



Learning Associates' Handbook / Hybrid Program

# *EdD* IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP



**LEARN. GROW. GO.**

Revised Summer 2024

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## What we do

We construct a leadership environment that allows an individual to develop their leadership identity, personal agency, and efficacy as a change maker.

## Why we do it

For our graduates to lead, educate, and empower in their realms of influence to advance equity, excellence, and ethics.

## How we do it

By building a cohort grounded in a curriculum that provides educational opportunities to transform self and community.

## Who you are

Candidates admitted to the EdD program are referred to as “Learning Associates” to recognize the significant practical experiences candidates bring with them into the program. Faculty and LAs work together in communities of practice designed to integrate theory and practice. The outcome is practitioner-scholar graduates better informed by the application of theory, research, and faculty enhanced by current, real-life practice.

Our Learning Associates come from a range of helping disciplines and are fully-employed professionals. Bringing together Learning Associates across backgrounds and experiences creates a more robust learning environment for everyone.

## Who we are

We define educational leadership as the reflective, informed practice of facilitating learning, change, and growth in individuals and communities in both formal and informal settings. Educational leaders are those people who facilitate the growth and development of organizations and communities.

Our program is designed around four main pillars that support our foundational values of equity, excellence, and ethics:

- Wellness
- Justice
- Leadership
- Inquiry

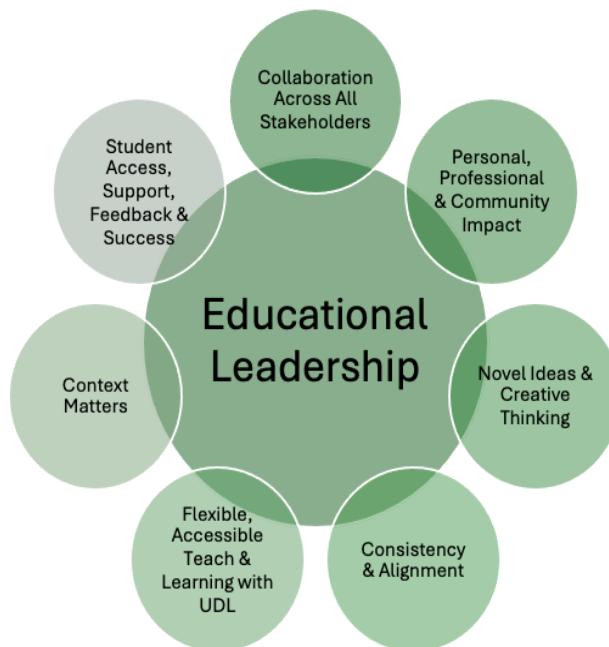
Our faculty are experienced, innovative leadership scholarly practitioners who are deeply engaged with our program and Learning Associates. Your classes are taught by a balance of full-time university faculty and part-time faculty who are primarily engaged in non-faculty roles to ensure that you get the benefit of both perspectives.

We are proud members of the [Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate \(CPED\)](#).

Defining elements of our program include:

1. Practitioner-scholar focus is designed to prepare leaders who construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, and communities;
2. A cohort model that provides opportunities for learning associates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships;
3. Emphasis on enhancing existing leadership skills by integrating theory and practice through job-embedded and “puzzles of practice” learning experiences;
4. Focus on the knowledge and skills component necessary for effective practitioners as well as on the human or dispositional qualities associated with healthy leadership;
5. A set of program outcomes that integrates both practical and research knowledge and links theory with systemic and systematic inquiry;
6. A focus on current educational leadership challenges, often framed around questions of equity, excellence, and ethics, to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice;
7. A commitment to action research, emphasizing the generation, transformation, and use of professional knowledge and practice.

The work in our EdD program is supported by the following values:



## About the cohort

Our EdD program leverages a cohort model, giving us sustained experience working with a diverse team of dedicated professionals. A key assumption of our approach is that most important educational issues cannot be resolved through the individual and isolated efforts common in many traditional doctoral programs but rather must come from team and interagency efforts that increase the efficacy of the initiative.

Learning Associates progress through the program with a common group of peers (their cohort). Each cohort is a Community of Practice and is designated numerically. The cohort model echoes our understanding of Learning Associates, expecting cohort members to see one another as resources and to serve as critical friends to one another. While friendships often emerge and deepen, our goal is to develop a strong professional and/or scholarly network among all members of each cohort.

Within each cohort, smaller groups called [Leader Scholar Communities \(LSCs\)](#) are formed in year two and carry through the third year to support the completion of [Dissertations in Practice](#). Across cohorts, everyone who is part of the EdD program is a member of our broader EdD Community of Practice.

