course (EDLE 6199)**--The educational leadership doctoral degree plan requires a minimum of nine dissertation writing hours, EDLE 6199. Once beginning dissertation writing hours, you must have continuous enrollment in that class until graduation (summer, fall and spring). You must propose your dissertation and defend your dissertation in different semesters.

_____ **Form Dissertation Committee**--Once you have been assigned a dissertation chair and determined a topic and methodology, you may work in conjunction with your dissertation chair to determine dissertation committee members. (See “Dissertation Committee” in this document for additional information.)

_____ **Develop and Successfully Defend Dissertation Proposal**--The student will work in collaboration with the dissertation chair and committee members to determine a research topic, questions and develop a dissertation proposal. The student may NOT submit IRB until this has been successfully proposed and approved by the committee, unit head, academic dean and dean of Research and Graduate Studies.

_____ **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**--See IRB requirements and policies at the following website: <https://www.sfasu.edu/researchcompliance/103.asp>

_____ **Application for Graduation**--You will need to apply for graduation months in advance. You will receive emails but you should be continuously looking at the registrar’s website. Here is a link that you might find helpful: <https://www.sfasu.edu/registrar/455.asp>

_____ **Prepare and Successfully Defend your Dissertation**--The student will work in collaboration with the dissertation chair and committee members to complete the research study, including the IRB, and defend the dissertation. Your chair will guide you through the process including the paperwork. However, it is the responsibility of the student to get with the chair and follow up on all paperwork.

_____ **Submit all final documents**--Approval pages, signature pages, final documents, etc. must be submitted prior to due dates. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that this happens. Graduation depends on the submission of documents and meeting program, college and university deadlines.

A few additional items to remember

- ✓ Be sure to follow program, unit, college and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies deadlines.
- ✓ All paperwork and deadlines are ultimately the responsibility of the student. Faculty members are willing to guide you through the process; however, the final responsibility lies with the student.
- ✓ When all else fails, ask!

University Policies

University policies can be found at the following website: <https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/> . Many of the guidelines and practices of the doctoral program in educational leadership are related to policies found on this site. Below you will find a few policies that are directly related to our program.

[Credit and Contact Hours, Policy 5.4](#)

[Course Grades, Policy 5.5](#)

[Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities, Policy 6.1](#)

[Final Course Grade Appeals by Students, Policy 6.3](#)

[Commencement, Policy 6.8](#)

[Doctoral Students: Allowable Credit Hours and Completion Times, Policy 6.11](#)

[Graduate Student Advising, Policy 6.13](#)

[Graduate Admission, Policy 6.17](#)

[Human Research Subjects Protects, Policy 8.4](#)

Course Listing

Research Core (12 hours):

Methods in Educational Leadership (RSCH 6311): This course is the first of four required core research courses and provides an overview to the steps in the process of educational research. In this course, students will explore common research designs appropriate to answering questions related to public education and to participate in a small group research project exercise that will include each of the steps in educational research, including identifying research problems, systematically reviewing relevant literature, selecting a research design and identifying the appropriate methodology.

Qualitative/Mixed Methods Research (RSCH 6312): This advanced course introduces students to the history, social foundations, philosophy, methodological approaches, ethics and politics, quality assurance, representation, and the logic of inquiry within two paradigms relevant to research in the social sciences, qualitative research and mixed/multiple methods research.

Quantitative Research (RSCH 6313): Students enrolled in this course will become familiar with and proficient users of (1) the philosophy of science as understood within the quantitative research tradition in the social sciences, (2) quantitative design elements in social science research, (3) statistical theory for quantitative social science research, and (4) the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS).

Applied Research in the Education Setting (RSCH 6314): This course serves as a preparatory course in the dissertation methodology writing process. The focus of the course is the further development of the student's capacity for writing the dissertation proposal of the first three chapters of the traditional doctoral dissertation and completion of the IRB application. The collective set of assignments and activities will offer the student opportunities for examination and critique of proposals and dissertations, review of qualitative/quantitative and mixed methods design, and evaluative experience in selection of appropriate methodologies. Construction of viable research questions will be completed both in group and individual activities. The core objective of this course is to provide guidance and motivation to the doctoral student so that, upon completion of course, the appropriate skills are in place for construction of the individual proposal and IRB, under the direction of dissertation chair and committee.

Educational Leadership Core (21 hours)

Leadership Theories and Application in Education (EDLE 6341): This course is a survey of major theories in educational leadership. The educational leader as scholar-practitioner will serve as a focus for examining the relevant dimensions of leadership theory. The candidate's professional and/or personal place of practice will serve as a context in which connections between theory and practice will be explored. The relationship of theory and practice will be examined in relation to inquiry and learning.

