



Kean University
College of Education

Setting the Standard for Excellence

Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program

Doctoral Student Handbook

2025-2026

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Welcome Letter

Dear Students,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Ed.D. program at the Kean University College of Education. It is our sincere desire that your experience here will be a positive one and that you will grow as both a practitioner and a scholar. Please know that as a department, we are here to assist you in any way possible.

The Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership seeks to develop visionary educational leaders and transformational change agents, capable of making sound decisions pertaining to shifts in educational policies. Our doctoral program is a unique blend based on a scholar-practitioner model and sets ambitious learning outcomes for our students. Emphasizing theory, research, and practice, our distinguished and experienced faculty will provide you with a well-rounded educational experience.

This student handbook is written to guide you through your doctoral studies and the dissertation process. In the handbook, you will find information on faculty, course requirements, program policies, and dissertation procedures. Please take the time to carefully read and acquaint yourself with our policies and procedures. Should you have any further questions, you may contact the Ed.D. Program Coordinator.

It is our goal that you will receive your doctoral degree from Kean University and become a leader who will make a difference in your school community. To this end, we look forward to working with you throughout the program. Your success is important, as you will have a direct impact on the educational environment.

We welcome you!

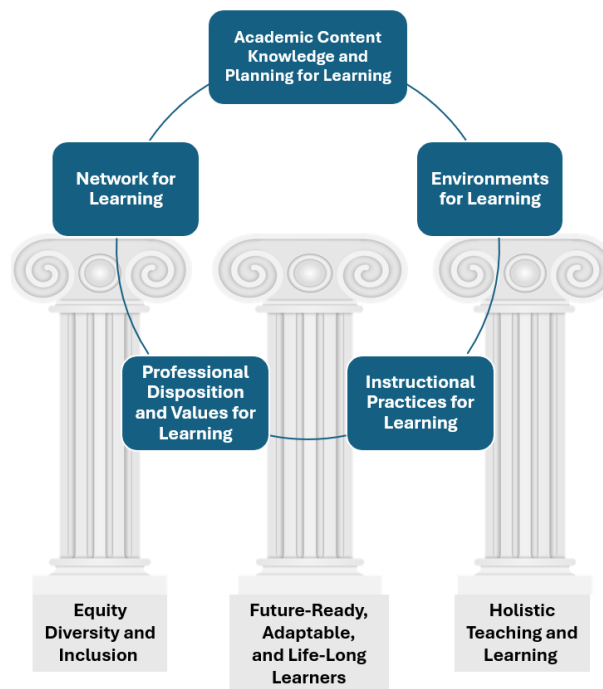
Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary
Education

Kean University Mission Statement

Kean University, New Jersey’s first Urban Research University, creates a world-class, innovative, and inclusive society through equity and excellence in teaching, learning, global research, and impactful public engagement.

College of Education Mission Statement

The College of Education’s mission is to prepare professionals who are committed to equity, excellence, and evolution, and have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to succeed in diverse settings.



In accordance with the missions of Kean University and the College of Education, the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) program is dedicated to developing the next generation of educational leaders. Candidates have a choice to focus on either K-12 public school administration or higher education. The doctoral program prepares future administrators with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively lead school districts, educational organizations, and colleges and universities.

The curriculum is based on an innovative, interdisciplinary, professionally oriented model that integrates coursework and practical experience, culminating in an internship in a school district or educational agency. The program is designed to create an advanced and diverse learning environment which supports personal and professional growth.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Kean University
Dorothy Grant Hennings Hall, Room 328
1000 Morris Avenue
Union, New Jersey 07083

Dr. Barbara Lee, Chairperson
Email: blee@kean.edu

Dr. Efthima Christie, Doctoral Program Coordinator and K-12 Program Advisor
Email: efthimia.christie@kean.edu

Dr. Liza Bolitzer, Higher Education Program Adviser
Email: LBolitze@Kean.edu

Mrs. Wanda Gonzalez, Professional Service Specialist
Email: gonzalwa@kean.edu

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FACULTY

Full-time Faculty

DR. SANCHA K. GRAY

Doctor of Education, Monmouth University
Senior Vice President for Entrepreneurial Education Initiatives
Acting Dean, College of Education, Kean University USA
Interim Dean, College of Education, Wenzhou-Kean University
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

Dr. Gray is an experienced scholar and educational leader dedicated to advancing equity, innovation, and excellence in educator preparation. Her research and practice focus on how schools, universities, and education systems can strengthen teacher development and improve student learning outcomes across diverse contexts. Central to her work is the belief that transformative leadership and professional learning drive lasting educational change. Dr. Gray has shared her scholarship in Challenges and Transition in Education in Times of Crisis and through national and international presentations on literacy, school transformation, and global teacher preparation.

DR. CARLOS RODRIGUEZ

Doctor of Education, Higher Education Administration, The University of Southern Mississippi
Senior Vice President for Administration
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

Dr. Rodriguez is an experienced scholar–practitioner and executive leader dedicated to advancing equity, innovation, and student success across K–12 and higher education. His work focuses on data-informed leadership, educational policy, and institutional transformation that promote access and excellence for all learners. Central to his research and teaching is a commitment to developing culturally responsive leaders through mentorship and applied learning. Dr. Rodriguez has shared his scholarship through publications and national presentations on topics such as data democratization, Hispanic student achievement, and systemic reform in education.

DR. MICHAEL SALVATORE

Doctor of Philosophy, North Central University
Senior Vice President for Administration
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

Dr. Salvatore is an experienced educator and executive leader dedicated to advancing equity, innovation, and student success in higher education. His work focuses on leveraging data-driven decision-making and collaborative leadership to strengthen institutional effectiveness and promote inclusive excellence. Central to his leadership is a commitment to expanding access, improving outcomes, and building sustainable systems that support learning for all students. Dr. Salvatore has also shared his expertise through national presentations and his ongoing work co-leading Kean University’s Presidential Task Force for Research to achieve R2 status.

DR. JOSEPH YOUNGBLOOD, II

Doctor of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania
Crawford Fellow, Penn Law and Netter Center Fellow,
and Arnold Award Winner for Doctoral Excellence
Chancellor of Kean University’s Global and Regional Campuses
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

Dr. Youngblood is an accomplished scholar and executive leader dedicated to advancing global learning, equity, and institutional innovation in higher education. His work focuses on building transformative university networks that expand access, strengthen research capacity, and promote cross-border collaboration. Central to his leadership is a commitment to using education as a catalyst for regional and global impact. Dr. Youngblood has shared his scholarship and policy expertise internationally through publications, presentations, and initiatives that advance public service, urban development, and global education.

