

# Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

## Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Graduate Programs

The Ph.D. in educational leadership and policy at the University of Kansas is a research degree that prepares individuals for roles as researchers, policy analysts, educational leaders, and faculty members for policy, PK-12, and higher education settings. This degree distinguishes itself by its focus on preparing graduates to be researchers who are making original scholarly contributions to the knowledge base in the field. Students typically take some courses in graduate programs in related fields such as sociology, public administration, and economics.

### Graduate Admissions Requirements

**Applicants must meet both the University and departmental admission requirements to be considered for the program.**

#### University of Kansas Graduate Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

#### Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Application Requirements

- A completed graduate application (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/>).
- Application fee.
- Official transcripts of all degree-granting post-secondary institutions you have attended and an official transcript for each degree earned.
- References - Letters of recommendations from three individuals who can speak directly to the applicant's academic skills and potential for rigorous, independent doctoral level work. Preferably the letters will be from current or former professors but can also include a letter from an immediate supervisor.
- Current resume or CV - Include, at minimum, the following items:
  - Post-high school education.
  - Relevant professional and/or scholarly experience.
  - Research experience and other pertinent experience.
  - Honors, other recognitions received.
  - Conference presentations, publications, reports.
- Statement of purpose. Please upload a 5-8 page statement of purpose describing your interests and commitment to the goals and curriculum of the ELPS Ph.D. program. It is recommended that you

address your personal and academic background and your scholarly and related professional goals. You also could explain a specific research interest or a faculty member with whom you want to work. It is important that you thoroughly address your preferred area of specialization in the ELPS program and explain reasons why you would be a good fit (e.g., education policy, social and cultural studies in education, higher education administration, educational leadership). The ELPS program seeks to build a diverse student body reflective of our community and our nation. Please explain any life experiences or achievements that have shaped your path to pursue a doctorate and convey how they would help you contribute to the ELPS program.

- **Writing Sample.** The writing sample can include professional works (not necessarily academic papers), formal reports, and other pertinent work. The writing sample should demonstrate your ability to think critically and/or analytically about an issue or a task. We are looking for documents of substantive quality and length, though there is no official minimum or maximum page limit.
- **GRE exam scores (optional)** Official copy of scores no older than five years.

After initial screening, ELPS faculty may invite you for an interview to address remaining questions about your objectives and fit for the program. The interview may also involve an interactive evaluation of your scholarly skills and potential.

Students in the Ph.D program in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies are required to take the following courses. Many courses are chosen in consultation with the student's faculty advisor.

Code	Title	Hours
EDUC 800	Education as a Field of Scholarship	3
ELPS 998	Seminar in: _____ (Equity & Access in Educational Systems)	3
ELPS 998	Seminar in: _____ (Education in World Historical Perspectives)	3
ELPS 998	Seminar in: _____ (ELPS Doctoral Proseminar)	3
Additional Major Courses <sup>1</sup>		24
Research Skills <sup>2</sup>		12
ELPS 999	Doctoral Dissertation	6-18
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>54-66</b>

1 - 12 hours must be in ELPS, 9 hours outside of the ELPS department and once research course taken beyond fulfillment of the 12 credit hr. research skills requirement. Students will consult with their faculty advisor on these courses. Typically, no more than two of the program courses may be taken as independent study. More than two independent study courses requires justification by student and advisor.

2-Students must take a basic qualitative and basic quantitative research course along with a intermediate or advanced qualitative or quantitative course (or equivalent depth in historical or philosophical methods)

A College Teaching Experience is no longer required but is highly recommended for students who are not GTAs but who are interested in pursuing a faculty position.

PhD students should expect to engage in "co-curricular" activities appropriate to their career aspirations above and beyond the specific degree requirements. These include conducting and presenting research at conferences, engaging in internships with policy organizations, etc.

The Responsible Conduct of Research requirement is met through EDUC 800.

Link for dissertation, comps, proposal and residency will be here.

The program is offered in-person on the Lawrence Campus although some courses may be online.

## Degree Requirements for all Ph.D. Programs: Comprehensive Examination:

Per University and SOEHS policy, students must be in good academic standing and have completed all required coursework in order to take comprehensive exams (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-oral-exams/>).

The comprehensive exam consists of both a take-home, open book written exam followed by an oral exam. Students must pass both written and oral components of the comprehensive examination. Satisfactory performance on the written component must be attained before the oral component may be attempted.

To fail either component is to fail the examination. All 4 members of the student's comprehensive examination committee are involved in the evaluation process. The written comprehensive exam is determined by the student's committee and assesses students' knowledge as well as ability to critically apply that knowledge to research and to the field of education. To pass, the student must be evaluated as having responded satisfactorily to questions in the major areas. If a student fails any portion of the written comprehensive component, a failure of the examination is recorded. The examining committee determines if the entire written component of the examination, or only the failed portion(s), must be retaken. The entire written component lasts a minimum of 16 hours. If a student passes the written component but fails the oral, the examining committee determines if both components or only the oral must be repeated.

The grade on this examination is Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory. An aspirant who receives a grade of Unsatisfactory may be allowed, upon the recommendation of the department, to repeat it, but it may not be taken more than 3 times. The aspirant may not repeat the oral examination until at least 90 days have elapsed since the last unsuccessful attempt or by petition.

## Dissertation:

After successfully completing the comprehensive exam, Ph.D. students will engage in work for their culminating project – the dissertation – and must be continuously enrolled (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-candidacy/>) per University and SOEHS policy until the dissertation is defended.

The dissertation is done under the supervision of an advisor and dissertation committee and consists of two parts. First, the student works with an advisor to write a dissertation proposal that outlines the purpose scope and methods of the dissertation study. The dissertation proposal must be approved by a committee of at least three faculty members and the signed title page and electronic proposal filed with the department and SOHES.

Upon approval of the proposal, the student may begin work on the dissertation research under the guidance of the advisor and dissertation committee (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/oral-exam-committee->

[composition/](#)) (typically consisting of the members of the proposal committee and one tenure-track faculty member from another department who represents Graduate Studies), determines the dissertation is ready for defense, a defense may be scheduled. Committee make up – etc.

The completed dissertation must be defended within time period (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/engagement-enrollment-doctoral-programs/>) established by the University and SOEHS for completion of doctoral degrees.

### Additional requirements

To continue in the program, students must meet the University and SOEHS standards for being in good academic standing (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/good-academic-standing/>) as specified in the SOEHS graduate regulations (<https://catalog.ku.edu/education/#graduateregulationstext>) tab.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Develop an understanding of education as a system (to include K-12 and Higher Education).
- Demonstrate a knowledge of the historical and social contexts of systems of education.
- Interrogate structural conditions that serve to maintain and reproduce systemic inequities in education, and design responses to ameliorate them.
- Develop individualized expertise in theory and content.
- Conduct original research in an ethical manner.
- Develop and intellectual or scholastic identity and develop norms and practices related to this identity.