Ethics and Philosophy of Educational Leaders (EDLE 6342): The course considers leadership dilemmas that can arise when the individual's values conflict with those of the organization, or when a situation requires decisions with conflicting value sets. Within this course, students use case studies, their own experiences, and current events to examine actions leaders have taken and consequences faced when confronted with ethical dilemmas. They work on a real-life ethical dilemma for understanding in-depth reasoning of the problem and develop an action plan for solving and preventing similar problems at the organizational and societal levels. From these exercises and discussions, students have an opportunity to develop a personal model for ethical leadership.

Curriculum Leadership (EDLE 6343): This course advances an understanding of the practice of contemporary curriculum leadership by looking at the philosophy, theory, history, social forces, and psychology behind many curriculum practices and issues that exist in educational settings today. It also includes the nature of the process of development, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum. There are many different definitions, intents, and conceptions of curriculum. In this course, curriculum is understood as both the explicit planned course of learning put before students, and the hidden or latent experiences that students encounter in educational settings.

Strategic Planning and Organizational Improvement (EDLE 6344): This course focuses on the process of strategic planning in educational leadership and how external environments and internal dynamics affect planning procedures. Through an examination and analysis of planning, goal setting, and strategic management in public sector organizations, this course will present elements of comprehensive strategic planning in a managerial system, the role of planning in growth management and the application of strategic planning to decision-making. It will illustrate the relationship between planning and the delivery of services.

Leading Change in Education (EDLE 6345): This course is a study of the research and design, implementation, management and evaluation of the change process. The course is constructed as a survey of educational change to include major themes of continuous improvement, individual change, organization change, and resistance to change. An emphasis on systemic change will be a major focus for educational change. Activities will introduce techniques for group facilitation, participatory planning, reflective practices, and the addressing of diversity issues. Considerations of the effectiveness of specific changes will be explored as the educational leader's role in the change process. Specific focus will be given to practices, policies, organization, and informal contexts that impact change.

Education Law and Policy (EDLE 6346): This course will examine the legal issues confronting education, on the local, state, and national level. The objectives are to 1) introduce students to various legal issues and identify those issues inherent in schools; 2) explore various legal principles and their application; and 3) analyze current school practices from the standpoint of potential legal controversies, including the ability to recognize "preventative law" situations. In addition to identifying pragmatic approaches to the law, this course also aims to involve students in academic discourse involving

issues of social justice and the democratic underpinnings of education. Outlooks and mindsets for course success will move toward the practice of ethical and legal leadership in educational systems as well as the scholarly study of legal principles involved in education.

Cultural and Societal Patterns Impacting Education (EDLE 6348): A survey of local, state, national and global conditions affecting schools. This course will be organized around four key questions: (1) What is the role of education in society and culture? (2) What is the degree to which culture and societal patterns shape our actions and experiences with education K-16? (3) Why do societal patterns and inequalities persist despite equal rights legislation and the welfare state? (4) What role does K-16 education play in shaping or reducing inequality, and what are the levers for change?

CONCENTRATIONS: (The student will select **ONE** concentration.)

K-12 Concentration (18 hours)

The Superintendency (EDLE 6311): The preparation and qualifications of the successful school superintendent and the duties, responsibilities and problems of the school superintendent.

Public School Finance and Business Administration (EDLE 6347): The principles of school finance, budgeting and accounting procedures and problems of local administration.

School Asset/Capital Management (EDLE 6351): Operation, maintenance, utilization and management of physical plant, property records, inventory control and school building programs.

Superintendency Seminar (EDLE 6394): Study of the superintendency from both a theoretical and field-based perspective. A series of culminating scenarios that connects research-based leadership practices with recognized proficiencies of leadership achievement.

Internship for the school superintendent (EDLE 6396): Three semester hours of individual study. Designed to give on-the-job training under the guidance of successful, experienced, practicing public school administrators and members of the university staff. Mentors in the field, public school administrators and professors build professional learning communities through mentor practices. This collaboration connects coursework and applied skills in the field.

Instruction and School Effectiveness (EDLE 6331): This course is designed to develop or strengthen the instructional leadership capability of K-12 practitioners. Students in this course will examine elements of instructional improvement and collective leadership at all levels of K-12 schooling (elementary, middle & high school) in the context of school effectiveness, reform, state and federal policies, and the change process. In addition, the

course will address how leaders can provide support and leverage for school improvement efforts. Students will apply the concepts to their own schools/districts as they propose instructional improvement plans for their respective sites that include multiple elements (curriculum, assessment, professional development, supervision, and student/community engagement) of effective school reform.

