GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

& HIGHER EDUCATION

2026-2027

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PART I: OVERVIEW OF ELHE GRADUATE STUDIES

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION MISSION AND VISION

The Department of Educational Leadership and Higher Education is committed to supporting and enacting the mission and vision of the College of Education (COE) at Texas Christian University (TCU). The Mission and Vision of the COE follow:

COE MISSION

To prepare exemplary leaders for diverse educational settings and related fields who are reflective, ethical, innovative and committed to all learners.

COE VISION

A generation of educators meaningfully invested in the creation of a humane and just society through their leadership and interactions with students at every level.

ELHE VALUES

The Department of Educational Leadership and Higher Education:

Values student experiences and contributions: We consider students valuable members of a community of practice, and we balance high expectations with scaffolded experiences to help students succeed.

Promotes equity, justice, and humanity: We recognize educational and societal inequities and disparities through curricular and co-curricular practices that equip individuals to advocate for the dismantling of oppressive structures.

Fosters personal and professional development: We understand that learning is a collaborative process between faculty and students, and we empower students to be the authors of their learning.

Maintains a responsive organizational structure: We align policies and practices to promote students' success through clearly communicated expectations.

PROGRAM HISTORY

Over the years the M.Ed. and Ed.D. programs have progressed through much iteration as program faculty strived to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Programs have served persons focused on leadership in independent, private, and parochial school contexts, persons focused on leadership in higher education and persons aiming to work in educational aspects of corporate, nonprofit, or athletics endeavors. All programs serve both full-time and part-time students.

While M.Ed. programs have been in place across the years and have undergone several revisions to better align with evidence-based standards, the first Ed.D. took the form of the joint MBA/Ed.D. and enrolled its first two students in 2000. Since that time, the program has continued to grow and remains one of very few MBA/Ed.D. programs in the nation.

In 2006, an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (independent of the MBA) was approved, and the first admitted students began coursework shortly thereafter. Over the years that followed, program faculty noted that the program largely served two main groups: those persons with roots in EC-12 leadership and those pursuing leadership in higher education contexts. To ensure that all student needs were met, the Doctorate in Higher Education Leadership was instituted in 2012. These additions to the degree offerings coincided with an increase in program faculty and revisions to the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership.

In spring 2018, the University Council approved an Educational Leadership track within the Ph.D. in Educational Studies program. Two advising plans are available within that track: one focuses on leadership in PK-12 contexts, and the second focuses on leadership in higher education contexts. The Ph.D. in Educational Studies (Educational Leadership Emphasis) provides a plan of study that focuses more intently on preparing persons who intend to work in research/scholarship, and who may want to apply for tenure-track positions in their anticipated career pathways.

In 2019, the Ph.D. in Educational Studies (Educational Leadership emphasis) option for the MBA joint program was approved, adding the MBA/Ph.D. option to the slate of degrees offered.

Programs now include two certification-only programs (Principal and Superintendent), several M.Ed. offerings (certification-seeking, non-certification seeking, and higher education focused), and five doctoral offerings (MBA/Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, MBA/Ph.D. in Educational Studies (Educational Leadership emphasis); Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, Ed.D. in Higher Education Leadership, and the Ph.D. in Educational Studies-Educational Leadership Emphasis). As has been characteristic of the program throughout the years, students still work closely with an advisor to select a program of study that has fidelity to the core tenets of educational leadership while meeting the student's personal and professional goals. Further, students in doctoral-level programs are encouraged to explore embedded certificate programs, such as the certificate in Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies (CRES) or Women and Gender Studies (WGST), both administered via the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, or the Analytics Certificate, administered through the Neeley School of Business. Interested students should work with an advisor to select courses that can count toward embedded certificates within or in conjunction with the degree plan.

As of the most current catalog, general program descriptions are as follows (more details can be found in sections specific to these programs in later sections of the handbook and in the Graduate Catalog via the TCU Registrar's website at:

- The **M.Ed. in Educational Leadership** (PK-12 emphasis) is a 30 credit-hour online non-thesis program that prepares individuals to serve in K-12 educational leadership in a variety

of educational settings. The program accepts a new cohort beginning each summer term, and persons in the cohort move through coursework together.[1]

Two pathways are available in the Educational Leadership, M.Ed. PK-12 emphasis: The first pathway serves students who are seeking certification as school administrators in the state of Texas (i.e., seeking the Principal-as-Instructional Leader certificate from the State Board of Educator Certification). The second focuses on developing leadership skills useful in the PK-12 context, but serves those who are not seeking certification; this might include persons wanting to serve in roles (e.g., teacher-leaders, instructional coaches) that do not require the Principal-as-Instructional Leader certificate.

Note: Applicants seeking to enroll in the coursework leading to certification as a principal must hold a valid teaching certificate and must have completed at least two full years of teaching in an accredited school by the time they begin M.Ed. coursework, and must have completed at least three full years of teaching in an accredited school by the time they complete their program at TCU to be eligible for TCU to make a recommendation to the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

- The **M.Ed. in Educational Leadership** (Higher Education Leadership emphasis) is a 36-credit-hour, non-thesis program that prepares students for professional and administrative roles in colleges, universities, and other postsecondary education settings.

- The **Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (K-12 contexts)** is a 54-hour degree designed to develop leaders who make a difference for the common good. The program serves professionals from within the PK-12 educational context who want to develop the breadth of knowledge and skills needed to succeed in advanced leadership roles within the PK-12 context as well as professionals who work externally to PK-12 but in education-related endeavors (business/corporate training, policy organizations, or nongovernmental organizations). Students complete coursework—including a guided dissertation process, across three years and within an executive (e.g., long weekend) format. Students may choose to complete the degree without certification preparation, with preparation for the superintendent certificate, or with preparation for the principal certificate.

  Applicants seeking the *superintendent* certificate must apply to the program having met statutory admissions requirements for persons seeking the superintendent certificate in the State of Texas. Persons seeking the principal certificate in conjunction with the EdD must have completed at least two years of full-time teaching at an accredited school and must hold a valid teaching certificate *at the time of application* to the EdD program. Applicants who wish to pursue principal certification in conjunction with the EdD *must also* complete two to three courses (depending on coursework taken in the applicant's Master's program) in addition to the 54-hour EdD program (as certification-only seeking students, or

[1] The M.Ed. in PK-12 Educational leadership, as well as associated principal certification programming, is on hiatus until 2026-27, as the program undergoes redesign, with a goal of relaunching with a new cohort summer 2027. The information in this handbook has been updated to reflect that redesign.

in connection with another program at TCU). It is recommended that these courses be completed *prior to beginning coursework* with the doctoral cohort. This means that persons seeking the EdD who also wish to obtain the principal certificate should first apply to TCU as a non-degree seeking student (certification-only), and, while completing the two to three course prerequisites, apply for admission to the EdD. The six to nine hours of coursework required for the principal certification program is in addition to, rather than in lieu of, any credit requirement in the 54-hour EdD program.

- The **Ed.D. in Higher Education Leadership** is a 54-hour program combining a common core, inquiry courses, practical experience, and a dissertation. The Ed.D. is designed to prepare students for leadership roles in a variety of higher education institutional settings. The program will provide a professional degree to improve the practice of those engaged in administrative functions in higher education.

- The **Ph.D. in Educational Studies: Educational Leadership** is a 66-hour degree designed to equip graduates to engage in high-quality original scholarship. Degree recipients will have the knowledge and skills to assume positions as tenure-track college faculty tasked with engaging in research and with teaching graduate education courses, as experts with policy organizations responsible for producing or overseeing education-related research, and as high-level leaders in K-12 or higher education-related organizations with oversight and/or responsibility for research-oriented functions. Within the degree, students may opt to focus some course selections around a concentration in PK-12 leadership or leadership in higher education contexts.

  Applicants seeking the *superintendent* certificate must apply to the program having met admissions requirements for persons seeking the superintendent certificate in the State of Texas. Persons seeking the principal certificate in conjunction with the PhD must have completed at least two years of full-time teaching at an accredited school and must hold a valid teaching certificate *at the time of application* to the PhD program. Applicants who wish to pursue principal certification in conjunction with the PhD *must also* complete two to three courses in addition to the PhD program (as certification-only seeking students, or in connection with another program at TCU) in addition to or as part of their PhD coursework (in many cases, these courses may be taken as electives embedded within the PhD plan of study). Because PhD programming includes some opportunity for electives, there is the potential that PhD students can request that 6 to 9 hours of prior coursework be applied to the PhD, provided those hours meet other requirements for transfer credits.

- The **MBA/EdD and MBA/PhD**. are joint programs between the College of Education and the Neeley School of Business. Students complete the MBA as directed by the Neeley School of Business, though certain electives are completed within—and count toward—the EdD or PhD program. The EdD and PhD portions of the program are as stated for the standalone EdD and PhD programs.
    - The purpose of the MBA/EdD in Educational Leadership program is to prepare students to assume major leadership positions in a wide variety of education-

related organizations by applying managerial skills and educational leadership in the field of education. The program is designed to prepare students to enter educational management in school systems, regional, state, or federal governments, higher education institutions, research institutions, private foundations, or private sector companies.

- The MBA/Ph.D. in Educational Studies: Educational Leadership prepares students to assume major leadership and research-intensive positions in a wide variety of education-related organizations, including institutions of higher education, research organizations/think tanks, private foundations and nonprofit organizations, school systems, regional, state, or federal government, or private sector companies. Degree recipients have the knowledge and skills needed to assume positions as tenure-track college faculty tasked with engaging in research and with teaching graduate education courses, as experts with policy organizations responsible for producing or overseeing education-related research, and as high-level K-12 or higher education-related organizations with oversight and/or responsibility for research-oriented functions. Within the degree, students may opt to focus doctoral-level course selections around a concentration in PK-12 or higher education contexts. The MBA/Ph.D. in Educational Studies: Educational Leadership requires a minimum of 66 hours of doctoral-level coursework (including fieldwork and dissertation) in addition to MBA requirements.

Note: In any year where revisions to programs of study are made, students will be informed about any changes that affect the shape or scope of their plans of study; in most cases, students will complete the program of study under which they are admitted, unless they request via letter to program faculty to shift to the newly approved program of study.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

ELHE Department Chair	Dr. Taryn Ozuna Allen	t.o.allen@tcu.edu
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Director of Accreditation, Certification and Assessment	Mrs. Heather Doyle	heather.doyle@tcu.edu
Coordinator of Field Experiences, Alumni Relations, and Career Development	Dr. Karrabi Malin	k.malin@tcu.edu

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

Texas Christian University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees. The College of Education is also accredited by the Texas Education Agency. TCU is also an approved/vetted provider for the principal residency grant program through the Texas Education Agency as of 2022.

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

Students seeking admissions to any program in the TCU College of Education should pay close attention to the requirements outlined on the TCU College of Education Graduate Studies webpage https://coe.tcu.edu/resources/graduate/admissions-requirements.php. Application materials vary slightly from program to program, even within Educational Leadership, so careful attention to posted requirements is essential.

Students interested in any ELHE PK-12 programs (degree and/or certification) should check the College of Education website for applicable deadlines. Students who plan to seek financial assistance or employment as a graduate assistant during the first semester of enrollment must apply by the February 1 deadline (and enroll for the first time in a summer or fall semester). Please note that to respond to fluctuations in capacity and to ensure that all admitted students receive appropriate attention from faculty and advisors, some doctoral programs only admit on an every-other-year basis. Contact program faculty with questions as to particular enrollment dates.

