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**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES**

Education Policy & Evaluation Master's Program

Student Handbook

*A guide to Master's degree requirements for students
in Educational Policy and Evaluation within the
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy
Studies at Florida State University*

2026-27

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The policies identified in this document are to be construed in light of existing University policies and with deference to the requirements imposed on graduate education by the University, the Board of Trustees of Florida State University, and the Governing Board of the State University System of Florida. The information outlined is subject to change, and students should remain alert to revisions announced by the faculty of the program, the department, College, and University.

Master's Student Handbook

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Mission of EPE Major

The Education Policy and Evaluation (EPE) major within the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS) program requires 36 hours of coursework. Students may complete the degree either fully online, on a part-time and continuously enrolled basis (Fall, Spring, and Summer terms), or in person on the Tallahassee campus. Both tracks are designed to be completed in approximately two years and lead to the same degree.

The program in Education Policy and Evaluation prepares individuals for policy-related careers that involve designing, developing, implementing, analyzing, and evaluating federal, state, and local educational policies, as well as prepares graduates to teach at the community college level.

Faculty research interests in educational policy and program evaluation are wide-ranging and include areas such as charter schools, urban education reform, school finance, teacher quality, accountability, and schooling and the economy.

The M.S. degree provides skills for individuals interested in careers in program evaluation, policy analysis, and public service leadership. Alumni are employed in:

- Policymaking, evaluation, and research positions in schools, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other research organizations related to pre-kindergarten through graduate education;
- Research, evaluation, and administrative positions in PreK–12 school districts, colleges, and universities; and
- Nonprofit organizations, foundations, and corporations engaged in educational development in the United States and internationally.

Graduates of the program will be able to:

- Design, implement, and administer educational projects in varied settings;
- Conduct topic- or policy-oriented research and evaluation;
- Teach related subject matter in colleges, universities, and adult education programs; and
- Provide consulting services to agencies, foundations, and governments to help them improve decision-making and policy choices in domestic or international settings.

Graduates holding the M.S. degree occupy or return to key functions in agencies, nonprofit organizations, corporations, schools, and universities actively involved in educational development in the U.S. and across the globe. Some graduates elect, upon their completion of the degree or at a subsequent point in their career, to continue graduate training at the doctoral level.

Degree Requirements

Online MS Degree Course Requirements

Students may enroll in up to two courses per semester. The sequence of courses below represents a suggested course registration plan, and it is not mandatory to take the courses in that particular order. If a particular course is not offered during a semester, students are free to select courses out of sequence but should consult with their major professor prior to registration.

Required courses:

EDF 5641	Introduction to Policy Studies in Education
EDF 6486	Applied Research Methods
EDA 6068	Education Policy to Practice
EDF 5400	Basic Descriptive and Inferential Statistics
EDF 5461	Introduction to Program Evaluation
EDF 6455	Data Use in Educational Settings
EDF 5464	Qualitative Methods for Program Evaluation
EDA 6061	Educational Administration and Organizational Practice
EDF 5449	Survey Research Methods
EDF 5462	Evaluation of New Educational Programs
EDF 6417	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis

Open elective selected in consultation with major professor; examples include:

EDH 6064	Women in Higher Education
EDF 5089	Black and Latino Education
EDH 5054	The American Community College

In-Person MS-Only Degree Course Requirements

Students studying in-person on the Tallahassee campus should work with their major professor to identify a program of study that includes the following required courses:

COURSE CATEGORY	HRS	EPE
EPE MS Core	6	EDF 5641 Introduction to Policy Studies in Education EDF 5462 Evaluation of New Educational Programs (Pre-requisite EDF 5461)
Electives	15	<i>To be selected from the list below</i>
Disciplinary Perspectives	6	Choose two: EDF 5624 Economics of Education EDF 5935 Sociology and Anthropology of Education EDF 5935 History and Philosophy of Education
Research & Evaluation Skills	9	EDF 6486 Applied Research Methods EDF 5461 Introduction to Program Evaluation And choose one: EDF 5400 Basic Descriptive and Inferential Statistics <i>or</i> EDF 5464 Qualitative Methods for Program Evaluation
TOTAL	36	

Electives – In Person MS Only

Students may choose their electives from this list of courses, as well as additional electives that may be added or offered as special topics courses in the ELP program. Choices of electives must be approved by the major professor.

EDF 5652 Policy Development in Education
 EDF 6576 Policy to Practice
 EDF 5089 Black and Latino Education
 EDF 5449 Survey Research Methods
 EDF 5414 Introduction to Large Data Sets
 EDF 6476 Advanced Qualitative Research Seminar
 EDF 6865 Promoting Literacy in International Settings
 EDF 5887 Multicultural Education
 EDF 5853 Comparative Education Policy
 EDF 5850 International Development Education

Academic Advisement and Program of Studies

Upon enrollment in the Master's program (online or in-person), each student is assigned to the faculty program coordinator. The coordinator is a faculty member with Graduate Faculty Status (GFS) to assist them in the commencement of their studies. The student is responsible for filing an approved Program of Study form with the Anne Spencer Daves College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences (Anne's College) and must do so by **the end of the second semester of enrollment**. The final version of this document must be prepared using the official Master's Program of Study form and signed by the faculty as well as (thereafter) by the Department Chair, and the Academic Dean's representative in OASIS. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they have met all degree requirements.

