Austin Peay State University
CLARKSVILLE TENNESSEE

Eriksson

College of Education

Doctor of Education

2026-2027 Handbook

Austin Peay State University
Welcome Students

Welcome to Austin Peay State University. Austin Peay combines the academic opportunities of a comprehensive university with the supportive environment of a smaller campus. Students can choose from a wide range of associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs that prepare them for academic success, career opportunities, and lifelong learning.

Learning at Austin Peay extends beyond the classroom through research opportunities, student organizations, leadership experiences, and community engagement. Located in Clarksville, one of Tennessee's fastest-growing cities, the University offers opportunities to connect with the local community while pursuing academic and professional goals.

Faculty and staff are committed to supporting student success and helping students make the most of their Austin Peay experience. We are pleased to welcome you to the Austin Peay community and wish you success in your academic journey.

Austin Peay State University Mission

Austin Peay State University is a mission-driven, community-minded institution that provides transformational experiences through innovative, creative, and scholarly activities. The university welcomes and inspires a community of learners to make a positive impact regionally and globally.

Austin Peay State University Vision

We will be the region's university of choice for those seeking to improve their lives. We will achieve this vision through student-centered teaching, unique developmental opportunities, and our focus on innovative research and public service.

Austin Peay State University: Strategic Plan
APSU Strategic Plan

University Student Policies

Student Handbook
This handbook contains policies, procedures, and student resources.
Student Handbook

Conduct & Behavioral Standards
Student Code of Conduct and University Policies
Student Handbook Overview
Disciplinary Offenses
Academic and Classroom Misconduct
Corrective Actions

Procedures and Conflict of Interest

Campus Life & Operational Policies

Student Life and Housing
Other Non-Academic Grievances

University Student Resources

Student Life
Academic Services

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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students with an overview of the Austin Peay State University (APSU) Doctor of Education (EdD) program and information on university and college policies. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is Eriksson College of Education's accrediting body. The scope of CAEP's work is the accreditation of educator preparation providers that offer bachelor's, master's, and/or doctoral degree programs leading to certification, licensure, or endorsement.

This handbook contains information related to the APSU mission and policies, as well as the EdD program objectives, curriculum, and accreditation. APSU Student Rights and Responsibilities can be found in the APSU Student Handbook.

Mission Statement University Mission

Austin Peay State University is a comprehensive university committed to raising the educational attainment of the citizenry, developing programs and services that address regional needs and providing collaborative opportunities that connect university expertise with private and public resources. Collectively, these endeavors contribute significantly to the intellectual, economic, social, physical and cultural development of the region. APSU prepares students to be engaged and productive citizens, while recognizing that society and the marketplace require global awareness and continuous learning. This mission will be accomplished by:

- Offering undergraduate, graduate and student support programs designed to promote critical thinking, communication skills, creativity and leadership;
- Expanding access opportunities and services to traditional and nontraditional students, including the use of multiple delivery systems, flexible scheduling and satellite locations;
- Promoting equal access, diversity, an appreciation of all cultures and respect for all persons;
- Serving the military community at Fort Campbell through complete academic programs;
- Providing academic services that support student persistence to graduation;
- Fostering a positive campus environment that encourages active participation in university life; and
- Developing programs (credit and noncredit), conducting research and providing services that contribute significantly to the quality of life, learning and workforce development needs of the region.

College Mission

The Eriksson College of Education Mission commits to:

1. *Promote Curiosity through Experiential Learning*. Our programs, practices, and curriculum foster intellectual curiosity, problem-solving, and inquiry based on research and best instructional practices.
2. *Support Reflective Practitioners*. Our learners are engaged and reflective practitioners who strive to meet the needs of a diverse society.

