

**Higher Education & Student Affairs (HESA) Leadership**  
**Department of Educational Leadership, Research and Technology**  
**Western Michigan University**

The Master of Arts in Educational Leadership, Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) concentration at Western Michigan University focuses on developing reflective practitioners for entry and mid-level positions in higher education. This can include positions in admissions, academic advising, residence life, student activities, career services, and offices designed to support and retain historically underserved student populations. The program emphasizes a scholar-practitioner model to combine a broad-based student development and leadership theory core with required individualized field experiences. Distinctive to HESA is an emphasis on the centrality of diversity and inclusiveness in higher education: one of the ways this is actualized is through a required and individually designed Diversity Cognate. The HESA curriculum meets *CAS Standards for Masters-Level Student Affairs Preparation Programs* and includes two distinct site-based Field Experiences. Students also develop *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners* through 39 credit hours of coursework, Field Experiences, and the Performance Driven Leadership Portfolio. The HESA program promotes innovative learning, discovery, and service through our emphasis on professional development, engagement in scholarly practice and research, and leadership in the profession. For more details including the admissions process visit: [www.wmich.edu/coe/elrt/](http://www.wmich.edu/coe/elrt/) or contact [elrt-hesa@wmich.edu](mailto:elrt-hesa@wmich.edu). Applications should be submitted to HESA program by January 15 annually to ensure full consideration for admissions and Grad Assistant (GA) positions.

**I. Leadership Core**

EDLD 6791: Educational Leadership Master’s Seminar (substituted by EDLD 6890/6899/6980)	1
EDLD 6020: Educational Leadership	3
Focused Elective	3
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>7</b>

**II. Student Affairs & Higher Education Core**

EDLD 6510: Foundations of Student Affairs	3
EDLD 6530: The College Student	3
EDLD 6545: Higher Education Environments and Administration	3
EDLD 6548: Assessment and Accountability in Higher Education and Student Affairs	3
EDLD 6550: Intervention Skills for Higher Education Professionals	3
EDLD 6590: Higher Education Law & Ethics	3
EDLD 6570 Equity and Diversity in Higher Education	3
<b>Section Total</b>	<b>21</b>

**III. Field Experience**

EDLD 6580: Field Experience in Higher Education & Student Affairs (300 clock hours)	<b>Section Total 3</b>
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**IV. Diversity Cognate** [Select 2 with approval of advisor]

See stated goals of diversity cognate. A variety of courses across the university and beyond may fit this description; in EDLD these are generally offered under EDLD 6890: Special Topics. Please see the list of courses on the HESA website, faculty advisor, or program email announcements for courses.

**Section Total 6**

**V. Capstone Experience & Portfolio Development**

EDLD 6792: Capstone Experience (100 hrs. Field Experience + Online Seminar+ Portfolio)	<b>Total2</b>
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**PROGRAM TOTAL 39**

*All courses should be approved by Faculty Advisor. Students should work with Faculty Advisor to lay out a plan of study. Updates and announcement to program changes will be made via HESA program email announcements and in advising session. View HESA Handbook for more information.*

**EDLD 6791: Educational Leadership Master's Seminar (HESA section).** This course is no longer offered and is substituted with a 1-credit seminar or independent study in the semester the student takes capstone.

**EDLD 6020: Educational Leadership.** This course is an introduction to educational leadership and leadership theory and practice. It provides the foundation for leadership in educational programs and institutions. Students will be required to demonstrate an understanding of transformational leadership and other leadership theories, effective communication and problem solving, motivation and decision-making, organizational change and renewal, and consensus building and conflict resolution. 3 hours

**EDLD 6710: Foundations of Higher Education & Student Affairs** [This course changed from EDLD 6510 starting Fall 2024] This course examines the purposes, philosophies, values, ethical perspectives, and historical contexts that have shaped the development of higher education and student affairs in U.S. postsecondary education. Students will examine several foundational documents and readings, gain an understanding of the various historical and philosophical influences that have shaped higher education practices, and explore aspects of academic and co-curricular leadership within the academy. The foundations gained in this course allow students to identify, reflect upon, and influence the internal and external forces that continue to shape the U.S. higher education landscape.

**EDLD 6530: The College Student.** This course examines the theoretical and research literature on contemporary college students from a variety of perspectives: demographic changes, patterns of growth and change during the college years, and the educational needs of diverse student groups. The impact of campus environments and various institutional contexts on students is explored, particularly focusing on the design of administrative and educational policy and practice.

