

Course Descriptions: Ed.D. in Education Leadership

All courses are worth 3 semester hours of credit, except EDL 9630 which is worth 6 semester hours, and are listed in numeric order.

EDL 7310 – Leadership Theory and Organizational Change

In this course, students will examine foundational and emergent theories of leadership, organizational behavior, and systems of change in educational settings. Students critically analyze leadership models, reflect on their own leadership philosophy, and apply change-management frameworks to authentic dilemmas in schools and higher-education organizations

EDL 7320 – Data-Informed Decision-Making

In this course, students will focus on quantitative and qualitative methods of institutional inquiry, root-cause analysis, and evidence-based decision-making. Students learn to interpret organizational data, conduct needs assessments, set SMART goals and milestones, and align resources and accountability systems to support institutional improvement.

EDL 7330 – Law and Ethics

In this course, students will explore legal and ethical dimensions of education leadership including student and employee rights, precedent-setting legal cases, governance policy, and ethical decision-making. Students analyze compliance, stakeholder implications, and ethical frameworks as they navigate complex educational dilemmas.

EDL 7340 – Policy and Governance

In this course, students will address the interplay of educational policy, governance structures, and fiscal responsibility at district, state, and higher-education levels. Students synthesize research, stakeholder perspectives, and regulatory frameworks to produce policy briefs and actionable recommendations for ethical and fiscally sound leadership.

EDL 7350 – Finance and Resource Allocation

In this course, students will explore budgeting, cost-benefit analysis, human-capital planning, facility and technology investments, and resource allocation aligned to institutional goals. Students design and evaluate program budgets, link staffing plans to objectives, and develop risk-mitigation strategies for sustainable operations.

EDL 7360 – Human Capital and Talent Development

In this course, students will examine strategies for recruiting, developing, and sustaining high-quality staff and leadership teams in educational organizations. Topics include talent management, professional learning systems, performance development plans, coaching models, and aligning human capital to instructional and organizational improvement.

EDL 8310 – Program Evaluation

In this course, students will analyze established models of program evaluation, logic-model design, monitoring systems, and actionable recommendations for improvement. Students apply evaluation frameworks to real-world initiatives and produce reports that inform decision-making and continuous improvement.

EDL 8320 – Community and Stakeholder Engagement

In this course, students will focus on designing stakeholder engagement plans, communication strategies, and artifacts tailored to a variety of audiences. Students build plans for sustained partnerships, design communication plans, and deliver professional briefings to advance organizational goals.

EDL 8330 – Communication and Scholarship

In this course, students will develop advanced skills in professional writing, scholarly dissemination, presentation design, and stakeholder communication. Students craft journal-ready manuscripts, technical reports, executive briefs, and presentations aligned with applied research and leadership practice.

EDL 8340 – Curriculum and Instructional Leadership

In this course, students will explore the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment systems to relevant standards and accreditation requirements. Students examine instructional improvement efforts, design monitoring plans, evaluate curricular effectiveness, and generate recommendations for instructional and programmatic improvement.

EDL 8350 – Research Methods

In this course, students will engage in research design, mixed-methods approaches, sampling strategies, instrument development, analytic plans, and IRB preparation. Students gain competency to design, conduct, and interpret applied research in educational leadership contexts.

EDL 8360 – P-12 Leadership

In this course, students will examine leadership practices specific to P-12 settings, including school district systems, superintendent leadership, school site culture, instructionally-focused leadership, community context, and equity-based improvement. Students apply theory and research to P-12 leadership challenges and design actionable initiatives.

EDL 8370 – Higher Education Leadership

In this course, students will examine leadership in postsecondary settings—including student affairs, academic affairs, enrollment management, retention strategies, institutional research, and

faculty development. Students analyze higher education governance, finance, policy, and organizational change.

EDL 8380 – Technology and Innovation

In this course, students will explore the evaluation, adoption, and leadership of educational technologies and innovation initiatives. Students examine evidence-based change efforts, design professional development plans, create risk mitigation strategies, and evaluate technological solutions aligned to teaching, learning, and organizational goals.

EDL 9310 – Dissertation in Practice I

In this course, students will initiate the dissertation in practice process: students define a problem of practice, describe context, conduct literature review, finalize methodology, and prepare for proposal defense. Emphasis is on applied research design aligned to leadership contexts.

EDL 9320 – Dissertation in Practice II

In this course, students will implement the approved intervention or evaluation, collect and analyze data, integrate findings with theory and practice, and draft key components of the final deliverable. Emphasis is on rigorous applied research and practical impact.

EDL 9630 – Dissertation in Practice III

In this course, students will complete data analysis, finalize the dissertation manuscript, produce an executive brief and journal-ready article, and deliver a professional presentation of findings. Emphasis is on dissemination, stakeholder impact, and leadership contribution to the field.