



NKU | COLLEGE OF
Education

Online Ed.D

**IN EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

LEARNING ASSOCIATES' HANDBOOK



LEARN. GROW. GO.

Revised Fall 2024

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Educational Leadership, Ed.D. Handbook

Learn. Grow. Go.

Introduction

What We Do

We construct a leadership environment that allows individuals to develop their leadership identity, personal agency, and efficacy as change-makers.

Why We Do It

Our goal is for graduates to lead, educate, and empower in their spheres of influence to advance equity, excellence, and ethics.

How We Do It

We create learning conditions and provide a curriculum that fosters opportunities for personal and community transformation.

Who We Are

We define educational leadership as the reflective, informed practice of facilitating learning, change, and growth in both formal and informal settings.

Our students (Learning Associates) come from a variety of backgrounds, including:

- P-12 education
- Higher/post-secondary education
- Non-profits
- Public/governmental sector
- Health care
- Consulting
- Training and development
- Museum education/interpretation

Our faculty are experienced leaders and scholars dedicated to engaging with our Learning Associates, providing a mix of perspectives through both full-time and part-time faculty.

Program Membership

We are a proud member of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED).

Defining Elements of Our Program

1. **Practitioner-Scholar Focus**
 - Prepares leaders who construct and apply knowledge to positively impact lives and communities.
2. **Cohort Model**
 - Encourages collaboration and communication skills for working with diverse communities.

3. **Theory and Practice Integration**
 - Enhances leadership skills through job-embedded learning experiences.
4. **Focus on Transformational Leadership**
 - Develops both the practical skills and human qualities needed for effective leadership.
5. **Research and Inquiry**
 - Combines practical and research knowledge, linking theory with systemic inquiry.
6. **Addressing Current Challenges**
 - Frames leadership challenges around equity, ethics, and justice.
7. **Commitment to Action Research**
 - Emphasizes professional knowledge and practice transformation.

Program Logistics

Where and When

Our online program is designed to support educational leaders in P-12 and higher education roles, accessible anytime from anywhere.

Classes are offered:

- In accelerated, asynchronous 7-week sessions via Canvas.

Contact Information

- **Educational Leadership & Advanced Studies**
MEP 209
Email: edd@nku.edu
Phone: 859-572-7899

Who Should Apply?

Minimum Admission Requirements

- A master's degree (or equivalent) with a graduate GPA of 3.0.
- Significant professional leadership experience (typically five years or more).

Applicant Evaluation Criteria

- Organizational or civic ambition
- Leadership trajectory
- Timing for pursuing an Ed.D.
- Fit with the Ed.D. program

Application Process

Required Documents

- **Application and Fee:** Apply at apply.nku.edu.
- **Transcripts:** Send all transcripts to NKU's Office of Graduate Education.
- **Letter of Intent:** Address the four prompts related to impact, leadership roles, timing, and program fit.
- **Resume/Vitae**

- **Professional References:** Contact information for three professional recommendations.
 - **Leadership Situation Essay** (approx. 500 words)
-

Program Requirements

Program of Study

Each LA, in consultation with their program advisor, will develop a curriculum contract. The contract will ensure completion of core and specialization areas as well as a cognate that provides a coherent emphasis in an area of interest to the learning associate. The curriculum contract and any revisions must have the approval of the program director and will be filed in the program office.

The program of study consists of 8 student learning outcomes (SLOs):

1. Construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals; families; and educational agencies, organizations, and/or communities
2. Gain insight into the challenges, practices, and perspectives facing educational leaders and agencies, organizations, and communities in contemporary US society
3. Apply a systems lens to the interaction between dynamic systems and individuals, families, and educational agencies, organizations, and communities
4. Support the human qualities associated with facilitating change in oneself; others; and educational agencies, organizations, and communities
5. Demonstrate creative leadership that encourages thoughtful innovation and risk-taking in individuals and educational agencies, organizations, and/or communities
6. Demonstrate the capacity to scan ever-changing environments; analyze the forces that impact community, agency, and/or organizational effectiveness; and use this knowledge to design and implement adaptive strategies
7. Establish and support collaborative relationships and teams
8. Influence the creation, continuation, and evaluation of just and ethical educational contexts, norms, policies, and practices to transform educational institutions