## Accountability

Learning Associates who choose our hybrid program are committing to being accountable to themselves and their cohort. We encourage cohorts to engage in intentional community building utilizing the principles of communities of care. For example, choosing to engage in preventative health measures such as masking during times of higher disease transmission is a way to manifest care for the community.

## Attendance

The cohort structure is both a support mechanism and a pedagogical tool. Attendance at in-person classes is a key component of our program. Substantial academic and leadership work is undertaken during class sessions, and LAs should ensure their professional and personal lives can accommodate a rigorous doctoral journey. Our program is designed for working professionals who often have significant community and family commitments. It is often the case that Learning Associates need to step back from personal and/or professional commitments in order to achieve their academic goals. There will be ebbs and flows to the workload of the program both within and across semesters.

Rarely, professional circumstances related to work may require you to miss a class. Such professional circumstances must be communicated as far in advance as possible to both relevant course instructors and the program director. If your professional circumstances regularly include weekend commitments, this may not be right time for you to pursue our program.

## Program of Study

Each LA, in consultation with their program advisor, will develop a curriculum contract. The contract will ensure the completion of core and specialization areas as well as a cognate that provides a coherent emphasis in an area of interest to the learning associate. The curriculum contract and any revisions must have the approval of the program director and will be filed in the program office.

The program of study consists of 8 student learning outcomes (SLOs):

1. Construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals; families; and educational agencies, organizations, and/or communities
2. Gain insight into the challenges, practices, and perspectives facing educational leaders and agencies, organizations, and communities in contemporary US society
3. Apply a systems lens to the interaction between dynamic systems and individuals, families, and educational agencies, organizations, and communities
4. Support the human qualities associated with facilitating change in oneself; others; and educational agencies, organizations, and communities
5. Demonstrate creative leadership that encourages thoughtful innovation and risk-taking in individuals and educational agencies, organizations, and/or communities
6. Demonstrate the capacity to scan ever-changing environments; analyze the forces that impact community, agency, and/or organizational effectiveness; and use this knowledge to design and implement adaptive strategies
7. Establish and support collaborative relationships and teams
8. Influence the creation, continuation, and evaluation of just and ethical educational contexts, norms, policies, and practices to transform educational institutions

The courses learning associates will take towards completion of the program of study for the EdD in Educational Leadership are organized as follows:

### **Leadership Core (15 credit hours)**

- EDD 800 Introduction to Doctoral Studies (3 credit hours)
- EDD 804 Leadership: Professional and Personal Perspectives (3 credit hours)
- EDD 805 Educational Leadership Theories (3 credit hours)
- EDD 806 Navigating Organizational Change (3 credit hours)
- EDD 807 Leadership: Identity and Agency (3 credit hours)

### **Justice Core (9 credit hours)**

- EDD 815 Unpacking Educational Systems (3 credit hours)
- EDD 816 Universal Design for Learning (3 credit hours)
- EDD 817 Transforming Educational Systems (3 credit hours)

### **Educational Leadership Wellness Specialization (6 credit hours)**

- EDD 845 The Mindful Educational Leader (3 credit hours)
- EDD 846 The Conscious Educational Leader (3 credit hours)

### **Educational Leadership Inquiry Specialization (18 credit hours)**

- EDD 847 Inquiry 1 (3 credit hours)
- EDD 848 Inquiry 2 (3 credit hours)
- EDD 849 Dissertation Seminar (3 credit hours)
- EDD 898 Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)

*Note: 9 credit hours of EDD 898 are required; courses may be taken and substituted in for EDD 898 credit hours at the discretion of the program director*

### **Cognate Core (12 credit hours)**

The cognate is designed to provide flexibility in choosing options through which additional areas of interest can be studied. Learning Associates may choose to specialize in the following cognates offered by the EdD program:

### **Teaching and Learning in Post-Secondary Settings (Complete 4 of the 6 courses)**

- EDG 674 History of US Higher Education (3 credit hours)
- EDG 675 Understanding the US College Student (3 credit hours)
- EDG 676 Student Development and Learning Theories (3 credit hours)
- EDG 677 Current Issues in Higher Education (3 credit hours)
- EDG 678 Higher Education Administration Practicum (3 credit hours)
  - *must have completed three of EDG 675, 676, and/or 677 before taking*
- EDG 679 Facilitating Post-Secondary Learning Practicum (3 credit hours)
  - *must have completed three of EDG 675, 676, and/or 677 before taking*

### **Leading for Educational System Transformation (Complete 4 of the 5 courses)**

- EDG 610 Critical Theories (3 credit hours)
- EDG 611 Gender Expansive Leadership (3 credit hours)
- EDG 612 Disability Studies in Education (3)
- EDG 613 Queering Educational Leadership (3 credit hours)
- EDG 614 Educational Leaders as Activists (3 credit hours)

In the hybrid program, cognates may also be fulfilled using any graduate-level courses offered at NKU, through the Greater Cincinnati Collegiate Connection, or at other accredited colleges/universities at the discretion of the program director.