Students interested in the Ph.D. in Educational Studies-Educational Leadership, the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, Ed.D. in Higher Education Leadership, or the M.Ed. in K-12 or Higher Education Leadership should check the College of Education website for applicable deadlines. Students who plan to seek financial assistance or employment as a graduate assistant during the first semester of enrollment must use the February 15 deadline (and enroll for the first time in a summer or fall semester). Please note that to respond to fluctuations in capacity and to ensure

that all admitted students receive appropriate attention from faculty and advisors, some doctoral programs only admit on an every-other-year basis. Contact program faculty with questions as to particular enrollment dates.

Students interested in the MBA/Ed.D. in Educational Leadership or the MBA/Ph.D. in Educational Studies (Educational Leadership emphasis) must apply to and be admitted to the Neeley School of Business at TCU prior to being considered for admission to the College of Education. These students should speak to program faculty and consult admissions requirements and deadlines for the Neeley School of Business Master of Business Administration - Neeley School of Business (tcu.edu) and must also apply and be accepted to the doctoral portion of the degree to participate in the joint degree program. Students applying for the MBA/Ed.D. or MBA/Ph.D. program are encouraged to visit with program faculty in both Neeley and the College of Education to determine whether the joint program will meet the student's professional goals.

GENERAL GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Information specific to graduate studies at TCU may be located at http://www.graduate.tcu.edu/ At this site, students can explore graduate programs, obtain information about general financial aid, and link to admissions requirements. The graduate studies catalog, along with many other resources including academic calendars and class search functions, is maintained on the website of the Registrar, at http://www.reg.tcu.edu/.

PART II: PROGRAMS OF STUDY, CURRICULA, AND PATHWAYS TO COMPLETION

NON-DEGREED PROGRAMS

The TCU College of Education recognizes that some students will seek certification as a principal or superintendent after completing other relevant studies. For these individuals, we offer professional certification programs. Upon successful completion of the required coursework and experiences, and upon completion of a successful practice exam in the appropriate area of certification, the TCU College of Education will permit the certification candidate to register for the required certification exam(s); students must successfully complete all requirements of the TCU College of Education Educator Preparation Program and required certification exams for TCU to finalize a recommendation to the State of Texas for certification as a principal or superintendent.

The principal certification program follows the same scheduling as the M.Ed. program, as this keeps certification-seeking students with a cohort.

Principal certificate. The professional certification program for aspiring principals is a 15 to 18-hour program (6-9 hours of coursework plus 6 hours of field-based practicum). Variation in required hours depends on the nature and content of the applicant's prior graduate work (e.g., the master's degree), and whether the student is positioned to complete the entire practicum within one semester at TCU, or whether the student would best be served by the two-semester experience. As per Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Part 7, §241.20, to be eligible to receive the Principal Certificate, a candidate must:

1. Successfully complete the appropriate certification exam(s) (i.e., the TExES 268 (PAIL) and 368 (PASL);
2. Hold, at a minimum, a master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education or an institution otherwise approved by an accrediting organization recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB);
3. Hold a valid classroom teaching certificate;
4. Have two creditable years of teaching experience as a classroom teacher (as defined in TAC §153.1021 and TEC §5.001(2); and
5. Successfully complete a principal preparation program that meets the standards outlined in the TAC and be recommended for certification by that program.

Additionally, TAC title 19, Part 7, §241 requires all individuals seeking certification as a principal to complete a field-based practicum that aligns with the Principal-as-Instructional Leader Standards (TAC §241.15). (For individuals seeking the Superintendent certificate, the candidate must

demonstrate proficiency in the superintendent standards (TAC §241.15) as part of the field-based practicum.[2] The practicum must be at least 160 hours (TAC §228.61)

There is a 5-attempt limit on taking any single certification exam under the Texas Education code. If a student does not pass after five tries, the candidate must seek a waiver through the Texas Education Agency to take the exam again. See more information on time limits for certification attempts and potential refresher coursework requirements at https://coe.tcu.edu/resources/testing-certification.php

All persons seeking the principal certificate who are seeking to obtain programmatic permission to register for the 268 and PASL exams should successfully complete AEL and T-TESS training through one of the regional Texas Education Service Centers (the closest are ESCs 11 and 10), as these enhance knowledge and skills pertinent to these exams. Both trainings—each of which are approximately three full days in duration—are undertaken at the student's expense, and certificates of successful completion should be filed in the student's certification documentation folder on TCU Box. Persons seeking clearance to register for the 268 should also complete the required preparation via 240Tutoring.com (using the @tcu.edu email to register for the account) and a practice exam; persons seeking clearance to register for 368 should complete required preparation as determined by the certification program coordinator.

Superintendent certificate[3]. The professional certification program for those individuals seeking the superintendent certificate is a 21-24 hour program (15-18 hours of coursework plus 6 hours of field-based practicum). Variation in required hours depends on whether the student is positioned to complete the entire practicum within one semester at TCU, or whether the student would best be served by the two-semester experience. As per Texas Administrative Code §242, to be eligible to receive the Superintendent Certificate, a candidate must:

1. Successfully complete the appropriate certification exam(s) (i.e., the TExES);
2. Successfully complete an approved superintendent educator preparation program that meets the standards outlined in the TAC and be recommended for certification by that program;
3. Hold, at a minimum, a master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education or an institution otherwise approved by an accrediting organization recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB);

[2] If legislation effects changes in preparation program requirements, or requirements for the principal and/or superintendent certificate, those laws, standards, and policies supersede the information in this handbook. The information in this handbook endeavors to be aligned with current requirements and laws, but may become outdated if changes occur at the state level.

[3] The superintendent certificate is treated as an alternative certification program, as this allows candidates to complete superintendent certification requirements—and potentially obtain the superintendent certificate—apart from the EdD or PhD. This is possible because the requirements for the superintendent degree do not require a completed doctorate. However, because of the small nature of the EdD and PhD programs in Educational Leadership at TCU, and the strict course sequence, it is challenging if not impossible to complete the superintendent preparation as a stand-alone program without substantial disruptions in learning progress. Because of this, persons seeking the superintendent certification, as of the 2025-26 year, should also be enrolled in an EdD or PhD program

4. Hold a valid principal certificate or the equivalent issued by another state or country.
5. Have at least three creditable years of managerial experience in a public school district (the experience must include responsibility for supervising or appraising faculty or staff, conducting district-level planning and coordination of programs, activities, or initiatives, and creating or maintaining a budget.

Additionally, TAC title 19, Part 7, §228.35(d)(3) requires all individuals seeking certification as a principal or superintendent to complete a supervised practicum of at least 160 clock-hours. For individuals seeking the Superintendent certificate, the candidate must demonstrate proficiency in the superintendent standards (TAC §242.15) as part of the field-based practicum.[4]

Upon admission to TCU and the College of Education, students work with an advisor to select appropriate coursework. Plans of study are outlined below.

Requirements for Testing Clearance (268, 368, 195). Students do not have to complete all program requirements before taking the relevant certification exam(s), but do have to meet certain requirements for clearance. To be cleared to take the TExES 268 (which may enable the student to seek a 1-year Intern certificate while finishing the program), the student must complete the first 6-12 hours of coursework in the program as well as AEL and T-TESS training, meet program standards as per the program coordinator on an in-person practice exam focused on constructed response items, and demonstrate depth of test preparation via the 240Tutoring.com platform. Students should register for the preparation platform with their @tcu.edu email address, to enable monitoring and crediting of preparation hours. While final requirements will be determined by the program coordinator, students should plan on preparing in alignment with the following guidelines as a starting point:

Practice Test Score (best attempt)	# hours preparation (minimum)
90% or better	5
80% or better	10
75% or better	15
70% or better	20
Under 70%	30

[4] The Standards required for the Superintendent Certificate are included among the materials in the Appendices.

When students have demonstrated proficiency (80% or better on practice exams on 240Tutoring.com; required preparation hours, 80% or better on the in-person exam focused on constructed response items, and completion of AEL and T-TESS training), they may request clearance from the certification program coordinator.

In addition to coursework, the preparation platform, and other program-related supports, recommended preparation resources are housed in the Graduate Course Shell on d2L (TCU Online).

Clearance to register for the 368 is dependent on program progress and attendance at an orientation workshop that reviews the structure of and approaches to the 368. Resources are also housed in the Graduate Course Shell on TCU Online.

Students seeking the superintendent certification may take the exam near or at the conclusion of their required preparation coursework or activities. To obtain clearance, they must first demonstrate proficiency on a practice exam. These may be scheduled individually or may be held in group format each semester.

TCU cannot make a final recommendation until all required components are complete, but can, with advisor approval, permit a student to register for an attempt or re-attempt of the 268, 368, or superintendent exam.

Note for persons seeking principal or superintendent certification, whether in a stand-alone program or in conjunction with a degree: Candidates are highly encouraged to complete all certification requirements within one year of graduation or certification program completion at TCU to avoid additional requirements and costs. In no case will TCU permit a candidate to test if they have not completed the certification process within five years of graduation or program completion. In the event of such a major delay in completion, candidates would be required to re-enroll and repeat the program, or to seek certification elsewhere.

In alignment with TAC §228.31, TCU will grant test approval when a candidate is ready (determined by TCU to mean that the candidate has met course and field experience requirements, including successful performance on a practice exam and related preparation activities) or if the candidate is a completer (that is, the candidate has successfully finished the course of study-including all practicum requirements—as well as the slate of associated trainings (AEL, T-TESS, dyslexia).

However, TCU shall make test approval contingent on a candidate completing additional coursework, preparation, and/or training to show that the candidate is prepared to pass the test if the candidate is:

1) Seeking test approval in an area where the standards and/or test changed since the candidate completed all requirements of the TCU program; *OR*

2) If the candidate has returned to the educator preparation program (i.e., TCU) for test approval one or more years following the academic year of completion of all program requirements.

Such additional coursework or training may include any of the following*:

1. Completion (at candidate's expense) of EDLE 60053; EDLE 60063/EDAD 70013; EDLE 60083/EDAD 70063; and a practicum experience of 3-6 hours.

2. Re-enrollment and completion of AEL and T-TESS at a regional ESC.

3. Practice exams (in person focused on constructed response items, online diagnostic and practice exams) and completion of required preparation on the 240Tutoring.com platform that demonstrates adequate readiness.

*Any costs associated with these requirements are at the certification-seeker's expense.

EDLE PRINCIPAL CERTIFICATION-ONLY PLAN OF COURSEWORK[5]

Student Name **TCU ID #**

Advisor **Date Plan was updated**

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDLE 60043	Instructional Leadership: Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment				
EDLE 60053	Instructional Leadership: Supervision, Evaluation, & Coaching				
EDLE 60033 or EDLE 70043	Community Engagement & Culturally Responsive Practice or School & Community Contexts				
EDLE 60063 or EDAD 70013	Law & Ethics in Educational Leadership or Legal & Social Environment of Education				
EDLE 60083 EDAD 70063	Data Use for Educational Leaders OR Data-Informed Decision-Making				
EDLE 60093A	Principal Practicum				
EDLE 60093B	Principal Practicum				

Substitutions

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of:

AEL Training Dates/Completion Certificate: _____

T-TESS Training Dates/Completion Certificate: _____

TExES Practice Exam Passed (Date): _____

Office use only	*Notes*
○ *2+ years full time teaching in accredited school verified* ○ *TExES Principal Exam & PASL passed*	

[5] On hiatus in 2025-26; this program is undergoing redesign, and is estimated to re-launch for applications in 2026.