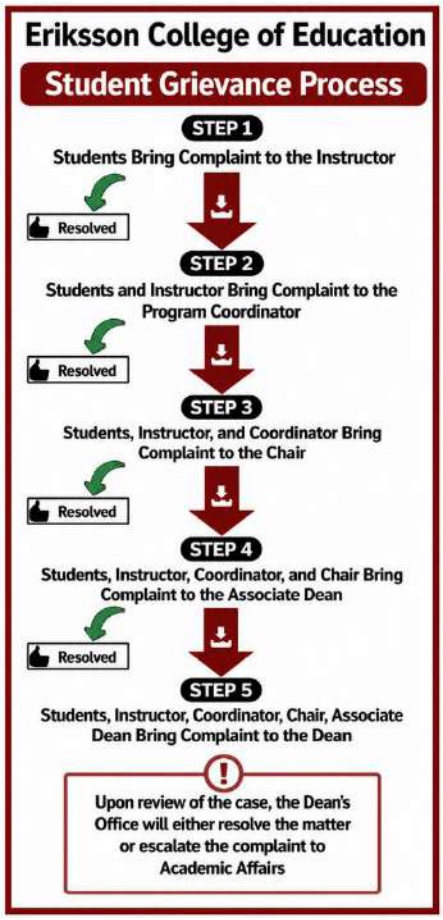
3. *Empower Change Agents and Ethical Leaders*. Our learners are deeply committed to social justice.
4. *Value Diversity and Equity*. Our programs provide learners opportunities to gain understandings on ways to amplify diverse voices and appreciate multiple perspectives.
5. *Foster Relationships and Community*. Our partnerships extend within and beyond the campus to build collaborative relationships.

Policies

University policies related to students can be found within the APSU Student Handbook; students' rights can also be found within the Student Handbook. There are many additional policies specific to graduate students, which can be found on the Graduate Academic Policies and Guidelines. Visit the College of Graduate Studies (COGS) website for the Graduate Bulletin, academic policies, forms, deadlines, graduation information, and other resources to support your progress throughout the doctoral program.

Student Grievance Process

https://canva.link/491elcahvr56kc1



Student Dispositions

Criterion	Target (3)	Approaching (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Not Applicable / No Basis for Judgment
Active Engagement • *Maintains purposeful and intensive involvement in the learning* • *Invests time, effort, and focus to create and sustain intellectual and emotional connections with both peers and professors* • *Pursues appropriate and effective communication with the professor* **CAEP Alignment:** RA 1.1 – Leading and/or participating in collaborative activities with peers, colleagues, and faculty.	The graduate student shows ongoing and deep commitment to the learning. They work to establish and substantiate scholarly connections to peers and to the professor. In discussions, they consistently and meaningfully contribute. They actively participate in meetings as needed with the professor and purposively meet assignment deadlines.	The graduate student demonstrates adequate participation in discussions with occasional insightful contributions that establish academic connections with peers and the professor. They stay involved in the learning, accessing course materials with reasonable consistency. They engage in meetings with the professor as needed, show acceptable interest in academic support, and manage to meet assignment deadlines on most occasions.	The graduate student lacks earnest participation in discussions and in the learning in general. They inconsistently access course materials, frequently miss assignment deadlines, and maintain minimal or no communication with the professor. The graduate student's academic connections with peers and the professor are wanting.	
Cultural Competence • *Demonstrates cultural respect, understanding, and equitable treatment for all individuals* • *Responds respectfully to diverse opinions and lifestyles* • *Supports and institutionalizes cultural knowledge* • *Assesses and adapts norms, policies, and values as they pertain to equity*	The graduate student has a thorough understanding of and demonstrates considerations for cultural and equitable norms in their course assignments and scholarly discourse. The graduate student demonstrates genuine respect for the opinions and lifestyles of all and seeks and is receptive to the interests and	The graduate student's assignments and contributions to discussions in class represent a general understanding of cultural constructions, barriers, and needs. The graduate student requires prompts to go deeper in their consideration of those stakeholders that may be impacted by their proposed instructional or	The graduate student needs prompts and supports to identify cultural constructions, barriers, and needs in their course assignments and in class discussions. Cultural or equitable considerations are missing in their proposed solutions or assignments. Respect for diverse opinions and lifestyles is neither consistent nor professional.	

