I. Course prerequisites: This core program course is limited to students who have advanced to Candidacy and secured the permission of a major professor/dissertation chair.

II. Course description and justification:

The number of credits you can register for each semester ranges from one to six. You must earn at least nine credit hours for this course and defend your dissertation successfully to graduate from the program.

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; maintain continuous enrollment until the dissertation is successfully defended, corrected/adjusted according to the committee’s will, and submitted to the Graduate School; and accumulate a minimum of 9 credit hours.

This course is classified as a dissertation (as opposed to lecture, seminar, lab, or 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 weeks in the fall or spring semesters or 45 hours/10 weeks in the summer term.

Candidates must 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 ten years to complete the EdD in Educational Leadership. Generally, students require three to four years to complete doctoral coursework, complete the comprehensive examination requirement, and advance to candidacy. Once students are advanced to candidacy and begin enrolling in this course, 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.

III. Informing standards:

A. Stephen F. Austin State University mission statement: Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) is a comprehensive institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative work, and service. Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, we engage our students in a learner-centered environment and offer opportunities to prepare for the challenges of living in the global community.

B. James I. Perkins College of Education vision, mission, core values, and diversity statement: The James I. Perkins College of Education will be the college of choice for students striving to achieve professional excellence through exemplary programs that are recognized at the state, national, and international levels. The mission of the Perkins College of Education is to prepare competent, successful, caring, and enthusiastic professionals from diverse backgrounds dedicated to responsible service, leadership, social justice, and continued professional and intellectual development in an interconnected global society. Core values include academic excellence through critical, reflective, and creative thinking; lifelong learning, collaboration, and shared decision-making; openness to new ideas; culturally diverse people and innovation and change; integrity, responsibility, diligence, and ethical behavior; and service that enriches the community. The James I. Perkins College of Education is committed to recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, staff, and student populations. Through open dialogue, mutual respect, and shared responsibility, faculty, staff, and students will demonstrate an understanding and sensitivity to ethnicity, race, gender, exceptionalities, culture, language/dialect, age, social class, family structure, sexual orientation, religion, and spiritual values to enhance the quality of life in a diverse, global community.
IV. Intended Learning Outcomes/Goals/Objectives:

A. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):
Students graduating with an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership will be able to:

1. Use data, policy, and research to lead continuous improvement and drive transformative change and innovation in P-20 education settings.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of ethical and moral responsibilities of leadership.
3. Apply theory and contextual knowledge to educational practice.
4. Practice analytical and communication skills in leadership roles.
5. Understand, design, and conduct research in educational leadership.

B. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):
By the end of this experience, you will be able to:

1. Identify the different elements of the research process and various research philosophies, paradigms, designs, and methods.
2. Identify the different elements of a dissertation and various research philosophies, paradigms, designs, and methods.
3. Identify best practices in the cultural grounding of educational research.
4. Identify best practices in the theoretical grounding of educational research.
5. Identify best practices in the methodological grounding of educational research.
6. Produce an IRB application
8. Appreciate the need for narrative coherence when writing educational research.
9. Identify best practices in academic search and use these in your writing.
10. Identify best practices in academic writing and use these in your writing.
11. Identify best practices in APA Style and use these in your writing.
12. Produce and present a dissertation aligned with (1.) Through (11.) Above.

V. Pedagogical approach: This course follows an independent study instructional model where your chair supports and guides your independent work on the dissertation project. Your work and instructor support occur mainly online and on the D2L platform. D2L is the only platform that will be used. Work or communication delivered through other platforms will not be considered. The purpose here is to ensure you have access to the history of your work in one place. This history can be visited for various purposes and as/if needed. Students who fail to contact their dissertation chair within the first 12 days of class each semester or/the first five days of class each summer term will be administratively dropped from enrollment in this course.

VI. Readings:

A. Required Texts/materials:

B. Other readings/materials:
All materials provided under the respective D2L course and its related communications, including Microsoft Teams.

C. Optional General Readings:

A. Selected Proposals and Dissertations Texts:


Bell, D. J., Foster, S. L., & Cone, J. D. (2020). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields (3rd ED.)*. APA.


B. Selected Academic Writing Texts:


Williams, V. K. (2016). *I am not a writer and I am just in graduate school*. Chrysalis Consulting.


