

M.Ed. in Educational Leadership Student Handbook



to **UTRGV**™ : Department of Organization
& School Leadership

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Department of Organization and School Leadership

Program Overview

The Department of Organization and School Leadership (OSL) offers a Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Educational Leadership. All students pursuing the M.Ed. Degree in the Department of Organization and School Leadership (OSL) must meet the following requirements:

- The UTRGV Graduate Admissions and OSL Graduate Admissions requirements,
- Successful completion of all required courses, and
- Pass a comprehensive review by completing a Portfolio B Oral Defense at the end of the program.

The department provides a comprehensive and challenging graduate program for a Master of Education degree and prepares students for careers in school leadership positions. Graduate students shall adhere to the university and department admission deadlines.

- Graduate students are admitted every semester in cohorts and move through the program in cohorts.
- Graduate students may take two assigned courses each semester.
- Graduate students shall attend the Student Orientation before beginning the program.
- Graduate students shall complete a comprehensive review by completing a Portfolio B Oral Defense at the end of the program.
- Graduate students shall be required to purchase software to store key documents, field-based work and assessments in TK20.
- Graduate students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical, responsible, and professional manner as stated in the Student Dispositions Document and will be completed each semester by the professor of each course.

Organizational & School Leadership Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Organization and School Leadership is to continuously improve leadership development through teaching, research, and service that includes the cultural and linguistic history of the Texas-Mexico border.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Student learning outcomes are defined as the accumulated *knowledge, skills, and attitudes* students develop during a course of study. As experts in their disciplines, UTRGV faculty determines the appropriate outcomes for their programs. SLO assessment is the process of collecting and reviewing SLO data and using that information to improve an academic program. It is the application of research methodology to the teaching setting so that decisions about curriculum and instruction can be made on a firm foundation.

SLO 1: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to conduct research, plan strategically, create responsive learning organizations, lead schools, and manage change effectively.

Measurements

A) 90% of the students will pass Portfolio B Oral Defense on the first administration during the semester immediately preceding the student's graduation date by receiving an evaluation of 33-20 percent in accordance with the department's scoring rubric.

B) Each semester 90% of students enrolled in EDUL 6350 and 6310 will demonstrate competency in the respective course content at the 80% mastery level as determined by the professor of record using a department approved knowledge and skills end product and scoring rubric.

SLO 2: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to provide effective leadership in the areas of data analysis, curriculum development, instructional programs, serving special student groups, and assessment practices.

Measurements

A) 90% of the students will pass Portfolio B Oral Defense on the first administration during the semester immediately preceding the student's graduation date by receiving an evaluation of 33-20 percent in accordance with the department's scoring rubric.

B) Each semester 90% of students enrolled in EDUL 6300, 6320, 6325 and 6330 will demonstrate competency in the respective course content at the 80% mastery level as determined by the professor of record using a department approved knowledge and skills end product and scoring rubric.

SLO 3: Students will be able to articulate the importance and impact that socio-cultural factors such as ethics, diversity and ethics; budgeting and selection, placement and retention practice of personnel have on the development and management of public schools and on educational success.

Measurements

A) 90% of the students will pass Portfolio B Oral Defense on the first administration during the semester immediately preceding the student's graduation date by receiving an evaluation of 33-20 percent in accordance with the department's scoring rubric.

B) Each semester 90% of students enrolled in EDUL 6305, 6335, 6318 and 6355 will demonstrate competency in the respective course content at the 80% mastery level as determined by the professor of record using a department approved knowledge and skills end product assessment and scoring rubric.

Admission Requirements

To be admitted to the 30-hour graduate program in Educational Leadership, prospective candidates must first meet all requirements for graduate admission to UTRGV, as well as the other requirements listed below:

- 3.0 for Clear Admission
- GRE test scores
- 2.75-2.99 for Conditional Admission with GRE results as required by UTRGV. If applicant does not meet minimum undergraduate GPA criterion, GRE general test with minimum scores of 150 Verbal, 141 Quantitative, and 4.0 Analytical are required for conditional admission. GRE test scores are valid for 5 years.
- Official transcripts
- Vita/Resume including educational background and work experience

Application Deadlines

All application materials must be submitted according to UTRGV deadlines. The schedules are available on the UTRGV website. Once the application is complete, the program coordinator makes admission decisions. Prospective students will be informed of admission decisions through the Graduate Office and by the OSL department chair. Application for admission must be submitted before the published deadline. The application is available on the Graduate School website.

Department Requirements for Graduate Students

Transfer Hours

A maximum of nine (9) semester hours of relevant coursework may be transferred to the master's degree and applied to the degree plan, if approved, by the department chair. No course lower than a B may be transferred.