Criterion	Target (3)	Approaching (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Not Applicable / No Basis for Judgment
CAEP Alignment: RA 1.1 – Employment of data analysis and evidence to develop supportive, diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments.	opinions of all stakeholders. The graduate student proposes solutions and suggestions that engage stakeholders and remove barriers at the university and in field-related institutions outside of the university.	leadership practices. A professional respect for diverse opinions and lifestyles is present. The graduate student's represented understanding of equity is developing.		
Ethical Agency • *Functions in line with accepted notions of right and wrong, professional standards, and societal laws* • *Exemplifies honesty and integrity* • *Complies with university and field-situated policies* • *Progresses through the program understanding that faculty are adopting a presumption of confidence* **CAEP Alignment:** RA 1.1 – Application of professional dispositions, laws and policies, codes of ethics, and professional standards.	The graduate student demonstrates a dedication to doing the right thing no matter the circumstance. They have a focus on honesty and follow university, district, and school-level policies in all their work. The graduate student understands that their academic journey is situated in the professor's belief and trust in the graduate student's competency and abilities; the graduate student acts accordingly.	The graduate student's demeanor presents as though they are operating within established constructs of right and wrong, professional standards, and societal laws. The graduate student seems to be honest and functioning within university and field-situated policies. The graduate student's understanding of the faculty's presumption of confidence in them is present but lacks deep effect on their progression through the program of study.	The graduate student's understanding of and adherence to professional standards are, at times, absent. The graduate student is negligent in maintaining the line between right and wrong, not always demonstrating honesty and integrity in their work or interactions with others. University and field-situated policies are often disregarded. The faculty's presumption of confidence in the graduate student is breached by the graduate student.	
Reflective Practice • *Accepts responsibility for decisions and actions* • *Engages in critical self-reflection* • *Integrates feedback*	The graduate student demonstrates self-awareness by examining the influence of their beliefs, biases, decisions, and actions on both successes and failures. They	The graduate student describes their beliefs, biases, decisions, and actions but inconsistently recognizes how their beliefs, biases, decisions, and actions influence both successes and	The graduate student may recall and summarize without reflection and self-awareness. Additionally, they may blame others for negative outcomes or respond negatively or not at all to	

Criterion	Target (3)	Approaching (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Not Applicable / No Basis for Judgment
• *Makes both data-informed and evidence-based decisions* • *Bridges theoretical and practical knowledge* **CAEP Alignment:** RA 1.1 – Applications of data literacy and use of research and evidence to inform decision-making.	comprehensively assess practice, articulating the connection between theoretical and practical knowledge. Their response to feedback is positive, seeking and incorporating feedback from diverse sources. Their decisions are informed by examining multiple sources of data and evidence and applying insights to improve student outcomes through improved practice.	failures. They identify relevant theoretical knowledge but do not clearly connect to practice. Their response to feedback is mostly positive, but they apply the feedback inconsistently, either responding only to selected feedback or not applying feedback to new contexts. Their decisions are informed by examining limited data and evidence, but changes do not lead to significant improvements in outcomes.	feedback. Any decisions are made intuitively or emotionally instead of based on data or evidence. They may convey some practical knowledge, but they do not make connections to theoretical knowledge. They do not demonstrate growth or positive changes in practice.	
Scholarly Communication • *Utilizes professional tonality in all communication* • *Employs the academic language and professional discourses of the discipline* • *Displays enhanced verbal communication skills, including effective speaking and active listening* • *Models person-first language* • *Adjusts language and register for all stakeholders as appropriate* **CAEP Alignment:** RA 1.1 – Application of professional	The graduate student's communication skills are highly developed, consistently professional in tone, and include the ability to speak and listen well. The graduate student incorporates the academic language and professional discourses of the discipline in their written work and in discussions in class. The graduate student always uses person-first language. They demonstrate the ability to tactfully adjust their	The graduate student's communications are mostly professional in tone. The graduate student is proficient in their use of professional discourse and discipline-specific academic language. The graduate student's speaking and listening skills are adequate, and person-first language is used in most cases. The graduate student shows the ability to adjust their language and register, although the adjustments are not always made smoothly.	The graduate student's communications are unprofessional. The graduate student's language does not display the knowledge and beliefs that are acquired through scholarly work in their discipline. Verbal communication skills are weak, and the graduate student appears to have a single language and register for all situations. The graduate student must be reminded often to use person-first language in their spoken and written work.	

