



**Morgridge College
of Education**

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Higher Education Department

Student Handbook

2026-2027

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MCE Land Acknowledgment

We recognize that the University of Denver and the greater city of Denver reside within the traditional territories of the Hinonoeino (Arapaho), Tsitsista (Cheyenne), and Nunt'zi (Ute). We recognize the descendant communities of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana, the Northern Arapaho Tribe of Wyoming, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. We also acknowledge that over 40 different Indigenous nations continue to be in relation with the lands currently called Colorado.

Denver is home to many different citizens of Indigenous nations and we recognize their enduring presence on this land by paying respects to their elders, both past and present. Please take a moment to consider the legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and resettlement that bring us together today and join us in uncovering such truths at all public events. Now is the time to reflect upon and personally reconcile how the genocidal acts against Indigenous communities intersect with our learning, collaboration, and sharing of knowledge.

For Further Reflection

To learn more about DU's recognition and efforts to reconcile the involvement of the University's founder, John Evans, in the Sand Creek Massacre, please review the [John Evans Report](#).

As students, professionals, and scholars of higher education, it is important to consider the fact that we owe our educational advancement, present and future career aspirations, as well as our research and scholarship in the field of higher education studies to the attempted genocide and forced migration of Indigenous peoples and the theft and scavenging of the land across what is now the United States of America. Through treaties (broken and extorted), state and federal legislation (e.g., the Morrill Land Grant Act), and the vigilantism of white citizens, the land on which postsecondary institutions occupy, such as the University of Denver, are both a legacy of the past *and a testament to the ongoing-ness of settler colonialism and anti-Indigeneity*.

We are also complicit with centuries of trade in the stolen bodies and labor of enslaved Africans, the profits from which were used by propertied white citizens to help build (literally and figuratively) the edifices (concrete and symbolic) of U.S. higher education. We can also point to the painful and unjust history of Mexican, Asian, Jewish, and immigrant disenfranchisement in public and private higher education.

All these legacies of violence and exclusion continue today and should give us pause. We offer these questions for reflection:

1. To whom are we answerable for our work and how we do our work?¹
2. How can we act with greater relationality with students, faculty, and staff, especially those who are subjected to systems of violence?²
3. What resources can we draw on to continually challenge ourselves to work for greater equity and justice in our educational institutions, systems, and sociopolitical structures?

¹ The concept of "answerability" was coined by Leigh Patel and discussed in her book *Decolonizing Educational Research: From Ownership to Answerability* (2016, Routledge).

² Relationality is an Indigenous concept. Lauren Tynan (trawlulwuy) discusses it in her article "What is relationality? Indigenous knowledges, practices, and responsibilities with kin," *Cultural Geographies* (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1177/14744740211029287>

About this Handbook

This *2026-2027 HED Handbook* governs the degree requirements and processes for HED students beginning their degree program in Fall Quarter 2026. Students who matriculated earlier than Fall 2026 are governed by the Handbook issued for that academic year unless they petition to change to the guidelines and policies contained in the current Handbook for that year.

A Message from the Higher Education Faculty

Hello and Welcome-

While community and relations can mean different things to different folks, those two factors often attract many to study higher education and select higher education as a career. Choosing a career in higher education is multifaceted. It could mean being a practitioner at a college or university. It could mean advocating for policy or community change to improve college access. Regardless of the journey folks plan to take, the DUHigherEd faculty are excited to be part of your journey.

The DUHigherEd faculty experience and knowledge comes from a variety of places, including but not limited to national policy organizations, community colleges, minority-serving institutions, regional public universities, and Research I public and private institutions. Our faculty aim to share their knowledge while leveraging MCE students' professional and personal knowledge to advance the study and practice of higher education.

Whether you're a returning student or new to the DUHigherEd and MCE community, we look forward to growing and learning this year. To help you get started, our faculty have worked hard to produce this handbook to provide detailed information about HED's degree programs, including guidance concerning processes, policies, and expectations. Please review carefully all the information contained herein. Students will want to work closely with their assigned HED advisor to ensure that all program requirements are met. As stated previously, it is important to be aware that students are ultimately responsible for knowing and understanding the contents of the *HED Handbook*, as well as the policies outlined in the [Graduate Policies and Procedures](#) and the [MCE Policies and Procedures](#).

Please know that all of us in HED are here to make your academic experiences at DU worthwhile, intellectually challenging, and professionally gratifying. We look forward to working with you!

Higher Education Department Overview

Colleges and universities all over the world face multiple challenges. These institutions need enlightened leaders and faculty who can guide various external audiences and internal constituencies toward new educational solutions to societal challenges. Our degrees provide students with opportunities to study various subjects in the field of higher education, providing deep research-based understandings across a breadth of postsecondary education concerns.

DUHigherEd Commitment Statement

(Revised January 2022)

The University of Denver's Higher Education Department (DUHigherEd) engages in collective learning about the foundations of postsecondary institutions, structures, and systems across diverse educational pathways. Our scholarship is grounded in theory, praxis, and community engagement to address persistent and emergent postsecondary phenomena at the institutional, local, regional, tribal, state, and national levels.

The DUHigherEd community is committed to:

- Teaching and mentoring educators and professionals who seek careers related to postsecondary contexts, such as administration, policy, teaching, and research, as well as public and private agencies of higher education.
- Uplifting and celebrating the diverse knowledge bases held by communities historically and contemporarily excluded from higher education.
- Centering and generating consequential research, scholarship, and creative activities that address interlocking systems of oppression which perpetuate inequities and injustices influencing the ecology of higher education by informing policy, practice, and theory.
- Fostering a sense of accountability to build liberatory practices needed to disrupt and dismantle oppressive higher education policies.
- Engaging in critical self-reflexivity as part of an intergenerational, collective, and life-long (un)learning process.
- Serving and partnering with communities to build knowledge and enact policy and practice that dismantles systems of oppression.

As a policy-aware and globally conscious department, we recognize that U.S.-based institutions of higher education are founded on ideologies of stolen land, bodies, and labor. We align our commitments to uplift critical scholars who name the ableism, genderism, genocide, heterosexism, homophobia, nativism, racism, settler colonialism, sexism, transphobia, and xenophobia continuously informing the operations of education.

As a community of learners, we traverse the boundaries of valuing education as a human right, while understanding the complicated and problematic relationship higher education has with communities that continue to be systemically marginalized. DUHigherEd welcomes learners who seek to actualize a critical praxis for making meaningful contributions that shift the landscape of higher education.

HED Faculty and Staff

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Adjunct Faculty

The department regularly employs adjunct faculty to teach courses who have practical expertise in a given topical area. These faculty add a great deal to the learning and professional growth of HED students.

Higher Education Coursework

Coursework is a critical element of the HED degree programs. The coursework serves as a gateway for students' future independent work and lays the academic foundation for professional practice. Underscored by theory, faculty and students will bring in practical experiences from their work in higher education and related professional settings in policy, practice, teaching, or scholarship. This application of practice to theory and theory to practice³ results in a praxis-oriented approach to addressing the challenges and maximizing the opportunities of postsecondary education in the U.S. and global contexts.

HED students will engage with three different types of courses during their degree program: core courses, seminars, and elective course options. The distinctions between these coursework offerings are discussed below.

Core Courses

Within their respective degree programs, HED students will take core courses that serve as the introductory competency for future coursework. Generally, core course topics cover higher education as a field of study and practice; issues of access, persistence, and retention; organization and governance; critical perspectives on higher education; and current issues in higher education. It is expected that students will return to this foundational knowledge throughout their time in HED and beyond.

Seminars

A unique Higher Education Seminar (HED 4294) series is offered each year, giving students an opportunity to participate in a course where full-time and adjunct faculty members bring in their current research, expertise, and/or a topic within the field to be explored in greater depth. Seminar courses offer a space to explore new theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical innovations. Seminars are open to all HED students.

Electives

HED students are also required to complete a varying number of electives. These course options may be taught by full-time or adjunct faculty on a rotating basis and are open to all HED students.