## **Transfer Policy**

All credits applied to the EdD degree, inclusive of transfer credits, must be completed within a period of eight (8) years at the time of graduation. Transfer credits are governed at the university level in the [Graduate Programs Progression to Degree section](#). Key details include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Only graduate credits earned from a regionally-accredited institution and in which a grade of *B* or better was earned can be transferred into the EdD program.
- Transfer credits are only accepted to fulfill the 12 credit hour cognate core.



- No more than 9 credit hours of graduate credit applied to a previously-earned degree can be transferred into the EdD program.
- No more than 24 credit hours of graduate credit that was not applied to a previously-earned degree can be transferred into the EdD program.
- Transfer credits are processed after admission to the EdD program. If you believe you have transfer credits that might apply to your EdD degree program, please contact the program director.

## The Online EdD Program

We also offer an online EdD in Educational Leadership. This is a distinct program with a different focus than the hybrid program in which you have enrolled.

The two EdD programs share some courses. You will register for the hybrid section of EdD courses. These will be indicated with synchronous meeting times and dates. If you enroll in a section designated for the online EdD program, we will contact you to move you into the correct section.

You may choose to transfer from the hybrid to the online program. If you choose to do so, only the courses you have within the leadership core and justice core may be transferred across programs (up to 24 credits maximum).

## Ed.D. Core and Specialization Course Descriptions

### Introduction to Doctoral Studies (EDD 800)

Introduction to the perspectives and skills needed to succeed as a doctoral student, including an introduction to information literacy, doctoral-level writing, and proficiency in reading and responding to major ideas in a chosen leadership field.

### Leadership: Personal and Professional Perspectives (EDD 804)

This course offers Learning Associates a comprehensive interdisciplinary exploration of leadership, focusing on developing knowledge, skills, and dispositions aligned with contemporary educational leadership. It provides a framework to investigate and enhance leadership assumptions, behaviors, and goals, fostering the planning of improvements for increased leadership effectiveness.

### Educational Leadership Theories (EDD 805)

Understand the role of theory in research and learn to develop and apply theoretical frameworks to guide research design and analysis. In-depth exploration of educational leadership theories within social and historical contexts. Critically analyze leadership frameworks, gaining fluency in articulating fundamental concepts such as *leader*, *leadership*, *theory*, *power*, and *authority*.

### Navigating Organizational Change (EDD 806)

This course explores navigating organizational change by fostering effective communication and ethical leadership, emphasizing skills applicable to any role. Students employ systems thinking to grasp interconnectedness within organizations, crafting strategies for managing change reactions, promoting resilience, and cultivating adaptable, ethically grounded teams in a supportive, innovative environment.

### Leadership: Identity and Agency (EDD 807)

This course focuses on individuals, emphasizing self-awareness, values, and purpose. Participants explore their unique identity and agency, synthesizing theory and introspection to gain insights into how their personal traits shape their capacity for leadership, culminating in a deeper understanding of themselves within their professional journey.

### Unpacking Educational Systems (EDD 815)

This course explores educational systems through social reproduction lenses, fostering compassion and a commitment to challenging injustice. Learning Associates gain tools and insights to problematize normative practices. The course inspires leadership that transforms conditions, policies, and practices, aiming to champion systems that support just outcomes and experiences.

## Universal Design for Learning (EDD 816)

Explore Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, examining strategies to create inclusive and accessible learning environments. Participants will gain insights into designing curriculum and instruction that meet diverse learner needs, promoting equity and engagement. Practical applications ensure participants can implement UDL effectively in educational settings.

## Transforming Educational Systems (EDD 817)

Learning Associates leverage their prior knowledge of educational inequities to instigate positive, transformative changes in policies and practices for individuals, families, and educational institutions. The course frames the current landscape of US education from a systems perspective, fostering creative leadership, adaptive strategies, collaborative relationships, and influence within just, ethical educational contexts.

## The Mindful Educational Leader (EDD 845)

This course for current and future leaders introduces themes and practices in mindfulness. Resources and assignments are designed to help learners explore and incorporate the benefits of mindfulness into their personal and professional lives, to support themselves, others, and the teams/communities with whom they work.