Changes to the Degree Plan

Any deviations from the degree plan must be approved by the program coordinator. Students must complete a *Petition to Change Degree Plan* form and submit it to the department's administrative assistant for processing. The degree plan change is not approved until the petition has been signed by the program coordinator, the department chair and the Dean of the College of Education & P16 Integration. Once the change is approved, the form will be sent to the Office of the Registrar.

Graduate Requirement of the Leadership and Fitness Dispositions

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical, responsible, and professional manner. This conduct is evaluated through the Leadership and Fitness Dispositions (LFD) policy as an element of a student's performance in the program. The purpose of the LFD review process is to regularly monitor students' professional and personal development to ensure students demonstrate appropriate progress towards developing the necessary behaviors, attitudes, and professional competencies to practice as school leaders or leaders of other organizations. Students who do not comply with the LFD policy may be removed from the program.

Each semester students will be evaluated based on the dispositions that are included in the Student Handbook on Policy and Guidelines for Professional Dispositions in the Department of Organization and School Leadership. Students will be evaluated in each course every semester while enrolled in the graduate program and the results will be uploaded into the Student Portfolio that is found in TK20.

Graduation Requirements of Portfolio A & B

Portfolio A

Each student will be reviewed within the first 12 hours of their coursework. This 12-credit hour check is to review students' progress (grades) through the program. Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in the degree program within the first 12 hours attempted. If students fail to meet this standard, a review conference will be scheduled with the program coordinator to determine next steps of continuous in the program. After this review conference and students are removed from the program, students have a right to follow the due process outlined by UTRGV.

Portfolio B Oral Defense

During the last semester of coursework, students shall apply to take the Portfolio B Oral Defense with the department administrative assistant. Students must complete and pass the Portfolio B Oral Defense to fulfill degree requirements for graduation. If a student fails the Oral Defense, they must petition in writing for a retake of the Portfolio B Oral Defense within 10 days. Should they fail a second time, students will need to retake the course related to the end product presented at the Oral Defense.

The requirements consist of a thirty-minute oral defense in front of a faculty committee from the OSL Department. This oral defense consists of three parts:

1. 10-minute presentation of a reflective paper;
2. 10-minute powerpoint presentation of an end product of your choice from the 9-10 courses in the program;
3. 10-minute question/answer session where the Faculty Interview Committee will ask questions about the reflective paper or the end of course assessment.

To prepare for this final portfolio defense here is what you will need to prepare before the interview:

1. A two-page reflection that describes how you as future school administrator have benefitted from this program of study at UTRGV. Describe the experiences, perceptions, and knowledge you have acquired from the first course you took in the program to the completion of nine or ten courses in the educational leadership program. This paper will be uploaded into TK20 prior to the interview. The program coordinator will inform students during the last semester of the due date. (10 minutes)
2. An oral presentation of one end of course assessment using a powerpoint presentation. The oral presentation must include the name of the course (for example EDUL 6300). In the oral presentation, you need to explain how the end product helped you achieve the course standards and how the end product helped you demonstrate leadership at your current campus (place of employment). Moreover, as a future school administrator, how did the end products help you develop critical inquiry and reflective practice. This power point presentation will be uploaded into TK20 prior to the interview. The program coordinator will inform students during the last semester of the due date. (10 minutes)

3. A question/answer session where professors will ask questions about the reflective piece or the end of course assessment you presented. The committee will consist of professors from our department. (10 minutes)

The oral defense is scheduled for 30 minutes via ZOOM unless you are a traditional face-to-face student and would prefer a face-to-face interview. The OSL Coordinator will schedule these interviews during the semester of graduation.

University Policies for Graduate Students

Student Conduct Code

UTRGV students are expected to behave responsibly and with integrity. All students should be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or in part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission; (2) turning in another person's work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them; and (4) any form of cheating on exams or quizzes.

Violations of academic integrity/honesty may result in receiving a zero on the particular assignment in question, receiving an "F" in the course, and/or possible suspension or expulsion from the University. Academic integrity/honesty is a matter of professional ethics for anyone involved in the field of education.

University Email

University policy requires all electronic communication between the University and students be conducted through the official University supplied systems. Students must use their assigned mail or Blackboard account for all correspondence with UTRGV faculty and staff.