Higher Education Practice & Experiential Learning

Practical experiences represent the other half of the foundation for future or current professional engagement with colleges and universities, postsecondary policy organizations, and other higher education related contexts. Assistantships and internships offer opportunities for HED students to gain or supplement their professional experience.

Assistantships

Not all HED students will have an assistantship. However, for those who do, this rigorous part-time, graduate-level work provides an ongoing opportunity for students to gain experience in administrative, instructional, or scholarly activities relevant to their degree goals.

³ This consideration of the relationship between practice and theory—the PTP Model—was developed by Lee Knefelkamp, Elizabeth Wells, and Rennie Rogers Golec and introduced to the field of higher education and student affairs in 1985.

Internships

Internships offer an opportunity for students to gain practical experience outside of their regular professional work (whether full-time or assistantships). These opportunities are short-term, usually lasting only one quarter, and no more than four to five (4-5) hours per week. HED students are encouraged to seek internship experiences that broaden their professional knowledge and allow them to apply formal theory to different settings, such as institutional context or functional area. Depending on the site, an internship may be paid or volunteer and may be eligible for academic credit. Internship experiences may be required depending on the degree program.

Other Work Experiences

HED students may also gain practical experiences in other ways, such as student hourly positions, non-credit practica, and other part-time work. Regardless of the nature of the position, all HED students are encouraged to bring their past and present professional experiences with postsecondary institutions and issues into the classroom and their academic work.

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Higher Education

The PhD is an indicator of the degree holder's substantive knowledge in the literature of their chosen field, as well as significant expertise in research design and practice. For DUHigherEd, the PhD program is research intensive and intended to prepare graduates for an academic or other research-oriented career. To achieve this goal, PhD students complete coursework that emphasizes coursework in research methods and theoretical frameworks to gain competence in conducting independent research intended to test or apply conceptual models and/or frameworks to generate new knowledge in the field.

The Higher Education page of the [Graduate Bulletin](#) contains all degree course requirements under the [Program of Study](#) tab. Course descriptions are found under the [Course Description](#) tab.

Overview of PhD Requirements

Detailed information regarding all aspects of the completion of the PhD can be found in the [Graduate Bulletin](#) and on the Current Student Resources tab of the Office of Graduate Education website here. Students are strongly advised to refer to this portion of the Bulletin and the website for specifics on the composition of the oral defense committee, forms that are to be submitted, timeline for submission of forms, and the formatting and submission of the dissertation.

Successful completion of the PhD in Higher Education includes both coursework and non-coursework requirements. These are described below.

PhD Coursework

Coursework required for the PhD in HED include research methods, required and elective coursework in HED, and a student-designed cognate. Courses are organized as follows:

Research Courses

38 cr

Credits in the research category include 6 credits of HED Research Experience, which can be satisfied through any combination of the following:

- *Independent study (HED 5991) focused on research methodology or practice*
- *Additional coursework in research methods in or beyond MCE*
- *Internship experiences focused on research practice (e.g., institutional research, policy analysis, or program evaluation)*

Other credits in this category are comprised of the Research Processes in Higher Education course (4 cr) and Doctoral Research Credits (HED 5995; minimum of 6 cr)

Higher Education Required Courses

28 cr

Included in this category are both core and seminar courses as described above.

Electives in Higher Education **12 cr**

Elective coursework in this category must be taken in HED. Requests for course substitutions must follow the process outlined above.

Cognate Courses **12 cr**

The PhD cognate is designed specifically to encourage students to take coursework in other units, either in MCE or DU writ large.

Total Minimum Credit Hours **90**

PhD Elective Requirement and Cognate Guidelines

12 credits of HED elective courses and 12 credits in a cognate complete the coursework requirement for the PhD. These two categories allow for the greatest flexibility in degree planning. Any non-HED elective courses selected by the student must be pre-approved by the advisor using the course substitution procedure.

Areas of focus for the cognate may include the following:

- College Teaching
- Public Policy
- Research Methodologies
- Self-designed Cognate
 - A self-designed cognate must be reviewed and approved by the student's advisor.

PhD Cognate Options

	COURSE NUMBER	CREDIT HOURS
College Teaching Cognate		
Curriculum Development in Higher Education	HED 4215	4
Internship in College Teaching	HED 4297	1-4
<i>See other course options from the MCE Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) program</i>		Varies
Public Policy Cognate		
Public Policy in Higher Education	HED 4212	4
Internship in Public Policy	HED 4296	1-4
Organizational Change	HED 4235	4
Educational Policy Analysis (<i>prerequisite: HED 4212</i>)	HED 4242	4
Research Methods & Methodologies Cognate		
<i>Consult offerings in the MCE Research Methods and Statistics (RMS) program</i>		Varies
Self-designed Cognate		
Coursework for a self-designed cognate must be approved by the advisor. <i>Courses offered by the College of Professional Studies cannot be counted toward the PhD in HED.</i>		Varies

Any coursework in HED not previously counted toward another requirement may be used as part of a cognate. Moreover, students are encouraged to take advantage of the robust graduate-level offerings throughout the University. Course descriptions for all programs may be found in the [Graduate Bulletin](#). Specific course offerings for upcoming quarters can be found through [MyDU](#).

Research Processes

HED 4216 Research Processes in Higher Education (4 cr) is typically taken by PhD students in the Fall Quarter during which they complete the comprehensive examination. This course is intended to support students to progress beyond the successful completion of the comprehensive exam into the dissertation phase (i.e., proposal, institutional research board approval, dissertation).

The Teaching Internship Requirement

The Higher Education Department considers experience in teaching at the college level to be a fundamental competency for PhD students. Students in the PhD program are required to complete 4 credits to demonstrate teaching competency. This requirement can be fulfilled by enrolling in any of the following options:

- HED 4215 Curriculum Development and Teaching Strategies (4 cr)
- HED 4297 Internship in College and University Teaching (2 cr each for two quarters)
 - The total of 4 cr of teaching internship equals to serving as a teaching intern in two HED courses.

Courses taught either by full-time or adjunct faculty in HED are eligible for the teaching internship. Faculty seeking a teaching intern for an upcoming quarter will share their announcement. Students may also approach faculty with their interest in serving as a teaching intern for a course in which they demonstrated strong competence. Students who are interested in interning with a faculty member outside of the Higher Education Department will be required to request an exception from their advisor.

Teaching interns may be called upon to assist with course design, curriculum facilitation, lesson planning, and/or assignment feedback. Teaching interns are also encouraged to participate in professional development workshops offered by the [Office of Teaching and Learning](#).

Other Internship Opportunities

Students with significant teaching experience at the college-level may request to have the teaching internship requirement waived using the process described above. However, such students are encouraged, with their advisor's guidance, to pursue an internship with local, regional, or (inter)national postsecondary institutions or organizations. A postsecondary institution is any accredited institution of higher education, whether public or private and regardless of sector (e.g., community college, regional public university, liberal arts college, specialized institution, research university). Organizations at which students may complete an administrative or public policy focused internship include community organizations with a higher education focus (e.g., Denver Scholarship Foundation), other non-profit organizations (e.g., Education Commission for the States), and/or government agencies (e.g., Colorado Department of Higher Education).

If interested in these alternative internship experiences, students who receive approval to waive the teaching internship requirement may register for either of the following:

- HED 4295 Internship in College and University Administration
- HED 4296 Internship in Public Policy

Students will register for credit during the quarter within which the internship takes place using the [Experiential Learning Registration Form](#) found on the Registrar's webpage. Before registering for an internship, the student and the advisor will determine the expectations to be met in the internship. Both will sign the registration form, signifying agreement with the internship requirements, and submit the form.

The PhD Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination demonstrates a student's knowledge competence in the field of higher education through the required coursework, as well as their preparedness for completion of independent research required by the dissertation. The student will work with their advisor to determine the student's readiness to sit for the exam. Comprehensive exams for PhD students are scheduled in the Fall Quarter. In rare circumstances, a student may complete the comprehensive exam in the Spring Quarter.

