

Educational Policy and Leadership Studies, PhD

Schools, Culture, and Society

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

The program develops students' ability to analyze the influence of social and historical factors that frame contemporary issues in education.

The PhD in educational policy and leadership studies with a schools, culture, and society subprogram requires the following coursework.

Requirements	Hours
Common Core Courses	9
Disciplinary Foundation Courses	12
Interdisciplinary Focus Courses	12
Cognate Courses	27
Research Tools	18
Dissertation	12

Common Core

Students complete all three courses in the common core.

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5102	History of American Education	3
EPLS:5126	Twentieth-Century Educational Movements	3
EPLS:5130	Sociology of Education	3

Disciplinary Foundation

Students choose one of two disciplinary foundation areas: sociology or history. They complete 12 s.h. in the area by taking three courses offered by the Department of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies (prefix EPLS) and one course offered by the corresponding department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: sociology (prefix SOC) or history (prefix HIST). The following lists provide examples of courses appropriate for the two disciplinary foundation areas.

Sociology

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5134	Education and the World of Work	3
EPLS:5142	Sociology of Higher Education	3
EPLS:5210	Education and Social Change	3
EPLS:5240	Topics in Education (when topic is sociology of education)	3

History

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5123	History of Ethnic/Minority Education	3
EPLS:5240	Topics in Education (when topic is history of education)	3
EPLS:6220	History of Higher Education	3
EPLS:6237	History of the Teaching Profession	3
EPLS:6238	Gender and Education in Historical Perspective	3
EPLS:6239	LGBTQ History in Education	3

Interdisciplinary Focus

Students choose one of two interdisciplinary focus areas: diversity and equity, or policy contexts. They take four courses in that area (total of 12 s.h.) chosen from the corresponding list. At least two of the courses (6 s.h.) must be from outside their disciplinary foundation area (see "Disciplinary Foundation" above).

Diversity and Equity

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5123	History of Ethnic/Minority Education	3
EPLS:6237	History of the Teaching Profession	3
EPLS:6238	Gender and Education in Historical Perspective	3
EPLS:6239	LGBTQ History in Education	3
EPLS:6277	Readings in Diversity and Equity in Higher Education	3

One relevant course from another department, with advisor's approval

Policy Contexts

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5134	Education and the World of Work	3
EPLS:5210	Education and Social Change	3
EPLS:6225	Higher Education Policy	3
EPLS:6237	History of the Teaching Profession	3
EPLS:6270	Policy and Politics	3

One relevant course from another department, with advisor's approval

Cognate Courses

Students complete at least 27 s.h. of additional graduate-level coursework in a field or fields that are relevant to their scholarly and professional goals. Students commonly complete some or all of the 27 s.h. with relevant graduate-level coursework from other University of Iowa programs or with approved transfer credit from other institutions. A student's advisor, in consultation with other faculty members in the program, determine which coursework to accept.

Research Tools

Students take at least 18 s.h. in research methods.

Basic Research Methods

Course #	Title	Hours
Both of these:		
EPLS:6206	Research Process and Design	3
EPLS:7373	Qualitative Research Design and Methods	3
With approval, students may substitute a course above for one of the following:		
CSED:7338	Essentials of Qualitative Inquiry	3
EDTL:7070	Qualitative Research Methods in Teaching and Learning	3
PSQF:7331	Qualitative Educational Research Methods	3

Intermediate Statistics and Linear Regression

Course #	Title	Hours
Both of these:		
PSQF:6243	Intermediate Statistical Methods	3
EPLS:6370	Quantitative Methods for Policy Analysis	3

Advanced and/or Specialized Research Methods

Students consult with their advisor to choose two courses from either list appropriate to their dissertation design.

Qualitative or Non-Quantitative Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5240	Topics in Education (when topic is historical methodology in education or analysis of philosophical argumentation)	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
EDTL:7751	Advanced Qualitative Data Analysis	3
PSQF:6265	Program Evaluation	3

Other comparable research methods courses approved by student's advisor and schools, culture, and society program

Quantitative Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
EPLS:5240	Topics in Education (when topic is multilevel modeling)	3
EPLS:6209	Survey Research and Design	3
EPLS:6370	Quantitative Methods for Policy Analysis	3

POLI:7003	Advanced Methodology	4
PSQF:6249	Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Models	3
SOC:5160	Research Design and Methods	3
SOC:7170	Advanced Statistical Modeling of Data	3
SOC:7180	Structural Equation Modeling	3
Other comparable research methods courses approved by student's advisor and schools, culture, and society program		

Students who want to enroll in an advanced/specialized course not listed above, and wish to receive credit toward their program requirements, must obtain prior approval from their advisor and from the schools, culture, and society program.

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination consists of two take-home exams, each with a maximum of 15 pages. The first exam covers the student's disciplinary foundation (history or sociology), and the second covers the student's interdisciplinary focus area (diversity and equity, or policy contexts) and the common core (history or sociology, not including the disciplinary focus).

Dissertation

After completing the comprehensive examination, students write a formal dissertation prospectus and submit it for approval first to their dissertation advisor and then to the members of their dissertation committee. The dissertation prospectus must be formally approved by the dissertation advisor and the dissertation committee before a student may begin dissertation research.

Students must earn 12 s.h. of dissertation research credit. The dissertation process culminates with a final oral defense of the dissertation. Students must register at the University of Iowa each fall and spring semester until the dissertation is successfully defended and the PhD is awarded.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College. A personal interview with one or more members of the program's faculty is recommended. Undergraduate and/or graduate emphases in education, sociology, and the humanities (philosophy, history, and so forth) provide good background for graduate study of schools, culture, and society, although other emphases also may be useful.

Applicants must submit a personal statement explaining their professional goals, experiences, and research plans; undergraduate and graduate grade-point averages; undergraduate and graduate transcripts; three letters of recommendation; and scores on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) General Test (however, the GRE requirement has been suspended for the 2023–24 admissions cycle).

Applicants whose first language is not English must submit official test scores to verify English proficiency. Applicants can verify English proficiency by submitting official test scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). For specific score requirements, see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

Admission is for fall semester entry. Application deadline is Jan. 15 for admission the following fall.

For more information on schools, culture, and society programs, see the Department of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies website.