**C. Selected Literature Review Texts:**


**D. Selected Conceptual Grounding Texts:**


**E. Selected Introductory Research Texts:**


F. Selected Introductory Qualitative Research Texts:


G. Selected Introductory Quantitative Research Texts:


H. Selected Introductory Mixed Methods Research Texts:


I. Selected Statistical Theory Texts:


J. Selected IBM SPSS Texts:


K. Selected Philosophy/Cultural Theory of Research Texts:


VII. Calendar, Assignments, Activities, Evaluation, and Assessments: For more details about these, refer to the D2L course. Student documentation of engagement and progress is 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 EDLE 6199 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/the first five days of class each summer term will be administratively dropped from EDLE 6199 Dissertation Writing enrollment.
VIII. Course Must Meet Expectations and Policies:

Must-Meet Expectations

Producing a good-quality dissertation assumes specific skills, attitudes, and dispositions. The purpose of prior coursework in this program was to help you master these. You will use these skills, attitudes, and dispositions in this course to produce a good-quality dissertation. Please remember that this course is an independent study when the instructor takes the role of a facilitator rather than an instructor. You are not only your instructor but your instructor’s instructor. The Dissertation Chair and Committee members are to serve only as guides in manuscript organization, clarifying research design and analyses and raising critical questions about “holes” in the organization, data interpretation, and the manuscript's reasoning.

Academically, this is a higher-order and critical-thinking doctorate course that requires an investment on your behalf of reflective time and effort. You are expected to engage with this project authentically, submit assignments of good quality (authenticity, inventiveness, and depth), and contribute positively to your overall growth.

Intellectually, you are expected to demonstrate some essential intellectual characteristics, including inquiry, critique, openness, reflexivity, and rigor. Be open to learning and reflexively embrace change.

Personally, you are expected to treat everybody with respect and good manners.

Professionally, your communications should meet professional standards expected from a doctorate student and an aspiring scholar-practitioner.

Relationally, working on such a project is a collaborative and interactive activity between you and the course instructor. This process is most successful when it involves authentic, tailored, two-way communication that results in tangible improvement. I am here to help you WHENEVER you need help, and it does NOT matter how often you need it! Please communicate with me as frequently as you need to. This is my job here! It will be my pleasure to answer an email of yours, share it with you via Zoom, or meet you in person if you need to. There is no irrelevant question or concern! Emails will be answered within 24 working hours. Feedback will be given within five working days.

Organationally, be well-planned, and manage your time correctly. Be proactive. Communicate as and if you need to. Remember that every credit hour you register for equals 45 hours of individual work. Time is a critical factor. Take time seriously. If you need help, seek help. This project is yours! Please do not assume it is anybody else’s. When receiving feedback, if you are encouraged to re-submit, re-submit as soon as possible.

Technically, your writing should be of high caliber, comparable to good quality scholarship, as presented in high-caliber publication venues in the field of interest. Good writing is like a predictable, condensed, and rich story. A good narrative is logical, flowing, coherent, and integrated. A good narrative is thematic, within and across its different parts, and against its overall identity. A good narrative is thick and rich. Your writing is expected to be coherent and creative and does not include spelling, syntax, or grammar mistakes.
Stylistically, you must use APA style for formatting, citation, and referencing. You are also expected to adhere to any technical requirements set by your chair, the program, the department, the college, the graduate school, and the university. Enrollment in a doctoral program assumes effective written communication. Although the dissertation chair shall assist in typical editorial feedback for overall manuscript improvement and compliance with APA-style guidelines, the responsibility for attending to issues related to grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph organization resides solely with the student. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the writing skills center at Steen Library to attend to persisting issues in this domain for which faculty are not responsible. A candidate for the doctoral degree must be able to use spoken and written English to the satisfaction of the dissertation committee.

Substantively, your work should be of high caliber comparable to good quality scholarship as presented in high-caliber publication venues in the field of interest. For the substance to be of high caliber, your work should demonstrate total command of the discourses of interest. Your understating of such discourses cannot be partial and reduced. The criterion for success here is that you will know these discourses like any other expert.

Policies related to the EDLE program and EdD-Leadership degree

Academic expectations: This is a synthetic and integrated dissertation course that requires an investment on your behalf of reflective time and effort. You are expected to submit assignments of good quality and contribute positively to your intellectual, academic, and professional growth.

Intellectual expectations: In this dissertation course, you are expected to demonstrate some essential intellectual characteristics, including but not limited to those of inquiry, critique, openness, reflexivity, and rigor.

Personal expectations: In this dissertation course, you must treat everybody you interact with respectfully and generously. Your communications should meet the professional standards expected from a dissertation student and an aspiring scholar-practitioner.