If at any time, there is a change in major professor *after* the Program of Study form has been filed, it will be necessary to retract the old form and submit a new one with the appropriate signatures. The student will also need to submit a Supervisory Committee Revision Form at the same time.

Graduate Certificate Programs

Students enrolled in the online Master's program may also, upon successful completion of all required coursework, receive a Program Evaluation (in ELPS) certificate that is fully aligned with the master's coursework. To be eligible for admission to the Program Evaluation certificate, online students must complete the online admissions application for the certificate, available here (Step 2: Complete Admissions Form): <https://annescollege.fsu.edu/program-evaluation>, during Fall 1. Students in the in-person program may also apply for and complete the certificate. They should work with their advisor to include all certificate coursework in the program of study.

After all certificate coursework is completed, but no later than two weeks after grades are posted, a **Certificate Completion Form** must be filled out for the respective certificate program.

Limitations Regarding Academic Credit

The following limitations apply to students' academic credit.

1. Credit earned more than seven (7) years prior to graduation may not be used towards the degree.
2. Credit earned as a non-degree seeking student does not carry graduate degree credit. However, if approved by a student's supervisory committee, up to 12 semester hours of non-degree seeking student credit graded "B" or better may be used. It is the student's responsibility to list such non-degree seeking student credit on the program of study.

3. A maximum of six (6) semester hours of transfer credit may be used towards a graduate degree. Departments will evaluate all transfer credits. It is the student's responsibility to list such transfer credit on the program of study and to provide an official transcript from the institution(s).
4. Non-degree and transfer credit are subject to a combined cap of 12 semester hours. Transfer credit is additionally capped at 6 hours (see item 3), and non-degree credit at 12 hours (see item 2), but the two together may never exceed 12. For example, a student who transfers in 6 hours may apply no more than 6 additional hours of non-degree credit.
5. Credit hours for courses graded below "C-" will not apply toward the degree but are computed in the graduate GPA.
6. Undergraduate-level coursework cannot be used to meet the minimum graduate credit hour requirement or the minimum graduate GPA. Coursework taken at the 4000-level is supplemental to degree requirements and does not count in the minimum total hour distribution or graduate GPA calculation.
7. Supervised research credit: maximum 3 semester hours.
8. Supervised teaching credit: maximum 3 semester hours.

Time Limit for Completion of Degree

All requirements for the Master's degree must be completed within seven years of beginning coursework.

Academic Standing - Dismissal

As stated in the University's graduate bulletin (<https://bulletin.fsu.edu>), the University reserves the right to dismiss graduate students and terminate their enrollment in an academic program based on a number of different criteria, beyond that of GPA alone. Oversight is provided by The Graduate School, Office of Faculty Development and Advancement, and Office of the Registrar. Additional details on the steps involved in the process are available for faculty and administrators from the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement and for graduate students at the Graduate School.

Dismissed students will not be permitted to register for further graduate study, including registering as non-degree students, in the degree program or college from which they had enrollment terminated.

Graduate students who have been dismissed from one degree program may seek admission to another degree program but will not be readmitted or allowed to add the dismissed degree program back as a second major or degree. This includes seeking admission into a different degree program that shared a joint pathway with the dismissed degree program.

Program terminations (dismissal for a reason other than GPA) are generally identified by

the faculty with support from the Department Chair (or unit head) in the department/unit or single-unit college level and may occur for a number of different reasons.

As specified by university policy, Graduate policy, or within the unit's Graduate Student handbook, reasons may include but are not limited to,

- Inability to function within a team environment to the extent that it negatively affects the learning, practice, and/or research of fellow graduate students;
- Behavior that does not meet the professional standards of a discipline;
- Failure to be approved for an Extension of Time (EOT);
- Failure to complete important degree milestone requirements within a reasonable period of time;
- Failure to follow the approved program of study (POS); and
- Failure to complete the master's degree.

In addition, please note that suspension or expulsion from the university may result if a student is found responsible in a formal Academic Honor Policy (AHP) hearing for an egregious AHP violation, or as an outcome from a Student Conduct Code charge for which a student is found responsible.

Students who are dismissed for reasons other than grades may follow the General Academic Appeals process if they have evidence that academic regulations and procedures have been improperly applied. Students with a concern about a grade, an advising decision, or program component are encouraged to raise it first with their major professor, and then with the program coordinator or Department Chair, before initiating a formal appeal.

Graduation

Students must apply for graduation during the **FIRST TWO WEEKS** of the semester in which graduation is planned. The University Registrar's website guides students through the application process. Students who no longer plan to graduate in the semester for which they applied must notify the Graduate Director.

Financial Assistance

Most students in this program fund their studies through tuition waivers, employer support, or federal financial aid. Those sources are described first, followed by competitive grants and fellowships.