EDLE SUPERINTENDENT CERTIFICATION-ONLY PLAN OF COURSEWORK

Student Name **TCU ID #**

Advisor **Date Plan was updated**

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70043 or EDLE 60073	Educational Policy & Practice or Education Policy Studies				
EDAD 70033	Ethics & Equity-Oriented Leadership				
EDLE 70073 or EDLE 70033 or EDAD 70053	School & Community Contexts or Community Engagement & Culturally Responsive Practice or Cultural Foundations in Educational Leadership				
EDAD 70013 or EDLE 60063	Legal & Social Environment of Education or Law & Ethics in Educational Leadership				
EDHE 70153	Organizational Behavior in Educational Contexts				
EDLE 70083	Issues & Trends in the Superintendency				
EDLE 70093A	Supt Practicum A				
EDLE 70093B	Supt Practicum B				

Substitutions

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of:

TExES Practice Exam Passed (Date): _____

Office use only	***Notes***
○ *Applicant holds valid Principal Certificate or equivalent* ○ *TExES Superintendent (064) passed*	

M.ED. PROGRAMS

The M.Ed. in Educational Leadership may be structured with either a PK-12 or higher education emphasis. For information on higher education programs, consult program faculty or the higher education (section of this) program handbook. The PK-12 (certification) emphasis prepares individuals to serve as elementary, middle school, and secondary principals as well as central office staff in public and private schools. Students may also elect a course of study that does not lead to certification, for those who aspire to work in a variety of contexts such as nonprofit leadership, with an entity that is associated with education, or in a higher education leadership context.

Degree with Certification

The M.Ed. + professional certification program for aspiring principals is a 30-hour program (24 hours of coursework plus 6 hours of field-based practicum; the program is online and structured for completion within one calendar year (summer-fall-spring). Candidates must successfully complete the program as set out by the TCU College of Education Educator Preparation Program and pass the required certification exams in order for the TCU College of Education to recommend candidates to the State of Texas for the Principal-as-Instructional-Leader certificate via the State Board for Educator Certification.

Degree without Certification

The M.Ed. in Educational Leadership is also available for those who are not pursuing principal certification, but who wish to pursue leadership opportunities in PK-12 education that do not require the certification. For these persons, a combination of electives and/or internships may be substituted for the principal practicum courses.

Credit for Prior Learning

Students admitted to the M.Ed. in Higher Education Leadership Program who possess prior full time work experience in higher education settings may seek credit for prior learning in lieu of completing 1-2 internships (3-6 credit hours). Credit for prior learning can be earned through the completion of Portfolio One and/or Portfolio Two (each equating to 3 credit hours). Each completed portfolio will be reviewed by program faculty and a grade of 70% or higher will constitute a passing grade (and the awarding of credit) for each portfolio.

The following qualifications and requirements must be met to be considered for CPL:

- Students seeking to receive CPL must have completed 2-3 years full-time work experience in a postsecondary educational setting, prior to enrolling in CPL. Full-time work is defined as a position (staff, administrative, or teaching) requiring 40 hours per week.
- CPL will be given for the completion of CPL Portfolio One and/or CPL Portfolio Two.
- CPL Portfolio One will be in lieu of EDHE 70203: Internship. Students wishing to complete CPL Portfolio Two may do so to meet requirements for EDHE 70203: Internship.
- CPL will only be in lieu of EDHE 70203 and cannot be used in place of any other courses on the M.Ed. in Higher Education Leadership Program of Study.

The requirements for Portfolio One and Portfolio Two are included below, along with descriptions of each required assignment, associated learning outcomes, grading, and evaluation criteria, as well as evaluation rubrics for each assignment for both portfolios.

Portfolio One requires the completion of the following:

1. About the Credit for Prior Learning Experience Site Paper
2. Credit for Prior Learning Outcomes Paper
3. Reflection on Prior Learning Experience Paper

Portfolio Two requires the completion of the following:

1. Professional Resume
2. Professional Development Plan
3. Completion of Mock Interview
4. Presentation on Prior Learning Experiences

Students granted credit for prior learning will be charged for 1 credit hour of tuition (for each 3 hours of credit given) at current rates and under all applicable TCU policies and procedures for credit for prior learning.

Degree plans are noted below.

M.ED. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (PK-12 EMPHASIS WITH PRINCIPAL CERTIFICATION)[6]

Student Name _____ **TCU ID #** _____

Advisor _____ **Date Plan was updated** _____

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDLE 60013	Leadership: Theory & Practice				
EDLE 60103	Human-Centered Leadership and Capacity Building				
EDLE 60033	Engaging Community & Culturally Responsive Practice				
EDLE 60043	Instructional Leadership A: Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment				
EDLE 60053	Instructional Leadership B: Supervision, Evaluation, & Coaching				
EDLE 60063	Law & Ethics in Educational Leadership				
EDLE 60083	Data Use for School Leaders				
EDLE 60023	Seminar: Trends in Teaching, Learning, & Leadership				

Midpoint Assessment

Date: _____ ***Result:*** _____

AEL Training:_____ **T-TESS**_____

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDLE 60093A	Principal Practicum A				
EDLE 60093B	Principal Practicum B				

Substitutions

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of:

Transfer coursework that counts towards degree:

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade

TExES Practice Exam Passed (Date): _____

[6] On hiatus in 2025-26; this program is undergoing redesign, and is estimated to re-launch for applications in 2026.

M.ED. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (PK-12 EMPHASIS, NON-CERTIFICATION TRACK)[7]

Student Name _____ **TCU ID #** _____

Advisor _____ **Date Plan was updated** _____

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDLE 60013	Leadership: Theory & Practice				
EDLE 60113	Human-Centered Leadership and Capacity Building				
EDLE 60033	Engaging Community & Culturally Responsive Practice				
EDLE 60043	Instructional Leadership A: Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment				
EDLE 60053	Instructional Leadership B: Supervision, Evaluation, & Coaching				
EDLE 60063	Law & Ethics in Educational Leadership				
EDLE 60083	Data Use for School Leaders				
EDLE 60023	Seminar: Trends in Teaching, Learning, & Leadership				

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70200	Internship or Elective				
EDAD 70200	Internship or Elective				

Substitutions

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of:

Transfer coursework that counts towards degree:

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade

[7] On hiatus in 2025-26; this program is undergoing redesign, and is estimated to re-launch for applications in 2026-27 for a cohort start date of summer 2027.

M.ED. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (HIGHER EDUCATION EMPHASIS)

Student Name _____ **TCU ID #** _____

Advisor _____ **Date Plan was updated** _____

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDHE 60423	Intro. to Student Affairs				
EDHE 60403	Theories of Student Development				
EDHE 60013	Leadership: Theory & Practice				
EDHE 61093	Diversity in American Higher Ed.				
EDHE 61183	Special Topics in Higher Ed.*				
EDHE 62373	Helping Relationships for Higher Ed. Administrators				
EDHE 62053	Small Group Dynamics for Higher Ed. Administrators				
EDUC 60823	Educational Program Evaluation & Research				
EDUC 70983	Intro. to Quantitative Research				
EDHE 70203	Internship*				
	ELECTIVE #1				
	ELECTIVE #2				

* May be taken more than once to fulfill elective.

Substitutions:

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of:

Transfer coursework that counts toward degree:

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Hours	Grade

ED.D. AND PH.D. PROGRAMS

Texas Christian University provides multiple pathways to the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and the Ph.D. in Educational Studies: Educational Leadership (Focus in PK-12 Contexts). Students focusing on an administrative career in colleges and universities (or who want to engage in teaching and scholarship focused on aspects of collegiate/university leadership) typically pursue the Doctorate in Higher Education Leadership. Students pursuing careers in school districts, regional or state agencies, education-related nonprofits, businesses, or other entities may elect to pursue the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (non-certification track) or the Ph.D. in Educational Studies: Educational Leadership (Focus in PK-12 Contexts), as they determine appropriate to career goals.

Those aiming for high-level leadership position in school districts, regional or state agencies, or PK-12 related nonprofits or other educational enterprises, typically opt for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership (PK-12), and frequently wrap principal or superintendent certification requirements into the course of study. Some students elect to focus their time at TCU on the doctoral degree, and concurrently or subsequently pursue superintendent certification via ESC 11 or other ESC program.

In 2018, TCU began offering the Ph.D. in Educational Studies: Emphasis in Educational Leadership (Focus in PK-12 Contexts) for those whose goals include appointments as scholarship-producing education faculty at institutions of higher education or in research and/or policy organizations. Finally, TCU boasts one of the few joint MBA-doctoral programs in the country. Persons who apply to this program (either the MBA/Ed.D. or the MBA/Ph.D.) must first be admitted to the Neeley School of Business at TCU and must also meet admission requirements and be accepted for admission into the Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership or the Ph.D. program in Educational Studies: Educational Leadership (Focus in PK-12 Contexts). Students accepted to the MBA/Ed.D. or MBA/Ph.D. program typically complete MBA requirements then complete doctoral-level work (including work required for certification if appropriate to career goals) in the College of Education, though movement between Business and Education coursework is encouraged when possible.

Principal certification in conjunction with Ed.D. or Ph.D. Persons who are seeking initial principal certification in conjunction with the Ed.D. or Ph.D. must have at least two years of creditable full-time teaching at a TEA-accredited school (EC-12), must already hold a Master's degree in education or a related field, and Ed.D. students must complete 6-9 hours of graduate educational leadership coursework as non-degree seeking (certification-only) students *prior* to beginning doctoral degree coursework with their cohort or *in addition to* other EdD requirements. If this applies, students initially apply as certification-seeking students, and in the first academic year (fall-spring) complete:

- EDLE 60043 (Instructional Leadership A: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment)[8]
- EDLE 60053 (Instructional Leadership B: Supervision)

[8] May be waived depending on the content/focus of the existing Master's degree, with advisor approval.

- EDLE 60083 (Data Use for Educational Leaders)

Persons who are seeking initial principal certification in conjunction with the Ph.D. must have at least two years of creditable full-time teaching at an accredited school (EC-12), must already hold a Master's degree in education or a related field, and must either complete 6-9 hours of graduate educational leadership coursework as non-degree seeking (certification-only) students *prior* to beginning doctoral degree coursework with their cohort or must work with an advisor to incorporate the required courses into the degree in lieu of electives, or to layer the additionally required courses onto the required program of study.

NOTE ON CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY: Students cannot be recommended for the Principal-as-Instructional Leader certificate in the state of Texas without a Master's degree; students interested in the MBA/doctoral degree track (MBA/EdD or MBA/PhD) who do not already hold a Master's degree at time of application should be aware that TCU will not be able to complete their recommendation until completion of both portions of the joint degree. Students who aim for administrative certification and who do not already have a Master's degree in education or a related field should visit with program faculty to determine possible pathways to certification prior to application.
Students who do not already hold a Master's degree, and who enroll in the MBA/EdD or MBA/PhD, cannot be admitted into a superintendent preparation program, as a Master's degree is a state requirement for admittance.

Students may not complete the Principal and Superintendent certificate preparation programs within the same degree.

Students may not "back date" courses; if a student does not apply for a certification-preparation program with the initial application, but later decides they want to pursue principal or superintendent certification, this may not be possible, given statutory requirements for when required coursework or other preparation experiences may be credited. It is critical that a student who wants to earn the principal or superintendent certificate complete the application procedure for certification programs at the time of initial application to the degree program. For questions about this, visit with an academic advisor or the departmental coordinator of K-12 certification programs.

Superintendent Certification in Conjunction with Ed.D. or Ph.D.
Doctoral programs in PK-12 Educational Leadership are designed to embed superintendent certification. Persons seeking principal certification will take principal practicum when other cohort members take superintendent practicum (all should take Trends & Issues in the Superintendency, as a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership benefits from an understanding of district-level functions and concepts).

