

Educational Policy and Leadership Studies, PhD

Learning Outcomes

Specialized Content Knowledge

The department expects students to acquire and display mastery of a broad and deep knowledge of disciplines associated with one's specialization (educational leadership; or higher education and student affairs) covering content that contributes to the historical, current, philosophical, and applied dimensions of the field.

Critical Thinking and Analytical Writing

Students will acquire capacities for theoretical and evidentiary-based analysis to critique and synthesize disparate and interdisciplinary perspectives within their specialization.

Empirical Skills

Students will develop skills for conducting assessment, evaluation, and research on phenomena associated with individuals and organizations associated with educational organizations, educationally aligned sectors, and individuals affiliated with or impacted by education.

Impact and Practical Application

Students will acquire skills for engaging in the higher education professional communities by participating in research and/or practitioner organizations focused on translation and application.

Leadership and Collaboration

Students will be able to analyze, articulate, and respond to complex problems using theory, evidence, and cooperation with those affected by the issues.

Ethical, Inclusive, and Equitable Practice

Students will gain skills in identifying and responding to educational inequities at the individual, organizational, and institutional levels. Specifically, students will apply their skills to advance educational inclusion and facilitate organizational change and reform.

Educational Leadership

The Doctor of Philosophy program in educational policy and leadership studies with an educational leadership subprogram requires a minimum of 90 s.h. of graduate credit. Students must earn a UI cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00 in major coursework.

The program prepares scholarly professionals for leadership positions in a wide range of educational and public sector settings. Students acquire strong backgrounds in leadership, policy, and research. They equip themselves to discover, integrate, and apply knowledge as transformational leaders.

The PhD in educational policy and leadership studies with an educational leadership subprogram requires the following coursework.

Requirements	Hours
Common Courses	12
Cognate Courses	9
Electives	29
Concentration Area Courses	12
Research Courses	18
Dissertation	10

Students also complete the comprehensive examination and a dissertation, described in the following sections.

Many educational leadership courses are offered by distance education; see MyUI for information about courses offered during current semesters.

For more detailed coursework information, see Educational Leadership on the Department of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies website.

Research Courses

All educational leadership PhD students must complete EPLS:6206 Research Process and Design during the first year of their PhD program. They must also complete a minimum of 15 s.h. in qualitative and quantitative coursework, with at least 9 s.h. from one area (qualitative or quantitative) and at least 6 s.h. from the other. Students select from courses listed under PhD Research Requirements on the college's Graduate Student Resources website.

Comprehensive Examination

Students must satisfactorily complete a written take-home comprehensive examination consisting of three parts. The first part covers a student's major area of study, and the second covers two additional concentration areas. The third is on the student's outside area of study and is prepared by faculty members outside the Department of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies. The written exams are followed by an oral examination.

Dissertation

Students must write a dissertation based on an original research project in an area of educational leadership. Students must earn 10 s.h. of credit for dissertation research. The doctoral program culminates with a final oral defense of the dissertation. Students must be registered at the University of Iowa during the session in which they graduate.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College and of the educational leadership program. Successful applicants must have experience teaching and leading PK-12 schools. Complete applications are reviewed as they are received.

Higher Education and Student Affairs

The Doctor of Philosophy program in educational policy and leadership studies with a higher education and student affairs subprogram requires a minimum of 74 s.h. of graduate credit. At least 39 s.h. must be earned while registered in the Graduate College at the University of Iowa, and after formal

program admission. Students must earn a UI cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00 in major coursework.

The doctoral program prepares individuals to be leaders in student affairs and academic administration, graduate faculty at research universities, leaders in conducting research about college students and higher education, policy analysts in postsecondary institutions and public or private agencies, and teachers and academic leaders at two-year and four-year colleges. The higher education and student affairs program integrates academic experience with the cocurricular learning experiences of students and studies the outcomes of both.

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

Requirements	Hours
Substantive Core Courses	18
Research Methods Courses	18
Concentration Area Courses	12
Electives	24
Dissertation	2

Substantive Core

The substantive core provides a foundational understanding of higher education and general knowledge that all students must master, regardless of their career goals and interests. All courses in the core (18 s.h.) must be completed at the University of Iowa.

