I. **Prerequisites:** Advanced to Candidacy; permission of major professor/dissertation chair

II. **Course Description:** 1 credit minimum/variable up to 6 credits; a minimum total of 12 credits

A doctoral dissertation is required for partial fulfillment of the EdD in Educational Leadership. The dissertation reflects an original, scholarly contribution to the research literature relevant to educational leadership. At a minimum, students will enroll in two consecutive semesters/terms for the dissertation proposal/prospectus and the dissertation oral defense which must be scheduled in two different semesters/terms. Students must register for at least one credit each fall/spring semester and summer term; must maintain continuous enrollment until the dissertation is successfully defended, corrected/adjusted according to the committee’s will, and submitted to the Graduate School; must accumulate a minimum of 12 credit hours.

AED 699 Dissertation Writing is classified as dissertation (as opposed to lecture, seminar, lab, practicum), meaning that the only focus of the credit is the independent, but guided work on the doctoral dissertation. For each credit hour, students should expect to spend at least 45 hours/15 week fall or spring semester or 45 hours/10 weeks summer term.

Candidates are required to maintain contact with the committee chair EVERY enrolled long semester and summer term. The format of the dissertation must be acceptable to the SFA Graduate School. Please refer to the most current version of the EdD in Educational Leadership Dissertation Handbook for specific information.

Program practice has been to allow 10 years to complete the EdD in Educational Leadership. Generally, students require three to four years to complete doctoral coursework, successfully complete the comprehensive examination requirement, and be advanced to candidacy. Once students are advanced to candidacy and begin enrolling in AED 699 Dissertation Writing, students must maintain continuous enrollment (fall, spring, summer) until the dissertation is successfully defended and the final polished version is submitted to the Graduate School.

**Program Learning Outcomes:**

1) The candidate will be able to synthesize each year’s study in relation to his/her growth as a scholar-practitioner leader.
2) The candidate will be able to demonstrate knowledge of and skill in research design.
3) The candidate will be able to demonstrate in-depth understanding of the topic studied, of the methodology used, and of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations stemming from a research study.

III. **Course Assignments, Activities, Instructional Strategies, use of Technology:**

- Students must formally contact the dissertation chair at least twice each semester/term to document engagement and to report progress
- Adhere to all Graduate School deadlines (http://www.sfasu.edu/graduate/83.asp)
- Apply for Graduation prior to the semester in which you plan to schedule the dissertation oral defense (http://www.sfasu.edu/graduate/109.asp)
- Prepare the dissertation in a format that is consistent with APA style and format; see the EdD in Educational Leadership Dissertation Handbook (most current version) for margins and other format requirements
- Complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training (http://www.sfasu.edu/researchcompliance/107.asp) on the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website; CITI training may be completed prior to enrollment in AED 699 Dissertation Writing hours
- Refine and enlarge the comprehensive review of the literature developed in AED 682 Developing the Dissertation Research Proposal; include all relevant scholarship published in the last 8 years related to the topic, the research questions, and the research design/methodology.
- Refine the development of a problem-based, research question(s)
- Refine and/or further develop the dissertation study proposal/prospectus, generally consisting of the first three chapters of a five or more chapter format: Introduction; Review of the Literature; Research Design & Methodology.
- Schedule the formal proposal/prospectus presentation; present/defend the proposal/prospectus; accept and refine the proposal/prospectus based on the chair and committee comments and requests; revise the proposal/prospectus; submit the revised and polished document within two weeks following the oral defense
- Preparation of the IRB application. Submit the applicable CITI Training Completion Certificate with your IRB application (http://www.sfasu.edu/researchcompliance/103.asp).
- With submission of the proposal/prospectus and IRB approval, begin data collection and analyses
- Develop a comprehensive and coherent discussion section
- Complete dissertation manuscript
- Schedule the formal oral defense of dissertation; present/defend the dissertation; accept and refine the dissertation based on the chair and committee comments and requests; revise the dissertation; submit the revised and polished document according to graduate school deadlines for graduation

IV. Evaluation and Assessments (Grading)
Student documentation of engagement and progress serve as the basis for assigning a grade of WH or an F for each enrolled term. The dissertation chair determines the grade based on the student documentation—WH for adequate progress or F for inadequate progress. The assignment of a grade of F stops the continuation of enrollment in AED 699 Dissertation Writing and may result in dismissal from the program.

Students who fail to contact their dissertation chair within the first 12 days of class each semester/first 5 days of class each summer term will be administratively dropped from enrollment in AED 699 Dissertation Writing.

Upon successful oral defense of the dissertation and submission of the revised and polished document to the Graduate School, all grades of WH will be changed to an appropriate passing grade.

V. Text & Materials:

VI. Course Evaluations:
Part of the academic culture and student responsibility is to engage in the course evaluation process, which provides faculty members with opportunity to receive students’ feedback about points of strengths and areas for improvement. Near the conclusion of each semester, students in the Perkins College of Education electronically evaluate courses taken within the PCOE. Evaluation data is used for a variety of important purposes including: (1) Course and program improvement, planning, and accreditation; (2) Instruction evaluation purposes; and (3) Making decisions on faculty tenure, promotion, pay, and retention. As you evaluate this course, please be
thoughtful, thorough, and accurate in completing the evaluation. The PCOE faculty body is committed to excellence in teaching and continued improvement. Therefore, your response is critical!

In the Perkins College of Education, the course evaluation process has been simplified and is completed electronically through MySFA. The instructor will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

VII. Student Ethics and Other Policy Information:

Attendance
Scheduled contact and submission of completed required documentation of progress as determined by the dissertation chair are required. Enrolled students must have no less than two scheduled contacts with the dissertation chair during each semester/term of enrollment. This contact may be direct meetings during office hours, e-mail or electronic communication, or telephone communication.

Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university polity on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam; (2) falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assigned assignment; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help other student(s) in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism include: (1) submitting an assignment as one’s own work when it is at least partly the work of another person; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy 4.1, Student Academic Dishonesty at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf

Acceptable Student Behavior
Graduate student behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the dissertation writing experience or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see policy 10.4, Student Code of Conduct Code, http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct-10.4.pdf). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is
appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom, research sites, in electronic settings, or in one-on-one meetings within faculty offices.

Student Code of Conduct: Policy 10.4
Disruptive Behavior--Interference or disruption of students, faculty, administration, staff, the educational mission, or routine operations of the university is prohibited. Such activity includes, but is not limited to, behavior in a classroom or instructional program that interferes with the instructor or presenter’s ability to conduct the class or program, or the ability of others to profit from the class or program. To remain in the vicinity of activity that is disrupting normal university functions when requested to leave by a university official is prohibited. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program at SFA.

Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.


VIII. Other Relevant Course Information:
The Dissertation Chair and Committee are to serve only as guides in manuscript organization, clarifying research design, analyses, and in raising critical questions about “holes” in the organization, interpretation of data, and reasoning reflected in the manuscript. Enrollment in a doctoral program assumes effective written communication. Although the chair shall assist in typical editorial feedback for overall manuscript improvement and compliance to APA-style guidelines, the responsibility for attending to issues related to grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph organization resides solely with students. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the writing skills center to attend to persisting issues in this domain for which faculty are not responsible.

English Proficiency: A candidate for the doctoral degree must be able to use spoken and written English to the satisfaction of the dissertation committee.