

# University of Delaware

School of Education  
Ed.D. in Educational Leadership

## Program Policy Statement

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## **Part I. Program History**

### **A. Purpose Statement**

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership serves practitioners from schools, districts, higher education, and other educational environments.

The Ed.D. program improves the leadership and decision-making capabilities of practitioners in educational organizations. Twenty-first century educators work in complex organizations with complex problems. Educational leaders are expected to make important decisions that influence teaching and learning, the core function of educational institutions. Effective leaders must access, analyze, and communicate relevant information, and, when they lack the information they need, know how to gather it. The Ed.D. program equips candidates with the knowledge, skills, and tools to gather and utilize information effectively in decision-making and problem-solving related to organizational improvement.

The Ed.D. program's 27 credit core is built around the themes of leadership, educational improvement, and evidence-based decision making. Coursework builds practitioners' knowledge and skills in scholarly analysis, empirical inquiry, organizational analysis, improvement planning strategies, and oral and written communication as well as in substantive domains of leadership theory, curriculum, technology, and education policy. Fifteen credits of elective options allow students to pursue their academic interests, professional preparation needs, and career goals. Candidates in K-12 leadership positions can earn Delaware administrative certification (School Leader Licensure I and II).

The Doctor of Education represents the highest level of scholarly attainment in the professional field of education. As intellectual and professional leaders, Ed.D. graduates are expected to inspire and lead by taking on complex problems and designing solutions across a broad range of K-12, higher education, and educational environments.

### **B. Origin of the Program**

Unlike many Division I land-grant universities with schools of education, the University of Delaware did not offer a practitioner-oriented doctoral degree in educational administration prior to 1980. In the 1970s, the Dean and faculty members interested in educational administration and education policy in the University of Delaware's College of Education recognized a national trend in the emergence of "external degree" programs (e.g., the Nova University Ed.D.) and surging enrollments in these programs. At the same time, they recognized that this was an opportunity to contribute to the academic and professional development of school and district educators in Delaware and to strengthen ties with these individuals. These trends and recognized needs led to the development of the College of Education's Ed.D. program. The program was approved by the Faculty Senate in April, 1980. The first students matriculated in September 1981, and the program received permanent status in October 1985.

### **C. Administration and Faculty**

The School of Education's Committee on Graduate Studies in Education (CGSE) is responsible for oversight of all SOE graduate programs, including the Ed.D. and M.A. programs in Educational Leadership. The CGSE is composed of four faculty members from the School of Education, a graduate student member selected by the Education Graduate Association, and the Director of the School of Education or his/her Designee who serves as the Graduate

Coordinator for the School of Education. The CGSE approves course and credit requirements, admissions policies and standards, and degree completion policies and requirements.

Management of the Ed.D. program is handled by the faculty member serving as coordinator of the Ed.D. program working through committee meetings of the faculty members affiliated with the Ed.D. program.

Admissions decisions are made by the Ed.D. Admissions Committee. This committee will consist of at least four faculty members, including the chair of Committee on Graduate Studies in Education, the coordinator of the Ed.D. program, and two faculty who are part of the Ed.D. program. In addition, the Director of the School of Education (or designee) will serve on this committee. All Ed.D. faculty have the opportunity to review applications and make recommendations to the Ed.D. Admissions Committee regarding applicant admissions.

At the time of admission, a student is assigned a faculty advisor who assists the student with course planning and other issues that arise as the student progresses through the program. A student may change faculty advisor upon the written request to do so, and upon the agreement of the new advisor to accept this student as an advisee. Typically, the student's advisor chairs the student's Education Leadership Portfolio committee. The Education Leadership Portfolio is the capstone project for completing the doctoral degree as explained below.

Faculty members who teach SOE graduate courses and advise graduate students must have a doctorate or equivalent. In some instances, faculty members with a master's degree and special expertise as a result of concentrated study, employment experience, or service may be recommended for graduate teaching. In such cases, the faculty member must have a record of successful teaching and professional contributions to the field of education as well as endorsement of the Director of the School of Education.

#### **D. Distance Learning Technology**

The Ed.D. program is a part-time academic program enrolling full-time working professionals from throughout Delaware, southern Pennsylvania, and northern and eastern Maryland. Distance learning technology, therefore, helps minimize geographical, scheduling, and commuting obstacles and many courses incorporate distance learning through hybrid formats.

