

INTERDISCIPLINARY ED.D. FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

Director: Aimee LaPointe Terosky, Ed.D.

Program Description

The Interdisciplinary Doctor of Education Program for Educational Leaders (IDPEL) Ed.D. program prepares transformational leaders across K-12, higher education, and social sector fields who are committed to equity-oriented change. Four core values ground our work:

- **Community** – cohorts with strong peer-to-peer and faculty-student relationships in an inclusive learning environment
- **Academic Expectations + “Cura Personalis”** – high standards coupled with “caring for the whole person,” by recognizing that our students are professionals with full lives
- **Scholar-practitioner** – applying knowledge and research to problems of practice
- **Social Justice** –critically examining systems of power in order to advance equity in the Jesuit tradition

Students enrolled in IDPEL can pursue one of the following concentrations: K-12 Education, Higher Education, or Social Sectors (e.g., Healthcare Leadership, Non-profit/Foundation Leadership, Criminal Justice Leadership, etc.). Students in the K-12 concentration can obtain Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) approved certifications in: Principal, Curriculum Supervisor, and Superintendent’s Letter of Eligibility.

IDPEL comprises 60 credits, with most students completing the Ed.D. degree in four years. In Years 1 and 2, students take six courses per year (two per semester including the Summer semester); in Year 3, students take four courses (no Summer courses); in Year 4, students take one course of dissertation advisement each semester as they complete their dissertation. If additional dissertation time is needed, students can continue to enroll in dissertation advisement until they reach 10 years from the start of coursework. The program follows a flexible instructional delivery model. Students attend face-to-face courses on SJU’s campus one night per week and the remainder of course content is provided through other forms of instructional delivery, primarily online or practice-based projects.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

Goal #1: Our graduates will develop strong qualitative and quantitative research skills in order to be critical consumers and producers of knowledge.

- Objective 1.1: Students will acquire qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research skills as a tool for collecting and using data for leading change and making decisions in their fields
- Objective 1.2: Students will develop the capacity to design and implement their dissertation research according to the scholarly and technical requirements of the field.

Goal #2: Our graduates will develop a strong foundation in their field’s theoretical and empirical literature, as well as the capacity to apply theory to practice-based problems.

- Objective 2.1: Students will develop a strong foundation in their field’s theoretical and empirical literature.

- Objective 2.2: Students will demonstrate the ability to apply a theoretical framework or empirical study to a problem of practice, as well as the capacity to reflect on the efficacy of their decision-making.

Goal #3: Our graduates will develop a strong foundation in leadership focused on inclusive cultures, social justice, and equity-minded change.

- Objective 3.1: Students will develop the capacity to participate in and lead inclusive cultures in their field.
- Objective 3.2: Students will develop critical analysis skills and practices around the role of social justice in equity-minded change.

Goal #4: Our graduates will develop mastery of specific skills that they can apply to their professional fields.

- Objective 4.1: Students will develop an understanding of the impact of historical, political, and contextual perspectives on their professional practices.
- Objective 4.2: Students will develop the capacity to apply effective leadership practices in their field, including mission, strategic planning, finance/operations, learning design, and communications.

Course	Title	Hours
First Year		
Fall		
EDL 800	Prof Sem: Doctoral Studies	3
EDL 830	Critical Ldsh: Social Justice	3
		Hours 6
Spring		
EDL 805	Quantitative Research I	3
EDL 820	Interdisciplinary Ldsh Theory	3
		Hours 6
Summer		
EDL 845 or EDL 846	Historical, Political, & Legal Contexts of Leadership: K-12 or Hist/Pol/LegalContxt Ldsh: HE	3
EDL 875	Organizator Theory&Cha	3
		Hours 6
Second Year		
Fall		
EDL 835	Qualitative Research I	3
EDL 860	Strat Plan,Eval,Fiscal Resour	3
		Hours 6

Spring			
EDL 840	Mixed Methods Research	3	
EDL 850 or EDL 851	Learning Design&Envr. K-12 or Learning Design&I HE	3	
Hours		6	
Summer			
EDL 880	Community Engaged Leadership	3	
EDL 885	Global Perspectives on Ldsh	3	
Hours		6	
Third Year			
Fall			
EDL 870 or EDL 871	Proposal Writing: K-12 or Proposal Writing: Higher Educa	3	
EDL 855 or EDL 856	Scholar-Practitioner Sem: K-12 or Scholar-Practi Sem:High Ed	3	
Hours		6	
Spring			
EDL 890 or EDL 891	Adv Resrch Method: Quant/ Mixed or Adv Resrch Method: Qualitati	3	
EDL 865	Comm & Research Dissemination	3	
Hours		6	
Fourth Year			
Fall			
EDL 893	Dissertation Study I	12	
Hours		12	
Spring			
EDL 894	Dissertation Study II	0	
Hours		0	
Fifth Year			
Fall			
EDL 899	Dissertation Study III	0	
Hours		0	
Total Hours		60	

EDL 800 Prof Sem: Doctoral Studies (3 credits)