Grants, Fellowships, and Scholarships

Many sources of funding are available throughout all stages of graduate study. Graduate students must take the initiative to inform themselves of possible funding sources and complete the application process. Students may need to apply as much as 12 to 18 months in advance of the desired funding date, so plan ahead.

Funding is available from the university and from outside sources. Students are strongly encouraged to visit the links below. The awards listed below are only a sample of the many relevant awards that can be found by visiting the main pages provided.

- [The Office of Graduate Studies Funding Awards](#)
- [Anne's College Scholarships and Aid](#)

The awards and organizations listed below primarily fund doctoral and postdoctoral research. Master's students may find them useful in planning for later stages of a research career, and are welcome to apply where eligible.

Examples:

[Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships](#)

Teaching Assistantships in English are offered in many countries worldwide. Placements are in schools or universities outside of the capital cities. Assistants design various activities to improve their students' language abilities and knowledge of the United States, while increasing their own language skills and knowledge of the host country. Assistantships carry a monthly stipend of about \$1000.

[Fulbright Full Grants](#)

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and is the largest U.S. international exchange program offering opportunities for students to undertake graduate study and advanced research worldwide in over 140 countries. Over 1100 Fulbright awards are made annually.

List of Funding Sources

Students may also explore funding opportunities through organizations such as:

- [National Academy of Education](#)
- [United States Institute of Peace](#)
- [National Science Foundation](#)
- [American Educational Research Association](#)
- [Spencer Foundation](#)
- [Social Science Research Council](#)
- [Wenner-Gren Foundation](#)
- [Institute of Education Sciences](#)

FSU or State of Florida Tuition Waiver

Students who are employees of FSU may be eligible to receive a tuition waiver for up to 18 credit hours per calendar year. More information on the [FSU Employee Tuition Scholarship](#) is available online on the [Office of Student Finance website](#).

Students who are employees of the State of Florida may be eligible to receive a tuition waiver for up to 18 credit hours per calendar year. More information on the [State Tuition Waiver](#) is available online.

Establishing Florida Residency

Students who relocate to Florida to conduct graduate studies at Florida State University may wish to declare Florida residency to qualify for much lower in-state tuition rates. One year after moving to Florida, new residents, including those participating in the Academic Common Market scheme (see below), must complete the [Residency Classification Form](#) and submit it to the Graduate Office of Admissions prior to the beginning of the semester for which in-state tuition rates are desired. International students are encouraged to contact the [FSU International Center](#) to learn whether they might qualify for in-state tuition rates.

In order to establish evidence that the residency adjustment request is not being made for the sole purpose of obtaining in-state tuition rates, new Florida residents will need to provide evidence of non-scholastic ties to the state of Florida. Such evidence includes, but is not limited to, obtaining a Florida driver's license, obtaining Florida vehicle registration, becoming registered to vote in Florida, owning property in Florida, employment in Florida, and so forth.

Students who have obtained a graduate assistantship are strongly encouraged to begin the process of establishing residency as soon as possible. After one year of retaining a graduate assistant position, only in-state tuition waivers can be issued to students hoping to continue working as graduate assistants. International students are exempt from this policy due to their ineligibility to obtain residency. For more information regarding how to begin the process of securing Florida residency, please visit the following link: <http://admissions.fsu.edu/residency/>

FSU Office of Financial Aid

Graduate students may also wish to contact the FSU Office of Financial Aid for information about student loans, grants, and other resources to finance their education. <http://financialaid.fsu.edu/>

Other Resources for Students

Professional Organizations

Many regional, national and international professional organizations exist to facilitate collaboration, share advances and advocate the interests of professional and academic specialists in areas of interest to students, such as the [American Evaluation Association](#), the [Association for Education Finance and Policy](#), the [American Education Research Association](#) and the [Comparative and International Education Society](#). Students are

encouraged to become members of professional organizations early in the course of their graduate studies in order to build their CV/resume and increase their exposure to the latest information and opportunities in their field. Professional organizations typically publish their own research journals and organize annual conferences. Students often qualify for reduced rates for membership. Membership is typically a requirement to present or even participate in the organization's conference and sometimes includes a subscription to the organization's journal. Master's students are all encouraged to attend and to present at a conference every year to build their CV/resume, develop comfort with the public presentation of their research, and establish relationships with other experts in their areas of interest. Since conferences may fall at any point during a given semester, it is not uncommon for professors to make alternate arrangements for classes during the week of a major conference that they and many of their students may attend, such as using an online forum to discuss class readings or assigning students to use the week for independent research or other projects. Students are responsible for discussing conference-related absences with their professor at the earliest opportunity to request accommodation if necessary.

Helpful Links

[The Office of Graduate Studies](#)

- [Information for New and Current Students](#)
- [Professional Development Workshop Series](#)
- [Research in Review: a magazine for research at FSU](#)
- [Funding Awards](#)
- [Responsible Conduct of Research: free course](#)
- FSU Bulletin (all the most up-to-date university policies and procedures)
- [Congress of Graduate Students](#)

Academic Assistance

[Academic Center for Excellence](#) (or, contact tutor@fsu.edu) - Tutoring, study skills and Writing Assistance

[Anne's College Learning Resource Center](#) – Statistical and Research Design Assistance