DR. EFTHIMIA N. CHRISTIE

Doctor of Education, Seton Hall University

Assistant Professor and Doctoral Program Coordinator, Educational Leadership

*Dr. Christie is an experienced educator and scholar dedicated to advancing leadership, equity, and excellence in K–12 and higher education. Her research and professional practice focus on educational leadership, bilingual education, and the preparation of future educators. Central to her work is a commitment to fostering inclusive learning environments and supporting the success of language learners. Dr. Christie has shared her scholarship through numerous publications, including her recent book, *Democracy at Risk: A Reflective Review of the Educational Backgrounds of the Capitol Rioters*, published by Peter Lang.*

DR. LIZA BOLITZER

Doctor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Assistant Professor and Higher Education Program Coordinator, Educational Leadership

*Dr. Bolitzer's work focuses on advancing teaching and learning in higher education. She uses qualitative research methods to study how college faculty, institutional leaders, and higher education professionals can advance college students' academic learning. Central to her research is building understandings of professional learning for faculty and higher education professionals. Dr. Bolitzer has shared her work in *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, *The Review of Higher Education*, *The Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* and *The Journal of Faculty Development*.*

DR. ALEX GUZMÁN

Doctor of Education, College of Saint Elizabeth

Assistant Professor and Master's Program Coordinator, Educational Leadership

Dr. Guzmán's research focuses on diversifying the teacher workforce, educational leadership, and the intersection of bilingual and science education. He has over 25 years of experience in K-12 education and higher education as a Chemistry and Physics Teacher, High School Principal, and Director of Curriculum. Dr. Guzmán has spearheaded the Minority Teacher Grant at Kean University, increasing the pipeline to the teaching workforce for candidates of color.

DR. LAUREN WELLS

Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Policy, University of California Los Angeles

Master of Arts, Educational Leadership from Teachers College, Columbia University

Bachelor of Arts in English from Temple University

Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership

*Lauren Wells (she/her) is a former classroom teacher, community organizer, and Chief Education Officer for the City of Newark. Dr. Wells has spent over 20 years working alongside communities to confront institutional harm and reimagine how schools, educators, and policymakers engage in educational and social change—particularly with and for Black students and families. Her research and practice are grounded in the belief that true transformation must be systemic, relational, and rooted in the epistemologies of the communities it aims to serve. She is the author of *There Are No Deficits Here: Disrupting Anti-Blackness in Education* (Corwin Press).*

Adjunct Faculty

Dr. Edward Aldarelli
Doctor of Education, Saint Peter's University
Superintendent, Edison Township Public School

Dr. Vincent Caputo
Doctor of Education, Saint Peter's University
Superintendent, Metuchen Boro School District

Dr. Nathan Fisher
Doctor of Education, Nova Southeastern University
Superintendent, Roselle Public Schools

Dr. Charles R. Ford
Doctor of Education, Nova Southeastern University
Superintendent, Monmouth County Vocational School District

Dr. Mary A. Garofalo
Doctor of Philosophy, Seton Hall University.
Director of Learning Support Services, Kean University

Dr. Richard Labbe
Doctor of Education, Educational Leadership and Administration, Nova Southeastern University
Superintendent, Sayreville School District

Dr. Marnie G. McKoy
Doctor of Education, Seton Hall University
Former Assistant Superintendent, New Brunswick Public Schools

Dr. Courtney Pepe
Doctor of Education, Lamar University
Director of Instructional Technology, Perth Amboy Public Schools

Dr. Danny Robertozzi
Doctor of Education, Kean University
Superintendent, Clifton Public Schools

Dr. Lavetta Ross
Doctor of Education, Seton Hall University
Former Principal, Freehold High School

Dr. Stephen Yurchak
Doctor of Education, Kean University
Superintendent, Arlington School District

Dr. Brian Zychowski
Doctor of Education, Seton Hall University
Acting Superintendent, North Brunswick District

This handbook consists of three major sections: I. Completing the Doctoral Program; II. Program Options; and III. Completing the Doctoral Dissertation. These sections describe the requirements, program elements, policies, procedures, and protocols that apply to all doctoral students from the time of admission to publication.

SECTION I: COMPLETING THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

This section of the handbook provides students with an overview of the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program and the process and procedures to be followed.

Program Requirements

There are two tracks within the Ed.D. program: K-12 Educational Administration and Higher Education. See Section II of this handbook for the program requirements for each track.

Course Delivery

All classes are hybrid, consisting of a mix of in-person, remote synchronous, and remote asynchronous meetings. Faculty determine the modality of class sessions based on the learning objectives of the course. The program follows a cohort model, where cohorts take two classes together in the fall, spring, and summer semesters. As a result, students must adhere to the scheduled/offered courses.

Course Sequence

The course sequence applies to students who enter with a Master's degree in educational admin, education or equivalent totaling 36 credits. The course sequence may be subject to change. Students will be notified should this occur. Upon completion of the 54 credits (listed below), students must maintain their status as matriculated students by registering for EDL 7103, Dissertation Continuation, a 2-credit course for the Fall, Spring, and Summer I semesters until they successfully defend their dissertation and submit their manuscript to ProQuest for publishing.

Credit Requirements and Time Limits

It is expected that students will complete coursework (exclusive of the dissertation) within three years. Students must complete all coursework prior to defending their dissertation. The timeline for completion of the dissertation, post-course work, is dependent on students' progress in developing their study, defending the proposal, executing their study, and publishing to ProQuest. While it is possible to complete the dissertation within one semester, most candidates require more time.

The graduate program must be completed within a six-year time limit, with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better. If circumstances prevent a student from completing a program within the required six-year time frame, an extension may be considered upon submission of a formal request to the Office of the Registrar. Students must consult with their program coordinators for approval.

During this 6-year period, students who must leave the University temporarily, either for medical or personal reasons, may request a leave of absence, referred to as Health and Wellness Absences, from the [Kean Wellness Center](#).

Unless the student is granted a formal leave of absence, they are required to register for Dissertation Continuation (EDL 7103), each semester after the completion of course work, until the oral defense and publication are complete.