## The Conscious Educational Leader (EDD 846)

This course grows leaders' wellness practices and intentional self-care. Students will leave the course having developed their effective wellness practices. Doing so will empower leaders to safeguard themselves and their communities by identifying systemic threats to wellness and constructing protective spaces to foster resilience and well-being.

## Inquiry 1 (EDD 847)

This course focuses on the characteristics of thoughtful scholarly inquiry, effective communication of patterns across knowledge sources, contextualizing problems of practice, and engaging in impactful change. Learners develop abilities to critically consume public knowledge, evaluate justice and equity issues, align communication with diverse audiences, and address information management challenges.

## Inquiry 2 (EDD 848)

This course develops the characteristics of thoughtful scholarly inquiry, effective communication of patterns across knowledge sources, contextualizing problems of practice, and engaging in impactful change. Learners refine their ability to critically consume public knowledge, evaluate justice and equity issues, align communication with diverse audiences, and address information management challenges.

### Dissertation Seminar (EDD 849)

Grounded in a deep understanding of a selected problem of practice, students design innovative approaches to knowledge creation to foster a positive impact on individuals, families, and educational entities.

### Dissertation Research (EDD 898)

Directed study to design, conduct, analyze, and share an action research Dissertation in Practice. Specifically for students researching and writing dissertations. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 hours.

## EDD Cognate Course Descriptions

### Critical Theories (EDG 610)

This course investigates how critical theories reveal systemic flaws and the deliberate functionality of oppression. Emphasizing generative thinking, the course analyzes individual lives, organizational structures, and societal frameworks to develop innovative approaches to systemic inequities. Students actively shape the seminar, dynamically adapting the exploration to their evolving interests.

### Gender Expansive Leadership (EDG 611)

Exploration of issues pertaining to leadership and gender/gender identity marginalization. Topics include: intersectionality, leading from the margins, navigating space and place, gender and leadership development, and social responsibility within organizations. Learners will consider how their own leadership and knowledge production could aid in disrupting inequitable systems and structures.

### Disability Studies in Education (EDG 612)

An interdisciplinary course offering a comprehensive exploration of disability as a multifaceted social, cultural, and political phenomenon. Delve into historical perspectives, social models, disability rights, and representations, fostering critical thinking and self-reflection while prioritizing the voices of disabled individuals. The curriculum aims to develop a nuanced understanding of disability issues.

### Queering Educational Leadership (EDG 613)

Apply a Queer Theory lens to roles and experiences as leaders and scholars. Learners will consider queerness as an action, role, identity, methodology, and theoretical framework. Learners use this lens to critically examine the ways norms, normalization, and normativity operate at the institutional, professional, and personal levels.

### Educational Leaders as Activists (EDG 614)

Root and refine your educational activist voice, vision, and values. Examine texts and theoretical frameworks that highlight activism in leaders, elevate the voices of leaders from the margin, and define and design personal activist leadership maps to serve as meaningful guides in future work.

### History of Higher Education (EDG 674)

An in-depth examination of higher education in the United States from its origins to the present day. Topics include trends, characteristics, and features that have shaped higher education, including the emergence of different types of institutions, the evolution of academic disciplines, and the impact of social, political, and economic forces.

### Understanding the US College Student (EDG 675)

This course explores critical issues of access and equity for contemporary US college students, examining the evolving demographics and characteristics of this population. Participants analyze challenges and opportunities, exploring strategies to enhance inclusivity and address disparities in higher education, fostering a deeper understanding of student experiences.

### Student Development and Learning Theories (EDG 676)

This course explores theories of adult learning and student development, delving into the affective and cognitive aspects that shape the educational experiences of post-secondary students. Participants gain a deep understanding of how students acquire and refine knowledge, skills, and values, blending theoretical exploration with practical applications.

### Current Issues in Higher Education (EDG 677)

This specialized course explores current trends and emerging issues in higher education leadership. Each iteration focuses on specific topics, offering in-depth insights through theoretical exploration, case studies, and real-world applications. Participants develop strategies to address contemporary challenges, gaining knowledge crucial for effective educational leadership in their professional contexts.

### Higher Education Administration Practicum (EDG 678)

A practicum experience in higher education administration. Participants apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, gaining practical experience in diverse administrative tasks. Supervised by seasoned professionals, students develop leadership skills, strategic planning abilities, and a nuanced understanding of higher education management.

### Facilitating Post-Secondary Learning Practicum (EDG 679)

A practicum experience in higher education teaching. Participants apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, gaining practical experience in designing, planning, delivering, and assessing learning. Supervised by seasoned faculty, students develop pedagogical skills and a nuanced understanding of facilitating student learning.