Criterion	Target (3)	Approaching (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Not Applicable / No Basis for Judgment
dispositions and standards; collaborative engagement with stakeholders.	language and register to match and honor the needs of all stakeholders.			
Scholarly Initiative • *Demonstrates a proactive pursuit of and persistence toward serious study* • *Exhibits enthusiasm for learning* • *Presents as a responsible intellectual self-starter, acting and taking charge without prompting while allowing others to lead when their leading may be more effective* • *Asks questions out of a curiosity for venturing off the prescribed path toward knowledge as long as the new path aligns with the goals of the graduate program* • *Requests feedback that identifies academic weaknesses* **CAEP Alignment:** RA 1.1 – Application of professional dispositions appropriate to the field of specialization.	The graduate student presents as regarding all course work as valuable; they reflect, discuss, and write with a fervor for expanding knowledge. The graduate student seeks academic feedback and incorporates the feedback into future work. They go above and beyond required tasks, reaching for as much learning as possible. The graduate student's questions are inquisitive and demonstrate the student's pondering stance toward academic development.	The graduate student's focus toward scholarly development ebbs and flows. They show enthusiasm and take initiative at times, only to sometimes falter and compel others to finish the task. They appear to welcome and value feedback, but their application of feedback that addresses academic areas for growth is at times inadequate.	The graduate student shows signs of quiet quitting, putting in the minimum amount of academic effort required to complete the program while not appearing to value feedback and guidance toward personal scholarly growth. They ask for outside guidance and for others to take charge of the learning and only respond enough to prompting and guidance to pass courses and receive the degree.	
Scholarly Responsibility • *Demonstrates sincere openness and responsiveness*	The graduate student demonstrates a focus on learning and a sincere desire for	The graduate student's focus is on learning but can be drawn away from time to time by problems that may	The graduate student's interaction with others does not indicate a willingness to seek to understand	

Criterion	Target (3)	Approaching (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Not Applicable / No Basis for Judgment
to the ideas of others • *Supports positive and appropriate interaction, even in times of struggle* • *Addresses and adjusts to graduate-level administration issues (scheduling, deadlines, bursar requirements, and more)* • *Values communication that leads to learning and seeks to resolve conflicts that interfere with said communication* **CAEP Alignment:** RA 1.1 – Leading and/or participating in collaborative activities with peers, colleagues, administrators, and community partners; application of professional dispositions and standards.	understanding in their communication with graduate faculty and other students. They take an active role in determining the direction of their own studies and strive to recognize and acknowledge the scholarly contributions of others. Their efforts and attention concerning administrative issues or conflicts are appropriately directed, allowing the graduate student to expeditiously return to the desired focus on learning.	arise along the graduate pathway. The graduate student's communication is appropriate but not always directed toward learning and knowledge. The graduate student responds to administrative issues but depends on others for support.	before, or even along with, seeking to be understood. In times of difficulty, they focus on and blame others rather than focusing on the issue that is interfering with their learning. The graduate student shows an ongoing inability to direct their efforts toward learning as the goal, instead allowing their attention to linger on obstacles and delays, regardless of how efficiently those are addressed by graduate faculty and staff.	

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Doctoral students are expected to maintain the highest of ethical and scholarly standards. Academic misconduct (i.e., plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and facilitation or collusion) could result in failure of an assignment or an entire course, probation, suspension, or expulsion. All courses have anti-plagiarism software that helps faculty determine whether academic misconduct has occurred in assignment submissions. Review about the APSU Academic Misconduct policy here.

Academic Status for EdD Program

Students whose doctoral grade point average falls below 3.25 will be on Academic Probation. Students not making adequate progress in the program will be placed on a

Doctoral Student Improvement Plan, a copy of which can be found in the D2L EdD Cohort Course. Review the full COGS Academic Status and Graduate Appeal Processes policy here.

Course Syllabus Policy

Students should refer to the syllabus for each individual course for specific information regarding course requirements, assignments, grading policies, attendance expectations, required materials, deadlines, and instructor-specific procedures. While this handbook provides an overview of program requirements and expectations, the course syllabus serves as the official guide for all course-specific information. In the event of any discrepancy, the course syllabus shall take precedence for matters related to that course.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Austin Peay State University recognizes the growing role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in education and professional practice. Students are expected to use AI responsibly, ethically, and in accordance with university policies, instructor expectations, and academic integrity standards. The use of AI for coursework may vary by program, course, and instructor; therefore, students must review course syllabi carefully for specific guidance regarding permitted or prohibited AI use. To better understand APSU's expectations, policies, and best practices related to AI, students are required to review the official university guidance by accessing the link provided below.