Student Expectations

It is the student's responsibility to follow the requirements, program elements, policies, procedures, and protocols contained in this handbook and in the [current Kean University Graduate Catalog](#). In addition, all students must meet the standards of academic integrity as found in the [Kean University Academic Integrity Policy](#). Violation of these standards results in disciplinary action. Students are expected to comport themselves professionally and ethically throughout their doctoral studies including all course work, the administrative internship, and the dissertation research process.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Kean University is committed to nurturing in its students the growth of intellectual reasoning, academic and professional values, personal and research ethics, and social responsibility. Kean University provides academically rigorous undergraduate and graduate programs that adhere to the twin principles of honesty and academic integrity. These principles are essential to ensuring and maintaining excellence in the quality of its academic institutional programs and facilitating the intellectual development of its students. Therefore, academic dishonesty in any form – written or non-written, media or technology – seriously compromises the mission of Kean University to provide quality programs and opportunities for optimum development of all students.

Maintaining high standards of academic integrity is the obligation of all members of the Kean community – students, faculty, and administrators. It ensures the application of the highest academic standards and principles of conduct, honesty, and truth. An individual's work must reflect that person's own efforts and achievements. The University maintains that all members of the academic community are expected to employ the highest standards of academic integrity in their work. Any violation of such will be subject to a sanction based on the infraction, which may include a reprimand, reduction in grade, failing grade, suspension, or dismissal from the university.

For the complete Academic Integrity Policy, please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Artificial Intelligence Expectations

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the technology that enables computers to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. Generative AI is software that generates content, including text, images, simulations, or other media. Generative AI (GenAI) includes programs such as ChatGPT, GPT 4, DALL-E, Quillbot, Vertex, and many others to come.

Faculty members specify in their course syllabi how AI and GenAI may be used in their classes. These guidelines may vary from course to course. Students are required to adhere to the specific requirements outlined in each syllabus.

For the complete Artificial Intelligence Expectations, please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Title IX

Sexual harassment in any form will not be tolerated at Kean University. Sexual harassment violates the dignity and rights of the University community. In addition, it is a form of sexual discrimination prohibited by the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination, N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (*as amended in 1991*). The Board of Trustees of Kean University recognizes its responsibility to ensure a working and learning environment free from discrimination, including sexual harassment. The University prohibits sexual harassment in accordance with campus policies and state and federal law. The University follows the New Jersey State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace.

Depending on the complaint, violations of the policy may be adjudicated through the Kean University student conduct process or the Office of Affirmative Action Programs. All complaints of sexual harassment should be brought to the attention of the Affirmative Action Officer immediately. Delayed reporting may impede a satisfactory resolution or hamper a proper investigation. Learn more: <https://www.kean.edu/titleix>

Grade Grievance Procedure

If a student believes that he or she has not been graded fairly in a course, it is the student's right to initiate a grade grievance. Requests for reconsideration of a grade must be brought to the faculty member as soon as possible after the conclusion of the course and no later than the end of the eighth week of the subsequent semester. The full policy including the appeal procedure can be found in the [current Kean University Graduate Catalog](#).

The student's overall academic standing is indicated by a grade point average. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 while completing the program. A GPA below 3.0 will result in academic probation and formal notification from the Office of the Dean.

Leave of Absence

Students who must leave the University temporarily, either for medical or personal reasons, may request a leave of absence. A leave of absence must be requested through the Kean Wellness Center. Included in the request should be the length of the leave and the circumstances surrounding the request. Leaves are typically granted for one or two semesters.

Students who have completed their course work, who are writing their dissertations and are enrolled in EDL 7103 – Dissertation Continuation, may request a one semester leave of absence for medical or personal reasons. During this leave of absence, students are not permitted to be in contact with their Dissertation Chair. This one semester leave of absence will be granted once.

If a student fails to request a leave of absence, the student may have to re-apply to the University. If the student believes their leave will last longer than the maximum leave allowance (one academic year), the student will have to file a Readmission Application at the time they wish to resume their studies.

Graduation Application and Commencement

Kean University confers degrees based on three annual cycles: January, May and August. Candidates must complete an online application in KeanWISE, and pay the applicable fee, by the stated deadline, to be considered for graduation (see ‘graduation information’ on the University Registrar’s webpage).

Applicants have three conferral cycles in order to fulfill their degree requirements before having to complete the application process again. This includes filling out a new application and repayment of the \$100 fee. Exceptions cannot be made, so proper planning with an academic advisor is imperative.

Please visit the Graduation Information page and the Kean Academic Calendar for more information. Questions or concerns should be directed to graduation@kean.edu or (908) 737-0400.

Doctor of Education Commencement Regalia

Graduates who intend to participate in the May commencement ceremony should order their regalia by the stated deadline (typically early March). Candidates have the option of ordering a standard souvenir (one-time use) gown with a doctoral tam or a fine quality gown (preferred) that is light blue with black velvet panels on the front and black velvet chevrons on the sleeves. To see the difference between Souvenir and Fine Quality Doctoral Regalia, and to order regalia, please visit:

<https://oakhallcg.com/pages/keandrcsm>

It is recommended that ordering regalia is done in conjunction with the filing of a Graduation Application Form. Participation in the commencement ceremony does not guarantee degree conferral. The Office of the Registrar must verify that all degree requirements, including the final submission to ProQuest, have been met in order to officially confer a degree.

Graduation Dates & Dissertation Defense Deadlines

The following defense deadline dates provide guidelines for successful completion of the defense to be eligible to meet the requirement for graduation.

January Graduate, the candidate must submit their final dissertation draft, successfully defend by November 1st and submit their final edited dissertation by December 15th.

May Graduate, the candidate must submit their final dissertation draft, successfully defend by April 1st and submit their final edited dissertation by May 1st.

August Graduate, the candidate must submit their final dissertation draft, successfully defend by June 1st and submit their final edited dissertation by July 15th.

SECTION II: PROGRAM OPTIONS

Program Requirements: K-12 Education Administration

For students concentrating in K-12 education administration, the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership program requires that students complete 90-credits beyond a bachelor's degree. Up to 36 graduate credits are accepted for a master's degree in educational administration. These credits will transfer to the Ed.D. Program upon the approval of the Program Coordinator and the Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary Education.

If a student holds a master's degree outside the approved prerequisite graduate program, may not be awarded the full 36 graduate credits. Students without an approved master's degree may be provisionally accepted into the Ed.D. Program, but may be required to complete Master's level courses in Educational Leadership, as they enroll in Doctoral level courses within the time specified by the Department. The prerequisite requirements are clearly articulated in the acceptance letter for all provisionally accepted students.