Exam Eligibility

PhD students may be eligible to take the comprehensive exam upon completion of 80% (64 credits) of coursework with a grade of C- or better in each course. Advisor approval to take the exam is required by the 5th week of the preceding Spring Quarter for Fall Quarter examinations. All coursework with a grade of Incomplete ("I") must be satisfied prior to the exam approval. Exceptions to this requirement may be made only by petitioning the Higher Education Department Chair.

Exam Components

The PhD comprehensive exam will consist of the following three parts:

PART I is an independently written 10–20-page dissertation prospectus that may follow the guidelines of a dissertation fellowship application (e.g., AERA Dissertation Fellowship) as decided upon by the student and their advisor. The prospectus must include the following sections:

- Articulation of the student's research problem
- Focused review of literature and/or frameworks that support the student's research
- Focused review of methodology and methods that support the student's research
- Strategy paper on how students see their research contributing to higher education policy, practice, research, and/or theory.

Students must submit the final draft of their dissertation prospectus (Part I) at the time of their seated exam.

PART II is a written examination. Students will sit for an 8-hour exam either on campus in Ruffatto Hall or at home. The exam will consist of two questions, each requiring a 6–10-page written response. Question #1 will be a standard question given to all students taking the exam and covers the required HED coursework. Question #2 will be designed to reflect the student's emerging research interest and expertise and will be written by the student's advisor.

PART III is the oral exam meeting which occurs no sooner than two weeks after the student completes the written exam portions (i.e., Parts I and II). An oral exam meeting is a required part of the comprehensive examination.

Evaluation of the Comprehensive Exam

The comprehensive exam will be evaluated by two HED faculty: the student's advisor and a second reader who may be familiar with the student's academic and/or professional experiences and interests. If the two readers cannot reach agreement on the outcome of the exam, the assessment of a third reader from the HED faculty will be solicited.

The outcome of the examination is determined by the two readers and communicated by the advisor to the student immediately following the oral examination. There are four possible outcomes:

1. Outstanding—Pass with distinction (*Reserved for exceptional performance on the written and oral parts of the exam*)
2. Acceptable—Approved with no revisions required
3. Revisions Requested—1 response would need to be revised to be acceptable
4. Unacceptable—At least 2 responses would need to be rewritten to be acceptable

If revisions are requested for one response (either Part I or one of the responses in Part II), then the student will have two weeks to revise. The student's advisor will review the revision and make the final determination as to whether the revisions satisfy the concerns that were noted during the examination. The oral portion of the exam will not need to be repeated.

If two or more responses are unacceptable (either in Part I or Part II), then the student has failed the comprehensive exam and must retake it successfully to continue their degree progression. Comprehensive exams must be retaken the following Spring Quarter. If the second attempt is unsuccessful or the student does not retake the exam on schedule, then the student will be determined to have made unsatisfactory progress toward the degree and will be recommended for dismissal.

The Dissertation Requirement

Completion of the PhD includes the execution of an independent and rigorous research study concerning a topic relevant to higher education theory, practice, and/or policy. The topic is selected by the student and is expected to build on what the student submitted as their dissertation prospectus for the comprehensive exam. Through their dissertation, the HED PhD student showcases their breadth and depth of knowledge of the literature related to their topic; sophisticated application of appropriate research methods; valid and trustworthy interpretation and presentation of findings; compelling discussion of those findings related to the extant literature; and the provocative enunciation of recommendations and implications for theory, policy, and practice in higher education. PhD students are expected to complete and present the dissertation within 12 months for full-time students or 18 months for part-time students following the successful approval of the dissertation proposal discussed next. Exceptions from this timeline require a petition and approval by the department chair.

Each of the following steps, up to and including the final submission of the approved dissertation manuscript, must be completed according to the deadlines set by the Office of Graduate

Education (OGE). Each current year's deadlines can be found online through the [Dissertation and Thesis Information](#) website.

Dissertation Proposal

After passing the comprehensive exam, the next step in completing the degree is the successful development and presentation of the dissertation proposal. The dissertation proposal will be reviewed and evaluated by the same two readers who comprised the student's comprehensive exam committee. PhD students are required to prepare and present the dissertation proposal within four quarters of the date of the comprehensive exam, not including summer. For example, if a student successfully passes the comprehensive exam in the Fall Quarter, they must present the dissertation proposal by the following Fall Quarter. Those students who do not comply with this timeline will be reviewed by the department faculty for dismissal from the PhD program.

Upon approval of the proposal, but before the gathering of data, the student must comply with the requirements of the Office of Research Integrity & Education (ORIE). Upon MASA receipt of ORIE approval from the student, the student is approved for degree candidacy.

The Dissertation Committee

With the advisor's help, the student will identify an oral defense committee chair, a dissertation director (usually the student's advisor), and a committee of three to six members. All selections must be approved by the department chair and the Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Education in the Office of Graduate Education. This is done by submitting the Oral Defense Committee Recommendation Form to the Office of Graduate Education.

Dissertation Final Oral Presentation

An oral presentation of the dissertation is required and is conducted by the candidate's committee. The presentation must be held according to the deadlines set by the Office of Graduate Education, typically at least three weeks before the end of the quarter in which the degree is to be granted. The Schedule of the Oral Defense Form must be submitted at least four weeks prior to the final oral presentation to the Office of Graduate Education and the department. All members of the dissertation committee shall receive a copy of the candidate's dissertation at least two weeks prior to the scheduled presentation date. The student is responsible for reserving the room or setting up the Zoom meeting if the presentation must happen virtually. The committee recommendations for approval of the proposal will be recorded on the [MCE Dissertation Proposal Approval form](#).

Conducting the Final Oral Presentation. In compliance with the [guidelines](#) established by the Office of Graduate Education and documented in the Graduate Bulletin, the oral defense committee chair presides over and manages the final oral presentation of the dissertation. The Oral Defense Committee Chair is responsible for making certain that the final oral presentation is conducted in a professional manner and that the student has a fair and equitable opportunity to present their dissertation. The oral defense committee chair is expected to provide opportunities for each voting member of the dissertation committee to participate in the final oral presentation and to ensure that the presentation is of high quality while remaining with proper limits of inquiry. The final oral presentation is an open forum and HED, MCE, and DU faculty members, graduate students, and others in the community may attend. The date of the student's final oral presentation will be shared with the HED community at least two weeks in advance. After the dissertation committee has conducted the essential examination of the candidate, questions may be asked by others present, if, appropriate, as determined by the oral defense committee chair.

When the final oral presentation is completed, the oral defense committee chair will request that the candidate and all others who are not on the dissertation committee leave the room or that the dissertation committee be placed into a Zoom breakout room. Then the oral defense committee chair will call for a motion to pass or fail the candidate. The candidate cannot pass with more than one negative vote from the dissertation committee. If the motion is a recommendation to pass, the committee must then agree on the conditions of the recommendation as follows, set by the Office of Graduate Education:

- Pass with no revisions means that only grammatical or formatting changes are required. Only a limited number of sentence additions or deletions should be requested as needed to enhance clarity.
- Pass with minor revisions indicates that the candidate will be required to reorganize portions of the manuscript and change or add to some of the content.
- Pass with major revisions means that a complete section or sections must be rewritten, additional tables are required and interpreted, or the general format must be changed.
- Fail indicates that the content is not of acceptable quality or that the candidate cannot defend the research. In most cases, failing the defense results in the rejection of the student's dissertation and a new or related study usually will need to be undertaken. A candidate who fails the final oral presentation may petition the dissertation committee to be allowed to repeat their final oral dissertation presentation the following quarter. If the candidate fails to submit an acceptable manuscript or is unable to defend the research a second time, the candidate will be recommended for dismissal from the program.

The Result of Oral Defense Form is provided by OGE through DocuSign and must be completed by all committee members.

Responsibility for seeing that any needed revisions are made rests with the dissertation director (i.e., the advisor) but committee members also may require their approval before final submission. Any changes or additions to the dissertation must be made and approved according to the deadlines established by OGE referenced above. Determination of the approval of the dissertation manuscript is recorded on the Final Approval Form, which is supplied by OGE to the dissertation director.