Please review the APSU AI Guidance and Expectations here:
Generative Artificial Intelligence at APSU

Accreditation

The Martha Dickerson Eriksson College of Education at Austin Peay State University has been accredited for over sixty years, first by National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and now by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Our last CAEP accreditation was in 2021; the next accreditation visit will take place in 2028. Accreditation is the seal of approval that verifies quality in educator preparation.

Austin Peay State University
CLARKSVILLE TENNESSEE

Eriksson

Doctor of Education:

Program Handbook Section

Program Objectives

The doctoral program in Educational Leadership aims to enhance the knowledge and competencies of leaders so they may provide optimal conditions for the education of youth and adult learners. The program is designed to enhance intellectual understanding of leadership theory and policy, deepen leadership capacity, and position students for elevated organizational responsibility. There are four core competencies that we seek to instill in prospective educational leaders, and each competency has specific and measurable student learning outcomes (SLOs). *Leadership Theory and Practice*

1. Student is able to apply relevant theoretical knowledge and frameworks to articulate an educational mission, vision, and set of core values for an institution or organization.
2. Student is able to use methods of continuous improvement designed to contribute to and assess the achievement of the mission, vision, and core values of an institution or organization.

Organizational Analysis

3. Student is able to identify sources of and develop proposals for the appropriate fiscal, physical, and other resources to support institutional or organizational mission and vision.

Data-Driven Decision Making Through Research, Inquiry, and Evaluation

4. Student is able to use assessment data appropriately and within technical limitations to monitor institutional or organizational progress and improvement.
5. Student is able to develop and conduct technically appropriate methods of data collection, management, analysis, and use for the purposes of research, inquiry, and evaluation. *Analysis of Educational Policy*
6. Student is able to analyze and identify educational policies designed to ensure that all members of an institution or organization are treated fairly, respectfully, and with an appreciation for their individual cultures and contexts, while meeting the changing expectations and opportunities for an institution or organization.

Curriculum

Description of the Program

The APSU EdD program is a 3-year cohort model that requires 60 credit hours, a comprehensive examination, and a dissertation. There are 39 hours of core courses, 9 hours of concentration-specific courses, and 12 hours of dissertation credits.
APSU has been a member of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) since the program's inception in 2018. Click here to visit the CPED website. The members of CPED believe that an EdD "prepares educators for the application of appropriate and specific practices, the generation of new knowledge, and for the stewardship of the profession" and

a. is framed around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice;
b. prepares leaders who can construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, and communities;
c. provides opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships;
d. provides field-based opportunities to analyze problems of practice and use multiple frames to develop meaningful solutions;
e. is grounded in and develops a professional knowledge base that integrates both practical and research knowledge, that links theory with systemic and systematic inquiry; and
f. emphasizes the generation, transformation, and use of professional knowledge and practice.

Matriculation

New students should review the COGS Online Orientation Prezi presentation. In addition, students are encouraged to regularly visit the following EdD resources: the Doctoral Students page, the EdD Progression page (program transition points and dissertation milestones), the EdD Program webpage, and the APSU Library's EdD website.

Advising

The doctoral coordinator is your advisor upon acceptance into the program, but you will be matched with an EdD faculty member during your first semester. Schedule an appointment with your advisor each fall and spring to be cleared for registration and discuss your progress. The doctoral coordinator will send an email prior to each registration period to let each cohort know which classes to take. Once you select your doctoral chair in spring of Year 2, that individual will become your advisor. If you are on an extended (i.e., longer than 3 years) program plan, contact the doctoral coordinator to create a revised course sequence specific to your needs and review it with your advisor at each pre-registration meeting. If you are seeking K–12 administrator licensure, contact the doctoral coordinator to create a program plan that includes those additional courses.

D2L Cohort Course

The doctoral coordinator maintains a cross-cohort “EdD Cohort Course” in D2L. This is where you can find all program and university documents, APA resources and writing supports, and information on comprehensive exams, dissertation guidelines and resources, graduation, and post-graduation. All cohort-wide synchronous session recordings will be housed here. This is also a place where EdD faculty can post announcements about upcoming presentation or funding opportunities. The discussion section of the course has a “Student Lounge” where you can communicate with peers in the other cohorts.