The K-12 education administration curriculum consists of 18 courses (3 credits each) for a total of 54-credits. Upon successful completion of 54-credits, students must maintain their status as matriculated students until they successfully complete and defend their dissertation.

To maintain their matriculation status, students must register for a 2-credit course, Dissertation Continuation EDL 7103, while they work on their dissertation. This requirement is implemented in the Fall, Spring, and Summer I semesters until the successful defense of their dissertation.

Courses: K-12 Education Administration track

FOUNDATIONS – 18 CREDITS		
EDL 6001	Political Policy Analysis	3 credits
EDL 6002	Legal and Policy Issues in Education	3 credits
EDL 6005	Organizational Theory and Change	3 credits
EDL 6101	Personnel Administration and Negotiations	3 credits
EDL 6102	Educational Finance and Resource Allocation	3 credits
EDL 6103	Program Assessment & Evaluation	3 credits
LEADERSHIP – 12 CREDITS		
EDL 6004	Educational Leadership and Decision Making	3 credits
EDL 6104	Instructional Leadership	3 credits
EDL 6105	Leadership and Diversity Issues	3 credits
EDL 6003	School and Community Partnership	3 credits
RESEARCH METHODS- 12 CREDITS		
EDL 6302	Educational Research	3 credits
EDL 6330	Introduction to Statistical Methods	3 credits
EDL 6331	Qualitative Research Methods	3 credits
EDL 6340	Advanced Quantitative Statistics	3 credits

CLINICAL PRACTICE- 6 CREDITS		
EDL 6201	Clinical Practicum in School District Administration I	3 credits
EDL 6202	Clinical Practicum in School District Administration II	3 credits
DISSERTATION- 6-8 CREDITS		
EDL 7101	Dissertation Seminar	3 credits
EDL 7102	Advanced Dissertation Seminar	3 credits
EDL 7103	Matriculation Continued	2 credits

TOTAL: 54-56 Credits

Course Descriptions

Course revisions are conducted to improve the quality of the learner experience, ensuring content remains accurate, relevant, and engaging. For the current course description please refer to the current Kean University Graduate Catalog or contact the program coordinator.

Clinical Practicum in School District Administration (K-12 Track)

During the beginning of the third year (fall), students will commence a full-year administrative field study under the guidance of a school superintendent or agency director and under the direction of a faculty advisor from the Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary Education. The Clinical Practicum in School District Administration requires the completion of 300 hours of field work over two semesters. Students will have to complete a comprehensive portfolio that represents their progress standards for school district leadership. This portfolio, which has multiple components, will be evaluated by the faculty advisor against a scoring rubric and requires a rating of ‘proficient’ or better.

The Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) align to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) and/or the National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP), as appropriate.

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards for advanced programs, particularly in leadership, are aligned with the NELP standards. Developed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), these standards guide the preparation, assessment, and accreditation of building and district-level educational leaders.

The New Jersey State Board of Education adopted the PSEL standards as the basis for licensure for school leaders. The standards serve as the basis for professional development, mentoring, and evaluations for school leaders, including principals, vice-principals, and supervisors.

The application for Clinical Practicums can be found on the Departmental Forms webpage.

Program Requirements: Higher Education Track

For students concentrating on Higher Education, The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership Program requires that students have a prior master's degree in higher education or a related field. Depending on the content of the prior master's program, students may be required to take additional master's level courses to prepare them for the doctoral program.

The Ed.D. Curriculum with a concentration in higher education consists of 18 courses (3 credits each) for a total of 54-credits. Upon successful completion of 54-credits, students must maintain their status as matriculated students until they successfully complete and defend their dissertation.

To maintain their matriculation status, students must register for a 2-credit course, Dissertation Continuation EDL 7103, while they work on their dissertation. This requirement is implemented in the Fall, Spring, and Summer I semesters until the successful defense of their dissertation.

Courses: Higher Education track

FOUNDATIONS – 18 CREDITS		
EDL 6001	Political Policy Analysis	3 credits
EDL 6002	Legal and Policy Issues in Education	3 credits
EDL 6005	Organizational Theory and Change	3 credits
EDL 6007	Literature of Educational Leadership	3 credits
EDL 6103	Program Assessment & Evaluation	3 credits
EDL 6006	College Student Development and Pathways	3 credits
EDL 6107	Curriculum and Instruction in Higher Education	3 credits
LEADERSHIP – 12 CREDITS		
EDL 6004	Educational Leadership and Decision Making	3 credits
EDL 6104	Instructional Leadership	3 credits
EDL 6105	Leadership and Diversity Issues	3 credits
EDL 6106	Organization and Leadership in Higher Education	3 credits
RESEARCH METHODS - 12 CREDITS		
EDL 6302	Educational Research	3 credits
EDL 6330	Introduction to Statistical Methods	3 credits
EDL 6331	Qualitative Research Methods	3 credits
EDL 6340	Advanced Quantitative Statistics	3 credits
CLINICAL PRACTICE - 3 CREDITS		
EDL 6201	Clinical Practicum in Administration I	3 credits
DISSERTATION- 6-8 CREDITS		
EDL 7101	Dissertation Seminar	3 credits
EDL 7102	Advanced Dissertation Seminar	3 credits
EDL 7103	Matriculation Continued	2 credits

TOTAL: 54-56 Credits

Course Descriptions

Course revisions are conducted to improve the quality of the learner experience, ensuring content remains accurate, relevant, and engaging. For the current course description please refer to the current Kean University Graduate Catalog or contact the program coordinator.

Clinical Practicum (Higher Education Track)

In the third year, students will commence a one semester administrative field study under the guidance of a higher education leader and under the direction of a faculty advisor from the Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary Education. The Clinical Practicum in higher education requires the completion of 150 hours of field work. Students will have to complete a comprehensive portfolio that represents their progress toward meeting the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in higher education for professionals (<https://www.cas.edu/>).

This portfolio, which has multiple components, will be evaluated by the faculty advisor against a scoring rubric and requires a rating of proficient or better.

SECTION III: COMPLETING THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation topic should be one that students feel passionate about, as they will spend a great deal of time conducting their study. The research question(s) addressed in the dissertation should be deemed appropriate, significant, and relevant to educational leadership by the student's Dissertation Chair and Committee Members.

Students are expected to address current educational issues grounded in theory. The appropriateness of the research topic, research question(s), and research methodology are conceptualized in the research and dissertation seminars and finalized in consultation with the Dissertation Chair.

