Educational Policy and Leadership Studies, EdD

The Doctor of Education (EdD) in educational policy and leadership studies is designed for educators who seek a terminal doctoral degree to practice upper-level leadership in pre-kindergarten through higher education (PK–20) settings. Based on the scholar-practitioner model, the EdD differs from the PhD in that it allows for a more practical-based approach to use and perform applied research in educational settings grounded in problem-based learning pedagogy. The EdD is offered fully online with synchronous (live) instruction.

The EdD is a non-deposit degree program. Students complete a dissertation in practice based on a problem of practice in their own work setting. The dissertation proposal course serves as the equivalent of the comprehensive exam, and an applied dissertation is required for graduation.

Learning Outcomes

EdD graduates will be able to:

- apply the knowledge, skills, and inquiry strategies to solve significant problems related to educational policies and practices;
- evaluate and use data to make judgments to improve practice and policy;
- understand and apply evidence of effective organizational and systemic change for equity, inclusion, and justice;
- frame situations from multiple perspectives;
- identify and meet contemporary challenges facing schools and higher education;
- embrace differences of persons and perspectives;
- develop a critical and professional perspective that is ethical and promotes change for equity and inclusion;
- link theory with systematic inquiry and assessment to improve educational policy and practice; and
- complete a dissertation in practice using scholarly methods to address field-based problems and develop meaningful solutions.

Graduate Education

Graduate education prepares students with advanced knowledge and skills in specialized fields. At the University of Iowa, the Graduate College advocates for student-centered graduate education and supports equitable application of rules and policies across graduate programs.

Academics

University of Iowa graduate credentials are regulated by policies and requirements found in the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations. This includes minimum grade-point average (GPA) requirements for academic standing and degree conferral. The Graduate College sets the minimum requirement. Individual graduate programs may establish higher GPA requirements.

Admissions

Graduate student applicants must meet admission requirements for both the Graduate College and the program to which they have applied. University of Iowa graduate admission requirements are published by the Graduate College and on the Graduate Admissions website.

Financial Support

Graduate students might be eligible for financial support. Several contingencies apply, including degree program and award type, satisfactory progress toward degree, satisfactory completion of all duties related to an appointment, and availability of funding. Graduate students should inquire directly with their program for more information about funding availability. The Graduate Student Employment Standards govern the employment relationship between the University of Iowa and all graduate teaching and research assistants in all matters except wages, which are covered by an existing collective bargaining agreement or the conditions of an applicable federal grant.

Higher Education

The Doctor of Education program in educational policy and leadership studies with a higher education subprogram requires 75 s.h. of graduate credit. This can include up to 36 s.h. of transfer credit from a previous master's degree with advisor approval, which requires 39 s.h. to be completed at the University of Iowa under the auspices of the Graduate College after program admission. The total credit can include up to 48 s.h. of transfer credit from the specialist in education (EdS) degree with advisor approval, which requires an additional 27 s.h. to be completed for the EdD. University of Iowa doctoral students must earn a UI cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.00 to be eligible for degree conferral.

The EdD in educational policy and leadership studies with a higher education subprogram requires the following coursework.

Core Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPLS:6217	Theory for Scholar Practitioners	3
EPLS:6307	Professional Seminar for EdD Students: Orientation to the EdD	2
EPLS:6321	Social Advocacy Summit	1
EPLS:7432	Strategies for Inclusive Leadership	3

Applied Research

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPLS:6266	Program Evaluation	3
EPLS:6352	Applied Research in Educational Settings	3
EPLS:6353	Advanced Applied Research in Educational Setting	3

EPLS:7483	EdD Dissertation in Practice Proposal	2
EPLS:7485	EdD Dissertation in Practice	4

Higher Education Coursework

Students complete coursework in higher education as follows.