#### **E. National Standards Alignment**

The Ed.D. program's conceptual framework aligns with national education leadership standards for doctoral programs in education leadership programs (Standards of the Education Leadership Constituent Council). These standards, used also by the National Council for Accreditation on Teacher Education, require that education leadership programs cover six major functions of leadership: (1) developing, articulating, implementing, and nurturing a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders; (2) advocating, nurturing, and sustaining an instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth; (3) ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; (4) collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources; (5) acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and (6) understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

#### **F. Degrees Offered**

The degrees awarded to students who complete this program will be either a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership, or a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership.

## **Part II. Admission**

### **A. University Policy on Admission**

Admission to the Ed.D. in educational leadership is competitive. Admission decisions are made on a number of criteria including academic qualifications; leadership potential, experience and accomplishments; and the applicant's fit with the program goals and objectives and the expertise of the program faculty. Those who meet stated minimum requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths.

### **B. University Admission Procedures**

Applicants must submit all of the following items to the Office of Graduate Studies before admission can be considered:

- A completed Graduate Application must be submitted no later than February 28 for this program. Applicants submit this application online at <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/apply/>.
- A nonrefundable application fee must be submitted with the application, unless the applicant qualifies for one of the application fee waivers described at <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/apply/appfee.html>.
- Transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate studies must be uploaded as part of the application. Applicants who previously attended the University of Delaware should list our institution on their application, but need not provide a transcript. Transcripts issued in a language other than English must be accompanied by an official translation into English. If the rank of the student is not displayed on the transcript or diploma, an official letter of explanation and ranking from the institution where the degree was earned is required.
- Applicants must submit at least three letters of recommendation. These letters are obtained via the online recommendation process described at <http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/apply/recommendation.html>.
- All students whose native language is not English must submit official copies of the TOEFL or IELTS test. The minimum acceptable score for the paper-based TOEFL test is 600; the minimum acceptable score for the Internet-based TOEFL test is 100. The minimum acceptable score for the IELTS is 7.0.
- It is a Delaware State Board of Health Regulation and a University of Delaware mandate that all entering graduate students born after January 1, 1957 give proof of proper immunization for measles, mumps, and rubella. If immunization requirements are not met, the student will not be eligible to register. Specific information may be obtained from the Student Health Service (302) 831-2226.

### **C. Specific Requirements for Admission into the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program**

Ed.D. admission decisions are made by the Ed.D. Admissions Committee described above. Students are admitted to the program based upon program capacity (which limits the total number that can be accepted), the applicant's qualifications, and the applicant's fit with the program goals and objectives and the expertise of the program faculty. In addition to the University requirements above, applicants must meet the following requirements.

1. Applicants must hold a Master's degree in a relevant area (e.g., educational leadership; literacy, mathematics, or science education; higher education; human services; special education; technology in education) from an accredited university by the month in which they begin doctoral work

2. Applicants must demonstrate scholastic ability by having achieved a minimum graduate grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.00 scale in their undergraduate degree and 3.00 on a 4.00 scale in their master's program.
3. Applicants should be working in or toward a leadership role in their current position (e.g., administrator, coordinator, or teacher leader at a district/school, higher education, or education department in other organization). A current Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) must be submitted as part of the application.
4. Three letters of recommendation from people qualified to assess the applicant's leadership skills and academic potential. One letter must be from the applicant's supervisor. Recommendations must be submitted electronically as part of the online application.
5. A completed University of Delaware online graduate application.
6. Written responses to the following three prompts:
  - Explain why you are applying to this particular program, that is, why do you want to be admitted to the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership?
  - The Ed.D. in Educational Leadership requires that candidates be involved in planning and implementing a series of initiatives targeted at specific improvement needs that candidates identify and in which they may exercise leadership. Describe the contexts and responsibilities in your current position which would allow you to exercise leadership.
  - Describe a problem in your area of interest that typifies the kind of issue that you would like to pursue as a leadership professional and why you think it is important to address.
7. The GRE test is not required as an admission requirement for this program. However, applicants who are international students and whose native language is not English must submit evidence of their English ability through TOEFL or IELTS scores. Minimum acceptable scores are 100 for TOEFL iBT or 7.0 on the IELTS. International applicants who have completed a bachelors or masters degree from an American university may have this requirement waived.
8. Additional materials are appropriate if they help to establish the candidate's ability to analyze, reason, interpret and write clear and persuasive prose. A grant proposal, report, journal article, or other succinct writing may be included with the application.