The Doctor of Education (EdD) in Higher Education

The Morgridge College of Education is a member of the [Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate](#). CPED's vision and mission state,

We envision a future where equity-minded educational professionals lead lasting and positive change for the learning and benefit of everyone. The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) transforms the advanced preparation of educational professionals to lead through scholarly practice for the improvement of individuals and communities. (CPED Home)

In line with CPED's vision, the EdD in Higher Education seeks to prepare advanced postsecondary education professionals working in college/university administration or policy to lead systemic and structural change at the institutional and organizational levels through foundational knowledge of the field of higher education and expertise in the scholarship of application (Boyer, 1990)⁴.

EdD students gain knowledge through coursework and demonstrate competence through successfully passing the comprehensive exam (also known as the *preliminary* examination) and the completion of the Dissertation in Practice (DiP).

Overview of EdD Requirements

The Higher Education page of the [Graduate Bulletin](#) contains all degree course requirements under the Program of Study tab. Course descriptions are found under the Course Description tab. Successful completion of the EdD in Higher Education includes both coursework and non-coursework requirements. These are described below.

EdD Coursework

The coursework required for the EdD in HED includes research methods, as well as required and elective coursework in the field of higher education. Courses are organized as follows:

Research Courses	37 cr
<i>Courses in the research category include foundational courses, an option to focus on learning how to conduct a program evaluation or policy analysis, and courses related to the design of the Dissertation in Practice. Other credits include the doctoral research credits (HED 5993; minimum of 6 cr).</i>	
Higher Education Required Courses	24 cr
<i>Included in this category are both core and seminar courses as described on page 10 in this handbook.</i>	
Higher Education Electives	4 cr
<i>Elective coursework must be taken in HED. Requests for course substitutions must follow the procedure outlined on page 11 in this handbook.</i>	
Minimum Total Credit Hours	65 cr

⁴ Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

The research courses and HED required courses are offered in a two-year sequence. EdD students are allowed very limited opportunities to take courses outside of the department unless pre-approved by the advisor and department chair. Instructions for requesting a course substitution are given above. EdD students are not required and do not have the option to create a cognate of courses outside HED.

Research Processes

HED 4216 Research Processes in Higher Education is taken by EdD students twice—once during the summer quarter immediately preceding completing the comprehensive exam and repeated during the Fall Quarter they complete the comprehensive exam. This course is intended to support students to both prepare for and progress beyond the successful completion of the comprehensive exam into the Dissertation in Practice, including institutional research board approval or waiver, data collection, analysis, and writing.

The Optional Internship Experience

While not required to earn the degree, EdD students are encouraged to pursue internships with local, regional, and/or (inter)national postsecondary institutions and organizations. An internship experience could involve the opportunity to broaden expertise and experience in one's current work and/or gaining experience in an area or institution type one is considering for the future. The student will work with the internship supervisor to determine the internship requirements, which are then approved by the student's advisor.

A postsecondary institution/organization is understood to be any accredited institution of higher education (e.g., Arapahoe Community College, Metropolitan State University of Denver). Other examples of postsecondary organizations include community organizations (e.g., Denver Scholarship Foundation, Education Commission of the States) and government agencies (e.g., Colorado Department of Higher Education).

EdD students can receive up to four (4) elective credit hours for internships by registering for one of the following as appropriate for the nature of the internship:

HED 4295	Internship in College and University Administration
HED 4296	Internship in Public Policy
HED 4297	Internship in College Teaching

Internship credit hours would go toward reducing the number of courses needed to fulfill the 12-credit elective requirement. The internship is limited to 2 credits per quarter and can be repeated for up to 4 credits. Students are required to register for credit during the quarter that the internship takes place using the [Experiential Learning Registration Form](#) found on the Registrar's webpage.

The EdD Comprehensive Examination

The student will work with their advisor to determine the student's readiness for the comprehensive exam. The written portion of the comprehensive exam for EdD students is due early Fall Quarter with the oral portion of the exam occurring approximately two weeks following. An alternate exam period may be scheduled during a different quarter if approved by the advisor and department chair.

Exam Eligibility

EdD students may be eligible to take the comprehensive exam upon completion of at least 80% (40 credits) of coursework with a grade of C- or better in each course. All coursework graded Incomplete

must be completed prior to receiving approval to complete the comprehensive exam. Advisor approval to take the exam is required no later than the end of the first week of the spring quarter preceding the next comprehensive exam period. Exceptions to these requirements may only be made by petition to the Higher Education Department Chair.

As noted previously, EdD students are required to enroll for the first time in HED 4216 Research Processes in Higher Education (4 credits) as part of the comprehensive exam process. This course will be offered in the Summer Quarter over a 10-week period. The purpose of the course in the Summer is to support students in writing the Dissertation in Practice (DiP) prospectus which constitutes the comprehensive exam for EdD students. During the course, students will receive feedback on drafts of their prospectus from instructors and peers and join a supportive community of peers to help complete the process.

EdD Comprehensive Exam Components

The EdD comprehensive exam consists of two parts: the written DiP prospectus and an oral presentation.

Part One is a 27-30 page prospectus for the DiP organized as follows:

Preface	~2-5 pages
<i>Articulation of the Research Problem</i>	
Section 1	~10 pages
<i>Focused review of the literature and/or frameworks to support the DiP</i>	
Section 2	~10 pages
<i>Focused review of the methodology and methods to support the DiP</i>	
Section 3	~ 5 pages
<i>Strategy paper on how students see their DiP, service/community engagement, and/or professional work contributing to policy, practice, and/or finding solutions to a problem facing higher education</i>	

As stated previously, students will complete a full draft of the DiP prospectus during the summer offering of HED 4216. Students will work independently on finalizing the prospectus, which constitutes the comprehensive exam, after the course during a two-week “silent” period before the comprehensive exam (i.e., the DiP prospectus) is due. Advisors will not offer feedback during this time.

Part Two is the oral presentation meeting. The oral presentation is scheduled to occur approximately 2-3 weeks after the student submits the written DiP prospectus.

Evaluation of the EdD Comprehensive Examination

The written comprehensive exam (i.e., the DiP prospectus) will be evaluated by two readers from the HED faculty according to the separate components of the prospectus described above. If the two readers do not agree on their assessment of the examination’s quality, then a third reader will be invited to participate. The outcome of the examination will be communicated by the advisor to the student immediately following the conclusion of the oral presentation and exam. Results will be recorded on the

Doctoral Comprehensive Exam/DiP Prospectus Approval Form, which will be provided by the advisor and then submitted to the HED ASA.

The student's comprehensive exam committee will assign one of the following evaluations:

1. Outstanding—The written exam and presentation are of exceptionally high quality and pass with distinction.
2. Acceptable—The written exam is approved without further revisions and the presentation is acceptable.
3. Revisions Necessary—One section of the written exam is determined to be unacceptable. The student will have two weeks to revise that section and circulate it among the readers. There will be no repetition of the oral presentation and exam meeting.
4. Unacceptable—Two or more sections of the written exam are deemed to need significant revision. In this case, the student must repeat the examination during a make-up period, typically the following spring quarter. If the student fails to participate in repeating the comprehensive exam (i.e., completing the required revisions of their DiP prospectus) by the deadline for the make-up period, that student will be recorded as having failed the comprehensive exam a second time.

If a student's DiP prospectus is judged to be unacceptable after two attempts, thus failing to successfully complete the comprehensive exam, then the student, advisor, and the department chair must meet to discuss next steps which may result in a recommendation for the student's dismissal from the program for failure to make satisfactory progress toward the degree.

Successful completion of the comprehensive examination admits the EdD student into the candidacy phase of the degree program.