The dissertation should demonstrate (a) mastery of theoretical, empirical, and applied literature relevant to the topic studied, (b) methodological knowledge relevant to the area of inquiry, (c) the ability to integrate research findings in a convincing, practical, and clear conclusion, and action plan, and (d) the ability to write clearly and concisely in the style adopted by the profession. In other words, the dissertation should be a sophisticated piece of written scholarship that demonstrates the ability to frame and address an educational issue and provide recommendations that can be adopted by practitioners.

Dissertation Process

The sequence of tasks required to successfully complete the dissertation is listed below with approximated program deadlines. Note: Dissertation Chairs may set earlier due dates. *It is recommended that students complete tasks earlier than the program deadlines.* Many of these tasks are described in detail in separate sections of this handbook. Forms must be submitted to verify some of these achievements. The required forms are available online at [Doctoral Forms](#).

Approximated Program Deadlines

The following dissertation tasks should be accomplished by the end of the Educational Research (EDL 6302):

- Develop possible topics/questions through exploration of relevant literature.
- Develop a robust annotated bibliography, identifying research articles from top tiered journals.
- Explore Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements of Kean University and the school district or education agency where research will be conducted.
- Complete Human Subjects Research training provided by the Collaborative Institutional Training Institute (CITI) program. CITI: <https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/>. To determine which course(s) need to be completed, please refer to the Kean IRB website: [Training: Overview of Training Requirements](#).

The following dissertation tasks should be accomplished by the end of the Advanced Quantitative Statistics (EDL 6340) and Qualitative Research (EDL 6331):

- Develop proficiency in statistical methods and qualitative methods.
- Draft a preliminary methodology chapter.

The following should be completed by the end of the student's second year (Spring & Summer I semester):

- In consultation with the Program Coordinator select dissertation chair (spring semester).
- Complete the *Dissertation Chair Form* and submit to the Program Coordinator.
- In consultation with dissertation chair and Program Coordinator recruit two additional committee members.
- Complete the *Doctoral Committee Form* and submit to the Program Coordinator.

The following dissertation tasks should be accomplished by the end of the Dissertation Seminar I (EDL 7101):

- Write final draft of Chapter 1 (chair/committee approved).
- Write final draft of Chapter 2 (chair/committee approved).

The following dissertation tasks should be accomplished by the end of Advanced Dissertation Seminar II (EDL 7102):

- Write final drafts of Chapter 3 (chair/committee approved).
- Under the guidance of the dissertation chair, schedule the dissertation proposal hearing with the full committee at least two weeks prior to the proposal presentation date.
- Present dissertation proposal to committee.
- Submit signed *Approval of Dissertation Proposal* form to the Program Coordinator on the day of the proposal presentation. Attach the student's IRB approval letter and PPT presentation to the form.
- Prepare Kean IRB application with dissertation chair.
- Obtain IRB approval/site authorization from research site (school district/education agency).
- Submit Kean IRB application (ONLY after successful proposal hearing) Make sure the following forms have been signed and submitted to the Program Coordinator:
 - Doctoral Student Information Form
 - Dissertation Chair Form
 - Doctoral Committee Form
 - Approval of Dissertation Proposal Form
 - IRB Approval Form (the student would have received this from the IRB)

The following dissertation tasks should be accomplished while maintaining student status (EDL 7103):

- Continue to refine and complete Chapters 1, 2, and 3 with the student's dissertation chair and committee, as needed.
- Continue with data analysis and write chapters 4 & 5 until approved by the chair and committee members.
- Follow all suggestions of the student's dissertation chair and committee members in preparation for oral defense.

Getting Started: Timeframe for Finding Chair/Developing Topic

Students are advised to consider possible dissertation topics from the beginning of their graduate experience. Through coursework, conversation, and review of the literature, it is expected that a topic will emerge that is suitable for the student to pursue as a dissertation. Serious efforts to find a suitable topic with the dissertation chair should begin no later than the spring of a student's second year in the program.

“Key Players” in the Dissertation Process

Each dissertation committee will be comprised of at least three individuals: the doctoral dissertation chair and two additional dissertation committee members.

The dissertation chair must be a Kean University faculty member from the Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary Education **OR** the College of Education. One committee member can come from outside of the Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary Education or the College of Education; however, prior approval of the Program Coordinator and Dissertation Chair is required. The Program Coordinator will recommend and aid the students in the selection of their chairs.

During the second year of the program, students should meet with the Program Coordinator to discuss their topic and seek advice on (a) the topic of the dissertation and (b) faculty/others to serve as dissertation chairs and committee members. The Program Coordinator is responsible for maintaining accurate records to ensure the distribution of research supervision is spread equitably among the members of the faculty. If a student asks for a faculty member who is already chairing more than 4 dissertations, the student will be advised to select another chairperson.

Committee Member Responsibilities and Grievances

All committee members are expected to attend the proposal presentation/defense and the final dissertation defense. Committee members must also be available to attend any additional meetings called by the dissertation chair.

If a student feels that the conduct of any committee member is inappropriate or not helpful, the student should first discuss this grievance with the dissertation chair. If the grievance remains unresolved and threatens to impede completion of the dissertation within deadlines, the student should consult with the Program Coordinator to resolve the problem.

If a student feels the conduct of the dissertation chair is inappropriate or not helpful, the student should discuss the grievance with the Program Coordinator. When the Program Coordinator is serving as the dissertation chair, the grievance should be taken to the Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary Education.

Changing Committee Members

Changes in committee members are rare and require the approval of the Program Coordinator. If a student wishes to change committee members, this request should be made in writing to the Program Coordinator. The letter should indicate compelling reasons for the change. If approved, new committee members must complete the relevant forms for appointment to the Committee. If the Program

Coordinator is a member of the student's dissertation committee that the student wants to replace, the student's concerns should be discussed with the Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Secondary Education.

Protection of Human Subjects

Every dissertation study must have clearance from the Kean University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This requirement includes all research, from data analysis to research involving surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

The IRB application must be approved by the dissertation chair before submission to the University IRB Committee. Students should keep in mind that if their research involves students, teachers, or school administrators, the school district will most likely require its own IRB application and approval.

The IRB Application Form, instructions, deadlines, and other important information are available through Kean's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website: [IRB & Research Compliance](#).