The courses learning associates will take towards completion of the program of study for the EdD in Educational Leadership are organized as follows:

Foundations Core (24 Credits)

- EDD 800 Introduction to Doctoral Studies - 3 credits
- EDD 804 Leadership: Personal & Professional Perspectives - 3 credits
- EDD 805 Educational Leadership Theories - 3 credits
- EDD 806 Navigating Organizational Change - 3 credits
- EDD 807 Leadership: Identity and Agency - 3 credits
- EDD 815 Unpacking Educational Systems - 3 credits
- EDD 816 Universal Design for Learning - 3 credits
- EDD 817 Transforming Educational Systems - 3 credits

Online Specialization Requirements (15 Credits)

- EDD 852 Working with Governing Boards - 3 credits
- EDD 853 Educational Finance and Operations - 3 credits

- EDD 854 Educational Policy Development & Analysis - 3 credits
- EDD 855 Educational Public Relations - 3 credits
- EDD 856 Ethics for Educational Leaders - 3 credits

Capstone Classes (9 Credits)

- EDD 850 Critical Analysis of Education Research - 3 credits
- EDD 851 Research Writing for Educational Leaders - 3 credits
- EDD 897 Action Research Capstone - 3 credits

Online Cognate Options (12 credits):

- Kentucky Principal Certification
- Kentucky Superintendent Certification
- Kentucky Director of Pupil Personnel Certification
- Higher Education Administration
- Design Your Own

Transfer Policy

All credits applied to the EdD degree, inclusive of transfer credits, must be completed within a period of eight (8) years at the time of graduation. Transfer credits are governed at the university level in the [Graduate Programs Progression to Degree section](#). Key details include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Only graduate credits earned from a regionally-accredited institution and in which a grade of *B* or better was earned can be transferred into the EdD program.
- Transfer credits are only accepted to fulfill the 12-credit hour cognate core.
- No more than 9 credit hours of graduate credit applied to a previously-earned degree can be transferred into the EdD program.
- No more than 24 credit hours of graduate credit that was not applied to a previously-earned degree can be transferred into the EdD program.
- Transfer credits are processed after admission to the EdD program. If you believe you have transfer credits that might apply to your EdD degree program, please contact the program director.

Ed.D. Course Descriptions

NKU Graduate Catalog

For the most up to date information, visit the Graduate Catalog + Policies at: <https://www.nku.edu/admissions/graduate/current-students/Catalog.html>

Ed.D Core and Specialization Course Descriptions

Introduction to Doctoral Studies (EDD 800)

Introduction to the perspectives and skills needed to succeed as a doctoral student, including an introduction to information literacy, doctoral-level writing, and proficiency reading and responding to major ideas in a chosen leadership field.

Leadership: Personal and Professional Perspectives (EDD 804)

This course offers Learning Associates a comprehensive interdisciplinary exploration of leadership, focusing on developing knowledge, skills, and dispositions aligned with contemporary educational leadership. It provides a framework to investigate and enhance leadership assumptions, behaviors, and goals, fostering the planning of improvements for increased leadership effectiveness.

Educational Leadership Theories (EDD 805)

Understand the role of theory in research and learn to develop and apply theoretical frameworks to guide research design and analysis. In-depth exploration of educational leadership theories within social and historical contexts. Critically analyze leadership frameworks, gaining fluency in articulating fundamental concepts such as *leader*, *leadership*, *theory*, *power*, and *authority*.

Navigating Organizational Change (EDD 806)

This course explores navigating organizational change through by fostering effective communication and ethical leadership, emphasizing skills applicable to any role. Students employ systems thinking to grasp interconnectedness within organizations, crafting strategies for managing change reactions, promoting resilience, and cultivating adaptable, ethically grounded teams in a supportive, innovative environment.