The EdD Dissertation in Practice (DiP)

The DiP is the culminating research application experience for EdD students. EdD candidates are expected to complete a quality project that investigates a key issue or problem important to the field of higher education and offer recommendations for practice or policy. Through this process, students have an opportunity to translate what they have learned into real-world applications. The structure of the DiP is meant to provide both a standard of excellence for a scholarly contribution on the part of the student, as well as a significant degree of flexibility by which the student may make such a contribution. DiP projects must be reviewed by the Office of Research Integrity and Education (ORIE) either through the [Human Subjects Review \(HSR\) Determination](#) process or a [full Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) approval](#) process. Notification of the approval of the project must be forwarded to the Higher Education Department Chair and Morgridge Office of Academic Services (MASA).

The DiP can follow one of two options that require critical analysis to link scholarship and practical application: program evaluation or policy analysis. Each requires a significant commitment of time and effort to produce an extended piece of writing. Preparation of the final written product will require substantive review of bodies of literature relevant to the project. These options extend opportunities for students to demonstrate research skills, theoretical understandings, and practical applications.

The Program Evaluation Option

Students engaged in a program evaluation DiP explore the effectiveness of educational interventions and develop implications for practice. The program evaluation identifies, clarifies, and applies justifiable criteria to determine the effectiveness of an educational program, project, process, policy, or product. In

every case, the program evaluation is intended to improve student learning and achievement and make data-based contributions to organizational effectiveness. Students' program evaluation DiPs should include effective aspects of evaluation capacity building.

The Policy Analysis Option

Students engaged in policy analysis designs seek to impact education issues through the review, research, and development of educational policy. This option begins with the review of an educational issue at federal, state and/or local levels. Through this review, new or revised policy recommendations and implications are developed by considering internal requirements, external requirements, existing policy, and stakeholder recommendations. Policy analysis DiPs include implementation plans.

Selection of Doctoral Research Topics

Doctoral research topics should be selected on the basis of the following factors:

- a. The student's individual interests
- b. The significance or value of the topic and/or issue to the field of higher education
- c. The real-world application of the outcomes of the study
- d. The project's feasibility to be completed in a nine to fifteen-month timeframe

EdD students are required to submit IRB approval or exemption to their advisor and the Academic Services Team (MASA) within six months of approval of the comprehensive exam. Additionally, EdD students must complete and defend the dissertation in practice within 24 months of the date of successfully completing the comprehensive exam (i.e., approval of the DiP prospectus). Those students who do not comply with this timeline may be recommended for dismissal from the Higher Education EdD program.

DiP Committee Composition

The final DiP and its oral defense will be evaluated by the student's committee. The student and the advisor will determine the composition of the DiP committee, which is composed of two HED faculty, including the committee chair, and up to three other members who may be a third HED faculty member, an adjunct faculty member, a post-doctoral appointee, or a professor from another unit in MCE, DU, or different postsecondary institution. In general, all members of the committee should hold terminal degrees (e.g., EdD, PhD, JD). All members of the student's DiP committee are voting members.

If any of the non-HED voting members are not Morgridge College of Education faculty, the selection must be supported by a strong rationale and submitted for department chair approval. Composition of the committee is recorded on the DiP Committee Recommendation and Schedule of Oral Defense Form, which the candidate will submit to the the Morgridge Office of Academic Services (MASA). This form is accessible via the student's advisor or the [HED Student Resources page](#).

DiP Final Oral Presentation

An oral presentation of the DiP is required and is conducted by the candidate's committee. The presentation must be held according to the same timelines for PhD completion, typically at least three weeks before the end of the quarter in which the degree is to be granted. All members of the defense committee shall receive a copy of the candidate's DiP at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense. The defense is expected to be held with the student physically present at DU unless extenuating circumstances make it not feasible for the student to do so.

Conducting the Final Oral Presentation. The student's committee chair will preside over and manage the final oral presentation meeting. The chair is responsible for making certain that the meeting is conducted in a professional manner and that the student has a fair opportunity to present their DiP. The chair is expected to provide opportunities for each member of the DiP committee to participate in the meeting and to ensure that the final oral presentation meeting is of high quality while remaining within proper limits of inquiry. The final oral presentation meeting is an open forum and MCE faculty members, graduate students, and others may attend. The time, date, and location of the final oral presentation meeting will be announced via the HED Chair's Digest no sooner than two weeks before the meeting.

After the student's DiP committee has conducted the essential examination of the candidate, questions may be asked by others present, if appropriate, as determined by the student's committee chair. When the discussion is completed, the chair will request that the candidate and all other persons who are not on the candidate's committee leave the room.

The chair will call for a motion to pass or fail the candidate's oral presentation portion and written DiP manuscript. A recommendation to pass can have no more than one negative vote from members of the committee. If the motion is a recommendation to pass, the committee must then agree on the conditions of the recommendation as follows concerning the DiP manuscript:

- **Pass with no revisions** means that only grammatical, labeling, or numbering changes are required. Only a limited number of sentence additions or deletions should be necessary.
- **Pass with minor revisions** indicates that the candidate will be required to reorganize portions of the manuscript and change some of the content.
- **Pass with major revisions** means that a complete section or sections must be rewritten, additional tables are required and interpreted, or the general format must be changed.
- **Fail** indicates that the content is not of acceptable quality or that the candidate cannot defend the research. In most cases, failing the defense results in the rejection of the student's DiP and a new or related study usually will need to be undertaken. A candidate who fails the oral defense may petition to the DiP committee for a maximum of one repeated final oral presentation.
 - If the DiP is again deemed to be not of acceptable quality or the candidate cannot defend the project, the faculty will submit a recommendation that the candidate be dismissed from the program.

Responsibility for seeing that any needed revisions are made rests with the student's chair, but committee members also may require their approval before final approval of the DiP manuscript is issued.

The time, date, and location of the final oral presentation along with the committee recommendations will be recorded on the *EdD Result of DiP Oral Defense Form*, provided by the advisor and must be signed by all committee members before being returned to the Higher Education Department ASA. On occasions when a committee member participates remotely, a scanned signature will be accepted.

Any changes or additions to the DiP must be made and approved no later than two weeks before graduation according to the same timelines for PhD students. The final approval of the DiP is recorded on the *Final Approval of Dissertation in Practice Form* completed by the DiP committee chair and returned to the Office of Graduate Education at gradservices@du.edu.

Please note that all the EdD forms mentioned here are different from those which guide the PhD process. EdD students are **not** to use the dissertation forms found on the OGE website. The forms for the EdD DiP are only available via the advisor or the [HED Student Resources](#) page on MyDU.

Submission to ProQuest

EdD students have the option to submit their DiP to ProQuest upon final approval by the DiP committee if it has met the formatting deadlines published for PhD dissertations by OGE: [Dissertation/Thesis Deadlines](#). Submission to ProQuest can be viewed by some publishers as a form of publication, so students need to think carefully about whether they will want to publish some or all of their DiP at a later date. Guidance for making this decision is available from your advisor as well as in the *Graduate Bulletin* under [Thesis and Dissertation Publication Options](#). Again, for EdD students, submitting their DiP to ProQuest is optional.

Additional Degree Completion Policies for EdD and PhD Students

Committee Conferences at Doctoral Oral Examinations and Presentations

It is common practice across the HED faculty for there to be a brief conference of the student's committee prior to beginning the oral examination for the comprehensive exam and student oral presentation for the proposal (PhD only) and final oral presentation. The purpose of this meeting is for the advisor to be able to review questions the committee members intend to raise and to surface any major concerns with the written document prior to proceeding with the oral exam or presentation meeting. For the comprehensive exam and final dissertation meetings, if significant concerns are raised by the committee, the advisor will record these for consideration as part of the evaluation of the complete exam (written and oral). In the case of proposal meetings, if the committee raises significant concerns with the written document that they feel cannot be addressed adequately in the oral presentation meeting, the advisor may postpone the formal presentation and instead use the time for the committee to give feedback to the student to suggest revisions for the written document to be made before rescheduling the official dissertation proposal meeting. Ideally, a student will not be allowed to proceed with the dissertation proposal or final dissertation meeting if such major concerns exist.