Students and their dissertation chairs are jointly responsible for submitting the IRB application. The dissertation chair serves as the student's faculty sponsor on the IRB Application Form. If data is not collected within 1 year of receiving IRB approval, students will need to request an extension through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal is the first three chapters of the dissertation. If the student does not complete the project as outlined in the proposal – for example, if the student discovers the chosen methodology will not work – the student must discuss with the dissertation chair and committee members how any changes caused by a change in methodology will be addressed. Conversely, if the research is carried out as outlined in the proposal, the student is protected from demands for major additions or revisions later in the process. Given that it is not possible to know in advance everything about a given subject, the student should expect some changes in the structure or focus of the project. However, these changes should be minor and should be consistent with the scope of the research outlined in the proposal.

Typically, students will work with the dissertation chair on a number of drafts before the rest of the committee sees the dissertation proposal. However, some committees may adopt a more collaborative strategy, working together throughout the development of the dissertation proposal. The student should make sure that all of their committee members are given sufficient time (**at least 3 weeks**) to read and reflect upon the proposal prior to the presentation. The chair has the right and responsibility to NOT approve the dissertation based on its failure to meet department expectations, as outlined in this handbook.

Dissertation Proposal Presentation

Students are responsible for scheduling the proposal presentation with their dissertation chair and committee members. The presentation of the dissertation proposal is designed to ensure that students have a workable plan for their research that meets the standards of scholarship appropriate to earning a doctoral degree. The presentation also allows the committee to come to a clear agreement about the

structure and scope of the research. The proposal presentation is an opportunity for the student to strengthen their research design and address any concerns or limitations prior to undertaking their research. Upon approval of the dissertation proposal, students must submit the signed Approval of Dissertation Proposal form along with a copy of the proposal PPT and IRB certification letter to the Program Coordinator.

Eligibility for Dissertation Defense

Eligibility requirements for defending the dissertation consists of completing all required coursework with a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative grade point average.

Oral Defense of Dissertation

When the dissertation chair and committee members are satisfied with the dissertation, they will inform the student that they may proceed to the final defense of the dissertation. It is up to the candidate to confer with the dissertation chair and committee members to finalize the date and time for the defense. It is up to the candidate to ensure a date that enables all committee members to participate in the defense.

The Program Coordinator will send an email inviting other students and faculty to the oral defense. A one-page abstract of the dissertation, that includes the problem statement, the research question(s), an overview of the methodology, and a summary of the findings and implications will be sent to all students and faculty along with the notice of the date, time, and location of the oral defense. A sample format for the dissertation abstract is included in the Appendix (see Appendix A – Format for Oral Defense).

The purpose of the final defense is to assess the student’s knowledge of their subject and the ability to analyze, synthesize, and integrate the relevant literature, prior research, and their own research.

The formal oral defense typically takes 30-45 minutes. Students are encouraged to develop a PowerPoint presentation consisting of **no more than 20 slides**. The formal presentation will be a synopsis of the research that includes what led to the student’s interest in the issue, how the student approached the literature and framed their research questions and hypotheses (if appropriate), followed by a cogent discussion of the methodology they used, what they found, what their findings infer and imply, the limitations of their research, their recommendations or action plan, and what future research they propose.

This formal presentation is followed by questions and comments from the members of the dissertation committee. After the committee has had the opportunity to ask questions, the dissertation chair will invite those in attendance to ask questions. Students should be prepared to discuss all aspects of their research.

After the student has responded to all questions, the dissertation chair will excuse the student and others in attendance while the committee deliberates. When a majority (two of the three) of members achieves a consensus, the student is invited back to the meeting and informed of the results.

The student will need to bring the *Final Oral Defense of the Doctoral Dissertation* form to the defense. In addition, students should **bring three copies of the signature page (making sure it is the same heavy weight cotton paper [25% cotton] that the dissertation will be printed on)** to the dissertation to the defense. The two committee members should sign the oral defense form and the signature pages after the defense is successfully completed.

The dissertation chair withholds their signature on the signature page and the oral defense form until all revisions have been made by the student and approved. They also withhold their signature until the student has had the dissertation edited by an APA editor. Once the dissertation is edited, the dissertation chair reviews the document, and their signature then represents acceptance of the final dissertation.

After the oral defense, the dissertation committee will have four options for evaluating the dissertation:

- 1) **Pass** - This evaluation will be given to a student if the defense is satisfactory and if there are only typographical or format changes to be made to the document.
- 2) **Pass with Minor Revisions** – This evaluation will be given to a student when the oral defense is satisfactory but there are some corrections to the dissertation that need to be made of an editorial nature or that are otherwise so minor that the Committee Members would not need to reconvene to discuss the corrected version of the dissertation with the student. The student would then have **2 weeks** to present the corrected version of the dissertation to their dissertation chair and committee members. **If after this time-period the student has not satisfactorily made all of the requested revisions, the student would be required to register for EDL 7103, Dissertation Continuation, until the needed revisions to the dissertation are completed by the Dissertation Committee.**
- 3) **Pass with Major Revisions** – This evaluation will be given to a student when the oral defense is satisfactory but there needs to be substantial additions or changes in the dissertation that would require another meeting of the Committee to discuss the revised version of the dissertation with the student (e.g., substantial additional data analyses or revision of the discussion section). **The student would have 12 weeks to present the revised version of the dissertation to their committee members during which time the student must register for EDL 7103, Dissertation Continuation, until the needed revisions to the dissertation are completed by the Dissertation Committee.**
- 4) **Fail** – This evaluation will be given to a student if, based on Dissertation Committee consensus, the oral defense was unsatisfactory or the dissertation as presented failed to achieve the expected standards of scholarship, which cannot not be remedied by a revision (e.g., incorrect use of a theoretical model or a situation requiring additional data collection). Whatever the specific reasons, a major rewrite of the dissertation would be required.

In the unlikely case that this happens, students will be provided with a clear explanation of why they failed. Students will also be provided with the opportunity to discuss the decision with the Program Coordinator and Department Chair. Once this discussion has taken place, the dissertation chair will inform the student, in writing, about what must be done to remedy the deficiencies. The student will also be required to register for EDL 7103 Dissertation Continuation until the needed revisions to the dissertation are completed and approved by the Dissertation Committee. Failure in a second defense would constitute failure to achieve the scholarship standards of the program and would effectively terminate students' enrollment in the EdD program.

A student has the right to appeal an academic program dismissal. The procedures to appeal academic dismissal are provided in the [Kean University Graduate Catalog](#).