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
EPLS:6216	Finance in Higher Education	3
EPLS:6220	History of Higher Education	3
EPLS:6224	Organizational Theory and Administrative Behavior	3
EPLS:6273	College Students	3
EPLS:6275	Higher Education and Society	3
EPLS:6311	Seminar: Research Topic in Education	3

Research Methods

Research methods courses (at least 18 s.h.) ensure that students achieve scholarly autonomy and initiative.

Basic Research Methods

Course #	Title	Hours
Both of these (6 s.h.):		
EPLS:6206	Research Process and Design	3
EPLS:7373	Qualitative Research Design and Methods (or approved substitute)	3

Statistics/Linear Regression

These courses (6 s.h.) must be taken in this order.

Course #	Title	Hours
This course:		
PSQF:6243	Intermediate Statistical Methods	3
Then this course:		

EPLS:6370	Quantitative Methods for Policy Analysis	3
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Advanced/Specialized Research Methods

Students consult with their advisor to choose two courses (at least 6 s.h.) from either list appropriate to their dissertation design and intended learning outcomes.

Qualitative Methods

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5170	Introduction of Institutional Research and Effectiveness	3
EPLS:7392	Mixed Methods Research	3
EDTL:7071	Critical Discourse Analysis in Educational Research	3
EDTL:7072	Advanced Methods of Literacy Research: Qualitative Data Analysis and Reporting	3
EDTL:7073	Ethnographic Methods, Theories, and Texts	3

Another comparable research methods course approved by advisor

Quantitative Methods

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5170	Introduction of Institutional Research and Effectiveness	3
EPLS:6209	Survey Research and Design	3
POLI:7003	Advanced Methodology	4
PSQF:6246	Design of Experiments	3
Another comparable research methods course approved by advisor		

Concentration Area

The concentration area (12 s.h.) gives students the opportunity to develop expertise in one area. Students consult with their advisor to develop the concentration curriculum.

Electives

A student and their advisor may determine that some of their prior graduate work may be appropriate and applicable to the student's doctoral program. A student may count up to 24 s.h. of prior coursework toward the doctoral degree as electives. If a student does not have prior graduate work, they must enroll in up to 24 s.h. of electives to fulfill this requirement.

Comprehensive Examination

The PhD comprehensive examination consists of a question written by the student in consultation with their advisor, and formally approved by the higher education and student affairs faculty. Students are expected to construct a well-supported argument informed by knowledge of the theory, research, and practice that constitutes the field of higher education based on the substantive core and the student's concentration. The written examination is followed by an oral examination.

Dissertation

The dissertation is a major research study planned in collaboration with the student's advisor. Students must write a formal dissertation proposal and submit it for approval, first

to their advisor and then to the members of their doctoral committee. Students and their advisors determine when the proposal is complete. Students must earn 2 s.h. of dissertation research credit. The doctoral program culminates with a final oral defense of the dissertation.

Students must be registered at the University of Iowa each fall and spring semester from the semester in which they complete their comprehensive examination through the semester in which they defend their dissertation and graduate.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College.

Academic Plans

Sample Plan 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, PhD

- Educational Leadership Subprogram [p. 3]
- Higher Education and Student Affairs Subprogram [p. 4]

Educational Leadership Subprogram

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
90 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; graduate transfer credits allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. ^a		
Distribute the following graduate elective hours between years 1-4 with advisor approval: ^b		
Elective course		3
Elective course		2
Hours		29
First Year		
Fall		
EPLS:6217	Theory and Practice of Leadership	3
EPLS:6224	Organizational Theory and Administrative Behavior	3
EPLS:6226	Educational Management	3
Hours		9
Spring		
EPLS:6311	Seminar: Research Topic in Education	3