This course serves a multifaceted purpose including: introduction to the doctoral program mission and expectations; community building among students, faculty, and alumni; facilitation of interpersonal skills needed in inclusive cultures; development of organizational and study skills for success in doctoral work; and initial review of academic writing, including the structure of scholarly writing, APA style, and critical consumption of knowledge.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 805 Quantitative Research I (3 credits)

This course provides students with empirical research experience through a variety of quantitative measures and techniques. The first half of the course focuses on functional familiarity with the evaluation of quantitative research reports, research design, methods of data collection, statistical analysis and interpretation of data, and the reporting of research findings. The second portion of the course emphasizes a continuation of instruction on quantitative research and statistical analyses specific to work in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The course culminates in the complete process of constructing a quantitative research study.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 820 Interdisciplinary Ldsh Theory (3 credits)

This course provides an interdisciplinary space for discussing the concept of leadership and its practical application in organizations. This course is therefore grounded in the "scholar-practitioner" model, whereby theory is applied in practice within a cycle of reflection and action. The purpose of this course is to establish a historical, theoretical, and practical basis for understanding leaders and leadership and will strive to provide various disciplinary lenses to help leaders better understand themselves and their organizations.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 830 Critical Ldsh: Social Justice (3 credits)

This course explores how historical relations of power have shaped current leadership practices in institutions such as schools, universities, health organizations, or non-profits. By engaging students in critical conversations on how social constructions of race, class, ethnicity, and gender have articulated notions of leadership that have further marginalized already disempowered groups, the course will pay particular attention to issues of knowledge, representation and identity. Ultimately, the course offers new analytical tools to create new spaces of possibilities in leadership grounded on the notions of justice, solidarity and allyship.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 835 Qualitative Research I (3 credits)

This course provides an overview of qualitative research approaches, including an examination of foundational research paradigms and a variety of qualitative research methods and techniques. Students will gain a functional familiarity with the evaluation of qualitative research reports, research design, data collection methods, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of research findings.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 840 Mixed Methods Research (3 credits)

This research method course continues the development of students' understanding of educational research methodology and techniques. The central focus of the course is the opportunity for students to design, implement, and assess mixed methods research within an authentic educational context. Students will develop relevant research skills, including project management, analytical skills, research communication, and writing skills.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 845 Historical, Political, & Legal Contexts of Leadership: K-12 (3 credits)

This course presents an interdisciplinary approach to key historical events and documents shaping American society and education, specifically by overviewing how policy development, laws, and court decisions shape education. The course will highlight tensions around power, particularly between majority and non-majority perspectives on past, current, and present issues facing K-12 education.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 846 Hist/Pol/LegalContxt Ldsh: HE (3 credits)

This course overviews key historical, political, and legal elements that shaped and continue to shape institutions of higher education. The course will highlight tensions around power, particularly between majority and non-majority perspectives on past, current, and present issues facing higher education. Options available for students interested in social sector careers include applicable topics for papers, projects, and readings.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 850 Learning Design&Env: K-12 (3 credits)

This course examines elements of design that shape the learning and working experiences of individuals in schools. Through an overview of learning theories (e.g., pedagogical design, student and adult learning theories, communities of learners), architectural, space, and facilities theories, and legal/policy regulations, this course facilitates the practical application of creatively and effectively designing, creating, and managing learning environments for the growth of all schools and all learners. Across this course's content, students will study how physical, organizational, and socially constructed environments shape student, adult, and organizational learning.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 851 Learning Design&Env: HE (3 credits)

This course examines elements of design that shape the learning and working experiences of individuals in institutions of higher education and social sector organizations. Through an overview of learning theories (e.g., pedagogical design, student and adult learning theories, sense of community) and architectural, space, and facilities design theory, this course facilitates the practical application of creatively and effectively designing, creating, utilizing, operating, and renovating learning environments and educational facilities. Across this course's content, students will study how physical, organizational, and socially constructed environments shape student and adult learning and their sense of community.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 855 Scholar-Practitioner Sem: K-12 (3 credits)

The course has a twofold purpose: First, students will engage in culminating assessments that demonstrate their knowledge and practical application of program objectives, content, and skills. Second, students will engage in sessions around effective leadership practices, diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, career advancement, and other special topics.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 856 Scholar-Practi Sem:Higher Ed (3 credits)

This course has a twofold purpose: First, students will engage in culminating assessments that demonstrate their knowledge and practical application of program objectives, content, and skills. Second, students will engage in sessions around effective leadership practices, diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, career advancement, and other special topics.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 860 Strat Plan, Eval, Fiscal Resour (3 credits)

This course examines the foundations of educational planning and assessment in a project-oriented course with an emphasis on assessing needs, identifying environmental changes, establishing goals, drafting strategic plans, setting metrics to measure success, identifying resources (i.e., human capital, financial, others), and implementing strategic plans. In addition to strategic planning, this course analyzes the role of assessment and evaluation in terms of institutional effectiveness, achievement of plan goals, and government compliance requirements, as well as funding strategies and fiscal resource allocation. An overarching goal is to explore the role of internal, external, cultural, social, political, and cultural factors in education planning and assessment. This course maintains modules in which students are divided for a portion of the course by area of concentration (e.g., K-12, Higher Education, Other Social Sector Areas).

