

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND
FEINSTEIN COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP & POLICY
GRADUATE PROGRAM
CLINICAL EXPERIENCE HANDBOOK

THINK BIG  WE DOSM



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Section 1 - Overview of Clinical Experiences

The Educational Leadership and Policy Program aims to develop visionary educational leaders equipped with a diverse set of leadership and management skills. The program offers graduate candidates a comprehensive blend of theoretical knowledge and practical experiences, forming the foundation necessary to support and enhance the learning of all students.

Candidates are required to complete a minimum of 500 clinical experience hours upon completion of the graduate program.

Candidates are required to complete a minimum of 15 hours of Fieldwork Experience in each of the following Educational Leadership Program courses, totaling at least 135 hours:

- EDL 500: Engaging Communities for Change
- EDL 501: Legal and Ethical Issues in Educational Leadership
- EDL 502: Fiscal Management for Educational Leaders
- EDL 503: Operations & Management for Educational Leaders
- EDL 504: Program Evaluation for Educational Leaders
- EDL 505: Supervision of Instruction
- EDL 506: Instructional and Curriculum Leadership
- EDL 507: Managing Human Capital
- EDL 508: Leading School & District Improvement

In addition, candidates must complete at least six practicum experiences in varied grade levels and demographic settings in conjunction with the following internship courses, totaling at least 400 hours:

- EDL 510: Internship I
- EDL 511: Internship II

Graduates of the University of Rhode Island's Educational Leadership & Policy Program are immersed in over 500 hours of clinical experiences as part of their administrative preparation. These clinical experiences are aligned with the RISEL and NELP standards.

Section 2 - General Information

Definition of Terms

Candidate: A candidate is a student enrolled in a preparation program who:

- Displays a growing understanding of the responsibilities of the profession and a dedication to the conviction that all students can learn.
- Is progressing successfully through a Principal preparation program, meeting all required benchmarks.
- Presents themselves professionally and with the decorum expected of a professional educator.
- Is expected to uphold the utmost confidentiality at all times. A Principal candidate may be expected to sign an LEA confidentiality agreement as they will have access to confidential information.
- Is required to meet LEA protocols for background checks and any other criteria that LEAs put forth for accepting principal candidates into field placements.

Clinical Educator: The principal or assistant principal who serves as the site-based supervisor for the candidate during the internship. They offer the candidate opportunities to achieve clinical experience goals by collaborating with them in instructional leadership activities or by allowing the candidate to independently lead specific leadership tasks. The clinical evaluator must be a certified administrator in the state.

Clinical Experiences: The comprehensive set of experiences a candidate completes throughout the program, providing opportunities to integrate theory and practice in real-world settings and in real-time.

Field Work: Field work is a requirement for nine courses within the program. Candidates will complete 15 hours in each course. This includes one release day. Field work may be completed on-site, in the candidate's home school/district or off-site in a school/district other than the candidate's home district. Candidates will reflect on their experiences and submit documentation to the course instructor. Field work will account for 135 of the 500 required clinical experience hours.

Internship: The internship is a collaborative effort involving the candidate, a school district, and the university. It requires specific core experiences in school administration, allowing candidates to strengthen their understanding of the RISEL standards and practice their ability to apply them effectively. Candidates engage in seminar sessions to reflect on their experiences, discuss supplementary readings and resources, construct a leadership portfolio, and provide mutual support as they progress toward principal certification. Candidates must complete two internship courses, totaling a minimum of 400 clock hours to meet the required clinical experience requirement.

Internship Action Plan: Prior to the internship, candidates are encouraged to develop an Internship Action Plan. This plan should outline tentative goals, identify possible mentors, propose potential leadership projects, and designate anticipated sites for completing practicum experiences.

Internship Supervisor: The University faculty/staff member responsible for coordinating, implementing, and evaluating all phases of the internship experience.

Leadership Portfolio: The leadership portfolio is designed to reflect the totality of the internship experience and to prepare you for the End of Program Final Evaluation. The portfolio is a collection of documents organized in a Google Drive. It is reviewed and assessed by the internship supervisor.

Practicum: Practicums are full day experiences that allow candidates to observe leaders outside of their school community. Practicums occur during the Internship I and II courses. Candidates must complete 6 practicum days (3 each semester) at a school with a different demographic and grade level than where they currently work. Candidates will reflect on their experiences and submit documentation via the internship log and weekly reflections journal. Practicum hours may be counted towards the 200 required clinical experience hours in each internship course.