Disability Services

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disability Services office for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities fully or to meet course requirements. Students who receive accommodation services must register with the Student Accessibility Services, University Center #108, 665-7005 or sas@utrgv.edu

Sexual Harassment Policies

The University condemns sexual harassment of or by its students, staff, and faculty. The University is committed to the principle that the learning and working environment of its students, employees, and guests should be free from sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is illegal. Sexual misconduct and sexual harassment are unprofessional behaviors. Such conduct is prohibited as a matter of institutional policy and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students who believe they are victims of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct are encouraged to immediately report the incident to the Dean of Students, the EO/AA Officer, or

the supervisor of the accused individual. The Dean of Students, or his or her designee, will work in consultation with the EO/AA Officer to resolve the complaint.

Academic Appeals

Students wishing to appeal final grades or misunderstandings in academic standards should first discuss the matter with the individual instructor of the class. If no resolution occurs, and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, he or she should appeal in writing to the department chair involved within one year after the disputed grade is issued or the misunderstanding occurred. The department chair will respond in writing to the student within ten class days of receipt of the student's written appeal. Pursuant appeals will be written and directed within ten class days of the date of the department chair's decision to the school, college, or division Academic Appeals Committee. The committee will consist of a panel of three faculty members, two of whom may not be from the department in which the appeal originated. The dean/director will appoint the panel members upon receipt of the written appeal and notify the student in writing of the date, time, and location of the hearing and the names of the members of the panel. The hearing will take place within ten class days of the dean's/director's receipt of the student's written appeal. The student and the faculty member involved may appear in person before the panel and present evidence and/or witnesses. The hearing will be closed to the public and no person other than the student, the faculty member involved, and panel members may be present. No person may represent the student or the faculty member.

After the Academic Appeals Committee has heard the appeal, it will deliberate and come to a decision. The committee's decision will be written and mailed or emailed to the student and faculty member within ten class days of the close of the hearing.

The student may appeal in writing within ten class days to the dean/director. The dean's/director's decision will be final and must be mailed or emailed to the student within ten class days of the receipt of the student's written appeal.

Academic Probation and Suspension

If a graduate student makes less than a B average in a given semester, the student will be placed on academic probation and warned that continuance in the program is in jeopardy. Graduate students on academic probation must, during the following regular semester (or summer school), recoup a cumulative graduate grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Those who do not will be suspended.

A suspended graduate student may petition for readmission. The petition includes submitting a written request through the Coordinator of the Graduate Program to the Dean of the College. The Dean may approve or deny admission to the graduate program. If the Dean of the College recommends readmission to the graduate program for a suspended graduate student, the Dean forwards the student's petition to the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies for final approval.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An Incomplete Grade ("I") is a temporary grade given only during the last one-fourth of a term/semester and only if a student: (1) is passing the course to date, and (2) has a justifiable and documented reason, beyond the control of the student (such as serious illness or military service), for not completing the work on schedule.

The student must arrange with the instructor to finish the course within one (1) semester by completing specific requirements. These requirements must be listed on a form signed by the instructor, student, department chair and Dean. This form must be received by the Office of the Registrar by the published deadline for faculty to enter grades. Grades of “I” assigned to a course at the end of a regular semester will default to an “F” at the end of one year unless the student completes the requirements and the faculty member processes a grade change for the course.

Faculty Concerns about a Student

According to H.O.P. policy, when a faculty or staff member sees student behavior that is concerning, disruptive or threatening, they will refer the matter to the Student Concern Intervention Team (SCIT) at 665-5375. SCIT will assess the situation and coordinate a response that protects the safety and rights of everyone within the university community.

If faculty or staff members receive a credible report that a student has engaged in, or threatened suicidal behaviors, that student will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Program Requirements for Master’s Degree

*EDUL 6300: Data Management for School Improvement	3
*EDUL 6305: Socio-Cultural Contexts of Education	3
*EDUL 6310: Organizational Leadership	3
*EDUL 6318: Equity, Ethics and Diversity	3
*EDUL 6320: Curriculum Leadership for School Involvement	3
*EDUL 6325: Instructional Leadership	3
*EDUL 6330: Instructional Leadership for Diverse Learners	3
*EDUL 6335: Supervision of Instruction	3
*EDUL 6350: The Principalship	3
*EDUL 6355: Administration of Human Resources and Budgeting	3
Total hours required for degree:	30

*Courses may require field-based hours which will be completed outside of class time.

Course Descriptions

*EDUL 6300: Data Management for School Improvement [3-0]
 This course focuses on analyzing and interpreting campus data for decision-making necessary to promote the success of all children. Special emphasis will be on developing action plans to meet student performance goals. Additionally, the course focuses on the development of educators as leaders in assessment, research, and evaluation. Applicable laws, policies, and regulations including local, state, and federal accountability standards will be emphasized.