Preparing for the Oral Defense of Dissertation

1. Submit the signed *Approval for Oral Defense Form* to the Program Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the defense date
2. Complete an online application in KeanWISE, and pay the applicable fee, by the stated deadline, to be considered for graduation (see ‘graduation information’ on the [University Registrar’s](#) webpage). or contact graduation@kean.edu
3. Schedule the oral defense in consultation with the dissertation chair, committee members, and the Program Coordinator
4. Submit dissertation abstract to Program Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the final defense date
5. Submit dissertation to committee members for review
6. In collaboration with dissertation chair finalize dissertation, abstract, and PowerPoint presentation

Oral Defense of Dissertation

1. Provide hard copy of the student’s abstract and PowerPoint to all in attendance at the student’s defense
2. Present dissertation to dissertation chair, committee members, fellow students, and interested members of the Kean Community
3. Respond to questions posed by dissertation chair, committee members, fellow students, and interested members of the Kean Community
4. Bring three (3) copies of the dissertation signature page and the *Final Dissertation Oral Defense Form* to the defense to obtain signatures after defense
5. Submit signed *Final Dissertation Oral Defense Form* to the Program Coordinator on the day of the dissertation defense
6. If required, revisions must be clearly articulated on the *Final Dissertation Oral Defense Form* (or on a separate paper attached to the form) along with due dates for revisions

After the Dissertation Defense

1. Make final revisions to the dissertation (depending upon defense outcome) within the time specified by the committee (within 2 weeks).
2. Submit chair-verified dissertation to an APA Style Editor for review (allow four weeks for this process and another week for obtaining signatures and making copies).
3. After editing is complete, submit the edited manuscript to the dissertation chair. The dissertation chair will not sign the defense signature until editing is complete. Obtain signature-

verification on the signature page of the dissertation from the dissertation chair that defense revisions are accepted.

4. Submit a copy of the student's signature page to the office of the Dean of the College of Education. This provides documentation of a successful defense.
5. Submit the final and approved dissertation for publishing through ProQuest (www.etsdadmin.com), a requirement for the program completion. All papers must meet the editorial style noted below and include a copyright page and signature page signed by all committee members.
6. Students may arrange for the binding of their dissertation through a professional service and submit a bound copy to the department.

Dissertation Submission

Review by APA Editor

Following a successful defense and the approval of any modifications to the dissertation by the student's dissertation chair and/or committee (verified by signatures on the signature page of the dissertation), students should submit their dissertation to an APA editor for final editing and formatting. Once the APA editing is complete, the dissertation chair will sign the signature page in preparation of binding. Students cannot graduate without submission of the signature page.

Editorial Style

The most current version of the *APA Publication Manual* is the authority both for writing style and typing instructions. The *APA Publication Manual* includes a description of formatting dissertations.

The student's committee members, especially the dissertation chair, have the responsibility for ensuring the dissertation's compliance with Kean's standards for scholarship. Committee members will provide editing suggestions regarding clarity and organization, in addition to content. It is not the responsibility of the dissertation chair or committee members to make grammatical or style edits to a student's dissertation. Students are responsible for submitting their dissertation, upon final approval, to an APA style editor for final APA edits.

Most errors in editorial style occur because students do not realize there are rules for organization, hyphenation, etc. As a grammar text, the *APA Manual* is far from comprehensive, but it nevertheless does an excellent job of covering many points that seem to give students most trouble (e.g., headings, indentation of long quotations, citations of published references, and reference format). Some of the rules are largely universal today; others take a position where several forms are acceptable among grammarians (e.g., a comma after the penultimate item in a series). Look at the APA manual as to how chapter headings and subheadings should be used in the manuscript.

Respect for diversity includes consideration of bias in language. The *APA Manual* also provides guidelines for reducing such bias. Specific examples are given to help guide revisions of text. Recommendations address gender, sexual orientation, racial and ethnic identity, physical challenges, and age.

Font

The font should be **12 point** with typeface of **Times New Roman**. For the use of alternate fonts, students should consult their Dissertation Chair.

Margins

A **1" left margin** should be used, half of which will be taken up by binding and a **1" margin for all other edges**. Page numbers must be included within these margins. The right margin should not be justified. The words at the end of a line should not be hyphenated. (See the *APA Manual* for additional guidance.)

Pagination

All pages starting with the Copyright notice page and ending with the List of Tables and/or List of Figures require a lowercase Roman numeral at the bottom and center of the page. Arabic numbers are used for the rest of the document starting with the Body of the text or the first page of Chapter 1. These page numbers go in the upper right-hand corner, and the font should be formatted the same as in the rest of the dissertation. Starting with the "Manuscript title page," page numbering and ordering follow *the APA Publication Manual* guidelines for manuscripts.

Dissertation title page (separate page, no page number)

Signature page (separate page, no page number)

Copyright notice page (separate page, numbered page i)

Abstract (separate page, numbered page ii)

Dedication (optionally included after the final dissertation defense on separate page, numbered page iii)

Acknowledgement (separate page, numbered page iv)

Table of contents (start on a separate page, numbered v)

List of Tables (start on a separate page, numbered vi)

List of Figures (start on a separate page, numbered vii)

Body of text - Chapters (start on a separate page, numbered page 1)

References (start on a separate page, numbered sequentially after text)

Appendices (start each on a separate page, numbered sequentially after references)

Paper and Print Quality

The final dissertation document requires letter-quality printing. The final copies of the dissertation for binding should be printed or photocopied onto **heavy weight cotton paper (25% cotton)**. If the student takes their dissertation to a retail/office facility to have the text copied onto the appropriate paper, make sure that: the highest quality machine is used, the paper is inserted so that the watermark on the paper is in the correct direction.

Binding the Dissertation

Students may arrange for the binding of their dissertation through a professional service and submit a bound copy to the department.

General Requirements

The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), latest edition will serve as the basic reference manual for the dissertation style. The following instructions follow APA format and should serve as a guide in the preparation of the doctoral dissertation.

Elements of the Dissertation

Title Page
Signature Page
Notice of Copyright
Abstract
Dedication (if preferred)
Acknowledgements (if preferred)
Table of Contents
List of Tables
List of Figures
Dissertation Chapters
References
Appendix A
Appendix B
Appendix C, etc.