Persons who are not seeking either certification take electives or internship (EDAD 70200) when cohort members complete practicum coursework/experiences.

Only when these core courses and the practicum have been completed, and the appropriate TExES exam(s) passed, will TCU consider recommending the applicant for the principal or superintendent certificate.

Course Scheduling and Degree Plans

ED.D. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Student Name _____ **TCU ID #** _____

Advisor _____ **Date Plan was updated** _____

Course of Study: Core Content (21 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70003	Foundational Readings in Educational Leadership	Summer 1			
EDAD 70033	Ethics & Equity-Oriented Leadership	Summer 1			
EDLE 70053	Cultural Foundations in Educational Leadership	Fall 1			
EDHE 70153	Organizational Behavior and Change	Spring 1			
EDAD 70013	Legal & Social Environment of Education	Summer 2			
EDLE 70043	School & Community Contexts	Fall 2			
EDAD 70043	Education Policy & School Finance	Spring 2			

Course of Study: Inquiry (9 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDUC 70953	Research in Education	Fall 1			
EDUC 70983	Introduction to Quantitative Research	Spring 1			
EDUC 70923 **** EDUC 70823	Introduction to Applied Qualitative Methods *or* Inquiry Seminar: Mixed Methods	Summer 2			

Course of Study: Certification/Practicum/Internship (9 hours)[9]

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDLE 70083	Issues & Trends in the Superintendency *OR* Elective	Summer 3			
EDLE 60093 *** EDLE 70093 *** EDAD 70200	Principal Practicum A *OR* Superintendent Practicum A *OR* Internship	Fall 3			
EDLE 60093 *** EDLE 70093 *** EDAD 70200	Principal Practicum A *OR* Superintendent Practicum A *OR* Internship	Spring 3			

[9] For non-certification-seeking students, additional coursework may be elected in lieu of internship hours.

Course of Study: Capstone (15 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70073	Capstone/Dissertation Seminar A	Fall 2			
EDAD 70073	Capstone/Dissertation Seminar B				
EDAD 90770 *or* EDUC 90980	Capstone or Dissertation Hours (with Chair)	Spring 2			
EDAD 90770 *or* EDUC 90980	Capstone or Dissertation Hours (with Chair)	Summer 3			
EDAD 90770 *or* EDUC 90990	Capstone or Dissertation Hours (with Chair)	Fall 3; Spring 3			

**While most students will complete the capstone within a year, others may require additional time, and students who need to take more than 9 credit hours must continue to enroll in 1 hours of EDAD 90770 or EDUC 90980/90990 through degree completion.*

Substitutions

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of:

ED. IN HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

Student Name | **TCU ID #**

Advisor | **Date Plan was updated**

The EdD in Higher Education Leadership requires 54 hours of post-matriculation coursework.

Foundations (18 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70003	Foundational Readings in Educ. Administration				
EDAD 70033	Ethical & Equity in Educ. Leadership				
EDHE 70133	History and Philosophy of Higher Education				
EDHE 70143	Advanced Student Development Theory: Impact of College on Students				
EDHE 70153	Organizational Behavior in Education Contexts				
EDLE 70053	Cultural Foundations in Educ. Leadership				

Inquiry (9 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDUC 70953	Research in Education				
EDUC 70963	Qualitative Inquiry I				
EDUC 70983	Introduction to Quantitative Research				

Administrative Leadership in Higher Education (15 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 60133	Trends & Issues in Educ. Administration				
EDHE 60133	Legal Issues in Higher Education				
EDHE 70113	Academic Leadership & Gov. in Higher Education				
EDHE 70263	Finance in Higher Education				
EDHE 78213	Human Resource Mgmt. in Higher Education				

Dissertation (12 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70073	Capstone/Dissertation Seminar				
EDUC 90980	Dissertation				
EDUC 90990	Dissertation				

Substitutions

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of:

Transfer coursework that counts towards degree (up to 6 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Hours	Grade

Student Name **TCU ID #**

Advisor **Date Plan was updated**

Foundations (18 hours)
The program is committed to providing students with coursework that provides complex and in-depth context to the work of the educational leader, including a grounding in philosophical, historical, legal, ethical, and organizational influences.

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70003	Foundational Readings in Educational Leadership (PK-12 focus)				
EDUC 60253	Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Education				
EDAD 70033	Ethics & Equity-Oriented Leadership				
EDAD 70013	Legal & Social Environment of Education				
EDAD 70043	Education Policy & School Finance				
EDHE 70153	Organizational Behavior in Educ Contexts				

Research (15 hours from the following)
The program and college are committed to helping doctoral students broadly understand research methodology while specializing in one or more methodologies. Students take a minimum of 15 hours of research coursework and work with a faculty member on a project toward presentation/publication in a scholarly venue in addition to completing the dissertation.

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDUC 60753	Research in Education				
PSYC 50213	Interactive Data Analysis				
EDUC 70983	Introduction to Quantitative Research				
EDUC 70923	Introduction to Applied Qualitative Methods				
EDUC 60043	Action Research				
EDUC 70963	Qualitative Inquiry				
EDUC 70973	Advanced Qualitative Inquiry				
PSYC 60623	Regression				
INSC 60010	Statistical Models[10]				
EDUC 70823	Inquiry Seminar[11]				
EDUC 70960	Apprenticeship in Research				

[10] INSC 60010 is a 1.5 hour course; students opting to take this course must exceed the 18 hour requirement in inquiry by taking another 3-hour course (i.e., will total 19.5 hours of inquiry), though they may take another 1.5 hour elective (in the specialization/electives section) to avoid exceeding the minimum of 66 hours for the degree plan.
[11] May be repeated up to three times with different emphasis with consent of advisor.

Leadership & Approaches: PK-12 Contexts (15 hours from among the following)

Additional course selections—aimed at equipping doctoral students with the in-depth and specialized knowledge needed to succeed in various areas of research and leadership—should be made with professional and research goals in mind; in some cases, this may mean electing coursework outside of the College of Education, with permission of the advisor.

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70023	Theory & Management of Education Systems				
EDUC 60023	Analyzing Professional Literature & Writing Professionally				
EDSP 60233	Exceptional Children and Youth at Risk				
EDUC 60213	Psychology of Thinking and Learning				
EDAD 70063	Data-Informed Decision Making				
EDUC 60823	Educational Program Evaluation				
EDUC 60013	Curriculum Theory				
EDLE 70083	Issues & Trends: Superintendency				
EDCS 60813	Curriculum Studies Seminar[12]				
EDLE 70053	Cultural Foundations of Educational Leadership				
EDLE 70043	School & Community Contexts				

Practicum or Internship Experiences (6 hours[13])

The program is committed to establishing authentic supervisory learning opportunities for students, and to doing so in ways that align with certification requirements established by the Texas Education Agency. Certification-seeking students will enroll in Principal or Superintendent Practicum, as appropriate; those who are not seeking certification, or who already hold certification, engage in internship hours to explore a facet of educational leadership or policymaking OR may elect up to six hours of additional coursework.

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDLE 60093 ***or*** EDLE 70093 *or* EDAD 70200	Principal Practicum A Superintendent Practicum A Internship				
EDLE 60093 ***or*** EDLE 70093 *or* EDAD 70200	Principal Practicum B Superintendent Practicum B Internship				

Dissertation (12 hours)

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade
EDAD 70073	Dissertation Seminar[14]				
EDUC 90980	Dissertation				
EDUC 90990	Dissertation				

Substitution

[12] May be taken up to three times with different emphasis with consent of advisor.

[13] For non-certification seeking students, an additional 3-hour internship may be substituted for one elective in the specialization section with approval of the student's advisor for a maximum of 9 hours of internship.

[14] Comprehensive exams must be completed prior to enrollment in EDAD 70073; in rare cases, a student may be allowed to enroll in EDAD 70073 while completing the comprehensive exam, but in no case will a final grade be assigned in EDAD 70073 until successful completion of the comprehensive exam.

Course	Course Title	Term Enrolled	Instructor	Hours	Grade	Accepted in lieu of

PH.D. IN EDUCATIONAL STUDIES: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (FOCUS IN HIGHER EDUCATION)

Student Name _____ *TCU ID #* _____

Date Plan was updated: _____

Advisor _____

Ph.D. in Educational Studies: Educational Leadership: (Focus in Higher Education)

Foundations (18 hours)

Course	*Course Title*	*Term Enrolled*	*Hours*	*Grade*
EDAD 70003	Foundational Readings in Ed. Admin. (Higher Ed. focus)			
EDHE 70133	History & Philosophy of Higher Education			
EDAD 70033	Ethical & Moral Dimensions of Ed. Leadership			
EDHE 60133	Legal Issues in Higher Education			
EDHE 70143	Adv. Student Devel. Theory: Impact of College on Students			
EDHE 70153	Org. Behavior in Educ. Contexts			

Research (15 hours from the following)

Students take a minimum of 15 hours of research methodology while specializing in one or more methodologies. Students take a minimum of research coursework and work with a faculty member on a project toward presentation/publication in a scholarly venue in addition to completing the dissertation.

Course	*Course Title*	*Term Enrolled*	*Hours*	*Grade*
EDIR 70953	Research in Education			
PSYC 50213	Interactive Data Analysis			
EDIR 70983	Intro. to Quantitative Research			
EDIR 70923	Intro. to Applied Qualitative Methods			
EDIR 60043	Action Research			
EDIR 70963	Qualitative Inquiry			
EDIR 70973	Advanced Qualitative Inquiry			
PSYC 60623	Regression Analysis			
INSC 60010	Statistical Models[2] (1.5 hours)			
EDIR 70823	Inquiry Seminar[3]			
EDIR 70960	Apprenticeship in Research			

[2] INSC 60010 is a 1.5 hour course; students opting to take this course must exceed the 18 hour requirement in inquiry by taking another 3-hour course (i.e., will total 19.5 hours of inquiry), though they may take another 1.5 hour elective (in the specialization/electives section) to avoid exceeding the minimum of 66 hours for the degree plan.

[3] May be repeated up to three times with different emphasis with consent of advisor.

Leadership & Approaches (21 hours from the following)

Course	*Course Title*	*Term Enrolled*	*Hours*	*Grade*
EDAD 60133	Trends & Issues in Ed. Admin.: Higher Ed.[4]			
EDHE 70633	Challenges in Higher Ed.: Student Affairs			
EDHE 60423	Intro. to Student Affairs			

EDHE 70113	Academic Leadership & Governance in Higher Ed.			
EDAD 70043	Education Policy & Practice			
EDHE 70123	College President			
EDHE 70163	The Small College			
EDHE 70263	Finance in Higher Ed.			
EDHE 70223	Intercollegiate Athletics in Higher Ed.			
EDHE 70233	Comparative Higher Ed. [5]			
EDHE 70253	Assessment & Accred. in Post-Secondary Ed.			
EDAD 70023	Theory & Mgmt. of Ed. Systems			
EDUC 60213	Psychology of Thinking & Learning			
EDIR 60823	Educational Prog. Eval. & Research			
	Elective			
	Elective			

[4] May be taken up to twice for a total of 6 hours with different emphasis. Topics: Strategic Planning, Sustainability, Environmental Theory in Higher Education, Finance and Administration in Higher Education, Development in Higher Education

[5] May be taken up to twice for a total of 6 hours with different emphasis. Topics: Great Britain, Central and South America, Europe and Asia

Dissertation (12 hours)

Course	*Course Title*	*Term Enrolled*	*Hours*	*Grade*
EDAD 70073	Capstone/Dissertation Seminar[6]			
EDUC 90980	Dissertation (3-6 hours)			
EDUC 90990	Dissertation (3-6 hours)			

[6] Comprehensive exams must be completed prior to enrollment in EDAD 70073; in rare cases, a student may be allowed to enroll in EDAD 70073 while completing the comprehensive exam, but in no case will a final grade be assigned to EDAD 70073 until successful completion of the comprehensive exam.