*EDUL 6305: Socio-Cultural Contexts of Education [3-0]
 This course develops an understanding of how socio-cultural forces and emerging issues impact the school leader’s role in creating culturally responsive learning environments. Attention will be given to leadership strategies and best practices essential for addressing

diverse learners. Future leaders learn to promote the success of all students and shape campus culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the full community. Applicable laws, policies, and regulations will be emphasized. A minimum of 20 hours of field-based experiences is required.

*EDUL 6310: Organizational Leadership [3-0]
This course emphasizes an examination of self and the study of major organizational leadership models and their applicability in various school settings. Students will engage in field-based activities as they pertain to decision making and problem-solving. Additionally, appropriate management techniques and group processes will be emphasized. A minimum of 20 hours of field-based activities is required.

*EDUL 6318: Ethics, Equity and Diversity [3-0]
Students will learn to model and promote the highest standard of conduct, ethical principles, and integrity in all decision making, actions, and behaviors to establish equity and acceptance of diversity in the school community.

*EDUL 6320: Curriculum Leadership for School Involvement [3-0]
In this course, students will learn to facilitate the design and implementation of curricula and strategic plans that enhance teaching and learning. Emphasis is on the alignment of curriculum, curriculum resources, and assessment, and the use of various forms of assessment to measure student performance. It will include the research of successful strategies for identified student groups. Applicable laws, policies, and regulations will be emphasized.

*EDUL 6325: Instructional Leadership [3-0]
This course examines effective instructional approaches and programs used in schools. It explores critical issues specific to curriculum, innovative instructional methods, and the role of educators as school leaders. Additionally, the course focuses on the development of educators as leaders in assessment, research, and evaluation. Applicable laws, policies, and regulations will be emphasized.

*EDUL 6330: Instructional Leadership for Diverse Learners [3-0]
This course provides a study of the delivery of differentiated instruction for diverse learners to include Bilingual Education/ESL, Gifted & Talented, Migrant, Special Education, 504, Career & Technology Education (CATE), and other special programs. Emphasis is placed on the principal's role of elementary and secondary school programs. Applicable laws, policies, and regulations will be emphasized. A minimum of 20 hours of field-based experiences is required.

*EDUL 6335: Supervision of Instruction [3-0]
This course will study the ways in which principals can incorporate supervision into their organizational behavior and work with teachers to create instructional practices that raise the level of teaching and learning in the classroom. Students will learn how to use aspects of effective supervision and teaching strategies when working with teachers during the observation/evaluation process. Strategies for coaching and mentoring teachers for improved student achievement will be presented throughout the course.

*EDUL 6350: The Principalship [3-0]

This course examines a study of the unique functions of the principalship as they relate to the administration of elementary, middle, and high schools. Special emphasis will be focused on the leadership role of the principal in the management and instructional aspects of the school programs. Applicable laws, policies, and regulations will be emphasized. A minimum of 20 hours of field-based experiences is required.

*EDUL 6355: Administration of Human Resources & Budgeting [3-0]

This course provides a study of human resources and school budgeting functions. Emphasis is on understanding and applying local district and campus practices: e.g., recruitment, retention, evaluation. For budgeting, the emphasis is on aligning the budget to the campus plan and understanding how the various funding sources may be allocated. Applicable laws, policies, and regulations will be covered. A minimum of 20 hours of field-based experiences is required.

*Courses may require field-based hours which will be completed outside of class time.

Course Delivery Models

The OSL Department offers three types of program delivery. It offers a traditional program face-to-face, an accelerated online program, and school district partnership programs. Some traditional courses are also offered using a hybrid delivery of instruction.

Course Offerings in Summer Semesters

The department will offer a full complement of day and night courses during the summer terms. Please check with the department office for summer class hours.

Program Timeline

It is the student's responsibility to keep track of program deadlines.

1. Apply online at <https://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/for-future-students/how-to-apply/index.htm>

The application process is a comprehensive process, so make sure you apply early. You must be accepted by the Graduate School before enrolling for any graduate courses at UTRGV. However, acceptance into the UTRGV Graduate College does not ensure acceptance into the Organization & School Leadership program.

2. Two semesters before your anticipated graduation date, go to the Graduate School and fill out an Application for Graduation. (If you intend to graduate in May, apply for graduation the summer before). If your graduation date changes, later on, you will need to pay a fee and inform the Graduate School of your new graduation date.
3. During your last semester of coursework, you must complete Portfolio B Oral Defense. This must be successfully completed to graduate from the program.

Principal Certification Program

The Department of Organization and School Leadership offers the Principal Certification Program for students who have earned the master's degree in educational leadership from UTRGV. All students pursuing the principal certificate must meet UTRGV, College of Education & P16 Integration, and department graduate admission requirements. Admission requirements are found in the Principal Certification Program Requirements on the OSL Website.