Office of Research Integrity & Education

The Office of Research Integrity and Education (ORIE) provides support and oversight for research conducted by members of the University of Denver community so as ***"...to ensure active adherence to the ethical principles and professional standards for the responsible conduct of research."***

MCE students, staff and faculty who conduct research are required to review the ORIE webpage as the first step to determine if your research project qualifies as human participant research that requires you to submit a proposal to be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Please review the [examples of research activities](#) that may or may not require an IRB proposal. The [Human Subjects Research Determination Form](#) must be completed and submitted for evaluation even if you believe your research does not require a complete IRB proposal. HED graduate students should consult with their faculty advisor about their research activities. If you have additional questions about the ethical conduct of research at DU, please contact the ORIE office at 303-871-2121. Please visit the [ORIE website](#) for more information about the office and resources available for faculty and student researchers.

MCE Research Registration Requirement

EdD and PhD students will be required to register for a minimum of six (6) doctoral research credits (HED 5993-EdD) or dissertation research credits (HED 5995-PhD) following the completion of coursework. Typically, students begin registering for these courses after completion of the HED 4216 series. No more than 5 credits of HED 5993 or 5995 may be taken prior to taking the comprehensive exam. *Note: EdD and PhD students beginning prior to Fall 2023 must register for a minimum of 10 doctoral research credits as required by the handbook for their matriculation year.*

Having met that minimum registration requirement does not release students from the college's policy (discussed below) that students remain continuously registered in at least one (1) doctoral or dissertation research credit, following completion of course work, to maintain degree candidacy until completion of the degree program. Students must be registered for each term during the academic year (Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters) through the quarter in which the student graduates. Summer registration for HED 5993/5995 is not required.

HED 5993 and HED 5995 credits, as with any credits, will not be refunded if the student does not successfully complete required courses, the comprehensive exam, or the dissertation/dissertation in practice.

Final Steps for Earning the Doctoral Degree

PhD Students are responsible for adhering to policies in the complete DU [Doctoral Degree Requirements and Standards](#), and for meeting all basic requirements for the degree as well as the specific requirements outlined by the college, school or department. Refer to the Graduate Bulletin page [Completing the Degree](#) for complete information.

EdD students will also follow the guidelines below, as well as those stated in this handbook. While the EdD is tracked and documented by the department, the standard for both degrees remain the same.

To be approved for graduation, all doctoral students will complete the following:

- All Incomplete grades must be converted to permanent grades prior to taking the comprehensive exam.
- Apply for graduation by the deadline. Failure to do so will automatically delay graduation to a subsequent quarter.
- Satisfactorily complete the final oral presentation meeting at least three weeks before the end of the quarter in which the degree is to be awarded.
- If revisions of the DiP or dissertation in its final form are not filed at least two weeks before the end of the quarter, the awarding of the degree will be postponed.

The Master of Arts (MA) in Higher Education

The HED Master of Arts⁵ (MA) degree is designed to prepare professionals for administrative, leadership, student-centered, and/or policy-focused careers in postsecondary institutions, private and public agencies of higher education, and other educational settings. This "generalist" degree enables students to explore the academic and practitioner-oriented issues related to postsecondary settings and to expand their experiential awareness through practical activities in administration, teaching, policy, and research.

Overview of MA Degree Requirements

The Higher Education page of the [Graduate Bulletin](#) contains all program course requirements under the Program of Study tab. Course descriptions are found under the Course Description tab. Successful completion of the MA in Higher Education requires both course work and non-course work components. A minimum of 48 credit hours is necessary to complete the MA in Higher Education. Other degree requirements include an internship experience and the successful completion of a Reflective ePortfolio. Students typically follow either a 2- or 3-year plan of study, depending on their schedules. Students will discuss the most appropriate timeline for taking courses to complete the program with their advisor.

MA Coursework

The following coursework is required for completion of the MA in Higher Education.

Research Courses	4 cr
<i>Research coursework for master's students consists of a foundational course to enable students to gain an entry-level understanding of the conduct and application of research to practical issues in higher education.</i>	
Higher Education Core Courses	32 cr
<i>These courses reflect foundational competencies for higher education professionals. It also includes the required e-portfolio course.</i>	
Elective/Optional Emphases Courses	12 cr
<i>Included in the elective coursework are 12 cr toward an optional emphasis area or one that they self-design. These courses are required to be taken in HED unless approval is gained through the course substitution process explained on page 11 of this Handbook.</i>	
Internship	0 cr
<i>Explained further below, the internship is a non-credit requirement.</i>	
Minimum Total Credits	48 cr

⁵ Other Higher Education and/or Student Affairs master's programs may be designated as a Master of Education (MEd) or Master of Science (MS) degree. It is important that you understand that you are earning a Master of Arts (MA) even though your degree program is in the College of Education.

Electives

Elective coursework will be fulfilled by any of the HED courses. MA students may choose to complete an *optional* emphasis by taking 12 of the 24 required elective credits in one of the areas listed below.

College Student Affairs

The College Student Affairs emphasis enables students to gain knowledge about higher education and student development. Students will develop skills for supporting diverse student populations and experience internships in student-related areas. The College Student Affairs emphasis is intended for individuals interested in positions in college/university student services and other organizations focused on college student success. The following list provides examples of courses that satisfy this emphasis:

- HED 4201 – Assessment in Higher Education
- HED 4217 – Student Affairs Administration
- HED 4229 – Student Support in College
- HED 4260 – Students and College Environments
- HED 4261 – College Student Development Theory

Diversity and Higher Learning

The Diversity and Higher Learning emphasis is intended for future scholars and practitioners interested in enhancing diversity, access, and equity in organizations; faculty and staff development in P-20 educational institutions; trainers in for-profit companies and not-for-profit agencies; and administrators and faculty in two-year and four-year higher education institutions. This emphasis places a great deal of importance on developing critical understanding of the impact that social identities (e.g., race, class, and gender) have on collective and individual learning in organizations. Students who currently work in or intend to pursue careers in multicultural affairs, curriculum development, university instruction, university administration, consulting, or training will find this emphasis a good fit. The following list provides examples of courses that satisfy this emphasis:

- HED 4281 – Inclusive Excellence Programming and Development
- HED 4284 -- Inclusive Excellence in Organizations
- HED 4287 – Critical Race Theory and Education
- HED 4288 – Gender & Sexuality in Higher Education
- HED 4289 – Race and Racism in Higher Education

Public Policy and Organizational Change

The Public Policy and Organizational Change emphasis prepares experienced professionals to assume greater responsibility, pursue longer-term career goals, or change their emphasis in higher education administration. This emphasis area has been especially designed for individuals working in or seeking to understand postsecondary education in a changing multicultural and global society. Experienced professionals who are interested in enhancing their careers will discover that this program challenges them to discover and strengthen an array of skills essential for success: analysis, communication, multicultural competence, and leadership. The Public Policy and Organizational Change emphasis area enables participants to link professional knowledge and research with the world of practice in postsecondary education, for-profit companies and not-for-profit agencies, foundations, think tanks, research institutes and the private sector. The following list provides examples of course that satisfy this emphasis:

- HED 4209 – Introduction to Budgeting and Finance in Postsecondary Institutions
- HED 4212 – Introduction of Public Policy and Higher Education
- HED 4222 – Legal Issues in Higher Education
- HED 4242 – Educational Policy Analysis

The Internship Requirement

The internship experience provides students with an experiential learning opportunity in the field of higher education. MA students usually complete their internship during the summer between their first and second year of study, or during the second year of coursework. However, students may pursue an internship at any time. This zero-credit learning experience, which is required for all MA students, is designed to expand the parameters of a student's current and/or previous (para) professional experience. The internship is intended to broaden students' practical experience in postsecondary institutions and organizations and serves to further their professional skills. Students satisfy the internship requirement through a minimum 100-hour internship (approximately 10 hours per week), in one of the internship courses listed below:

HED 4270: Student Affairs Internship

HED 4295: Internship in College and University Administration

HED 4296: Internship in Public Policy

HED 4297: Internship in College Teaching

A postsecondary institution/organization is understood to be any accredited institution of higher education (e.g., Arapahoe Community College, Metropolitan State University), as well as community organizations (e.g., Denver Scholarship Foundation, Education Commission of the States), and/or government agencies (e.g., Colorado Department of Higher Education). Students register for the internship course using the [Experiential Learning Registration Form](#) found on the Registrar's webpage during the quarter within which the internship takes place. While there is some assistance in finding and designing internship experiences, it is the student's responsibility for securing meaningful internship experience(s).