Leadership: Identity and Agency (EDD 807)

This course focuses on individuals, emphasizing self-awareness, values, and purpose. Participants explore their unique identity and agency, synthesizing theory and introspection to gain insights into how their personal traits shape their capacity for leadership, culminating in a deeper understanding of themselves within their professional journey.

Unpacking Educational Systems (EDD 815)

This course explores educational systems through social reproduction lenses, fostering compassion and a commitment to challenging injustice. Learning Associates gain tools and insights to problematize normative practices. The course inspires leadership that transforms conditions, policies, and practices, aiming to champion systems that support just outcomes and experiences.

Universal Design for Learning (EDD 816)

Explore Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, examining strategies to create inclusive and accessible learning environments. Participants will gain insights into designing curriculum and instruction that meet diverse learner needs, promoting equity and engagement. Practical applications ensure participants can implement UDL effectively in educational settings.

Transforming Educational Systems (EDD 817)

Learning Associates leverage their prior knowledge of educational inequities to instigate positive, transformative changes in policies and practices for individuals, families, and educational institutions. The course frames the current landscape of US education through a systems perspective, fostering creative leadership, adaptive strategies, collaborative relationships, and influence within just, ethical educational contexts.

Critical Analysis of Educational Research (EDD 850)

This course equips participants to contextualize, design, and evaluate ethical action research. Through analyzing environmental scans and scholarly inquiry, participants learn to understand patterns across public and local knowledge sources. Emphasis is placed on addressing problems of practice with justice and equity considerations and effectively communicating findings to diverse audiences.

Research Writing for Educational Leaders (EDD 851)

This course explores effective communication of scholarly inquiry and action research findings. Participants learn to align communication strategies with diverse audiences and to assess and prepare for clear, impactful presentation of action research processes, findings, and recommendations.

Working with Governing Boards (EDD 852)

This course provides a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics and responsibilities of working with governing boards within various organizational contexts. Grounded in both theoretical frameworks and practical applications, the course aims to equip doctoral students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of governance structures effectively.

Educational Finance and Operations (EDD 853)

This course is designed to provide advanced insights in the intersection of educational finance and operations within the broader field of education leadership. Participants in this course will engage in rigorous analysis and independent research to develop an in-depth

understanding of the complex financial and operational challenges facing educational institutions.

Educational Policy Development & Analysis (EDD 854)

Participants explore the policy-making process, analyze its impact on educational systems, and gain skills to formulate effective policies. Practical applications ensure a comprehensive understanding, empowering leaders to navigate and contribute to the dynamic landscape of educational policy.

Ethics for Educational Leaders (EDD 856)

Exploration of ethical considerations in educational leadership. Participants delve into foundational ethical theories and practical decision-making frameworks. Case studies and real-world scenarios enhance ethical reasoning skills, empowering educational leaders to navigate complex moral dilemmas and cultivate just learning environments.

Action Research Capstone (EDD 897)

In this capstone course, students synthesize action research projects, applying them to address real-world challenges in their field and fostering advanced problem-solving and strategic decision-making. The course culminates in the presentation of impactful findings that contribute to professional growth and field advancement.

Exit Requirements

To earn the degree, Learning Associates must:

- Complete all 60 hours of coursework with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Pass the comprehensive assessment process.
- Apply to graduate through myNKU, adhering to all university deadlines and requirements.

Ed.D. Cognate Course Descriptions

Critical Theories (EDG 610)

This course investigates how critical theories reveal systemic flaws and deliberate functionality of oppression. Emphasizing generative thinking, the course analyzes individual lives, organizational structures, and societal frameworks to develop innovative approaches to systemic inequities. Students actively shape the seminar, dynamically adapting the exploration to their evolving interests.

Gender Expansive Leadership (EDG 611)

Exploration of issues pertaining to leadership and gender/gender identity marginalization. Topics include: intersectionality, leading from the margins, navigating space and place, gender and leadership development, and social responsibility within organizations. Learners will consider how their own leadership and knowledge production could aid in disrupting inequitable systems and structures.