## Progress Toward Degree

Unfortunately, not everyone succeeds in graduate work. We do not think it is just to allow students to continue in a program that is unsuited to their strengths. Standards have been set for what we consider to be the minimum requirements for students to progress toward the EdD in Educational Leadership.

All core, specialization, and cognate courses must be passed with a grade of B or better. In the event that an LA earns a B-, C+, or C in a course, the LA will be given one opportunity to retake the course. Additional opportunities will not be given. The LA may be asked to step out of the cohort until passing grades in all previously attempted required courses have been earned. Learning Associates may retake no more than two separate courses.

If an LA earns an F in any course, the LA will be dismissed from the program.

## Comprehensive Assessment

The artifacts that form the Comprehensive Assessment are your course assignments and grades in the following courses:

- EDD 800 Introduction to Doctoral Studies (3 credit hours)
- EDD 804 Leadership: Professional and Personal Perspectives (3 credit hours)
- EDD 805 Educational Leadership Theories (3 credit hours)
- EDD 815 Unpacking Educational Systems (3 credit hours)
- EDD 845 The Mindful Educational Leader (3 credit hours)
- EDD 847 Inquiry 1 (3 credit hours)
- EDD 848 Inquiry 2 (3 credit hours)

Thus, the Comprehensive Assessment is passed by earning a grade of B or better in each of those courses. Earning a grade of B or better demonstrates mastery of key knowledge and skills that support success in navigating the remaining portions of the program and ultimately leadership, justice, wellness, and inquiry.

## Continuous Enrollment

Once the comprehensive assessment has been passed, Learning Associates must maintain continuous enrollment. To maintain continuous enrollment, LAs must enroll in a minimum of one semester hour of dissertation credit during each regular semester, including at least one summer term each year, until the dissertation has been accepted by all necessary parties.

## Doctoral Candidacy

Candidacy occurs upon the successful defense of a DiP proposal.

## The Dissertation in Practice (DiP)

To complete the EdD in Educational Leadership, LAs must complete program courses as laid out in their curriculum contract, pass the comprehensive assessment, and complete the Dissertation in Practice (DiP) designed to positively impact your professional practice and associated community/ies.

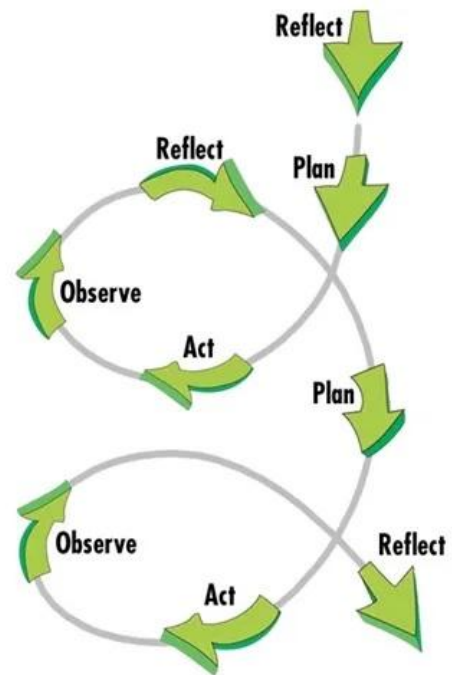
The DiP can take a variety of forms and offers you the opportunity to match your intellect and creativity. DiPs in our program must focus on an identified problem of practice (not “an issue that can be easily solved by a ‘technical fix’” and “should have layers of complexity that require substantive research”<sup>1</sup>. and must utilize a critical action research approach.

### What is Critical Action Research?

Our Learning Associates engage in critical action research. Critical action research is founded on a belief in collaboration, respect for local knowledge, and the commitment to trust in the ability of equitable and ethical processes to lead to positive personal, organizational, and community transformation and liberation.<sup>2</sup>

Additional key descriptors of action research as we frame it:

- “The epistemological assumption of action research is to change the world” (Watkins, Gilbertson, & Nicolaides, 2023, p. 33)
- “Action research is inquiry that is done *by* or *with* insiders to an organization or community, but never *to* or *on* them” (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 3)
- “The perceived need for change should come from within the setting” (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 4)
- “Action research is cogenerative... the power of the group, the action research team, to enact a more democratic approach to change in human systems is coupled with explicit strategies of collecting evidence to guide interventions, collective inquiry, and reflection, all toward a worthwhile purpose... a consistent focus on taking collective action, action formed by evidence... within a... complex adaptive system” (Watkins, Gilbertson, & Nicolaides, 2023, p. 24)
- “Action research looks at a system while it is in the midst of changing; this differs markedly from traditional research that is often post-hoc” (Watkins, Gilbertson, & Nicolaides, 2023, p. 73)



<sup>1</sup> Watkins, Gilbertson, & Nicolaides, 2023, pp. 90-91

<sup>2</sup> Definition of action research adapted from Brydon-Miller, Kral, Maguire, Noffke, & Sobhlok (2011, p. 398).