Higher Education Concentration (18 hours):

Organization and Administration of Higher Education (HEDL 6321): This course is a survey of college and university organization and governance. Approaches to leadership, organizational type, design, and structure, administrative roles and functions, the institution's environment, culture, and resource management will be examined in relation to stable and changing conditions that comprise higher education institutions and systems. This course is part of a six-course sequence that comprises the concentration in higher education administration within the doctoral program in educational leadership.

University/Student Affairs in Higher Education (HEDL 6322): This course will provide an overview of university/student affairs in higher education. The student will explore a variety of topics related to student affairs in a university setting to provide the knowledge and skills needed for leaders in higher education.

Academic Affairs in Higher Education (HEDL 6323): This course will provide an overview of academic affairs in higher education. The student will explore a variety of topics related to academic affairs in a university setting to provide the knowledge and skills needed for leaders in higher education.

Business/Development Affairs in Higher Education (HEDL 6324): This course will provide an overview of business/development affairs in higher education. The student will explore a variety of topics related to budgeting and fundraising in a university setting to provide the knowledge and skills needed for leaders in higher education.

Critical Issues in Higher Education (HEDL 6325): This course provides students with various critical issues facing higher education. Students will learn how those critical issues impact higher education. Students will explore and analyze the critical issues in higher education and describe the potential implications. From these issues, students will develop an understanding of the changing environment within American higher education.

Internship in Higher Education (HEDL 6326): This course provides learning experiences in authentic higher education settings in which the student works directly with a mentor in a university/college setting. These experiences are intended to be development within a practical context in order to foster linkages with theory and practice and to encourage the analysis of theory and practice.

Dissertation (minimum of 9 hours)

Dissertation Writing (EDLE 6199): A doctoral dissertation is required for partial fulfillment of the EdD in Educational Leadership. The dissertation reflects an original, scholarly contribution to the research literature relevant to educational leadership. At a minimum, students will enroll in two consecutive semesters/terms for the dissertation proposal/prospectus and the dissertation oral defense must be scheduled in two different semesters/terms. Students must register for at least one credit each fall/spring/summer semester; must maintain continuous enrollment until the dissertation is successfully defended, corrected/adjusted according to the committee's will, and submitted to the Graduate School; must accumulate a minimum of 9 credit hours.

Classroom Expectations

Navigating the Course

The expectation is that the student will log into D2L/Brightspace and select the appropriate course from drop down menu. Once you click on the course, you will be on the course home page. On this home page, you will see “news” items from the professor. Also, you can see other things such as the calendar, content browser, course modules, etc. At the top of this “Course Home” page, you will find other tabs on the tool bar (Course Home, Content, Course Tools, Communication Tools, Grades, etc.) Click on “Content” so you can find the content of the course. On the left side of your screen, you will find the modules for the course. You will click the appropriate module for that particular week(s). In each course, you will have a “Getting Started” module. This module will include all of the documents that will be needed for getting started with the course. It will include items such as but not limited to a welcome to the course, meet my professor, course communication, syllabus, calendar template, etc. Each course will also contain a “Quick Links and Resources” module. This module provides students with general graduate resources as well as research and writing resources at SFA. Then, the other modules will be content specific for the course. When you click on each content module, you will find the following pages: 1) Introduction and Objectives, 2) Readings and Resources, 3) Content (number of pages will vary) and a 4) Summary. Please make sure to completely read each page of each module. This is essential. A module does not have to be completed in one setting. Instead, you may work on it, stop, and then return to that work at a later time. Please take time now to navigate through the course to see if you have any questions.

Communication

Faculty to Student Communication

Communication is key to any successful relationship. Professors are available in class as well as during office hours or via an appointment. Professors will be in contact with students through the email system within the online platform, Brightspace. Should students have questions, please contact the professors through this email. Professors will respond within 24-48 hours. Additionally, the student may find additional course communication on the course “news” page. This is found on the Course Home Page.

Student to Student Communication

As noted earlier, communication is essential. The delivery and tone impacts relationships. Therefore, as you write emails, papers and/or discussions, please be mindful of your communication delivery. In most cases, students will be communicating with other students through discussion posts. While you might disagree with another student, it is the responsibility of each student to be respectful of other opinions and perspectives. In this case, you would simply disagree and state the reasons and research that counters the information stated. Discussion and dialogue are essential in doctoral courses.

Additionally, the courses are created to make you consider a variety of perspectives and

engage in conversation accordingly. Read/listen to others and be respectful in your response. Remember that respectful is not synonymous with agreement.

Zoom Meetings

While this is an online program, there is the possibility of zoom meetings in your classes. During the class meetings, you are expected to:

- Find a quiet location
- Have reliable internet
- Avoid multi-tasking
- Enable camera at all times
- Come prepared
- Mute unless talking to the group