Disability Studies in Education (EDG 612)

An interdisciplinary course offering a comprehensive exploration of disability as a multifaceted social, cultural, and political phenomenon. Delve into historical perspectives, social models, disability rights, and representations, fostering critical thinking and self-reflection while prioritizing the voices of disabled individuals. The curriculum aims to develop a nuanced understanding of disability issues.

Queering Educational Leadership (EDG 613)

Apply a Queer Theory lens to roles and experiences as leaders and scholars. Learners will consider queerness as action, role, identity, methodology, and theoretical framework. Learners use this lens to critically examine the ways norms, normalization, and normativity operate at the institutional, professional, and personal levels.

Educational Leaders as Activists (EDG 614)

Root and refine your educational activist voice, vision, and values. Examine texts and theoretical frameworks that highlight activism in leaders, elevate the voices of leaders from the margin, and define and design personal activist leadership maps to serve as meaningful guides in future work.

History of Higher Education (EDG 674)

An in-depth examination of higher education in the United States from origins to current day. Topics include trends, characteristics, and features that have shaped higher education, including the emergence of different types of institutions, the evolution of academic disciplines, and the impact of social, political, and economic forces.

Understanding the US College Student (EDG 675)

This course explores critical issues of access and equity for contemporary US college students, examining the evolving demographics and characteristics of this population. Participants analyze challenges and opportunities, exploring strategies to enhance inclusivity and address disparities in higher education, fostering a deeper understanding of student experiences.

Student Development and Learning Theories (EDG 676)

This course explores theories of adult learning and student development, delving into the affective and cognitive aspects that shape the educational experiences of post-secondary students. Participants gain a deep understanding of how students acquire and refine knowledge, skills, and values, blending theoretical exploration with practical applications.

Current Issues in Higher Education (EDG 677)

This specialized course explores current trends and emerging issues in higher education leadership. Each iteration focuses on specific topics, offering in-depth insights through theoretical exploration, case studies, and real-world applications. Participants develop strategies to address contemporary challenges, gaining knowledge crucial for effective educational leadership in their professional contexts.

Higher Education Administration Practicum (EDG 678)

A practicum experience in higher education administration. Participants apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, gaining practical experience in diverse administrative tasks. Supervised by seasoned professionals, students develop leadership skills, strategic planning abilities, and a nuanced understanding of higher education management.

Facilitating Post-Secondary Learning Practicum (EDG 679)

A practicum experience in higher education teaching. Participants apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, gaining practical experience in designing, planning, delivering, and assessing learning. Supervised by seasoned faculty, students develop pedagogical skills and a nuanced understanding of facilitating student learning.

Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership (Online)
Curriculum Contract

Last Name	First Name	Previous Last/Middle	Student ID #
Semester and Year Admitted/		E-mail	

Foundations Core Requirements (24 credit hours)	Prerequisite	Hours	Grade	Sem/Year
EDD 800: Introduction to Doctoral Studies	Admission	3		
EDD 804: Leadership: Professional & Personal Perspectives	Admission	3		
EDD 805: Educational Leadership Theories	Admission	3		
EDD 806: Navigating Organizational Change	Admission	3		
EDD 807 Leadership: Identity and Agency	EDD 804 B or better	3		
EDD 815: Unpacking Educational Systems	Admission	3		
EDD 816: Universal Design for Learning	EDD 815 B or better	3		
EDD 817: Transforming Educational Systems	EDD 816 B or better	3		

Online Specialization Requirements (15 credit hours)	Prerequisite	Hours	Grade	Sem/Year
EDD 852: Working with Governing Boards		3		
EDD 853: Educational Finance and Operations		3		
EDD 854: Educ Policy Development & Analysis		3		
EDD 855: Educational Public Relations		3		
EDD 856: Ethics for Educational Leaders		3		

Capstone Classes (9 credit hours)	Prerequisite	Hours	Grade	Sem/Year
EDD 850: Critical Analysis of Educ Research		3		
EDD 851: Research Writing for Educ Leaders		3		
EDD 897: Action Research Capstone		3		

Cognate Classes (12 graduate credit hours)	Prerequisite	Hours	Grade	Sem/Year