- “Action research proposals begin the research with a clear direction but with the anticipation that as data-gathering and analysis proceed, the process will continue to be crafted rather than totally set a priori” (p. 87)
- “The literature drawn on for the study will develop as the researcher grows into a deeper understanding of the issues under study” (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 105)
- “Solid action research leads to a deepened understanding of the question posed as well as to more sophisticated questions” (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 107)

## Leader-Scholar Community

The Leader-Scholar Community (LSC) concept was developed at Arizona State University (Olson & Clark, 2009)<sup>3</sup>. This process assumes that both faculty and learning associates are experts and shareholders in the learning process. The faculty are experts in applied research, writing, and scholarly literature, and the learning associates are experts and responsible leaders in the particular practices and contexts in which they conduct research and effect change (Olson & Clark, p. 217).

In the second year of coursework, smaller groupings of approximately five Learning Associates and two faculty members will be formed. Each group becomes an LSC, with all members agreeing to work together<sup>4</sup> to support the completion of the DiP. It is our experience that the engaged 2-year commitment of the LSC will support the timely completion of all DiPs. It is our expectation that members will remain engaged through the completion of all LSC member’s DiPs. In this model, both the learning associates and the faculty are experts and share in the learning process.

During the two-year commitment, the LSCs will meet face-to-face<sup>5</sup> approximately once a month. These meetings provide further instruction relative to the DiP and give LAs the opportunity to get feedback on their writing and help each other to stay current in knowledge and outside learning opportunities. Faculty may also meet individually with the learning associates throughout this process.

The EdD program director will meet with LSC faculty regularly to assess the process and initiate changes that may emerge.

Engaging in the LSC process:

1. provides our learning associates with support and guidance and strengthens the collaboration of each cohort;
2. results in a consistent community of peers and faculty with whom our learning associates will lead and learn;

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<sup>3</sup> Olson, K. & Clark, C. M. (2009). A signature pedagogy in doctoral education: The leader-scholar community. *Educational Researcher*, 38(3), 216-221.

<sup>4</sup> What we mean by “work together” is each LSC member will commit to writing their dissertation, reading their LSC members’ dissertations, and giving feedback within the program’s requisite 10 business day turnaround timeframe.

<sup>5</sup> Hybrid options may be made available at the discretion of the LSC.

3. promotes the concept of critical friends that results in a mutually supportive collaborative; and
4. results in a high completion rate (Olson & Clark, 2009).

## DiP Completion Process

The DiP is designed to be completed across multiple semesters. Beginning no later than the first semester in which the LA enrolls in EDD 898 credits, LAs must choose one or more of the 11 listed steps (which must be completed in order) each semester. LAs may take up to two semesters to complete any particular step.

1. Submit a complete Dissertation in Practice (DiP) proposal to the dissertation committee
2. Earn a 'pass' on DiP proposal defense
3. Obtain IRB approval<sup>6</sup> (*may be waived as appropriate to the DiP methodology*)
4. Gather DiP data following approved protocols
5. Analyze data
6. Communicate findings relevant to research question(s)
7. Communicate findings relevant to the DiP process
8. Communicate implications of findings relevant to research question(s) and DiP process
9. Submit the complete Dissertation in Practice (DiP) to the dissertation committee
10. Earn a 'pass' on DiP defense
11. Submit DiP to ProQuest<sup>7</sup> and ensure its acceptance. If final approval is not granted by the last day of the academic semester, the LA will be required to register for 1 credit of EDD 898 in the subsequent semester.

Our program has committed to ensuring feedback on submitted DiP components within 10 business days of submission and has built supports into the second year of the program. The process includes several assessment feedback loops to support the success of individual LAs and the impact that the process has on the success of the LA.

In the fall of the second year of coursework, LAs

- identify and refine a problem of practice,
- obtain topic approval, and
- meet with their LSC monthly.

In the spring of the second year of coursework, LAs

- meet with their LSC monthly to further refine their DiP proposal, and

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<sup>6</sup> Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects Research) Guidelines: In accordance with federal and institutional regulations, any undertaking in which University faculty, staff, or learning associate investigates and/or collects data on human subjects for research purposes must be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). It is the responsibility of each investigator to seek review of any study involving human subjects prior to initiation of the project.