Courses and Course Sequencing

Required Courses (60 hours)

Students typically take two courses each spring and fall and three courses each summer for a total of 60 hours. Each concentration has the same core course requirements, with 9

hours of concentration specific courses. Per APSU Policy 2:064, students should spend at least 3 hours per credit hour per week on coursework (i.e., at least 9 hours a week for each class); you may find that doctoral-level courses require even more time.
Your program of study is located in Degree Works, which can be found on your OneStop homepage. This is the list of courses and benchmarks (i.e., passing the comprehensive exam, proposal defense, and dissertation defense) you need to complete prior to graduation. Students may transfer up to 9 hours of post-master's degree coursework, as well as graduate-level statistics, if the course covers the same content and objectives as a required course and was completed within the past 6 years with an earned "A." Contact the coordinator during your first semester to request substitution or transfer credits.
Submit all assignments using the guidelines in the APA (7th ed.) manual.

Core Courses

Leadership Theory and Practice (12 hours)

- *EDUC 7000: Theories of Leadership*
- *EDUC 7016: Comparative and International Education*
- *EDUC 7017: Multiple Perspectives on Learning and Teaching*
- *EDUC 8003: Team Building and Group Dynamics*

Organizational Analysis (9 hours)

- *EDUC 7004: Organizational Development*
- *EDUC 8005: Strategic Planning*
- *EDUC 8006: Program Planning and Evaluation*

Analysis of Educational Policies (6 hours)

- *EDUC 7015: Contemporary Approaches to Educational Problems*
- *EDUC 7012: Social, Political, and Legal Issues*

Data-Driven Decision Making (12 hours)

- *EDUC 7030: Applied Statistics for Social Sciences I*
- *EDUC 7050: Qualitative Research*
- *EDUC 7031: Applied Statistics for Social Sciences II* ***or***
- *EDUC 7051: Advanced Qualitative Research*
- *EDUC 8050: Research Design*

Concentration-Specific Courses

K–12 Leadership (Non Licensure)

- EDUC 7002: Technology Applications for Educational Leaders
- EDUC 7011: Educational Policy
- EDUC 7018: Turnaround Leadership in Educational Organizations
- EDUC 7020: Designing Effective Professional Learning

K–12 Leadership (Licensure)

(All six courses are required.)

- EDUC 5720: Action Research and Decision Making
- EDUC 5760: Human Resources Administration
- EDUC 5714: Inclusivity and Interventions
- EDUC 5740: Supervision of Curriculum and Instruction
- EDUC 5770: Administration of Special Services Programs

- EDUC 5700: Seminar on Educational Leadership

Higher Education Administration

- EDUC 7040: Higher Education Administration
- EDUC 7041: Higher Education Finance
- EDUC 7042: Higher Education Law

Nurse Educator

- NURS 6615: The Nurse Educator
- NURS 6650: Advanced Clinical Decision Making and Concepts for Doctoral Students
- NURS 6719: Nursing Education Practicum

Socioscientific Studies

- SCI 7330: Advanced Research on Problems in Science Education
- SCI 7550: Socioscientific Issues in Education
- SCI 7770: Leading Integration of STEM Instruction

Literacy Studies

- EDUC 7060: Theory and Practice of Literacy Education
- EDUC 7061: Trends and Issues in Literacy
- EDUC 7062: Critical Literacy Practices in Schools and Communities

Sample EdD Course Sequence (3-Year Plan)

	Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
Year 1	EDUC 7000: Theories of Leadership EDUC 7015: Contemporary Approaches to Educational Problems **Total credits = 6**	EDUC 7030: Applied Statistics 1 EDUC 7050: Qualitative Research **Total credits = 6**	EDUC 7004: Organizational Development EDUC 7017: Multiple Perspectives on Learning and Teaching Concentration-specific course **Total credits = 9**
Year 2	EDUC 7016: Comparative and International Education EDUC 7031: Applied Statistics 2 or EDUC 7051: Advanced Qualitative Research **Total credits = 6**	EDUC 8006: Program Planning and Evaluation EDUC 8050: Research Design **Total credits = 6** ***Comprehensive Exam***	EDUC 7012: Social, Political, and Legal Issues EDUC 8003: Team-Building and Group Dynamics Concentration-specific course **Total credits = 9**
Year 3	EDUC 8011: Research Design (Dissertation I) EDUC 8005: Strategic Planning and Decision Making **Total credits = 6**	EDUC 7020: Designing Effective Professional Learning EDUC 8015: Dissertation II **Total credits = 6**	EDUC 8016: Dissertation III Concentration-specific course **Total credits = 6** ***Dissertation Defense (when ready)***