**EDLD 6545: Higher Education Environments and Administration.** This course examines leadership, management, and administrative practices in a variety of higher education environments. Topics may include: environment theory, campus ecology, campus culture, institutional types, organizational culture, ethical issues in administrative practices including supervision, human resource management, budget and finance, facilities management, accessibility in higher education, issues of sustainability and technology.

**EDLD 6548: Assessment and Accountability in Higher Education and Student Affairs**  
This course provides an overview of accountability and professional standards in higher education and student affairs administration and an introduction to assessment best practices in higher education and student affairs. Utilizing student development models of assessment, students will explore a variety of topics, techniques, and methods and apply their learning in real-world assessment case/s. Topics addressed may include: accountability, accreditation, professional standards, outcomes based assessment, program evaluation, higher education databases, student learning outcomes, college impacts, benchmarking, needs assessment, and satisfaction surveys.

**EDLD 6550: Intervention Skills for Higher Education Professionals.** This theory-to-practice course teaches basic interpersonal skills necessary for successful higher education professionals, as well as individual, group, and organizational interventions; crisis management skills, referral skills; and approaches to handling difficult students, parents, colleagues, and others in the higher education environment.

**EDLD 6570: Equity and Diversity in Higher Education.** This course is designed for students to develop an understanding of the individual and organizational issues of diversity and multiculturalism in U.S. higher education. A broad definition of diversity will be utilized in an effort to capture the range of populations served by higher education in this country. Through the integration of relevant information from history, law, interpersonal development, organizational development, and philosophy, this course will attempt to develop a complex, comprehensive understanding of equity and diversity.

**EDLD 6580: Field Experience in Higher Education. (HESA Section)** This course emphasizes practical experience in the student's area of specialized interest within higher education and student affairs. Student affairs administrative experiences are provided in selected supervised settings so that students can apply knowledge and skills acquired during previous studies. Graded on a credit/no credit basis. Prerequisite EDLD 6510/6530 and 6570 highly recommended. Must have Faculty Advisor approval of Field Experience site.

**EDLD 6590: Higher Education Law & Ethics.** This course studies the number of legal areas that intersect on college campuses has made knowledge of legal issues related to liability, contracts, hiring and firing, free speech, disabilities, discrimination, and many other topics necessary for effective college administrators. Legal issues, legal enactments and precedents, constitutional provisions, court decisions and case law that impact higher education will be the focus of this course. Current legal issues affecting higher education will be monitored and discussed throughout this course.

**EDLD 6792: Capstone Experience.** This course provides students a final opportunity to reflect upon merging educational leadership theory with best practices. This will be accomplished through the completion of field-based assignments, completion of a Performance-Driven Leadership Electronic Portfolio and interaction with leaders in educational or other institutions. This final course in the Performance-Driven Leadership Master of Arts program has as a major theme the development of transformational leaders who understand and have the will to create effective relationships within their institutions. Prerequisites: Students must have completed all but one of their required classes in their Master of Arts in Educational Leadership prior to registering for EDLD 6792. EDLD 6890: Field Experience must be completed before enrolling in 6792. Register for HESA 2-credit section only in Spring. Must have Faculty Advisor approval of Capstone site.

**Diversity Cognate.** The WMU HESA program was founded on and continues to emphasize issues of inclusion and access to higher education for historically marginalized and/or underserved student populations. One way this is actualized is through a required and individually designed diversity cognate (6 credit hours selected by the student with approval of advisor). Students may utilize suggested DC course list offered by HESA, browse through WMU course offerings to find a class that may fit, or students may choose a course on another campus.

Information about diversity cognates can be found on HESA website

Courses for the Diversity Cognate should meet the stated goals: helping to work with “historically marginalized and/or underserved student populations in higher education” and must be pre-approved by the Faculty Advisor for the particular student. **A partial listing is available on the HESA website.**

**Some courses include:** *EDLD 6890: Special Topics in Higher Education Seminar (various topics offered regularly, diversity related only); CECP 6860: LGBT Issues in Counseling & Development; FCS 5680: Gender, Culture, and Families; COM 6700: Seminar in Interpersonal Communication (diversity related only); SOC 5220: Social Psychology of Prejudice; SOC 5680 - Race, Ethnicity, and Justice*