<sup>7</sup> Note: The final DiP must be publicly available in perpetuity. Alternatives to sharing through ProQuest may be deemed appropriate by the EdD Program Director for a given DiP. If an alternative is identified and deemed appropriate by the EdD Program Director, step 11 will be altered to reflect that alternative while remaining true to the spirit of ProQuest submission and acceptance.

- form their dissertation committee.

In the summer of their second year of coursework, LAs will:

- enroll in EDD 849 (Dissertation Seminar), in which they write a DiP proposal.

The dissertation committee is comprised of two LSC faculty and a third committee member. This person may be a subject matter expert or a methodological expert. The person must have a terminal degree (PhD, EdD, DBA, etc.). The person must have the capacity to follow NKU's dissertation committee time commitments (e.g. reading and providing feedback within 10 business days, attending the proposal and final defense). No more than two committee members may hold a primary appointment in the Department of Educational Leadership and Advanced Studies.

## Components of a DiP Proposal

### Problem Framing

#### Naming the problem of practice

- What is the specific problem of practice in my setting's system I intend to address?
- Why is this a specific problem of practice for/to me?
- What evidence is there that it is a problem of practice in my setting's system?
- What are the pieces that constitute a full understanding of the problem of practice in my setting's system?
- What are the relationships between/among those pieces?
- What are the pieces outside the context that also impact the problem of practice in my setting's system?

#### Environmental scan

- What other scholarly practitioners have investigated this problem of practice or its components?
- How did they investigate it?
- What is to be learned from their investigation?
- What patterns exist across investigations?
- What local, regional, or national laws, norms, histories, or other structures impact this problem of practice?

### Intended Action

#### Action

- Who are the members of the change team?
- What is the theory of change developed by the change team?
- Where does the intended inquiry fit into the theory of change?

- How has the change team attempted to “first do no harm” through our actions?

### Inquiry

- What type of inquiry do I intend to pursue?
- Why is this the most appropriate type of inquiry for the specific problem of practice in my setting's system?
- What is the question I am investigating?
- What evidence will illuminate the question from the perspectives of the:
  - individuals in the setting
  - change team, and
  - institution as a whole?
- How will I engage in ongoing documentation and reflection as the inquiry proceeds?
- How will I analyze the evidence to generate both local and public knowledge?
- Where does my inquiry occur in the *plan, act, observe, reflect* action research cycle?
- How have I attempted to “first do no harm” through this inquiry?

## DiP Proposal Defense

When the LA has a complete DiP proposal, they send their DiP proposal to the members of their dissertation committee with notification that they are requesting a DiP proposal defense. The dissertation committee then has 10 business days to consider the DiP proposal. If the dissertation committee finds the DiP proposal ready to defend, a DiP proposal defense will be scheduled.

The proposal defense will be attended by the dissertation committee and the LA/s defending that DiP proposal. The document must conform to the norms of its genre, including but not limited to grammar, mechanics, formatting, and adherence to the appropriate APA style manual.

The approval of the dissertation proposal is reserved to the dissertation committee. The faculty may accept the DiP proposal in its current form (a ‘pass’), may accept the DiP proposal with minor required changes (a ‘pass with revisions required’), or may not accept the DiP proposal and require that it be revised and resubmitted for reconsideration (a ‘fail’). The LA will be notified of the faculty’s decision regarding the proposal.

If the DiP proposal is accepted in its current form, the LA may proceed to the next step in the [DiP Completion Process](#).

If the DiP proposal requires revisions, the LA will submit their revisions to their dissertation committee in the following ten business days. LAs may petition their dissertation committee for additional time accompanied by a proposed work plan which will be granted at the discretion of the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee will have ten business days to consider the revisions. If the revisions are accepted, the LA may proceed to the next step in the [DiP Completion Process](#).

If the DiP proposal is not accepted either at the time of the DiP proposal defense or as the result of submitted revisions, the LA will use the feedback provided by the dissertation committee to revise their proposal and resubmit it for reconsideration once the feedback has been completely addressed.

The implementation of the study may not begin prior to passing the DiP proposal defense and obtaining IRB approval (may be waived as appropriate to the DiP methodology).

A copy of the signed proposal defense form and the proposal itself will be filed with the EdD program office.

## Defense of DiP

The LA enrolls in EDD 898 (Dissertation Research) for the appropriate number of credit hours each semester until the DiP is ready for defense. Semester hours are determined in consultation with the faculty who are members of the LSC. The LA completes 898 hours in the semesters during which the LA is completing their research and the writing of the DiP.