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPLS:5252	Administration of Higher Education and Student Affairs	3
EPLS:6216	Finance in Higher Education	3
EPLS:6218	The Law and Higher Education	3
EPLS:6225	Higher Education Policy	3
EPLS:6336	Impact of College on Students	3

Electives

In consultation with their advisor, students complete the remaining semester hours in elective coursework. Students choose electives numbered 3000 or above appropriate to their individual programs. These may draw from courses offered by counselor education (prefix CSED), teaching and learning (prefix EDTL), educational policy and leadership studies (prefix EPLS), and psychological and quantitative foundations (prefix PSQF) or by other University of Iowa departments and programs.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College. They must have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution or an equivalent degree from another country as determined by University of Iowa Admissions; a master's degree with a GPA of at least 3.00 in higher education, student affairs, student development, K–12 leadership, or another related field; and have at least three years of full-time experience in education.

PK–12 Administration

The Doctor of Education program in educational policy and leadership studies with a PK–12 administration subprogram requires 75 s.h. of graduate credit. This can include up to 36 s.h. of transfer credit from a previous master's degree with advisor approval, which requires 39 s.h. to be completed at the University of Iowa under the auspices of the Graduate College after program admission. The total credit can include up to 48 s.h. of transfer credit from the specialist in education (EdS) degree with advisor approval, which requires an additional 27 s.h. to be completed for the EdD. For students who have a current endorsement (State of Iowa Endorsement 171), the total credit can include up to 42 s.h. of transfer credit with advisor approval, which requires an additional 33 s.h. for the EdD. University of Iowa doctoral students must earn a UI cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.00 to be eligible for degree conferral.

The EdD in educational policy and leadership studies with a PK–12 administration subprogram requires the following work.

Core Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPLS:6217	Theory for Scholar Practitioners	3
EPLS:6307	Professional Seminar for EdD Students: Orientation to the EdD	2
EPLS:6321	Social Advocacy Summit	1
EPLS:7432	Strategies for Inclusive Leadership	3

Applied Research

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPLS:6266	Program Evaluation	3
EPLS:6352	Applied Research in Educational Settings	3
EPLS:6353	Advanced Applied Research in Educational Setting	3
EPLS:7483	EdD Dissertation in Practice Proposal	2
EPLS:7485	EdD Dissertation in Practice	4

PK–12 Administration Coursework

Students complete coursework in PK–12 administration as follows.

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPLS:6265	Standards-Based Education and Accountability	3
EPLS:6270	Policy and Politics	3
EPLS:6329	Legislative Summit	1
Electives or coursework toward the superintendency endorsement.		8

To obtain superintendent endorsement, all requirements for the endorsement must be met.

Electives

In consultation with their advisor, students complete the remaining semester hours in elective coursework. Students choose electives numbered 3000 or above appropriate to their individual programs. These may draw from courses offered by counselor education (prefix CSED), teaching and learning (prefix EDTL), educational policy and leadership studies (prefix EPLS), and psychological and quantitative foundations (prefix PSQF) or by other University of Iowa departments and programs.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College. They must have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution or an equivalent degree from another country as determined by University of Iowa Admissions; a master's degree with a GPA of at least 3.00 in higher education, student affairs, student development, K–12 leadership, or another related field; and have at least three years of full-time experience in education.

Career Advancement

The EdD prepares students for careers in PK–12 and higher education administrative leadership in educational institutions and related organizations.