All internships must be approved by the student's advisor, who usually serves as the instructor of record for the internship experience. As a part of the internship experience, students are expected to reflect upon and make meaning of their experiences by connecting the theoretical foundations of coursework with the practicalities of working in an organization as well as developing professional knowledge, skills, and competencies.

As such, students are required to provide a confirmation letter or email from the student's supervisor at the end of the internship experience with the following information:

1. Verification of hours completed (minimum 100 hours)
2. Verification that the student has completed all work expectations in a satisfactory manner.

The student is also required to submit the following:

3. A reflective activity (paper, podcast, recorded presentation, infographic, arts-based reflection, etc.) that connects the student's learning in the internship to their coursework, personal and professional goals, and the knowledge, skills, abilities, and values gained.

More information about the reflective activity will be available on Canvas in the internship course. Both the letter from the supervisor and reflective activity are to be submitted via Canvas to the instructor of record by the last day of classes for the quarter in which the internship credit is sought.

The Reflective ePortfolio

The ePortfolio is the culminating project required to earn the Master of Arts in Higher Education. The ePortfolio demonstrates the student's professional competencies, skill sets, and experiences developed throughout the MA degree program. Students complete the ePortfolio under the direction of a HED faculty member.

Students will have the ability to choose their own artifacts (assignments, projects, work samples from internships, reflection papers, etc.) that best represent their learning in the program. Students can also choose how they visually display their learning using the DU Digication platform.

Based upon their experiences in the HED MA program, students will create a portfolio that demonstrates their academic learning and personal growth through critical reflection. Within the portfolio, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of theory and its application to practice as well as highlight the praxis-centered curriculum. Students will use *Inclusive Excellence* as a framework to understand higher education policy and practice and integrate learning from across the curriculum, co-curriculum, and their praxis experiences. Lastly, students will include demonstrations of collective learning through group projects, showing the ability to collaborate with diverse groups of people.

The outcome of the student's ePortfolio is demonstration of personal and professional growth through artifacts and narratives, which showcase significant learning in the program and future goals and aspirations.

Students will enroll in a four-credit course, HED 4231, Capstone: Professional Competencies in Higher Education in the winter quarter of the final year of the program. Students are expected to submit an ePortfolio in the spring quarter of their last year, with approval from both their faculty advisor and professional advisor to meet the requirements of the degree. The ePortfolio will be reviewed by two HED faculty and will be awarded one of three designations: pass with distinction, pass, or remediation required. Students will have the opportunity to rework section(s) should they not pass the ePortfolio. If a student fails to pass the ePortfolio, the student shall meet with the Department Chair to review the rubric and feedback and will have two weeks to complete the revision process. Following revisions, if the student's ePortfolio is deemed unacceptable a second time, the student will be recommended for dismissal from the program.

Additional details about the ePortfolio are available during HED 4231 and in the ePortfolio Handbook available on the HED Student Resources page on MyDU.

Elective Options 2026-2027

Elective courses offered for 2026-2027 are listed on the current course schedule found on the [HED Student Resources](#) page on MyDU.

Higher Education Department Policies

The following policies govern the Higher Education Department. They may be more restrictive than University policies covering similar issues and may be different from the policies which govern other departments in the Morgridge College of Education.

Attendance, Preparation, and Participation Policy

Attendance in all class sessions is essential to successfully completing this program and is expected by the department regardless of course modality (in-person or online). Specific guidelines for online courses follow below. Unavoidable absences may require the completion of asynchronous work, demonstration of achievement of learning objectives for the missed class session, and/or other requirements as set by the instructor. An unavoidable absence is one that is related to a disability accommodation discussed in advance with the instructor, illness or injury of oneself or close family member, or military or public service (e.g., jury duty), as examples. Class absences due to mandated work should be used only in rare instances. Please discuss your academic commitments with your supervisor and arrange for any necessary flex or comp time before the beginning of each term. Students who miss more than two class meetings of a weekly course *may* have their final grade reduced by one letter grade. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor if they are going to miss class.

Students are also expected to be prepared and to participate actively in class sessions. Preparation includes having completed any assigned work before the class session, as well as, taking notes from the readings on major themes, key ideas, and the relationship of the reading to one's own development, professional practice, scholarly interests, or policy issues.

Participation does not look like just one ideal. It is sometimes assumed that participation means talking and answering questions during class. This is one way to participate but it is not the only way nor is it always the most valuable way to participate in class. Actively listening to others' ideas, making connections between ideas raised in class to each other and to the readings, and encouraging other voices to enter the space are also valuable, and necessary, ways to participate in class. For those students who process externally and/or are especially excited about the class topic (high-talkers), we encourage you to note your ideas and pause before contributing to allow others who may be slower to process their thoughts an opportunity to enter the discussion. Alternatively, we encourage those students who process best internally and/or more slowly (low-talkers) to take up more space in class discussions. All students should monitor how much space they are taking up and who is being left out of the discussion because of the dominance of only a few voices.

Use of Technology in Class

You may find it helpful, or the instructor may request, the use of certain technologies in the classroom to access course materials, class engagement tools (e.g., online polls, word clouds), or for other purposes. You may also be more comfortable taking notes electronically via your laptop, eNotePad, or other device. Please be mindful that this is still class time and the use of technology for self-entertainment (e.g., scrolling Instagram) is inappropriate and can be distracting to others.

Class Modalities

All students are expected to abide by the Student Conduct Policies associated with the [Honor Code](#) regardless of whether students are on-campus or learning remotely through an online learning platform. These relevant Student Conduct Policies include but are not limited to Impediment and Violation of

Professional Standards as defined under Academic Integrity (A.6. and A.8, respectively), Harassment (F) Interference (H), Non-compliance (I), Provocation (L) from the Students Rights and Responsibilities Section. Students who violate this policy will be reported to The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities and may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under Student Rights & Responsibilities Policies.

Online Courses

The format of online courses may be slightly different from what you are accustomed to, so please read the following information very closely. This document covers courses delivered entirely online. Courses can be offered in both “synchronous” (live) and “asynchronous” (on your own time) modalities, or in combination.

- **Synchronous component:** Courses will meet via the DU Zoom platform to hold “live” (synchronous) class sessions. These meetings are required and attendance will be taken.
 - Please note that all times are noted in either Mountain Daylight or Standard Time, as appropriate to the season of the year. Students are responsible for calculating any time zone differences if they are away from campus and making sure that they make it into the online Zoom classroom on time.
- **Asynchronous component:** You may also have required course components such as: pre-recorded lectures, podcasts, readings, and activities that you are expected to complete before synchronous sessions every week. These will all be made available to you via the Canvas platform.

Zoom Etiquette. We are aware that everyone comes from different circumstances and upbringings. We are also aware that "professional etiquette" is informed by values that are, at times, exclusive of certain communities. (Example: expecting you to have access to a dedicated workspace where there will be no noise distractions.) While faculty and students will work together to develop more specific shared expectations for interactions in the virtual environment, the HED faculty do have some baseline norms to which we ask students to adhere.

Cameras and self-view. To enhance the classroom experience and encourage community building, the Higher Education faculty strongly encourage you to use your video when participating in Zoom class sessions. We recognize there are circumstances when that is not preferable or feasible. Please discuss with the instructor if you expect you will need to have your video off for all or part of a class session.

Zoom backgrounds. To protect one’s privacy, many people choose to use an alternate background for Zoom versus their real-time background. This is acceptable. If using a Zoom background, please select one that is innocuous and non-offensive. Illicit, exploitative, or otherwise inappropriate content is prohibited.