	Proposal Defense and IRB application (when ready)		

Course Sequence for Dissertation Credits
You must be enrolled in dissertation credits during every semester that you are working with your chair on your dissertation.
EDUC 8011: Research and Design (Dissertation I) (3 hours) – offered in fall
In Research and Design (Dissertation I), students will prepare and defend their dissertation proposal (i.e., Chapters 1–3) and submit an IRB application under the guidance of their doctoral chair and committee. This course, taken in fall of Year 3 is graded "IP" (In Progress) until the proposal defense is passed.
EDUC 7020: Designing Effective Professional Learning (3 hours) – offered in spring
In **Designing Professional Learning**, students will prepare to disseminate their dissertation research through scholarly presentations, publications, and other professional communication. Students will develop conference proposals, prepare manuscripts for publication, and create professional learning experiences that translate research into practice for diverse educational audiences.
EDUC 8015: Dissertation II (3 hours) – offered in spring
In Dissertation II, students will conduct their dissertation study (i.e., collect and analyze data) under the guidance of their doctoral chair and committee. This course, taken in spring of Year 3, is graded "IP" (In Progress) until the dissertation defense is passed.
EDUC 8016: Dissertation III (3 hours) – offered in spring and summer
In Dissertation III, students will write their findings, discussion, and conclusions as well as defend their dissertation under the guidance of their doctoral chair and committee. This course, taken in summer of Year 3, is graded "IP" (In Progress) until the dissertation defense is passed.
EDUC 8017: Dissertation IV (1 hour)* – offered each semester
In Dissertation IV, students will continue to progress on their dissertation until it has been successfully defended. This course is graded "IP" (In Progress) until the dissertation defense is passed.

Students should strive to maintain continuous enrollment (i.e., fall, spring, and summer) until the dissertation is successfully defended and accepted by COGS. You must be enrolled in dissertation credits during every semester that you are working with your chair on your dissertation. If you do not complete your dissertation during EDUC 8016, you must enroll in EDUC 8017: Dissertation IV for each subsequent semester that you are working with your doctoral chair to complete program requirements. It can be repeated a maximum of 5 times.

Non-Coursework Requirements

Doctoral Committee

In January of Year 2, you will select a doctoral chair and, under the guidance of your chair, select your three other doctoral committee members by May of Year 2. Guidance on this process can be found in the D2L EdD Cohort course in a document titled “Selecting Your Doctoral Committee.”

Comprehensive Examination

A comprehensive examination assesses a student’s (a) knowledge and application of the program’s four core competencies and their associated SLOs and (b) readiness to begin their dissertation proposal. Comprehensive exams are completed in May of the second year. You must have at least a 3.25 doctoral grade point average and completed all required coursework prior to taking the comprehensive exam. The doctoral coordinator will share the specifics of the exam protocol during your Year 2 Orientation. Please note that students are responsible for the content of all core courses for the comprehensive exams, even if substitutions or transfers have been approved.

Research Prospectus

After you have formed your doctoral committee, work with your chair to complete the Research Prospectus form (located in D2L), which needs to be approved by all committee members before you begin working on your dissertation proposal.
Note: Once you and your chair have determined the data you will need for your dissertation study, communicate with study site personnel to determine that these data will be available to you; do not propose a study for which you cannot access data.

Dissertation Proposal

After your committee approves your research prospectus, you will develop your dissertation proposal (i.e., Chapters 1–3). Following your chair’s guidance, have ongoing conversations with your committee members to seek their support and guidance in areas related to their expertise to improve your chapters prior to the proposal defense. The EdD Cohort Course contains guidelines for completing your chapters as well as resources to help with methodology. Work with your chair, using the interactive proposal defense timeline in the EdD Cohort Course, to determine a reasonable defense date. Refer to the Protocol for Defenses document in the EdD Cohort course for what to expect at your proposal defense.