### **Part III. Degree Requirements for the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership**

#### **A. Course Requirements**

The Master of Arts in Educational Leadership requires 30 credits of graduate-level coursework. The required coursework includes the following ten 3-credit courses:

##### **Educational Improvement**

Curriculum Planning and Design (EDUC 897)  
Educational Technology Foundations (EDUC 818)  
Education Policy & Governance (EDUC 839)  
Organizational Problem Analysis and Planning in Education (EDUC 891)  
Leadership: Theory and Research (EDUC 890)

##### **Evidence-Based Decision Making**

Analysis of Secondary Data for Decision Making (EDUC 827)  
Research in Education Decision Making (EDUC 828)  
Collection and Analysis of Data for Decision Making (EDUC 846)  
Program Evaluation in Education (EDUC 863)

**Elective**

One 3-credit Ed.D. Elective. The list of Ed.D. electives is online at [www.udel.edu/education/edd/electives](http://www.udel.edu/education/edd/electives). In addition to the courses on this list, the student's advisor can approve other electives based on the student's goals and needs.

Candidates for the M.A. degree must have regular status and must be in good standing in order to obtain the M.A. degree (i.e., pass all courses and maintain a 3.0 GPA).

**B. Articulation Between Master of Arts and Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership:**

The M.A. in Educational Leadership provides a master's degree option for Ed.D. students in good standing who want to obtain a master's degree in conjunction with their doctoral degree, or for students in good standing who must leave the doctoral program prematurely because of family, health or personal reasons. Students will not be admitted directly to the M.A. program, since the program requirements are embedded within the Ed.D. requirements. To obtain the M.A. degree, students submit the completed Application for Advanced Degree to the Office of Graduate Studies by the deadline date stated in the University Calendar for the semester in which they intend to have their degree conferred.

**Part IV. Degree Requirements for the Doctor of Education Program****A. Course Requirements****Ed.D. Doctoral Core Courses****27 credits****Educational Improvement**

Curriculum Planning and Design (EDUC 897)

Educational Technology Foundations (EDUC 818)

Education Policy &amp; Governance (EDUC 839)

Organizational Problem Analysis and Planning in Education (EDUC 891)

Leadership: Theory and Research (EDUC 890)

**Evidence-Based Decision Making**

Analysis of Secondary Data for Decision Making (EDUC 827)

Research in Education Decision Making (EDUC 828)

Collection and Analysis of Data for Decision Making (EDUC 846)

Program Evaluation in Education (EDUC 863)

Students are expected to complete all core courses in the degree program. On rare occasions, extenuating circumstances may warrant a course substitution. On those occasions, students may write a petition to the SOE's Committee on Graduate Studies in Education (CGSE) requesting a course substitution. The petition should describe the extenuating circumstances that warrant the request and explain the benefits that accrue to the students' scholarly

development. The student's advisor must approve the petition.

### **Electives**

**15 credits**

The list of Ed.D. electives is online at [www.udel.edu/education/edd/electives](http://www.udel.edu/education/edd/electives). In addition to the courses on this list, the student's advisor can approve other electives based on the student's goals and needs.

### **Education Leadership Portfolio**

**12 credits**

Education Leadership Portfolio 1 (EDUC 880 4 cr.)  
Education Leadership Portfolio 2 (EDUC 881 4 cr.)  
Education Leadership Portfolio 3 (EDUC 882 4 cr.)

**TOTAL CREDITS FOR DEGREE:**

**54 credits**

## **B. Requirements and Regulations for Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP)**

1) Purpose of the ELP. The Ed.D. is a professional degree with an applied project as its capstone requirement for doctoral completion – the Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP). The ELP connects theory with practice, academic work with professional work, and leadership development with organizational and/or instructional improvement. The ELP demonstrates the candidate's expertise and accomplishments related to a leadership initiative in his/her professional work. The ELP is directed by the student's advisor and an ELP committee.

2) ELP Components. The ELP consists of three primary parts: a **Problem Statement**, a **Final Reflection Essay**, and a coherent set of **Artifacts**. The **Problem Statement** describes the student's focus of inquiry, the context in which the student will study the problem and the student's role in the organization; and an improvement goal that includes the student's strategies for moving from what *is* to what *should be*. The **Final Reflection Essay** ties the entire portfolio together. It includes a description of the problem addressed, improvement strategies undertaken and their results, and reflections on both the success of the improvement efforts as well as the candidate's leadership development. **Artifacts** are linked to the student's focus of inquiry and reflect different approaches and methodologies for addressing the improvement goal. The artifacts are constructed in collaboration with the candidate's advisor, ELP committee members, and doctoral coursework instructors. They are connected to practice, focused on leadership and improvement, and aimed at specified organizational audiences (e.g., colleagues, staff, employees, constituencies). Examples of artifacts include, but are not limited to, needs assessments, problem or vision statements, literature syntheses, white papers, web designs or tools, professional development products, curriculum designs, policy briefs, data analysis reports, program evaluations, strategic plans, resource allocation plans, policy documents, and leadership communications. The artifacts are included as appendices to the final portfolio.