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 865 Comm & Research Dissemination (3 credits)

This course studies effective written and verbal communication for professional settings, as well as the dissemination of research findings to scholarly, practitioner, policymaker, and general audiences. A key focus of the course is to enhance students' writing and presentation style through various individual and group methods.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 870 Proposal Writing: K-12 (3 credits)

In this course, students will structure and present their dissertation topic by developing complete drafts of Chapters One (Introduction) and Two (Literature Review). Students will learn how to articulate and align their research question, statement of the problem, operational definitions and relevant scholarly works in a professional manner using APA and IDEPEL guidelines. Students will select and secure a dissertation chair by the end of this course.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 871 Proposal Writing: Higher Educa (3 credits)

In this course, students will structure and present their dissertation topic by developing complete drafts of Chapters One (Introduction) and Two (Literature Review). Students will learn how to articulate and align their research question, statement of the problem, operational definitions and relevant scholarly works in a professional manner using APA and IDEPEL guidelines. Students will select and secure a dissertation chair by the end of this course.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 875 Organizational Theory&Change (3 credits)

This course examines the theoretical foundations of organizations and organizational change, including such topics as structures and power in organizations, organizational culture, approaches to decision-making, the change process, motivation theory, conflict management, effective communication, and ethical leadership.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 880 Community Engaged Leadership (3 credits)

This course serves as a practical opportunity for students to apply the content knowledge from their doctoral coursework to a community-based problem for a regional organization. Combining a practicum format with a social justice orientation, students will work collaboratively with community partners to identify a problem and develop a project for addressing the problem.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 885 Global Perspectives on Ldsh (3 credits)

This course applies theories of leadership and organizational development to the practice of leading schools, higher education institutions, and organizations. Through experiential learning, simulations, and career counseling strategies, students engage with topics such as self-identity and self-care as a leader, group and power dynamics, inclusive cultures, and career advancement.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 890 Adv Resrch Method: Quant/Mixed (3 credits)

This advanced research methodology course provides students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to design, conduct and report advanced quantitative and or mixed methods research studies related to topics in education and leadership. The expected outcome of this course is the development of a viable Chapter 3 of a dissertation proposal and obtaining a dissertation committee (i.e., content expert, methodologist).

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 891 Adv Resrch Method: Qualitative (3 credits)

This advanced research method course provides students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to design, conduct, and report advanced qualitative research studies in education and leadership. The expected outcome of this course is the development of a viable Chapter 3 (Methodology) and obtaining a dissertation committee (i.e., content expert, methodologist).

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 893 Dissertation Study I (6 credits)

This course provides individualized support from dissertation committee members as students' prepare and defend their dissertation proposal, apply for Institutional Review Board approval, collect data, analyze and write findings and discussions, defend their dissertation, and finalize post-defense steps.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 894 Dissertation Study II (6 credits)

This course provides individualized support from dissertation committee members as students' prepare and defend their dissertation proposal, apply for Institutional Review Board approval, collect data, analyze and write findings and discussions, defend their dissertation, and finalize post-defense steps.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

EDL 899 Dissertation Study III (0 credits)

This course provides individualized support from dissertation committee members as students prepare and defend their dissertation proposal, apply for Institutional Review Board approval, collect data, analyze and write findings and discussions, defend their dissertation, and finalize post-defense steps. This course includes a charge of 1.00 billable credit.

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Doctoral level students.

Attributes: Doctoral

Course Registration

The IDEPEL Director will automatically register all active students in their appropriate course(s). If students do not complete their dissertation by the end of Year 4, the IDEPEL Director will automatically register relevant students for EDL 899 every Fall and Spring semester until they defend their dissertation or reach the maximum of 10 years from the start of their coursework.

Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) and Program Dismissal

IDEPEL students will be dismissed from the program for any of the following reasons: (a) students who do not meet a minimum of a 3.0 GPA after two semesters of academic probation, (b) students who receive the grade of C+ or lower in four or more classes, (c) students who do not defend their dissertation proposal within five years from the start of coursework, and/or (d) students who do not defend their dissertations within 10 years from the start of coursework. Students with a GPA of less than a 3.0 will not be permitted to sit for the comprehensive exam during their third year.

Leaves of Absence

It is expected that each student will remain with their original cohort in all activities and experiences during the four-year period. In the event of a personal or professional crisis, students in good academic standing can request a leave of absence for one academic year (three semesters) with the IDEPEL Director. If approved, the leave of absence excuses the student from tuition costs during the leave. At the end of the leave of absence (three semesters), the student is permitted to rejoin the program by enrolling in courses with the next cohort.

Years to Complete the Program

Students have a total of five years from the start of coursework to defend the dissertation proposal and 10 years from the start of coursework to defend the dissertation and complete all degree requirements or be dismissed from the program.

Graduation Process

After a successful dissertation defense, students must complete all of the post-dissertation defense requirements before their diplomas and transcripts can be released. Post-dissertation defense requirements include: signatory pages, revised, copyedited/formatted, and approved manuscript, IRB Closure Report, Library Requirements (i.e., dissertation abstract, ProQuest, and bindery), and registration for graduation.