Academic Plans

Sample Plans of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

Educational Policy and Leadership Studies, EdD

- Higher Education Subprogram
- PK-12 Administration Subprogram

Higher Education Subprogram

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
75 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; up to 36 s.h. of graduate transfer credits from a previous graduate degree from an accredited university allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. [a, b]		
	Hours	**0**
First Year		
Fall		
EPLS:6266	Program Evaluation	3
EPLS:6307	Professional Seminar for EdD Students: Orientation to the EdD	2
Higher Education course [c]		3
	Hours	**8**
Spring		
EPLS:6217	Theory for Scholar Practitioners	3
Higher Education course [c]		3
	Hours	**6**
Summer		
EPLS:6321	Social Advocacy Summit [d]	1
EPLS:6352	Applied Research in Educational Settings	3
EPLS:7432	Strategies for Inclusive Leadership	3
	Hours	**7**
Second Year		
Fall		
EPLS:6353	Advanced Applied Research in Educational Setting	3
Higher Education course [c]		3
	Hours	**6**
Spring		
EPLS:7483	EdD Dissertation in Practice Proposal [e]	2
Higher Education course [c]		3
	Hours	**5**
Summer		
Higher Education course [c]		3
	Hours	**3**
Third Year		
Fall		
EPLS:7485	EdD Dissertation in Practice [f]	2
	Hours	**2**
Spring		
EPLS:7485	EdD Dissertation in Practice [f]	2
	Hours	**2**
	Total Hours	**39**

a Students who enter with fewer than 36 s.h. of graduate transfer credits need to work directly with their faculty advisor to select appropriate graduate level coursework to complete the degree requirements. Students must have a related master's degree to be admitted to the program and are expected to have been practicing in education for a minimum of three years.

b Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.

c Higher Education subprogram coursework must include EPLS:5252, EPLS:6216, EPLS:6218, EPLS:6225, and EPLS:6336.

d Typically offered every summer; may be completed either prior to the first fall semester in the program or after the first year.

e Students must have successfully completed all other core/applied research coursework (except for EPLS:7485) and at least 80% of the subprogram coursework, and be concurrently enrolled in any outstanding subprogram courses, in order to take EPLS:7483.

f Student must successfully complete EPLS:7483, including passing a committee proposal defense meeting, before enrolling in EPLS:7485.

PK–12 Administration Subprogram

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
75 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; up to 36 s.h. of graduate transfer credits from a previous graduate degree from an accredited university allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. [a, b, c]		
	Hours	**0**
First Year		
Fall		
EPLS:6266	Program Evaluation	3
EPLS:6307	Professional Seminar for EdD Students: Orientation to the EdD	2
PK-12 Administration course [d]		3
	Hours	**8**
Spring		
EPLS:6217	Theory for Scholar Practitioners	3
PK-12 Administration course [d]		3
	Hours	**6**

Summer		
EPLS:6321	Social Advocacy Summit [e]	1
EPLS:6352	Applied Research in Educational Settings	3
EPLS:7432	Strategies for Inclusive Leadership [e]	3
	Hours	**7**
Second Year		
Fall		
EPLS:6353	Advanced Applied Research in Educational Setting	3
PK-12 Administration course [d]		3
	Hours	**6**
Spring		
EPLS:7483	EdD Dissertation in Practice Proposal [f]	2
PK-12 Administration course [d]		3
	Hours	**5**
Summer		
PK-12 Administration course [d]		3
	Hours	**3**
Third Year		
Fall		
EPLS:7485	EdD Dissertation in Practice [g]	2
	Hours	**2**
Spring		
EPLS:7485	EdD Dissertation in Practice [g]	2
	Hours	**2**
	Total Hours	**39**

a To obtain superintendent endorsement, all requirements for the endorsement must be met including an additional 12 s.h. in PK-12 Administration.

b Students who enter with fewer than 36 s.h. of graduate transfer credits need to work directly with their faculty advisor to select appropriate graduate level coursework to complete the degree requirements. Students must have a related master's degree to be admitted to the program and are expected to have been practicing in education for a minimum of three years.

c Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.

d PK-12 Administration subprogram coursework must include EPLS:6265, EPLS:6270, EPLS:6329, and at least 8 s.h. of superintendent endorsement or elective coursework.

e Typically offered every summer; may be completed either prior to the first fall semester in the program or after the first year.

f Students must have successfully completed all other core/applied research coursework (except for EPLS:7485) and at least 80% of the subprogram coursework, and be concurrently enrolled in any outstanding subprogram courses, in order to take EPLS:7483.

g Student must successfully complete EPLS:7483, including passing a committee proposal defense meeting, before enrolling in EPLS:7485.