

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, ED.D.

The EdD is a professional degree designed to meet the needs of individuals seeking to improve their knowledge and skills as educational leaders. The EdD is intended to meet the growing demands that educational leaders must face as they address concerns related to instructional leadership, public accountability, increased globalization, diversity concerns, the emergence of new digital technologies and more. The EdD program is guided by a model of professional inquiry and reflection that emphasizes the development of key decision making skills. Students examine the core content domains related to organizational theory, data-driven decision-making, law, supervision and evaluation, curriculum design, professional development, school economics, budget planning, and other relevant content areas. Knowledge taken from these domains facilitates the process of framing and critically addressing the problems of practice. Although the primary purpose of the EdD degree is focused on practice and leadership, the research rigor of the EdD experience can also qualify an individual for a position in higher education.

Admissions

Application and Entrance Requirements

The Educational Leadership Ed.D. program is offered online only. Doctoral students are admitted annually. Each applicant should submit a complete application for admission before the deadline of March 1 for fall admission. Applications past the deadline will be considered if space allows or due to exceptional circumstances.

Potential applicants should be aware that admission to the UA doctoral programs is a competitive process and that submitting an application does not guarantee admission. In addition to the minimum Graduate School admission requirements, to be considered for regular admission an application must include:

1. An earned Master's degree from an accredited institution.
2. Reference Letters – The application must include three letters of professional and academic reference letters, including one from a current supervisor, as described in the Graduate School Application Process.
3. Purpose, Rationale and Career Statement – A statement of purpose which addresses the following: (1) the student's rationale for applying for the Ed.D.; (2) a statement regarding career/professional goals; and (3) a statement of how the student's rationale and career goals are consistent with the purpose of the Ed.D. degree as articulated by the Department and Program.
4. Writing Sample – An academic or professional writing sample written by the applicant within the last year that provides evidence of the student's writing ability.
5. Professional Experience – It should be noted that for the Ed.D. degree, experience in teaching and/or leadership are key factors considered in the admission process.
6. An updated résumé.
7. Prior to admission, applicants must provide evidence that they have completed courses in the following areas with the following parameters:
 - Special Education Course. Applicants must have taken a special education course with a grade of 'B' or better.
 - Graduate Level Statistics Research Course. In addition, if applicants have not taken BER 540 Statistical Methods In Educ or an acceptable/pre-approved masters-level equivalent within the

last four years with a grade of 'B' or better, then if accepted into the doctoral program, students must complete this course before beginning the 12 hour research requirement.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Curricular Requirements

A minimum of 69 semester credit hours beyond the Masters degree is required for completion of the Ed.D. program. These 69 hours must consist of the following courses: Educational Leadership Courses (AEL) = 36 hours; Educational Foundations Courses (BEF) = 9 hours; Educational Research (BER) = 12 hours; Dissertation Hours = 12 hours. It should be noted that depending on coursework prior to admission to the Ed.D. program, that prerequisites for more advanced study in educational leadership may be required.

Educational Leadership (AEL) Course Requirements: *36 hours*: Ed.D. students must successfully complete a total of 36 semester hours to qualify for the degree. These requirements must be distributed as follows:

Core Educational Leadership (AEL) Requirements: *15 hours* – All doctoral students in Educational Leadership are required to take the core AEL course requirements at the University of Alabama. The AEL core consists of following 600-level courses:

Code and Title	Hours
Educational Leadership (AEL) Courses (Required Ed.D. Core Courses)	
AEL 619 Politics Of Education	
AEL 650 Organizational Theory	
AEL 671 Survey Instructnl Superv	
AEL 675 Leadership/Organization Improv	
AEL 682 Lead & Org/Theory & Appl	
AEL Electives ¹	21
AEL 608 Educ Fin Theory/Pract	
AEL 611 Superintendency	
AEL 618 Adv Educational Law	
AEL 630 School Partnerships	
AEL 661 Major Issues and Trends	
AEL 664 Ed Policy/Dynamics of Change	
AEL 697 Seminar in Ed Leadership	
Foundations Courses ²	
BEF 681 Ethics And Education	3
BEF 642 Studies Philosophy Education	3
BEF 695 Sem Curriculum Leadership	3
Research Courses ³	
BER 630 Qual Case Study Research	
BER 631 Inqry As Interp: Qual I	
BER 660 Eval I:Theory & Practice	
BER 661 Evaluation 2	
Dissertation	12
AEL 699 Dissertation Research	
Total Hours	69