Substitutions:

Course	*Course Title*	*Term Enrolled*	*Hours*	*Grade*

Course work that counts toward degree:

Course	*Course Title*	*Term Enrolled*	*Hours*	*Grade*

SELECTION OF THE CHAIR FOR THE CAPSTONE OR DISSERTATION COMMITTEE (ED.D. AND PH.D. STUDENTS)

PhD students should select a chair and begin working toward a comprehensive exam process when they have completed approximately 45 hours of coursework; they may do this earlier, particularly if they would like the chair's input on electives or coursework (content or methods) related to the intended topic. Students will work with the chair to complete the dissertation committee. PhD Committees should be comprised of four persons: the Chair (from the program area unless approved by Department Chair), a second member from the ELHE department, a third member who is a TCU or TCU CoE faculty member, and a fourth person who holds a terminal degree in the field (this can be from the CoE, from TCU more broadly, or external to the institution).

EdD students will identify faculty with whom they would like to work at or around the conclusion of their first full year of coursework (that is, in the spring/summer moving into Summer or Fall 2). Students should consider not only faculty whom they know or with whom they work well, but also which faculty have needed or relevant topical or methodological expertise. Program faculty will consider student preference, but will also consider faculty expertise and current faculty capstone/dissertation load, and will assign a chair to each EdD student. Students will work with the designated chair to fill out the dissertation or capstone committee. EdD Committees should be comprised of three persons: the Chair (from the program area unless approved by Department Chair), another CoE faculty member, and a third person who holds a terminal degree in the field (this can be from the CoE, from TCU more broadly, or external to the institution).

The Chair must hold Graduate Faculty Status and TCU-based members must hold, at a minimum, Associate Graduate Faculty status. If a student wishes to include a special committee member (external to TCU or from within TCU but for someone who does not hold, at a minimum, Associate Graduate Faculty status), they should consult with the chair on procedures to qualify such persons for participation on a capstone/ dissertation committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

PhD Committee	EdD Committee
Chair (ELHE Faculty; holds Graduate Faculty Status)	Chair (ELHE Faculty; holds Graduate Faculty Status)
Member 2 (ELHE Faculty; holds at a minimum Associate Graduate Faculty Status)	Member 2 (ELHE Faculty; holds at a minimum Associate Graduate Faculty Status)
Member 3 (Faculty @ TCU; holds at a minimum Associate Graduate Faculty Status)	Member 3 (Faculty @ TCU who holds at a minimum Associate Graduate Faculty Status OR External/Special Committee Member)
Member 4 (Faculty @ TCU who holds at a minimum Associate Graduate Faculty Status OR External/Special Committee Member)	
Note: Persons working in a professional/leadership capacity outside of TCU or TCU faculty/staff who do not already hold at least Associate Graduate Faculty Status should be slotted into the "external/special committee member" role.	

PROCESS FOR ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

The comprehensive examination (or "qualifying exam")[15] is an exercise through which students pursuing the PhD demonstrate competence in the doctoral curriculum prior to embarking on the dissertation proposal. PhD students become a "doctoral candidate" upon successful completion of the comprehensive exam.

EdD students do not complete a comprehensive exam separate from the dissertation proposal process: For EdD students, the transition from doctoral student to "doctoral candidate" is marked by successful defense of the dissertation proposal.

For PhD students, the "Advancement to Candidacy" form is completed upon successful completion of the comprehensive exam. For EdD students, the "Advancement to Candidacy" form is completed upon successful defense of the capstone or dissertation proposal. For EdD students, the IRB protocols may *not* be submitted for approval until the Advancement to Candidacy form is filed. For PhD students, IRB protocols may *not* be submitted until successful defense of the dissertation proposal.

[15] All doctoral students who enrolled in their first TCU graduate-level course during or after the Fall 2014 semester must follow the process for Comprehensive Exams as outlined in this handbook.

The process for comprehensive exams (for PhD students only) is as follows. Upon completing at least 42-45 hours of coursework, the student selects three professors (at least one from among Educational Leadership program faculty who will serve as the Dissertation Chair, and two others who will serve on the dissertation committee) to serve on the comprehensive exam panel. A fourth member must be added to the committee for the full project (for PhD students), but this is not required for composition of the comprehensive exam committee.

Upon selection of faculty, the student work with the Chair to schedule a dialogue with those faculty serving on the Comprehensive Exam Panel. Faculty serving on the comprehensive exam panel will then meet with the student to discuss the student's professional and scholarly interests and potential topical areas for the dissertation. Within one to two weeks of that convening (or at a different time as mutually agreed upon in the student-panel discussion), the Chair will forward one question from each committee member to the student (for a total of three questions). The student will have **30 calendar days from receipt** of these questions to return one document (containing responses to all three questions) to all comps panel members. For all responses, APA 7 formatting and well-edited writing is expected, as are thoughtful and research-based responses. Specific directions will be provided by the panel chair. Students may not consult with or use external resources (e.g., the TCU writing center, peer or professional editors), as part of the process aims at identifying student strengths and continuing areas of need moving into the research/writing process.

Members of the comprehensive exam panel have 30 calendar days to read all responses, and to assess the question each issued to the student. If desired, the committee may require the student sit for an oral examination to make a final determination on passing this portion of the candidacy process. A letter with the final decision (*Pass*, *Pass with Revisions*, *Revise and Resubmit*, or *Fail*) will be forwarded to the student and to the student's graduate file. In the event a student does not pass the comprehensive exam, the faculty panel will meet with the student to outline a plan for remediation and progression toward passing status. The student may be required to submit new responses for 1, 2 or all 3 questions, or may be required to complete other tasks *(including additional coursework)* in preparation for subsequent attempts to pass the comprehensive exam.

PhD students should successfully pass the comprehensive exam prior to enrolling in EDAD 70073 (Capstone/Dissertation Seminar). Students should not enroll in EDAD 70073 or for dissertation or capstone hours until the comprehensive exam has been successfully completed. Students should plan accordingly so that comps are completed successfully in a timely manner as determined by collaboration with the committee Chair.

Following a successful comprehensive exam experience (for PhD students) or moving into the 2nd summer and fall of the program (EdD students) students work in concert with the dissertation chair

to prepare the research or project proposal and subsequently defend the capstone or dissertation proposal to the full committee.

DEGREE COMPLETION

Upon successful defense of the proposal, students continue work on their respective projects/studies. EdD students will do so largely through a series of structured courses—EDAD 70073, taken twice, followed by nine hours of EDAD 90770 (for capstone projects) or EDUC 90980/90990 (for dissertations) taken with the chair. PhD students will take seminar (EDAD 70073) once, then complete the rest of the dissertation process (at least 9 hours) via EDUC 90980 and 90990, taken with the chair.

Once students enroll in the sequence of courses leading to completion (EDAD 70073-EDAD 90770/EDUC 90980/90990 or EDAD 70073-EDUC 90980-EDUC 90990), they must maintain continuous enrollment through the semester of graduation. This includes summer semesters. This is, in part, to ensure that students working on capstone or dissertations retain access to TCU resources (e.g., library) as well as to faculty feedback. **In short, students must maintain continuous enrollment (including summers) from the time of proposal defense through graduation.** Students who otherwise complete all required program hours and are still working on completing the capstone or dissertation may elect to enroll in 1 hour of EDAD 90770 or EDUC 90990 per long semester through completion, but continuous enrollment (unless interrupted by a granted furlough) is required.

Upon completion of **dissertation** research, the student composes the final chapters of the dissertation, consults with the committee chair regarding edits, and schedules a final defense. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the TCU Writing Center (http://www.wrt.tcu.edu) and/or a professional editor throughout the writing process. Students should also use available tools (e.g. TurnItIn.com) to ensure their document is free of plagiarism. Students should consult with their chair to discuss appropriate uses of and cautions around AI tools in the dissertation process.

At the time of the defense, the student conducts a public presentation of the study and findings and answers questions from the committee. The dissertation defense is an academic exercise; while friends or family may be invited to attend (at the student's discretion), students should keep in mind that the defense is a formal academic event. Celebrations are best reserved for after the committee has rendered its decision—students are encouraged to plan gatherings or recognition with that outcome in mind. At the defense, after the presentation and 1-2 rounds of questions for the candidate, the committee will consult to determine whether the dissertation: 1) meets passing requirements with no further edits; 2) meets passing requirements with minor edits; 3) does not

meet passing requirements (necessitating major edits and a potential re-presentation of the work to the committee).

Upon completion of the **capstone project** as approved by the student's committee, the student composes the remainder of the project and schedules a final defense and presentation. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the TCU Writing Center (http://www.wrt.tcu.edu) and/or a professional editor throughout the writing process. Like the dissertation, the capstone defense is an academic exercise; while friends or family may be invited to attend (at the student's discretion), students should keep in mind that the defense is a formal academic event.

Celebrations are best reserved for after the committee has rendered its decision—students are encouraged to plan gatherings or recognition with that outcome in mind. At the defense, after the presentation and 1-2 rounds of questions for the candidate, the committee will consult to determine whether the capstone project: 1) meets passing requirements with no further edits; 2) meets passing requirements with minor edits; 3) does not meet passing requirements (necessitating major edits and a potential re-presentation of the work to the committee).

CAPSTONE OR DISSERTATION

Ph.D. students complete dissertations and aim to produce original research that contributes new knowledge to the field. Capstone projects tend to tackle an important problem of practice in a specific context. Both are rigorous pieces of work and must be anchored in evidence.

As the Ed.D. offers options for Capstone Projects or Dissertations, students should work with their respective chairs and advisors to determine which is most appropriate given personal, professional, and career goals. Both are rigorous projects that require intense effort, time and dedication, though the general shape and scope may differ. Both require doctoral candidates to demonstrate skills related to research (primary and secondary), critical thinking, problem-solving, written communication, and oral presentation.

A **dissertation** is original research that is typically broader in scope and makes an original contribution to the field of study as it addresses a research gap in a given area. Dissertations are grounded in theory (or develop theory). Outputs of the dissertation are typically presentations and articles in peer-reviewed as well as practitioner-friendly journals.

A **capstone** is an applied research project that may sometimes take the form of a "dissertation in practice," but which may also diverge from the traditional written, five-chapter model used for many dissertations. A capstone may build on existing research as a student develops a solution or plan of action responsive to a problem of practice rooted in a specific context. Capstone projects

function as knowledge and practice portfolios, and may take a variety of formats, such as (but not limited to):

- A robust report that outlines the problem of practice, the approach to inquiry around that problem, findings from the inquiry action, and resulting recommendations.
- A written evaluation of a program, or a needs evaluation relative to a recognized problem or issue;
- A series of peer-reviewed or practitioner-oriented journal articles on a noted topic;
- A book proposal to a publisher, accompanied by a requisite number of sample chapters;
- A portfolio of published articles and high-level professional (i.e., state, national or international) professional presentations.
- A film project, rooted in appropriate theoretical and empirical bases.
- The development of an electronic resource or app, rooted in appropriate theoretical and empirical bases.