When the LA has a complete DiP, they send their DiP to the members of their dissertation committee with notification that they are requesting a DiP defense. The dissertation committee then has 10 business days to consider the DiP. If the dissertation committee finds the DiP ready to defend, a DiP defense will be scheduled and a dissertation defense form filed with the Office of Graduate Education. A DiP defense cannot be held sooner than ten business days after the dissertation defense form is filed.

The DiP defense will be open to the public. The document must conform to the norms of its genre, including but not limited to grammar, mechanics, formatting, and adherence to the appropriate APA style manual.

The approval of the DiP is reserved for the dissertation committee. The faculty may accept the DiP in its current form (a 'pass'), may accept the DiP with minor required changes (a 'pass with revisions required'), or may not accept the DiP and require that it be revised and resubmitted for reconsideration (a 'fail'). The LA will be notified of the faculty's decision regarding the defense.

If the DiP is accepted in its current form, the LA may proceed to the next step in the [DiP Completion Process](#).

If the DiP requires revisions, the LA will submit their revisions to their dissertation committee in the following ten business days. LAs may petition their dissertation committee for additional time accompanied by a proposed work plan, which will be granted at the discretion of the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee will have ten business days to consider the revisions. If the revisions are accepted, the LA may proceed to the next step in the [DiP Completion Process](#).

If the DiP is not accepted either at the time of the DiP defense or as the result of submitted revisions, the LA will be given the choice to attempt a second DiP defense or be withdrawn from the program.

A copy of the signed defense form will be filed with the EdD program office.

## Components of a DiP

All components of a DiP proposal must be present. If revisions are made to the methodology after the time of the defense, those revisions must be accurately referenced in the DiP. In addition, the following must be present:

### Content Learning

- What has been learned about my research question from the perspectives of the:
  - individuals in the setting
  - change team, and
  - institution as a whole?
- Have I described what we learned in the most accessible manner possible?
- How did I continue to attempt to “first do no harm” through this inquiry?

### Process Learning

- How did the process of inquiry change over time?
- How has this process impacted me as a scholarly practitioner?

### Implications

- What local knowledge was generated through this inquiry?
- How does the local knowledge generated through this inquiry inform the *plan, act, observe, reflect* action research cycle?
- What public knowledge was generated through this inquiry?
- How is the knowledge generated through this inquiry in conversation with public knowledge?

## Other Relevant Policies

### Time to Degree

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within a period of eight (8) years. Learning associates exceeding the time limit may be required to repeat the comprehensive assessment, replace out-of-date credits with up-to-date work, and/or show other evidence of being current concerning their program of study.

Learning associates may [petition for a leave of absence](#) of up to one year for personal or family medical conditions. An approved leave of absence stops the clock for the learning associate's degree.

Learning associates who have not completed the dissertation within 12 semesters (inclusive of fall, spring, and summer terms) from the semester in which the LA first enrolled in the EDD 898 credit/s must petition the program director for permission to extend their timeline.

### University Policies

These policies are all governed at the university level. Please click on the appropriate link to access the most recent expectations:

- [Dissertation guidelines and upload deadlines](#)
- Graduation: [Office of the University Registrar](#)

### Funding your EdD in Educational Leadership

The College of Education aims to provide a high-quality, innovative, and cost-sensitive Ed.D. in Educational Leadership for fully employed educational leaders.

Visit NKU's website for details about the [cost to attend](#). Please review the university's policies regarding [tuition payment deadlines](#).

### Waiver of Course Requirements

A program director may waive a program requirement only if the proposed waiver is not in violation of any pertinent university regulation, procedure, or policy. A course might be waived under the following circumstances:

- The learning associate has already met the required course objectives through some experience, which was not in the form of a transferable course.
- The program director determines that the learning associate would not benefit from the requirement.

An appropriate course waiver form must be signed by the Ed.D. program director and a copy submitted to the graduate office. If a program requirement is waived, the minimum number of hours required for the program is unaffected. In other words, another course must be substituted for the course that was waived.

## Kentucky Licensure

The Education Professional Standards Board is responsible for issuing and renewing certificates for all Kentucky teachers and administrators. The EPSB works closely with local school districts in the hiring process to ensure a properly credentialed educator in every professional position in Kentucky schools. Staff also works with Kentucky colleges and universities, out-of-state institutions, and national evaluation agencies. For detailed information on licensure procedures and standards for Kentucky, please visit their website at <http://www.kyepsb.net>.

## Special Thanks

Special thanks to Dr. Tynisha N. Worthy and Dr. Lisa Mauthe (both graduates from cohort XIV) for their leadership in refreshing and reformatting the LA Handbook!