NO RUNNING HEAD

Title Page

The dissertation document has a title page that identifies the document as a dissertation. The title of the dissertation, which is a descriptive title of no more than 10 words in length, appears centered at the top of the page, above the candidate's name. The candidate's name appears on the title page as recorded with the Kean University registrar. The names of the dissertation chair and committee members are included on the title page. The statement "Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Doctor of Education Kean University" appears below the names of the student's committee members. The month and year of graduation appears at the bottom of the title page.

A sample of the Title Page is provided in Appendix (see Appendix B – Dissertation Title Page, Signature Page, Copyright Notice Page).

Signature Page

The signature page, while very similar to the title page, contains additional information not found on the title page and includes the signatures of the student's dissertation chair and committee members. Students are required to bring three copies of this page to their defense to obtain the required signatures.

In addition to the title of the dissertation, followed by the student's full name, the signature page contains the following statement:

Dissertation presented to the College of Education, Kean University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the Department of Educational Leadership Under the guidance of [Typed Name of Dissertation chair] and approved by [provide three lines for the signatures of committee members].

Under the lines for the signatures appears the city where the defense took place: Union, New Jersey and under that the date of the oral defense.

A sample of the Signature Page is provided in Appendix B – Dissertation Title Page, Signature Page, Copyright Notice Page.

Copyright Page

If the dissertation is copyrighted, this notice should follow the title page. The copyright symbol © should be accompanied by the full legal name of the author and the year in which the copyright is secured. This notice should begin 4 ½ inches from the top of the page. The following format is recommended:

© Copyright by Mary Jones, 20XX
All Rights Reserved

A sample of the Copyright Page is provided in Appendix B.

Abstract

The abstract of the dissertation must begin on a new page and should adhere to the guidelines presented in the APA manual. The heading “Abstract” should be centered followed by the title of the dissertation. An Abstract is a succinct **summary** of the research conducted. It should address the major research questions, participants, methods, key results, and conclusions

Dedication (if preferred)

Students may choose to include a dedication statement.

Acknowledgements (if preferred)

Students may choose to include an acknowledgement statement.

Table of Contents

A sample Table of Contents is provided in Appendix C. Information in the Table of Contents should begin with the Abstract, Dedication, Acknowledgement, List of Tables, and List of Figures, followed by the chapter titles and all major and minor headings. A heading should be presented exactly as it appears in the body of the dissertation. The subheadings should be indented. All the headings should be given page numbers, at the right side of the page, connected by dotted lines. Double space should be

used throughout the Table of Contents. See the example provided in Appendix C – Organization of the Dissertation.

List of Tables

Tables and figures are incorporated appropriately into the text of the dissertation. Depending on the size of the tables/figures, they can be placed on the same page with the text that references them or on a separate page following the reference in the text. Figures must be placed on a separate page immediately after the page on which they are referred. Following the Table of Contents, a List of Tables is presented in numerical order, with their title and page number.

List of Figures

If figures are included in the text, a List of Figures with their titles and page numbers is also provided.

Body of the Manuscript

The sections of the manuscript are regarded as chapters and each of these chapters begins on a new page. The usual chapter headings are Introduction; Review of the Literature; Methodology; Results/Findings; and Summary, Conclusions, and Action Plan. Each of these headings follow the chapter numbers.

References

References should follow the last chapter of the manuscript, preceding the appendices. The reference list must be double spaced, and entries should have a hanging indent. See *APA Manual* for additional examples.

Appendices

Relevant information not contained in the body of the dissertation may be included in the Appendix. For example, the results section might not include all of the statistical analyses that were computed or all of the tables or figures for non-critical data presentations. The analyses and tables/figures may be included in the Appendix. In addition, copies of a survey administered or interview questions and focus group guidelines should be included in the Appendix.

Appendix A

Format for Oral Defense

ABSTRACT

Student's Name

Committee Chairperson's Name

Dissertation Title

Date of Defense

Abstract:

Problem Statement

Research Question

Methodology

Key Findings

This should be one page in length. This will be handed out at the oral defense and will be sent, electronically, to other Ed.D. students and faculty, at least 1 week in advance of the defense.

Appendix B

Dissertation Title Page, Signature Page, Copyright Notice Page

[Dissertation Title Page]

Title of the Dissertation
[Double Spaced in title case]

By

Name of the Student

Dissertation Committee

Dissertation Chair

Committee Member I

Committee Member II

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education
Kean University
20XX

[Signature Page]

Title of the Dissertation
[Double Spaced in title case]

By

Name of the Student

Dissertation presented to the

College of Education,

Kean University, New Jersey

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Education in the

Department of Educational Leadership

Under the guidance of

Name of the Dissertation Chair

and approved by (signatures of all members)

Union, New Jersey

Month, Year

[Copyright Notice Page]

© 20XX

Student's Full Legal Name

All Rights Reserved

[Center this notice in the lower third of the page. The circled “c” must be in lower case. The proper form of this page secures the student’s copyright. The year listed is when the student submit the student’s final dissertation document.]

Appendix C
Organization of the Dissertation

[Organization of Dissertation – Sample]

Dissertation Title Page

Signature Page

Copyright	i
Abstract	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1 Introduction	xx
Background	xx
Statement of the Problem	xx
Purpose of the Study	xx
Research Questions	xx
Hypothesis [depends on dissertation]	xx
Significance of the Study	xx
Research Design	xx
Rationale of the Research Design	xx
Assumptions	xx
Limitations/Delimitations	xx
Definition of Terms	xx
Chapter Summary	xx

Chapter 2 Review of the Literature OR Conceptual Framework	xx
Introduction	xx
Historical Information/ Descriptive Information [if applicable]	xx
Theoretical Framework	xx
Review of Selected Literature	xx
Chapter Summary	xx
Chapter 3 Methodology	xx
Introduction	xx
Research Setting	xx
Participants/ Sample	xx
Data Collection/Management	xx
Data Analysis	xx
Validity/Reliability OR Trustworthiness	xx
Positionality	xx
Ethical Considerations	xx
Chapter Summary	xx
Chapter 4 Results OR Findings	xx
Introduction	xx
Discussion of Results	xx
Chapter Summary	xx
Chapter 5 – Discussion and Implications	xx
Introduction	xx
Discussion	xx
Implications	xx

Policy (if applicable)	xx
Practice	xx
Future Research	xx
Conclusion	xx
References	xx
Appendices	xx

Note: The above Table of Contents is a sample; dissertations may deviate from this organization as long as a clear argument for doing so can be made. **Introduction** need not be a subheading in each chapter, but there should be an introductory paragraph.