The capstone will either include or be accompanied by a written report that provides an overview of the literature and underlying theories that provide context and foundation for the work, as well as a final written report detailing the scholar's background and growth throughout the project. The student completing a capstone works in concert with the doctoral capstone committee to agree upon the shape and scope of the final product(s). Some excellent models of "dissertations in practice" can be explored at https://www.cpedinitiative.org/dissertation-in-practice

PART III: GENERAL PROGRAMMATIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND PROFESSIONALISM INTERVENTIONS

Students must maintain acceptable academic performance (a minimum 3.0 GPA in graduate coursework completed at TCU) once admitted to any educational leadership graduate program, and must maintain high professional standards, in order to advance in the program and to remain candidates for program completion.

Because most students will eventually hold positions of authority and be responsible for the safety and well-being of many people, including children, the faculty and staff of the Educational Leadership program are committed to identifying and intervening to assist students who demonstrate difficulties maintaining expected norms in their academic progress or in terms of professionalism.
Any faculty member in the College of Education who has a concern about a candidate's performance and/or professionalism may initiate the Academic performance and Professionalism Warning (APPW) process:

1. The faculty member completes the APPW form describing the concerns and indicating potential strategies and solutions to resolve the problem(s).
2. A conference between the student and two faculty members is required to complete the APPW form. During the conference, the parties discuss the student's understanding of the concerns and the course of action required to remediate the problem/s). The APPW contract is signed by the student and faculty. If the student fails to respond or attend a conference, faculty will complete the form and notify the student via certified mail.
3. The completed form is submitted to the associate dean, the student, and the Office of Campus Life.
4. Any student receiving three notices through this process may be considered for dismissal from the College of Education. Except in an unusually severe or critical situation, no one notice will result in dismissal from the college of program.
5. These notices do not become part of a student's permanent academic record held in the registrar's office.

ADVISING

Upon acceptance to any TCU ELHE program, each student is assigned an academic advisor. Students should consult with the advisor each semester to plan the course schedule, and to update the plan of study whenever substitution courses are added to the plan. Any transfer coursework from other institutions should be submitted for approval within the first full semester of the student's enrollment. Upon request to accept transfer credit, the academic advisor may recommend approval to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of up to 6 hours of transfer graduate work (so long as the courses in question have not already counted toward a degree); however, any requested application of transfer work beyond six hours must be submitted to the academic advisor and subsequently considered by the full ELHE program faculty; the full program faculty will issue a recommendation to the Associate Dean as to whether to accept transfer work

beyond six hours. In no case will more than 9 hours of transfer credit be accepted toward a graduate degree in ELHE at TCU.

ATTENDANCE AND MISSING CLASS

All students are expected to be on time in each class session during the semester. Due to the intensive nature of the programs, students who miss class sessions may fail to meet the appropriate number of contact hours and important course content. Please discuss with your instructors if attendance is not possible for any reason, prior to class. Individual instructors may determine if there is a grade penalty in each specific case of any absence. Students are also responsible for all assignments missed as a result of absence. Instructors are not responsible for making up extra assignments or activities to provide make up credit in the case of an absence.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

It is the student's responsibility to maintain an up-to-date background check on file with the graduate studies office in the COE. Information, required forms, and guidance on completing the required background check can be found at https://tinyurl.com/yaqvtstz

CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE PROCEDURES

To obtain certification as a principal or superintendent in the state of Texas, students must successfully complete all degree/certification program and educator preparation program requirements (or course and field experience requirements for non-degree-based plans of study). They must also be able to submit evidence of at least two years of full-time creditable teaching at an accredited school (generally, the Teacher Service Record), and must meet the passing standard on any required Texas Examinations of Educator Standards, or TExES. Until all of these items are complete, TCU cannot submit a final recommendation for issuance of the certificate to the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).

Candidates who are ready to take the TExES 268 or superintendent exam must request a release from the College of Education Director of Accreditation, Certification and Assessment. Candidates will not be released for an attempt on any certification exam until the candidate has first demonstrated readiness for the TExES; this is done by meeting the passing standard on a practice TExES exam. Further, for students enrolling in Fall 2021 and beyond, TCU program faculty will not recommend that a student be released to register for the 268 or PASL exam until such time as the student has submitted evidence of successful completion of Advanced Educational Leadership (AEL) and Texas Teacher Evaluation and Supervision System (T-TESS) training (obtained via one of Texas' Regional Education Service Centers).

Upon passing the required TExES (including, for principal candidates, the PASL), students should contact the Director of Accreditation, Certification and Assessment to ensure that all required documentation has been submitted and to verify that no further information is needed for issuance of the final recommendation for certification to SBEC.

CERTIFICATION TIME LIMITS (PRINCIPAL & SUPERINTENDENT CERTIFICATION)

Because state standards are updated every few years, and curricula changes as needed, graduates are highly encouraged to complete certification requirements and obtain their certification(s) within one calendar year of degree completion. If a student delays this process, and upon request for final recommendation to SBEC is unable to produce the state-required documents related to the practicum, the student will be required to repeat the practicum experience at their own expense. TCU does not maintain practicum records in perpetuity, and requirements change over time as state certification and preparation requirements evolve.

Persons who delay completing certification for more than one (1) calendar year post-degree completion or post-certification coursework will be required to demonstrate readiness via a practice test and other preparation experiences prior to clearance to test. Persons who delay completing certification for more than three (3) calendar years post-degree completion or post-certification coursework completion will be required to repeat the practicum at their own expense (along with any other experiences and trainings that must be updated) and may be required to complete additional coursework in order to obtain a recommendation from TCU to move forward in and complete the certification process, in addition to completing required practice testing and other preparation activities. In no case will a student who has delayed certification more than five years beyond degree or program completion be approved for testing through TCU's principal or superintendent preparation programs.

CERTIFICATION EXAMS—TEXES 268 (PAIL)/ 368 (PASL)/195 (SUPERINTENDENT) WAIVER POLICY & PROCEDURE

Candidates for the Principal or Superintendent Certificate are now limited by statute to five attempts to pass the required certification exam. If, after receiving permission from TCU to test, a student exhausts the five attempts, the student may request a waiver through the state to permit another attempt.

TCU must approve a waiver request in order for the state to consider granting the additional attempt.
The process TCU will follow in regards to considering/approving a waiver request (and each subsequent request) is as follows:

1. The requesting student will meet with the Director of Accreditation, Certification and Assessment, the preparation program coordinator, and an EDLE program advisor to examine the CSEM chart and Deficiency Competency Analysis to determine appropriate remedial coursework.

2. The student will, following the plan developed by the certification program coordinator and the Director of Accreditation, Certification and Assessment, and at his/her own expense:
    - Complete additional coursework to update/refine skills and knowledge specific to current standards for the principal certificate. The required number of clock-hours is driven by the CSEM chart found in the Waiver Application; each course

completed counts for 15 clock hours toward the required clock-hours related to the Waiver Application. This may include, depending on a review of the Deficit Competency Analysis (completed by examining the five most recent attempts in the student's ETS account):

- A course in instructional leadership focusing on curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- A course in instructional supervision;
- A course in either educational data use or community engagement/equity;
- A course in educational law and the responsibilities of the campus leader
- Re-completion of AEL and T-TESS training via a Regional Education Service Center program.

- Any request to waive and retake an exam after five failed attempts shall include:
  - Completion of a 160-clock hour campus-based practicum course, aligned to current principal or superintendent standards (as appropriate to the certificate being sought), to include any activities associated with EDLE 60093 or 70093, as appropriate to addressing the Deficiency Competency Analysis.
  - A practice exam (with achievement of a minimum score threshold)
  - Practice exam activities (e.g., 240Tutoring) as determined by the waiver request plan/certification program coordinator.

3. The student will score at or above an established threshold on a practice exam prior to approval of the waiver request.

For prospective testers who have not hit the five-attempt limit, clearance for testing follows the process outlined earlier in this handbook:

Students do not have to complete all program requirements before taking the relevant certification exam(s), but do have to meet certain requirements for clearance. To be cleared to take the TExES 268 (which may enable the student to seek a 1-year Intern certificate while finishing the program), the student must complete the first 6-12 hours of coursework in the program as well as AEL and T-TESS training, meet program standards as per the program coordinator on an in-person practice exam focused on constructed response items, and demonstrate depth of test preparation via the 240Tutoring.com platform. Students should register for the preparation platform with their @tcu.edu email address, to enable monitoring and crediting of preparation hours. While final requirements will be determined by the program coordinator, students should plan on preparing in alignment with the following guidelines as a starting point:

Practice Test Score (best attempt)	# hours preparation (minimum)
90% or better	5
80% or better	10
75% or better	15

70% or better	20
Under 70%	30

When students have demonstrated proficiency (80% or better on practice exams on 240Tutoring.com; required preparation hours, 80% or better on the in-person exam focused on constructed response items, and completion of AEL and T-TESS training), they may request clearance from the certification program coordinator.

In addition to coursework, the preparation platform, and other program-related supports, recommended preparation resources are housed in the Graduate Course Shell on D2L (TCU Online).

Clearance to register for the 368 is dependent on program progress and attendance at an orientation workshop that reviews the structure of and approaches to the 368. Resources are also housed in the Graduate Course Shell on TCU Online.

Students seeking the superintendent certification may take the exam near or at the conclusion of their required preparation coursework or activities. To obtain clearance, they must first demonstrate proficiency on a practice exam. These may be scheduled individually or may be held in group format each semester.

TCU cannot make a final recommendation until all required components are complete, but can, with advisor approval, permit a student to register for an attempt or re-attempt of the 268, 368, or superintendent exam.

Note for persons seeking principal or superintendent certification, whether in a stand-alone program or in conjunction with a degree: Candidates are highly encouraged to complete all certification requirements within one year of graduation or certification program completion at TCU to avoid additional requirements and costs. In no case will TCU permit a candidate to test if they have not completed the certification process within five years of graduation or program completion. In the event of such a major delay in completion, candidates would be required to re-enroll and repeat the program, or to seek certification elsewhere.

In alignment with TAC §228.31, TCU will grant test approval when a candidate is ready (determined by TCU to mean that the candidate has met course and field experience requirements, including successful performance on a practice exam and related preparation activities) or if the candidate is a completer (that is, the candidate has successfully finished the course of study-including all practicum requirements—as well as the slate of associated trainings (AEL, T-TESS, dyslexia).

However, TCU shall make test approval contingent on a candidate completing additional coursework, preparation, and/or training to show that the candidate is prepared to pass the test if the candidate is:

1. Seeking test approval in an area where the standards and/or test changed since the candidate completed all requirements of the TCU program; *OR*

2. If the candidate has returned to the educator preparation program (i.e., TCU) for test approval one or more years following the academic year of completion of all program requirements.

Such additional coursework or training may include any of the following*:

1. Completion (at candidate's expense) of EDLE 60053; EDLE 60063/EDAD 70013; EDLE 60083/EDAD 70063; and a practicum experience of 3-6 hours.
2. Re-enrollment and completion of AEL and T-TESS at a regional ESC.
3. Practice exams (in person focused on constructed response items, online diagnostic and practice exams) and completion of required preparation on the 240Tutoring.com platform that demonstrates adequate readiness.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Sometimes, students are engaged in field experiences that place them in close proximity to children and students. Often, TCU EDLE students are working as classroom teachers, assistant principals, principals, district leaders, or in other areas that require the person to hold a valid Texas educator's certificate.

Texas Family Code §261.101 states that a person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report. Further, this suspicion of abuse or neglect **must be reported within 48 hours** (or less if determined by local school board policy), by the person(s) who observed the suspected abuse and neglect. School personnel may not rely on another person or administrator within the school district to report suspected child abuse or neglect for them.