Work quality: As a dissertation student, you are expected to give your best in completing the required work. Assignments should be completed carefully, meet all assignment criteria, and show authenticity, inventiveness, and depth. Your writing is expected to be coherent and creative and does not include spelling, syntax, or grammar mistakes. You must continually use APA style for formatting, citation, and referencing.

Participation and engagement: In this dissertation course, you are expected to engage with course materials, your chair, and your committee members in authentic ways that will contribute to your growth.

Late and missing work: All deadlines should be met as set by your chair. Failing to do so might affect your course grade and your standing in the program.

Hints for success: be organized and manage your time correctly. Be proactive. Communicate if you need to. Be open to learning and reflexively embrace change. The anxiety that leads you to be proactive is healthy. Fear that makes you freeze is healthy. If you need help, ask for help!
Instructor support: Your chair is here to help you WHENEVER you need help, and it does NOT matter how many times you will need it! Please communicate with your chair as frequently as you need to. This is the chair's job here! It will be the chair's pleasure to answer an email of yours, communicate with you via Microsoft Teams, or meet you in person if feasible. There is no irrelevant question or concern!

Scholarly Responsibility: You are ultimately responsible for the content and quality of your dissertation. While we will support you in every way we can, the final responsibility rests with you. You are expected to maintain a high standard of scholarship and writing, and you must engage any help you might need to produce a final dissertation that fulfills the requirements specified by your dissertation chair and committee.

Scholarly Conduct: Our program demands high academic integrity, scholarly conduct, and etiquette of doctoral candidates, and we treat misconduct as a serious offense. Academic offenses such as dishonesty, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), falsification or fabrication of data, and intellectual sabotage of the work of another are expressly prohibited (for more details, see the Dissertation Handbook). Dispute over scholarly conduct is governed by the SFA Policy 4.1 (Student Academic Dishonesty). Per SFA Student Academic Dishonesty Policy 4.1, “Penalties may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, resubmission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.”

Paid and Unpaid Assistance: All dissertations are, in fact, collaborative projects between the candidate and their committee. You will receive much assistance with the direction of your research from your Dissertation Chair and committee. Additionally, you are permitted to help with the physical formatting of your document. A colleague’s critical review of your paper is generally recommended as well. The acceptability of further assistance is at the discretion of your Dissertation Chair. Anything that diminishes intellectual ownership of your work is much more than assistance and is not permissible. Check with the chair of your dissertation committee if you have any questions about what is acceptable. All help you receive, paid and unpaid, must be disclosed and briefly described in the acknowledgment section of your dissertation. Should you be planning to use such assistance, do not start using it before the approval of your chair.

Tracking Citations: It is legally and ethically imperative to cite all sources in your dissertation accurately. This includes cross-checking all cited materials with those referenced to ensure that all information is accurate. This is an extensive and time-consuming project for a document the size of a dissertation. Be mindful of this from the beginning, and choose a method that will allow you to track all materials you use efficiently.

QClassroom Statement: This course uses the QClassroom data management system to collect critical assessments for students who are Perkins College of Education majors (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral) or majors in other colleges seeking educator certification through the Perkins College of Education. Support emails will come from qclassroom@sfasu.edu.

Course Evaluation: 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. Please know that the PCOE faculty 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. Although the instructor can view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and summarized data will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

**Student Code of Conduct (Policy 10.4):** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This policy applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have complete discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program at SFA.

**Mental Health:** SFASU values students’ mental health and its role in academic and overall student success. SFA provides various resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
(1) SFASU Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counseling
Tucker Building (Southeast corner of Raguet and East College streets)
936-468-2401
(2) SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

**Crisis Resources:**
Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741
A complete list of mental health resources for students can be found at:
https://www.sfasu.edu/info-for/current-students/mental-health-resources

More information about student wellness and support options can be found on the Health and Wellness Hub (https://www.sfasu.edu/thehub) and the Lumberjacks Wellness Network (https://www.sfasu.edu/lwn).

**Student Ethics and Other Policy Information**

**Important course-related policies:**
[Course Grades (Including WH), Policy 5.5](https://www.sfasu.edu/info-for/current-students/mental-health-resources)
[Final Course Grade Appeals by Students, Policy 6.3](https://www.sfasu.edu/info-for/current-students/mental-health-resources)
IX. Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter, and amend any section in this syllabus or any other related D2L or Microsoft Teams content as deemed necessary. Students will be notified by email of such revisions, alterations, and amendments.