3) Establishment of the ELP Committee. During the last semester of a student's Ed.D. coursework, the student will select a doctoral advisory committee (henceforth, "ELP Committee") in consultation with the student's advisor. The ELP Committee shall include the

student's advisor, a minimum of two additional University faculty from within the School of Education, and one member from outside of the program. The outside member may be a relevant individual from the student's place of employment. The student's advisor will serve as chairperson of the ELP Committee. The ELP advisor must be a member of the SOE faculty. SOE faculty who do not have regular faculty status may co-chair the ELP committee provided that the other co-chair meets the definition for regular faculty status. The definition of faculty shall include professional staff who hold secondary faculty appointments. Faculty who have retired or resigned from the University may chair committees of students whose work began under their direction prior to their retirement or departure from the University. An advisor who is not employed full time by the University of Delaware may serve as co-chair of the committee provided that the other co-chair meets the conditions stated above.

Outside committee members shall include individuals not affiliated with the SOE. These may be individuals from outside of the University who are nationally recognized for their expertise in the area of study specified by the ELP, as well as faculty members from other units on campus. It is the responsibility of the ELP advisor to replace members who withdraw from the committee during the ELP process.

4) Schedule for ELP Completion. The ELP is a 12-credit project completed in three distinct stages: Development of ELP Problem Statement (ELP 1: EDUC 880), Conduct of Improvement Strategies (ELP 2: EDUC881), and Reflection on Leadership Efforts (ELP 3: EDUC 882). Students register for each 4-credit course in sequence. Students are not allowed to register for the next class until all work is completed for the previous course. Each stage (or course) is led by the student's advisor and supported by the student's ELP committee. Although students begin to develop artifacts during their Ed.D. coursework, students begin the formal ELP process after they have completed all doctoral coursework.

A student will first register for **ELP 1 (EDUC 880)**. In this course, the student constructs an **ELP pre-proposal document** which is composed of a problem statement (i.e., a concise description of the student's focus of inquiry) along with a brief description and rationale for the possible artifacts that are aligned to the student's focus of inquiry. Half of the artifacts may be based on student's work completed during Ed.D. coursework. After the ELP pre-proposal document is completed, it is sent by the student's advisor to the ELP Committee members for their feedback on the student's problem statement and proposed artifacts, and for recommendations related to both the problem statement and the composition of the proposed artifacts. With the committee's direction, the student then makes necessary revisions in the problem statement and constructs several proposed artifacts. These are presented to the committee in an official **ELP Proposal Defense**, where the student defends the problem statement, the initial artifacts, and negotiates the composition of the remaining ELP artifacts. The ELP Committee may decide to increase or decrease the total number of required artifacts depending on their scope and breadth, and how the artifacts address the candidate's improvement goal. At the successful completion of this defense, the advisor will construct an **ELP Proposal Defense Contract**, which highlights the revisions that the committee requires of the initial artifacts, and outlines the composition of the final ELP artifacts. When the ELP committee signs off on this contract the student will be considered to have completed the requirements for ELP 1 and will be allowed to register for 4 credits of ELP 2 (EDUC 881).

In **ELP 2 (EDUC 881)** the student will make revisions to the initial artifacts outlined in the ELP Defense Contract, and begin the process of developing the remaining artifacts under the direction of the committee. During ELP 2, the student is required to meet with the advisor and



committee to review student progress and identify appropriate adjustments and revisions to the artifacts. At the end of ELP 2 the student will have completed all revisions to the initial artifacts that will be reviewed and approved by the ELP committee, and the student will be allowed to register for 4 credits of **ELP 3 (EDUC 882)**.

In **ELP 3 (EDUC 882)** the student will develop the remaining ELP artifacts and write the final reflection paper. At the conclusion of the ELP 3, and upon recommendation of the student's ELP advisor, the student will present and defend the ELP before the ELP committee in a formal **ELP Defense**. When the ELP committee signs the doctoral completion form, the student completes the doctoral program and is recommended for the Ed.D. degree.

5) Defending the ELP. The ELP defense will be scheduled only after the ELP advisor has determined that a defense is appropriate. The committee will have a minimum of two weeks to review the entire portfolio. The ELP defense will be open to the public, and notices will be emailed to all SOE faculty and graduate students at least one week prior to the defense date. The candidate will present a summary of the completed portfolio and will then field questions from the committee, attending faculty, and guests. After all questions have been answered, the ELP committee will meet to decide whether the ELP is accepted, rejected, or accepted pending revisions. Results of the meeting will then be presented to the student.