From the Texas Education Agency website:

What must I do if I suspect abuse or neglect of a child?
If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 or your local police first.
Then call the Texas Abuse Hotline to make a report.
The Texas Abuse Hotline is open 24/7/365.
1-800-252-5400
www.txabusehotline.org
(Report via the online reporting system for non-urgent situations only. A non-urgent situation means that intervention is not needed within 24 hours.)

Persons who also are employed by TCU in any capacity must ***also*** report suspected child abuse or neglect that has taken place on the TCU campus or at any TCU function to the TCU Police Department (817-257-6777). Students may also report to the TCU police in addition to the Texas Abuse Hotline.

COMPLAINTS

Persons registering a complaint may move through a multi-stage process, depending on whether or not their complaint is resolved at a lower level.

COMPLAINTS: GRADING/GRADE APPEALS (TCU STUDENTS)

Access the grade appeal procedure via the Dean of Students website at https://deanofstudents.tcu.edu/student-handbook/academic-policies/grade-appeal-procedure/

As a brief overview of the process, the student should first timely (within 10 academic days following the disclosure of the grade to the student) discuss the matter with the faculty member who issued the grade. If the matter is not resolved within 10 academic days following the discussion of the issue (either because the faculty member did not respond or the student wishes to further appeal the matter), the student may appeal the faculty member's decision to the Department Chair. This appeal must be in writing and must occur within five (5) academic days of receiving a response from the faculty member. If the matter is not resolved as per policy, the chair's determination may be appealed **in writing** by the student or the faculty member to the Dean within five (5) days of the Department Chair's decision. The Dean's decision may be appealed **in writing** by the student, the faculty member, or the Department Chair within five (5) days of the Dean's decision to the Academic Appeals Committee. If, at any point in the process, the student does not receive a reply acknowledging receipt of the appeal letter within five (5) academic days, the student may contact the next administrator to request the next stage of appeal. See the full policy for specific information.

COMPLAINTS: DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, RETALIATION

All individuals are encouraged to report discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation so that prompt effective action can be taken. Reports should be made as soon as possible after an incident, and reporting procedures related to complaints or allegations of discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or retaliation in violation of these policies, are found at https://deanofstudents.tcu.edu/how-to-report-a-complaint/

If the complaint cannot be resolved after all College of Education and Texas Christian University processes have been exhausted, see Stage II (report to Texas Education Agency).

COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS: GENERAL (STUDENTS)

If a student has a general concern, the process for resolution should start at the place most proximal to the issue and move "up" the organizational hierarchy from there. In most cases, this means the first step should be a direct conversation with the professor. If the matter is not resolved, the next step would be for the student to discuss the matter with the department chair, and to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Faculty Affairs, and Strategic Partnerships, the Dean of the College of Education, and, if applicable to the Provost.

COMPLAINTS/CONCERNS: SITE SUPERVISORS, PRINCIPALS, SUPERINTENDENTS, PARTNERING DISTRICTS AND STUDENTS

If a site supervisor, campus principal, superintendent or designee, or liaison from a partnering district has a complaint that does not fall under the policy for complaints related to discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct, that individual should:

- Step 1: Contact the field supervisor to discuss the concern as close to the event as possible. If this does not resolve the problem, or the field supervisor is not available or responsive, proceed to Step 2.
- Step 2: The complaining/concerned individual should contact the Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Higher Education with the complaint or concern. IF this does not resolve the issue, proceed to Step 3.
- Step 3: A written complaint should be sent to the Dean of the College of Education, who will respond within 10 working days. If the concern is still not resolved, proceed to step 4.
- Step 4: The complaining/concerned individual should contact the Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS (WORK-RELATED PROBLEMS OR DISPUTES): FACULTY & STAFF

TCU has a Conflict Resolution Policy to provide faculty with a prompt and fair method for resolving work-related problems or disputes. The policy may be accessed at https://provost.tcu.edu/faculty-resources/handbook/faculty-handbook-conflict-resolution-policy/ and broadly includes four steps: (1) Informal Discussion; (2) Mediation; (3) Peer Review Panel/Provost Review; (4) Chancellor Review (applicable to dismissal disputes only).

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT AND REQUESTS FOR FURLOUGHS

Because graduate programs expect that students will proceed toward completion within 3-6 years of enrollment, regular and consistent enrollment in coursework is expected of all students. However, we recognize that students have commitments or life events that may at times require them to pause program activity temporarily.

If, for any reason, a student is not able to enroll in coursework required to move the student toward program completion (including 1-hour of summer enrollment in capstone or dissertation hours), then the student must request, via the "Request for Furlough" form, a temporary pause in program progress. This request must be submitted to the Advisor and Department Chair no later than the first week of courses for the semester in which the furlough is requested, and can be re-submitted twice (for a total of 12 months total of furlough). If a student must pause longer than 12 months, then the student will be disenrolled from the program, and would be required to re-apply as a new student should the student wish to complete the degree. In the event a student must reapply, no more than 9 hours of credits, earned within the previous 10 years, could be applied to the new degree. For degree programs, and particularly for certification programs, regular enrollment is crucial, and departures from regular enrollment must be requested and documented timely.

If a student fails to enroll for a semester as expected, and does not obtain an approved furlough, the student will be issued an Academic Performance and Professionalism Warning. A subsequent

semester of non-enrollment, without an approved furlough, will result in the student being disenrolled from degree and certification programs. Should the student wish to complete the program, the student must re-apply as a new student. In the event a student must reapply, no more than 9 hours of credits, earned within the previous 10 years, could be applied to the new degree. For degree programs, and particularly for certification programs, regular enrollment is crucial, and departures from regular enrollment must be requested and documented timely.

DROPPING COURSES

If dropping a course becomes necessary, students are responsible for dropping their own courses. Discussion about dropping a course with a program coordinator or professor is not sufficient; the student must follow up and drop the course. If a student does not officially drop a course, the professor will assign an F to this student at the time final grades are due. Courses dropped after the dates published by appropriate TCU will be considered a "withdrawal." Dropping courses can directly affect a student's ability to complete the program in a timely manner. This should be discussed with the student's particular program coordinator.

FIELD EXPERIENCES FOR CERTIFICATION SEEKING STUDENTS

Specific guidelines and expectations for practicum and field experiences are set forth in syllabi and field guides/documents specific to those courses. For principal and superintendent certificates, TCU must abide by Texas Education Agency and statutory requirements for practicum experiences in terms of clock hours and documentation. For more information, contact the instructor of record for the course in question. See also "State required practicum experiences" in this section. Documentation of trainings (e.g., AEL, T-TESS, Youth Mental Health First Aid) and practicum requirements (e.g., time logs, signed observation documentation, certificates) must be complete, accurate, and uploaded into the student's certification file on TCU Box for processing of certification recommendations.

FINANCIAL AID

Financing your degree requires planning in savings and lifestyle choices, and many students finance their graduate education through a combination of institutional funding, federal aid, private educational loans, and other sources. Students are encouraged to seek financial assistance from their school districts and other organizations.

Students who are admitted to a graduate degree program and who enroll for a minimum of 6 hours in any one semester may be eligible to apply for federal financial aid. All students interested in financial aid need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This can be done electronically at www.fafsa.ed.gov. It is extremely important that this be done as early as possible.

FORMS & DOCUMENTS

While this handbook contains several important forms and documents in the Appendices, graduate students should also be familiar with the many documents and forms posted at Helpful Forms for Graduate Students | College of Education (tcu.edu). Postings at this site include important forms such as the Transfer Credit Request, forms for dissertation/capstone committees and "special member" forms for committee members external to TCU, the Intent to Graduate, the Graduation Checklist, and the Graduate Student Travel Application, among others.

GRADING AND INCOMPLETE GRADES

Students taking internship, practicum, and capstone/dissertation hours should take care to register for the appropriate number of hours for these courses; the TCU registration system permits students to select from 1-6 hours, and will default to "1" in many cases if not altered by the student at the time of registration.

An "I" grade is recorded when the student and instructor have determined that the work required for a course cannot be completed within the term of enrollment due to circumstances beyond the control of the student. The "I" grade must be removed within the first 60 days of the semester immediately following or it is automatically changed to an "F"; it is the student's responsibility to complete all work required to effect the changing of the "I" grade and for picking up the required permit from the Registrar's office and delivering it to the professor of record for the course within those 60 days to clear the Incomplete. This time limitation does not apply to capstone or dissertation hours.

MIDTERM & S/U GRADES FOR CAPSTONE AND DISSERTATION

As of 2025, instructors are encouraged to provide midterm interim grades for students in danger of not meeting course expectations—as reflected via a reported midterm grade of "U" for "unsatisfactory"—through reporting to the registrar's office. If a student is assigned a midterm grade of "U" they are notified through their @tcu.edu email.

TCU's grading scheme for capstone and dissertation hours (that is, hours taken with the chair on a TBA basis), are assigned a grade of "S" (Satisfactory), "I" (Incomplete), or "U" (Unsatisfactory) until the final semester, in which a letter grade is assigned to reflect the quality of the final project. See above for conditions regulating the assignment of an "I" grade.

If a student makes satisfactory progress toward completing the research plan for that semester (as established in the syllabus or plan of work set forth by the chair/instructor), the student should receive the grade *S*. S grade are not counted in computer the student's GPA and cannot replace a prior grade in the GPA. A "S" course grade, however, will carry credit hours and be used toward a student's total hours required for graduation.

If a student's progress toward completing the research plan for that semester is unsatisfactory, the student will receive the grade "U". That grade does not need to be resolved and it will remain on the

transcript. A "U" course grade will **NOT** carry credit hours or be used toward a student's total hours required for graduation.

Consequences of a final "U" grade in capstone or dissertation hours: A second grade of "U" at any point (this does not have to happen in sequential semesters) prompts a discussion between the faculty advisor, graduate program director, thesis/dissertation/capstone committee, and the student, resulting in either a written plan for improvement signed by all parties; or dismissal from the program. A third grade of U at any point (does not have to be sequential semesters) results in dismissal from the program.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Students conducting research (including research for a Capstone project or a Dissertation) must adhere to the requirements set forth by the Institutional Review Board. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the policies, procedures, and required forms pertinent to IRB processes. Information about the processes and meeting dates for review boards may be found at www.research.tcu.edu under "Compliance" and "IRB" tabs. Students must request an account on the electronic IRB submission/communication system, Cayuse. Students submit proposed work, in collaboration with the chair, to the IRB through the Cayuse Human Ethic system. Students conducting research (or who act as research assistants) must also complete the CITI training related to research involving human subjects, available at https://research.tcu.edu/research-compliance/training/

Students who intend to submit manuscripts for publication, or present work at conferences, which in any way derive from inquiry work done in regular coursework, should confer with their course professor, dissertation/capstone chair, or academic advisor for guidance on adhering to TCU Research Compliance guidelines. That projects begin as class assignments does not release the student from obtaining IRB approval for inquiry work that involves human subjects which evolves into scholarship.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

Most students in PK-12 EDLE programs, and all students seeking certification, will at some point participate in field experiences that require students to conduct sheltered practice on a school campus. In certain circumstances, professional educators (and practicum students) may be liable for actions leading to the injury to a child. While these instances are somewhat rare, we do recommend that TCU educational leadership students obtain liability insurance. Many professional organizations, such as the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE), the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA), United Educators Association (UEA), the Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA-NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) include liability insurance for members. All students are encouraged to research the options that exist and to take advantage of the legal benefits that accompany membership.

MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING PRESENCE

We encourage ELHE students to engage with technology in constructive ways, and to create and engage in professional learning networks (PLNs) via social media and other forms of technology. For in-class use, students should abide by the policies set forth in the syllabus for each course. For out-of-class use, students should consult any policies established by employers, school districts, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION

TCU email is the official mode of communication for the University. Students are required to check it regularly for messages from the Department of Education Policy and Leadership, different departments of the University, and professors. Students can view and pay tuition through my TCU at my.tcu.edu.

ONGOING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND E-SURVEYS

As part of programmatic continuous improvement efforts, the Educational Leadership programs conduct periodic e-surveys, focus groups, and interviews as part of ongoing program evaluation. Current student emails (@tcu.edu accounts) are used for current students, and when students complete the intent to graduate they will be asked to submit a non-TCU-affiliated email for use in this annual data collection. We encourage participation as this helps us make positive programmatic decisions. More information about the assessments, such as how data are used and to what degree responses are anonymous or confidential, are included on the initial screen of the survey each year.

PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS FOR CERTIFICATION SEEKING STUDENTS

The College of Education monitors each student's progress to ensure that the student is well-prepared as an educational leader, to assist the student in achieving his or her professional and personal goals, and to ensure confidence in recommending candidates for certification. While benchmarks vary slightly by program, major programmatic checkpoints include:

- **Benchmark 1: Admissions.** The role of the admissions committee (made up of the whole of the educational leadership program faculty) is to review each applicant to the CoE graduate programs in educational leadership. Each admitted candidate not only has the technical qualifications to excel in educational leadership (EC-12 or higher education) but is also perceived to have the requisite interpersonal skills to succeed in the field. As always, the committee takes program fit into consideration when making final decisions.

- **Benchmark 2: Advising & Coaching** (at least annually). Annually if not more frequently, the student will have the opportunity to dialogue with his or her advisor to discuss prior coursework and level of success, strengths and potential areas for improvement, and next

steps toward successful program completion. Notes on these meetings may be kept by the student and advisor.

- **Benchmark 3: Midpoint Assessment** (M.Ed. with principal certification and certification-only students). At the midpoint of programming, the student will engage in reflection and discussion about strengths and areas in need of improvement with the practicum instructor and, if applicable, a second program faculty or the student's practicum site supervisor. This assessment will help guide the student through the final semester of coursework and experiences.

- **Benchmark 4: Comprehensive Exams** (Ph.D. only) and **Capstone/Dissertation Proposal Defense** (EdD and PhD students) This set of benchmarks takes the form of the comprehensive exams and the capstone/dissertation proposal defense. In each case, multiple faculty members provide the student with feedback and, if needed, opportunities for revision and/or remedial opportunities to enhance chances of eventual program success.

- **Benchmark 5: Doctoral Progression Checks.** Annually in year three and beyond of any doctoral program, the doctoral student will confer with their respective Chair and the Chair will issue a written statement of progress toward degree completion. The student will receive a copy of this form, and a copy will be filed with the Department Chair and the TCU Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

- **Benchmark 6: Completion of Program Requirements.** For M.Ed. students (and Ed.D./Ph.D. students seeking initial certification), successful completion of campus-based or central-office based field experiences, plus the successful completion of the practice and actual TExES exams, offers another opportunity for feedback and needed remediation.

  For Ed.D. and Ph.D. students, the benchmark process continues into Candidacy, wherein students defend a research or project proposal to a committee of faculty and then work closely with faculty to project completion and defense. Throughout all these processes, faculty have the opportunity to coach students and gain insight into the potential effectiveness of the student as a candidate for certification as a principal or superintendent (for certification-seeking students) or as a potential leader/scholar in the field of higher education. This process culminates in the defense of the work to the capstone/dissertation committee.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

We encourage all graduate students to explore membership and/or participation in leading professional organizations. Many of these organizations have graduate-student level memberships available at discounted rates. A partial listing of some of these organizations includes:

PK-12
• Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) • University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) • American Association of School Administrators (AASA) • Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP) • National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) • Texas Elementary Principal and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) • Texas Association of School Business Officers (TASBO) • Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council) • Texas Middle School Association (TMSA)
Higher Education
• Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) • National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) • American College Personnel Association (ACPA) • Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) • American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE) • American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE) • National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) • Association of Student Conduct Administration (ASCA) • Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (AACUHO-I) • Association of College Unions International (ACU-I) • National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) • National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

PUBLICATION, PRESENTATION, AND MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to membership in professional organizations, we encourage students to work toward publication in association newsletters and journals and toward presentation of work at conferences. To this end, PhD students (whose programs are aimed at enabling scholarship, and building a scholarly record that will help students engage competitively for tenure-track faculty and research-oriented positions. Additionally, students are encouraged to seek out opportunities specific to graduate students and designed to support the development of scholarship and productive scholarly habits. Among these are:

AERA Scholars. *The AERA Scholars Program at TCU seeks to encourage scholarly inquiry related to education and evaluation by supporting students with mentoring, membership to AERA and an AERA Special Interest Group (SIG), and financial support to attend and participate in the*

annual AERA conference. Support is based on application, and each AERA Scholar serves a 3-year term, participating in research and scholarship opportunities each year at AERA.

Holmes Scholars. Holmes Scholars at TCU will join a national network of students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds and are pursuing doctoral degrees. Holmes Scholars are selected based on their academic achievements and their commitment to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in the field of education. As a member institution, TCU's College of Education will provide financial support and mentorship through the AACTE program. Each student will serve a 3-year term, participating in research, advocacy and policy initiatives, including the AACTE Annual Meeting and the Holmes Scholars Summer Policy Institute.

Barbara L. Jackson Scholars. TCU is proud to have supported a number of Jackson Scholars; these Scholars, representing a number of top-tier universities around the United States, engage in mentorship and development opportunities, and TCU provides financial support to greatly defray the cost of attendance and participation at UCEA and AERA (American Educational Research Association) convenings for two years (totaling four professional conferences over the term as a Jackson Scholar). Read more about the Barbara L. Jackson Scholars program on the UCEA website. Interested students should visit with their academic advisor or dissertation/capstone chair, and with TCU's Plenum representative (currently Dr. Tanetha Fisher) for more information.

Research Opportunities. PhD students may complete a Research Apprenticeship as part of their coursework, in which they work with a scholar on an established project, with the potential to earn authorship or to engage in presentations that help build the student's CV. The TCU Research & Pedagogy Festival provides an opportunity showcase student research. UCEA has a Graduate Student Seminar, which precedes the annual meeting, dedicated to graduate student sharing, roundtables, and presentations. Students who wish to be competitive on the job market for tenure-track jobs, or for any positions requiring researcher potential, are encouraged to build their CVs with a range of presentations and publications throughout their time at TCU.

TCUOnline (D2L) Resource Page

Doctoral students may find useful resources on the PK-12 or Higher Education D2L course shells. These pages include resources, templates, and examples of the dissertation process, IRB training, and proposal and dissertation defense presentation templates.

Graduate and Research Assistantships

Students may opt to apply for graduate or research assistantships. These take the form of 10- and 20-hour per week appointments, and provide financial awards in the form of tuition remission and/or stipends. Students may work with a program or with individual faculty members on projects, research, and in assistance of teaching efforts. Interested students should explore opportunities within TCU Graduate Studies and at the College of Education Scholarships & Aid webpage. Typically, all scholarship and assistantship applications are due no later than February 1 for appointments beginning the following fall semester. See the CoE website for specific details.

Further, students in a doctoral program may apply to teach undergraduate or master's-level courses as adjuncts; note there are several adjunct pools within the TCU Human Resources Directory, so potential applicants should confer with an advisor or the Department Chair if they are interested in these (limited) opportunities.

STATE REQUIRED PRACTICUM EXPERIENCES (PRINCIPAL & SUPERINTENDENT)

While some aspects of TCU certification programs are unique to TCU, we also must align with state requirements pertaining to our processes and content; the practicum clinical experience for those seeking principal or superintendent certification is just such an area. The state of Texas currently requires a campus-based (for principals) or district central office based (for superintendents) experience of no fewer than 160 clock hours, and these experiences must be under the supervision of a site and field supervisor who meets all requirements as outlined in TAC §228. Formal as well as informal observations are required components of the practicum and will occur during the practicum clinical experience hours in alignment with the requirements set out in TAC §228.

Because the program team believes it is critical for students to experience the ebb and flow of educational leadership throughout a school calendar, we strongly recommend that students pursuing the principal or superintendent certificate enroll in the practicum over two semesters (Fall-Spring). This reduces the practicum to approximately 80 hours per semester and makes the practicum do-able in a way that permits ample reflection and in-depth exploration of leadership. However, we recognize that on rare occasions a student may need to complete a practicum in one semester. Therefore, under extenuating circumstances, students may petition the EDLE program faculty to permit completion of the 160-hour practicum within a single semester. It should be noted that this does not reduce the total number of hours required for any degree; if a M.Ed. student takes one semester of practicum, the remaining three hours must be filled with additional coursework. If an Ed.D. or Ph.D. student takes one semester of practicum, the same requirements hold.

T.E.A. REQUIRED TRAINING

For persons seeking certification as a principal or superintendent, there are particular areas of focus in which students must receive appropriate training within the preparation program. Areas of focus that are embedded in principal and superintendent-certification coursework include **the Texas Educator Code of Ethics and TAC 259 Subchapter B (Governing Enforcement Actions and Guidelines related to the Code of Ethics), FERPA, Digital Literacy and Digital Citizenship, Dyslexia,** and **Mental Health/Substance Abuse/Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention.** For some of these, students are required to complete particular training modules and submit certificates of completion to their professor and/or advisor.

TEXAS EDUCATORS' CODE OF ETHICS

All persons who hold a certificate issued by SBEC or who are involved with a program of study leading to certification as an educator in Texas should familiarize themselves thoroughly with the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics. Persons seeking certification and all CoE admitted students

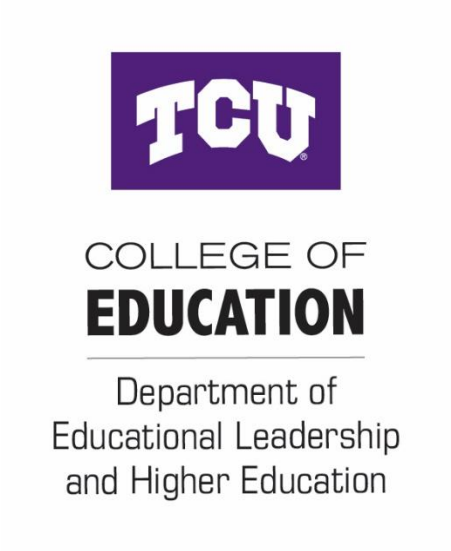
should also have on file with the CoE Graduate Studies a signed copy of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Transfer credit requests must be completed at the time of admission and within the first semester of enrollment. Six hours of transfer credit is typical; on rare occasions, program faculty may recommend to the Associate Dean that nine transfer hours be accepted (depending on granting institution, content of course, and date of coursework). The appropriate forms with required materials (e.g., evidence of successful completion and course descriptions and/or syllabi) must be completed and are the responsibility of the graduate student. No transfer credit will be awarded for coursework over 10 years old at the time of the transfer request or for coursework that has already been counted toward a conferred degree.

TRAVEL GRANTS AND FUNDING

Sometimes students co-author papers with one another or with faculty members for presentation at statewide, national, or international conferences. Some funds are typically available to help defray the costs associated with travel to such events. Students considering such travel should file a request for travel assistance with the Office of Graduate Studies and then with the office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Education. Pre-planning and early application for funds is essential, as many students throughout the College and University apply for funding assistance each year. Additionally, many organizations, such as the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) have competitive funding grants earmarked for graduate students. Again, timely planning and requests are critical to obtaining such funding.


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