Footnotes

- ¹ Beyond the AEL 15 hour core requirements, Ed.D. students are required to take 21 hours of AEL electives. All electives must be at the 600 or doctoral level. While the electives available have been identified and scheduled in advance for the Ed.D. cohort, other AEL 600-level courses may be approved by AEL program faculty. Note, this is the exception rather than the rule.
- ² While foundation course requirements for the Ed.D. have been identified and scheduled in advance for each Ed.D. cohort, other BEF 600-level courses may be approved by AEL program faculty. Note, this is the exception rather than the rule.
- ³ Prerequisite Statistics Requirement: BER 540 Statistical Methods In Educ – If students have not taken BER 540 or an acceptable/pre-approved masters-level equivalent within the last four years with a grade of 'B' or better, then students must complete this course before beginning the 12 hour research requirement. This prerequisite *cannot* be used to fulfill the 12-hour Research Requirement. While research course requirements for the Ed.D. have been identified and scheduled in advance for each Ed.D. cohort, other BEF 600-level courses may be approved by AEL program faculty. This is the exception rather than the rule.

Transfer Credit

Transfer Parameters on AEL courses – Please note that as of April 2019, the following policies guide the transference of courses into the Ed.D. program:

- Applicants with an Ed.S. in leadership from The University of Alabama – For students with an Ed.S. from The University of Alabama *and* at the discretion of a student's program of study committee, up to 27 hours of the AEL Ed.S. may be counted toward the Ed.D. degree *if* the following parameters are met: (1) the course was completed no more than 5 years from the date of the student's admittance, (2) a grade 'B' or better (note, not a 'B-') was earned in the course, and (3) the course is not an independent study nor a "practicum" type course.¹
- Applicants with an Ed.S. in leadership not from University of Alabama – (*Effective April 1, 2017*) For students who have completed an Ed.S. at institutions other than the University of Alabama *and* at the discretion of a student's Program of Study committee, up to 27 hours of their Ed.S. program may be counted to the Ed.D. degree *if* the following parameters are met: (1) the institution from which the student took these courses is accredited; (2) the course(s) addresses a major curricular component of the Ed.D. program at the University of Alabama as captured in the Program's current array of doctoral AEL courses; (3) the course(s) was completed no more than 5 years from the date of the student's admittance, (4) a grade 'B' or better (note, not a 'B-') was earned in the course(s), and (5) the course is not an independent study nor a practicum course.
- TBD: Applicants with an Ed.S. in a specific curricular area of education, or in Teacher Leadership or School Library Media Specialist rather than in educational leadership can also transfer some Ed.S. courses.
- All students must take the five core courses regardless of whether or the number of Ed.S. courses transferred into the Ph.D. program.
- Course transfer must be approved and signed by the advisor and submitted prior to or no later than the student's Program of Study is approved.

Transfer Parameters for Research Courses (*Effective April 1, 2012*) – Given the importance of research methods to doctoral study and the propensity of human knowledge to recede if not used on a consistent basis,

faculty and students are strongly encouraged to minimize the number of research courses transferred into the doctoral program. Graduate level statistics courses taught by research faculty at other universities may be accepted for transfer only if the following conditions are met: (a) the institution from which the student took these courses is accredited; (b) the course taken was a doctoral level course; (c) the course was completed no more than 5 years from the date of the student's admittance to the UA doctoral program, and (d) the student received a grade of 'B' or better (note, not a 'B-') in the course.

Graduate Information on Transfer Credit.