6) Processing the Final Portfolio. The ELP will consist of the following parts: an **Abstract**, the **Final Reflection Essay**, and **Appendices** that include the Artifacts. The initial pages will include signature pages that attest that the student has met the requirements of the ELP.

7) Registration Requirements for Graduation. Students must be registered for ELP 3 or in Doctoral Sustaining Status in the term in which the degree is officially awarded. Sustaining registration is required in summer or winter session only if the degree is awarded at the conclusion of that term. Students enrolled in Sustaining are considered full-time students. Students may only register for Sustaining Status for a maximum of two semesters.

## **Part V. General Information Relevant to Both Master's and Doctoral Degree Candidates**

### **A. Financial Assistance**

Ed.D. students are usually part-time graduate students and normally do not qualify for financial assistance. If an Ed.D. student is full time, however, the full-time Ed.D. student is eligible to apply for the same assistantships and fellowships as full-time Ph.D. students.

### **B. Graduate Course Numbering System**

Graduate credit may be earned for courses numbered 600 through 969. (Courses numbered 600 to 699 are graduate-level courses open to qualified, advanced undergraduates by permission of the instructor.)

### **C. Application for Advanced Degree**

To initiate the process for degree conferral, candidates must submit an "Application for Advanced Degree" to the Office of Graduate Studies. The application deadlines are February 15 for Spring candidates, May 15 for Summer candidates, September 15 for Fall candidates, and

December 15 for Winter candidates. The application fee payment is required when the application is submitted.

#### **D. Graduate Grade Point Average**

Students must have a minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 to be eligible for the degree. In addition, the grades in courses applied toward the degree program must equal at least 3.0. All graduate-numbered courses taken with graduate student classification at the University of Delaware are applied to the cumulative index. Credit hours and courses for which the grade is below "C-" do not count toward the degree even though the grade is applied to the overall index.

#### **E. Time Limits for the Completion of Degree Requirements**

Time limits for the completion of degree requirements begin with the date of matriculation and are specifically expressed in the student's letter of admission. Students entering a doctoral program with a master's degree are given ten consecutive semesters to complete the requirements. Students who change their degree plan and have transferred from one degree program to another degree program are given ten consecutive semesters from the beginning of the first year in the latest program.

#### **F. Extension of the Time Limit**

An extension of time limit may be granted for circumstances beyond the student's control. Requests for time extensions must be made in writing and approved by the student's adviser and the School of Education Director or Designee. The Director/Designee will forward the request to the Office of Graduate Studies. The Office of Graduate Studies will determine the student's eligibility for a time extension and will notify the student in writing of its decision to grant an extension of time.

#### **G. Transfer of Credit Earned as a Continuing Education Student at the University of Delaware**

Students who complete graduate credits with the classification of CEND (Continuing Education Non-Degree) at the University of Delaware may use a maximum of 9 graduate credits earned with this classification toward their graduate degree. The CEND credits, grades, and quality points become a part of the student's academic record and grade point average. CEND credit can be transferred provided that (1) the course was at the 600 to 800 level, (2) the course was taken within the time limit appropriate for the degree, and (3) the course was approved by the student's adviser and the School of Education Director or Designee.

#### **H. Transfer of Credit from Another Institution**

Graduate credit earned at another institution will be evaluated at the written request of the student. Such a request should be submitted first to the student's advisor using a Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit form. A maximum of 9 credits required for the degree will be accepted provided that such credits (1) were earned with a grade of no less than B-, (2) are approved by the student's adviser and the School of Education Director or Designee, (3) are in accord with the student's program requirements, (4) are not older than five years, and (5) were completed at an accredited college or university. The credits, but not the grades or quality

points, are transferable to University of Delaware graduate records. Graduate courses counted toward a degree received elsewhere may not be used. Credits earned at another institution while the student was classified as a continuing education student at that institution are not eligible to be transferred to one's graduate degree at the University of Delaware. Credits from institutions outside of the United States are generally not transferable to the University of Delaware.

### **I. Transfer of Credit from the Undergraduate Division at the University of Delaware**

Students who wish to transfer credits from their undergraduate record to their graduate record may transfer a limited number by arranging with the department to have these courses approved by their instructors before the courses are taken. These courses must be at the 600-level, and the student must perform at the graduate level. These courses must be in excess of the total required for the baccalaureate degree, must have grades of no less than B-, and must not be older than five years. The credits, grades, and quality points will transfer.