Dissertation

The dissertation is an original research project and the culmination of your EdD degree. The findings of your dissertation study should be a unique and novel contribution to the literature in your field. Your dissertation, prepared according to APSU “Thesis and Dissertation Manual: Instructions for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations,” must be accepted by COGS prior to commencement for your degree to be conferred.
Before conducting your dissertation study, you must complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) and receive institutional review board (IRB) approval. **Do not**

submit your IRB application until you have passed your proposal defense. CITI information can be found here. APSU IRB guidelines and forms can be found here. Your chair must submit the IRB application on your behalf; your CITI certificate must be submitted along with the application. You also need written approval to conduct research at your study site, if applicable. **Do not begin data collection or analysis until you have received approval from IRB and the study site (if applicable).**

Work closely with your chair during data collection and analysis. Following your chair's guidance, have ongoing conversations with your committee members to seek their support and guidance in areas related to their expertise to improve your chapters prior to the dissertation defense. The EdD Cohort Course contains chapter guidelines as well as resources for data analysis and writing up findings. Work with your chair, using the interactive dissertation defense timeline in the EdD Cohort Course, to determine a reasonable defense date. Refer to the Protocol for Defenses document in the EdD Cohort course for what to expect at your dissertation defense.

Program Completion

To be eligible for graduation, you must maintain a cumulative program GPA and overall APSU GPA of **3.25 or higher**. Prior to commencement:

- Your dissertation must be successfully defended and accepted by COGS.
- All required graduation forms must be submitted and accepted by the appropriate offices.

Use the graduation checklist in the EdD Cohort Course to monitor your progress. If you notice discrepancies in Degree Works, contact the doctoral coordinator. Students seeking administrator licensure should contact the MAEd Graduate Coordinator after completing licensure coursework and passing the Praxis examination.

Graduation Checklist

1. Verify that all program requirements have been completed in Degree Works.
2. Apply for graduation before the published deadline and review the graduation FAQs.
3. Order your doctoral regalia if you plan to participate in commencement.
4. Upload your dissertation draft to the EdD Cohort Course plagiarism assignment and share the report with your doctoral chair.

Commencement Requirements

To participate in the commencement ceremony:

- Your dissertation must be **approved** (not conditionally approved).
- Your Record of Dissertation Defense must be uploaded to the Cohort Course.
- All required coursework must be successfully completed.

If these requirements are not met by the deadline, your graduation application must be moved to the following semester, and you will participate in that commencement ceremony. To allow sufficient time for revisions, schedule your dissertation defense **at least six weeks before commencement**.

After your dissertation has been approved, request that your EDUC 8015 and EDUC 8016 grades be changed to **P**.

Per COGS, submit your dissertation to the library *at least 4 weeks* prior to commencement. It must be formatted according to APSU Thesis and Dissertation Manual and APA (7th ed.) guidelines. COGS will notify you and the doctoral coordinator when it has been accepted.

1. Dissertation document that was accepted by the library.
2. Verification of EdD Degree form (signed via DocuSign, *after* your dissertation has been accepted by the library).

To have your degree conferred, (1) your dissertation must be accepted by the library and (2) the Verification of EdD Degree form must be (a) uploaded and (b) submitted to COGS *prior to commencement.* If you miss this deadline, your degree will be conferred the semester in which you complete these steps.

Remember, you may participate in the commencement ceremony only after your dissertation has been "approved" (not "conditionally approved") and the Record of Dissertation Defense is complete and uploaded. Your degree will be conferred the semester in which your completed Verification of EdD Degree form is accepted by COGS and the graduation office.

Changes in Major or Concentration

The EdD only has one major: Educational Leadership. If you are interested in changing your concentration, make an appointment to speak to your advisor and/or the doctoral coordinator.

Key Contacts

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Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received, reviewed, and understand the information contained in this program handbook. I understand that this handbook outlines important policies, procedures, expectations, and program requirements. I recognize that it is my responsibility to remain informed of program and university updates and to review all course syllabi for specific course requirements, assignments, and expectations. After reviewing this handbook, please complete the Student Handbook Acknowledgement form using the link provided below. My submission confirms my understanding and agreement to adhere to the policies and expectations outlined herein.

Please follow the link provided: APSU College of Education: Handbook Acknowledgement