Doctoral Plan of Study

During their second fall semester of study and no later than the second year of study, doctoral students are required to submit an approved Program of Study (POS). Completed under the guidance of the student's assigned advisor, the POS must be officially approved by this advisor and the program POS committee. The Program of Study functions to: (1) specify in advance program course requirements; (2) plan, chart and monitor a student's progress in the program; and (3) define the parameters regarding the course credits taken at other colleges/universities that may be transferred in to meet doctoral program requirements at the University of Alabama. Note, students are advised against making premature judgments about courses to be transferred in from other institutions and programs. In addition to the guidelines specified in the Program of Study (above), such decisions are based on the professional judgments of tenure-track faculty in the Educational Leadership Program at the University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa campus. Other UA personnel are *not* authorized to advise nor approve a student's Program of Study.

Graduate Information on the Doctoral Plan of Study.

Comprehensive Exam

A comprehensive exam designed to assess the breadth and depth of a student's knowledge and skills is administered twice each academic year. It should be noted that the Doctoral Comprehensive Qualifying Exam is not offered in the Summer. Policies governing this exam are as follows:

1. Purpose of Comp Exam: The comprehensive exam is designed to assess the breadth and depth of a student's knowledge and skills based on the entire range of his/her doctoral course work and consistent with the purpose of the Ed.D. degree, as well as the ability to apply what they have learned to investigate and solve problems, and inform leadership.
2. Logistics of Exam: The exam committee chair selects questions and prepares the exam instruction based on the suggestions from the committee. The chair disseminates the exam instruction to the examination proctor, who coordinates the evaluation, and reports the results. Students may choose either to type or handwrite their examination. While it is appropriate for students to seek information from professors on the general domains to be examined, students should not solicit nor be given specific information regarding about the exam. Unless specified otherwise, the exam often takes place in October and March each year. Students are required to take and successfully pass this exam before they can formally begin the dissertation process and register for dissertation research hours (AEL 699 Dissertation Research).
3. Requirements for Taking Exam: Before sitting for the Comprehensive Exam, the following parameters must be met by the student:
 - Approved Program of Study – Students cannot sit for the Comprehensive exam unless his/her Program of Study has been both completed and officially approved.

- Completed all AEL course requirements – Students cannot sit for the Comprehensive Exam unless they have completed all AEL course requirements (AEL core + electives) or are in the last semester of doing so.
- Removal of all Incompletes from Academic Record – Students cannot sit for the Comprehensive Exam unless they have removed all Incompletes ('I') from their academic record.
- Completion of Comprehensive Exam Application Form – Students cannot sit for the Comprehensive Exam unless they have completed and submitted the *Request To Take Comprehensive Exam Form*.

Graduate School information on Comprehensive Exams.

Admission to Candidacy Requirements

Students are admitted to candidacy after they pass the comprehensive exam.

Graduate School information on Admission to Candidacy.

Continuous Enrollment Policy

Graduate information on Continuous Enrollment.

Dissertation Requirements

Dissertation Research Requirements: *12 hours*: Ed.D. students are required to complete a minimum of 12 hours of AEL 699 Dissertation Research.

- Passing of Comprehensive Exam required – Students cannot register for AEL 699 Dissertation Research until after they have passed the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam.

Graduate School information on Dissertation Requirements.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

A minimum of two academic years of graduate study beyond the master's degree is required for completion of Ed.D. degree.

Graduate School information on Time Limits.

Academic Misconduct Information

Graduate School information on Academic Misconduct.

Withdrawals and Leave of Absence Information

Graduate School information on Withdrawals and Leave of Absence information.

Academic Grievances Information

Graduate School information on Academic Grievances.

Grades and Academic Standing

Graduate School information on Grades and Academic Standing.

Graduate School Deadlines

Information on Graduate School Deadlines.

Application for Graduation Information

Information on the Application for Graduation.

The doctoral program faculty will consider, select, and nominate students for the program's Graduate Research Assistantships and for

the fellowships offered by the Graduate School. Students do not need to apply for this funding. Performance expectations for students who receive these assistantships and scholarships are consistent with those specified in the Graduate Catalog.

While a GRE score is not required for admission, preference for a limited number of college-funded assistantships is given to applicants for full-time study who take the GRE and achieve a composite score of 300 or better. Other competitive assistantship, fellowship, and scholarship opportunities may be available for applicants without GRE scores.

Students are encouraged to apply for College of Education scholarships and scholarships offered through UA Online.

Graduate School information on Financial Assistance.