Chat feature. The Zoom chat feature is a convenient way to communicate with the instructor and peers. It is often of benefit for students who are not confident speaking out loud in front of the full group and for sharing complementary resources (e.g., links to materials being referenced). However, just as in an in-person class, the chat should not be used to carry on excessive side chatter even through direct or “private” messages. An instructor, or fellow student, may choose to download the chat to save resources or important points raised in the discussion. So, be aware that just because you may send a

“private” message to another student in class, that does not mean that the instructor, or another student, will not see that message if the chat is downloaded after the session ends.

Breakout rooms. Another convenient Zoom feature is the availability of breakout rooms. These spaces allow the meeting host to create small group discussions. Just as you would in an in-person class session, please remain present in the Zoom breakout room and keep your discussion focused on the topic given by the instructor or peer leading the class session.

Other netiquette guidelines. Aside from fully online courses, the Higher Education Department will, on occasion, host classes or meetings in a virtual setting to accommodate students and faculty. When this occurs, it is important for students to remember “netiquette,” or the norms and behaviors associated with being in a virtual space. When participating in a virtual classroom it is important to remember that you are still in a class. Treat the space in the same way as you would in person. Please be cognizant of your clothing, the background, and noise. Also, when not speaking, remember to mute yourself to not distract others. Finally, be aware that people can still see you and your facial expressions; try to limit excessive movements.

Communication with Faculty

Direct email or Canvas Inbox will be the primary mode for out-of-class communication. Generally, students can expect a response within 48 hours (about 2 days), Monday to Friday during standard work hours (8am to 5pm). Students are encouraged to seek out faculty members during scheduled office hours or by appointment.

Course Changes & Modifications

The instructor reserves the right to alter information in their syllabus as needed to accurately reflect the course coverage and to enhance the learning outcomes of the course. When or if changes are necessary, they will be announced in advance and students will have appropriate time to make schedule adjustments. Any anticipated changes may be discussed with the class for input and as part of the decision-making process; however, final decisions are the responsibility of the instructor.

Department Grade Requirements

University policy states that any graduate student whose overall grade point average (GPA) falls below a 3.0 will be warned, put on probation, suspended, or dismissed and may lose eligibility for assistantships or other financial aid. In addition to this minimum expectation, courses in which a student has earned a C- or below will not be accepted as counting toward meeting degree requirements, regardless of the overall GPA average. Students who do not meet department degree requirements will be put on academic probation with OGE.

Further, students earning a grade which is lower than a C- in any course will participate in a mandatory review with their advisor to discuss and finalize a written action plan to be filed with the department. At a minimum, the following conditions must be met to have academic probation lifted:

- The student will provide a copy of the signed remediation plan to the Higher Education Department Chair and the Morgridge Office of Academic Services (MASA) no later than the second week following the quarter that below C grades were earned.
- The student will repeat all courses the next quarter they are offered by the department, earning a C- or higher.

- The student will be responsive to communications from the advisor and instructors, as well as communicate any issues in a timely manner.

These requirements are supported by additional information found in the [Graduate Student Bulletin](#). The department highly recommends that students review the information found at this link.

Inclusive & Equitable Learning Environments

We will work together to develop a learning community that is inclusive and respectful. Our diversity may be reflected by differences in race, ethnicity, culture, gender, language, age, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and myriad other social identities and life experiences. The goal of inclusiveness, in a diverse community, encourages and appreciates expressions of different ideas, opinions, and beliefs, so that conversations and interactions that could potentially be divisive turn instead into opportunities for intellectual and personal enrichment.

A dedication to inclusion requires respecting what others say, their right to say it, and the thoughtful consideration of others' communication. Both speaking up and listening are valuable tools for furthering thoughtful, enlightening dialogue. Respecting one another's individual differences is critical in transforming a collection of diverse individuals into an inclusive, collaborative, and excellent learning community. Our core commitment shapes our expectations for behavior inside and outside of the classroom.

Quarterly Student Review

The Higher Education Department faculty is committed to working closely with students to facilitate their academic progress. As part of this process, the faculty regularly review all students' work to assess their progress. Assessment is based on a review of course work, independent work, and progress toward other degree requirements and milestones (i.e., internships, the comprehensive exam, dissertation proposal, the final dissertation). For students' knowledge to be current, and to pursue research on timely problems that will advance the field, it is expected that all students will make steady progress toward completion of degree requirements. Students who are not making satisfactory progress in their respective program will be required to meet with their advisor and/or the Department Chair. The goal of the meeting will be to assist and support students and identify a plan of action toward continuous improvement and success.

Student Identifiers

This department supports and is committed to abide by students, faculty, guests, and others' names, gender pronoun use, and self-identifications. We expect the same of students, guests, and others visiting HED spaces and events. Instructors will provide opportunities for students to share their proper names and self-referential gender pronouns. Desires for how one wants to be called and referred to may change, please feel free to share with your instructors how you wish to be called and referred to at any point during the term.

Student Leave Policy

Students experiencing hardship or who otherwise require extended time away from the program may apply for a personal or medical leave of absence (LoA). The maximum time for a single personal LoA is three consecutive quarters (excluding Summer term). Be aware that a [medical LoA](#) requires medical documentation be submitted by the last day of the term you wish to withdraw, and students may apply for a maximum of two medical LoA in the same degree program. The full process for requesting a leave of absence and related forms may be found in the [Graduate Bulletin](#).

Leave and Time-to-Degree

Please note, time spent during a personal leave of absence continues to count as time in your degree program. In other words, a personal LoA does not “stop the clock” on degree completion time limits. Students on medical leave may be eligible for relief of their time-to-degree requirement.

While on Leave

Students on a leave of absence are expected to not access departmental resources until they return from leave. Students on leave should not expect, for example, to meet with their advisor or submit drafts for review as they are considered as temporarily withdrawn from the University. Students can expect, however, to retain their placement within the program, as well as their advisor upon returning, unless other circumstances arise necessitating advising changes (e.g., faculty departure, sabbatical, or family leave).

Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) Ethical Codes and Professional Standards

As members of the Higher Education research community, we adhere to the professional standards and code of ethics as outlined by the [Association for the Study of Higher Education](#) (ASHE), regardless of faculty or student membership in the association.

The members of the ASHE are subject to many sets of laws, regulations, standards, and codes of conduct related to their professional responsibilities. The principles presented in this document supplement these other sets to represent the high standards of conduct according to which ASHE members expect each other to conduct their professional lives. This list of principles should not be viewed as exhaustive, nor is it supported by a formal regulatory process; rather, the principles should be interpreted as hortatory reminders of the expectations and standards that support the professional work of the association and its members in their roles as scholars, educators, students and other professionals.

Integrity

ASHE members should conduct research and other inquiry in such a way as to maintain the integrity of the work, the people involved in the work, and the field of higher education.

Credit

ASHE members should fully and appropriately acknowledge the contributions of others in their work, whether the contributions are made through collaboration, publication of previous work, or other means.

Responsibility

ASHE members should take full responsibility for all aspects of their work and other professional activities.

Honesty and accuracy

ASHE members should value and demonstrate the highest levels of honesty and accuracy in their work.

Originality

ASHE members should accurately represent the extent of originality in their work, as well as its dependence on their own or others' previous work.

Respect

ASHE members should maintain professional respect and civility in their relationships and interactions with others.

Fairness

ASHE members should fairly and carefully judge the merit of others' work and qualifications on their own merits, without discrimination or prejudice related to personal characteristics or professional bias.

Advancement

ASHE members should aim to advance the study of higher education and its contributions to its constituents, including through participation in and service to ASHE.

Responsibility to clients and to the public interest

ASHE members, as professionals, have a principal responsibility to serve as best they can the best interests of their clients and of the public interest.

Conflict of interest

ASHE members, as professionals, should declare any possible conflict of interest that emerges from any financial interest they may have with regard to any particular professional decision or judgment.