

# EDUCATION, DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PH.D.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, POLICY AND JUSTICE

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## Program goal

The educational leadership, policy and justice concentration is designed to cultivate educational scholars and leaders who will advance scholarship, policy and practice related to equity and social justice. Drawing on an interdisciplinary study of leadership and policy, the program promotes an understanding of the many societal and organizational impediments to equal educational opportunity. This concentration is directed not only toward identifying and analyzing those injustices, but also toward imagining, researching and creating more equitable, inclusive schools, organizations and societies through leadership and policy. The dissertation is a rigorous culminating tool for research, advocacy and change within educational organizations and endeavors. Graduates will be prepared to lead for equity in K-12 organizations, higher education, research and policy think tanks or local, state and federal policymaking institutions.

## Student learning outcomes

1. Complete an original research study: dissertation component – Student will design, implement, analyze and defend an original research study. Once a student passes the prospectus hearing, he or she will collect and analyze the data and finish writing the last two chapters of their dissertation. Students have a committee of a minimum of four faculty members. Typically, this consists of a chair, a methodologist, a subject-matter expert and an expert outside of the School of Education. Each committee member independently reviews the student's work. Once the dissertation defense has occurred, the committee discusses their thoughts on the quality of the student work. Once members agree, and other requirements are met, the student is granted a Ph.D.
2. Apply skills in external setting: externship component – Students will demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a professional placement in a school, agency or corporate setting. The faculty adviser and the externship site supervisor work together to evaluate the student.
3. Develop research knowledge and skills: research component – Students will acquire the prerequisite skills essential to designing, conducting and interpreting qualitative and quantitative design research. Students will demonstrate this knowledge and skill set on a qualifying examination, which is independently evaluated by at least two faculty members. To address inter-rater reliability, if the two faculty members disagree on the student's level of knowledge, a third faculty member is called in to evaluate the student's responses on the qualifying examination. This exam is also graded "blindly," meaning that the evaluator does not know which student he or she is evaluating.
4. Develop in-depth knowledge in one area of study: concentration component – Students will demonstrate in-depth knowledge and skills in an area of study that is congruent with their current or projected career goals. Content will differ according to chosen concentration.

## VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

**Visit the academic regulations section** for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

## Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

**Visit the academic regulations section** for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/>)

## Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

**Visit the academic regulations section** for additional information on graduation requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>)

## Other information

See the doctoral student handbook (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-education/educational-leadership/education-phd-concentration-educational-leadership/%20http://www.soe.vcu.edu/files/2016/01/Ph.DHandbook2017.pdf>) for further information.

Apply online at [graduate.admissions.vcu.edu](http://graduate.admissions.vcu.edu) (<http://www.graduate.admissions.vcu.edu>).

## Admission requirements

| Degree: | Semester(s) of entry: | Deadline dates: | Test requirements: |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Ph.D.   | Summer or fall        | Jan 15          | GRE                |

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), the following represent the minimum requirements for admission:

1. Master's degree in an appropriate discipline
2. Three letters of recommendation addressing the student's potential for graduate study in education
3. Student's written statement concerning career interests
4. Transcripts of all previous college work
5. A personal interview and writing sample (may be requested)
6. Professional vitae/resume
7. Satisfactory scores on the GRE

Please see doctoral admissions information on the School of Education website for details.

## Degree requirements

In addition to the VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), students are required to complete course work in core and elective courses.

1. Credit hour requirements: Students are required to complete a minimum of 48-54 credit hours depending on concentration.
2. Grade requirements: Receipt of a grade of C or below in three courses constitutes automatic dismissal from the program. Courses with a grade below C cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.
3. Externship requirement: Students must complete an approved externship.
4. Examination requirements: Students must pass both a qualifying examination early in the program and a comprehensive examination near the end of the program.
5. Dissertation requirements: Students must complete and defend a research dissertation.

## Curriculum requirements

| Course            | Title   | Hours |
|-------------------|---|-------|
| <b>Foundation</b> |   |       |
| EDUS 702          | Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship I  | 3     |
| EDUS 703          | Foundations of Educational Research and Doctoral Scholarship II | 3     |
| <b>Research</b>   |   |       |
| EDUS 608          | Educational Statistics  | 3     |
| EDUS 710          | Quantitative Research Design                                    | 3     |
| EDUS 711          | Qualitative Methods and Analysis                                | 3     |
| Research elective |   | 3     |
| <b>Externship</b> |   |       |
| EDUC 700          | Externship  | 3     |

## Dissertation

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| EDUC 899 | Dissertation Research (minimum of six credit hours) | 6 |
| EDUS 890 | Dissertation Seminar                                | 3 |

## Concentration courses

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| ADMS 703 | Leadership for Social Justice and Equity in Education                                   | 3 |
| ADMS 704 | Education Finance Policy and the Equitable Distribution of Resources                    | 3 |
| ADMS 707 | The Politics of Education   | 3 |
| ADMS 708 | Equal Educational Opportunity in the 21st Century Metropolis: Toward a Policy Framework | 3 |
| ADMS 709 | U.S. Educational Policy   | 3 |
| ADMS 710 | Current Topics in Educational Leadership and Policy                                     | 3 |

Other courses selected in consultation with the adviser

|             |  |    |
|-------------|--|----|
| Total Hours |  | 48 |
|-------------|--|----|

**The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 48.**

## Program contact

Communications and Enrollment Management

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## Coordinator contact

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**Program website:** [soe.vcu.edu/academics/doctoral-programs/phd-leadership](http://soe.vcu.edu/academics/doctoral-programs/phd-leadership) (<https://soe.vcu.edu/academics/doctoral-programs/phd-leadership/>)