Research course ^c		3
Research course ^c		3
Hours		9
Second Year		
Fall		
Concentration Area course ^d		3
Research course ^c		3
Research course ^c		3
Hours		9
Spring		
Concentration Area course ^d		3
Research course ^c		3
Research course ^c		3
Hours		9
Third Year		
Any Semester		
Comprehensive Exam ^{e, f}		
Hours		0
Fall		
Concentration Area course ^d		3
Cognate course ^g		3
Cognate course ^g		3
Hours		9
Spring		
Concentration Area course ^d		3
Cognate course ^g		3
Hours		6
Fourth Year		
Fall		
EPLS:7493	PhD Thesis ^h	5
Hours		5
Spring		
EPLS:7493	PhD Thesis ^h	5
Final Exam (Dissertation Defense) ^{i, j}		
Hours		5
Total Hours		90

a 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.

b Complete a total of 29 s.h. in a related field; work with academic advisor for approval of graduate transfer credit and/or to select electives. Students are encouraged to present their MA degree as the related field, where appropriate.

c Complete at least 18 s.h. of graduate courses in research design, quantitative, and qualitative required methods appropriate for doctoral-level research in Educational Leadership. Work with academic advisor to select appropriate courses approved by the College of Education.

d Complete at least 12 s.h. in a concentration area; work with academic advisor to select appropriate graduate level courses. See the General Catalog and the College of Education website for specifics.

e Typically taken after most required coursework is completed; work with academic advisor to complete the exam.

- f Required written and oral examination covering three areas: major area of study, other concentration area, and the student's chosen outside area of study.
- g Students must complete a 9 s.h. cognate outside of the Educational Policy and Leadership Studies department. Work with academic advisor to determine appropriate graduate courses and sequence.
- h Maximum total of 10 s.h. of thesis credit allowed.
- i Must be completed within five years of Comprehensive Exam.
- j An original research project is to be developed, presented and defended in an area of Educational Leadership.

Higher Education and Student Affairs Subprogram

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
74 s.h. of graduate level coursework must be completed; graduate transfer credits allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. ^a		
Distribute between years 1-4 with advisor approval; work with academic advisor to determine sequence.		
EPLS:6216	Finance in Higher Education ^b	3
EPLS:6220	History of Higher Education ^b	3
EPLS:6224	Organizational Theory and Administrative Behavior ^b	3
EPLS:6273	College Students ^b	3
EPLS:6275	Higher Education and Society ^b	3
EPLS:6311	Seminar: Research Topic in Education ^b	3
EPLS:6206	Research Process and Design ^c	3
EPLS:7373	Qualitative Research Design and Methods ^c	3
PSQF:6243	Intermediate Statistical Methods ^d	3
EPLS:6370	Quantitative Methods for Policy Analysis ^d	3
Advanced/Specialized Research Methods course ^{e, f}		3 - 4
Advanced/Specialized Research Methods course ^{e, f}		3 - 4
Concentration Area course ^g		3
Concentration Area course ^g		3
Concentration Area course ^g		3
Concentration Area course ^g		3
Elective course ^h		3
Hours		72-74

Third Year

Any Semester

Exam: Doctoral Comprehensive Examⁱ

Hours	0
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Fourth Year

Any Semester

Exam: Doctoral Final Exam^j

Hours		0
Fall		
EPLS:7493	PhD Thesis ^k	1
Hours		1
Spring		
EPLS:7493	PhD Thesis ^k	1
Hours		1
Total Hours		74-76

- a 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.
- b Substantive Core course.
- c Basic Research Methods course.
- d Statistics/Linear Regression course.
- e Work with academic advisor to select either Qualitative or Quantitative Advanced/Specialized Research Methods coursework appropriate to dissertation design.
- f 6 s.h. from Qualitative courses EPLS:5260, EPLS:7392, EDTL:7071, EDTL:7072, EDTL:7073, or 6-7 s.h. from Quantitative courses EPLS:5170, EPLS:6209, POLI:7003, PSQF:6246.
- g Work with academic advisor to select appropriate graduate level coursework in the specialization area. See the General Catalog and the College of Education website for specifics.
- h Work with academic advisor for approval to select electives in related field, including graduate transfer credits.
- i Typically taken after most required coursework is completed; work with advisor to complete the exam.
- j Dissertation defense. Must be completed within five years of Comprehensive Exam.
- k Students must earn 2 s.h. of dissertation research credit.