Release Time: As a condition of acceptance into the Educational Leadership & Policy program, candidates are required to secure fifteen (15) days of release time to complete clinical experiences. Nine (9) days will be allocated for fieldwork experiences during coursework, and an additional six (6) days will be dedicated to practicum experiences, with candidates completing three practicum days each semester. Candidates must obtain letters of support from their building principal and superintendent, agreeing to provide the required fifteen (15) release days throughout the program.

Seminar: Biweekly sessions led by the internship supervisor designed to support candidates reflect on their experiences, discuss supplementary readings and resources, construct a leadership portfolio, and provide mutual support as they progress toward principal certification. Seminars may also feature panel discussions with experts, presentations by experienced administrators, and simulation activities.

Roles and Responsibilities in Clinical Experiences

The Role of the Candidate

The candidate is responsible for completing their required internship hours and for developing, participating in, documenting, and reflecting on their experiences throughout the internship. Candidate responsibilities include the following:

- Attend all orientation sessions and seminar preparation/training as provided.
- Discuss the internship scope and responsibilities with the internship supervisor and clinical educator.
- Collaborate with the clinical educator to develop appropriate leadership projects.
- Identify and secure practicum locations.
- Engage in all tasks and responsibilities outlined in the handbook, while being available for leadership development opportunities throughout the internship.
- Maintain a log and reflective journal.

- Meet regularly with the internship supervisor and clinical educator to discuss observations, gain feedback, and be assessed on leadership knowledge and skills.
- Produce internship documentation, reflections, and reports as required by the university.
- Demonstrate professional conduct and integrity throughout the internship.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Take the initiative to broaden professional experiences as this range of experience is needed to support PK-12.
- If difficulties or problems arise during the internship, bring them to the attention of the university supervisor as soon as possible.
- Incorporate feedback from the internship supervisor and clinical educator into ongoing efforts towards growth and development of leadership potential.
- Complete a minimum of 400 clinical hours.

The Role of the Clinical Educator (K-12)

The clinical educator serves as a role model, supervisor, coach, and mentor throughout the candidate's internship experience. They guide the candidate, challenging them to grow as an educational decision-maker, instructional leader, and manager of a complex organization. The clinical educator should have a demonstrated record of effective educational leadership, particularly as outlined by the RISEL standards, and have the time and interest to supervise the candidate throughout the internship. They should be committed to the program's vision of educational leadership and their role in developing quality leadership in candidates.

A Clinical Educator is a Rhode Island Educator who:

- Models practices consistent with the Rhode Island Leadership Standards and other appropriate standards, and assures that these standards drive decision-making for school leadership.
- Is willing to share practice and provide on-going feedback to the Principal Candidate while engaging the candidate in regular reflection.
- Demonstrates the capacity to have a positive impact on student learning through the use of ongoing, documented progress monitoring systems and assessment practices and by conveying the conviction that all students can learn at high levels.
- Has collaborative professional practices that indicate an ability to understand and effectively assume the role of mentor in a professional capacity with other adults, including the use of reflection and feedback to inform and improve practice.
- Incorporates various aspects of current technologies into school leadership and teaching practices and systems.
- Models professional and appropriate communications skills, as evidenced in all aspects of the work with students, families, community partners and colleagues.
- Abides by the EPPs requirements that time is available for planning and coaching with the Principal Candidate(s).
- Has a leadership practice promotes anti-racism through an intentional focus on equity and social justice.
- Is committed to actively supporting Principal Candidates in addressing issues of equity and justice in the school and community.

- Is prepared to help Principal Candidates learn to work with diverse families and communities.
- Conveys a positive attitude about the education professions and are eager to work and learn alongside other school leader candidates.
- Has completed a minimum of three years of successful building administration.
- Holds a minimum of initial certification as a Prek-12 Building Administrator.
- Participates in all required professional learning provided by the EPP, including the EPP clinical educator training.
- Agrees to abide by all EPP-required policies, procedures and deadlines needed to assess and support the teacher candidate.
- Is supported by their administration to serve in this role.

The clinical educator's responsibilities include:

- Meet with the candidate prior to the internship to discuss the internship scope and candidate responsibilities.
- Meet with the candidate on a regular basis (at least weekly) to discuss responsibilities, progress, and leadership learning experiences, as well as provide guidance and feedback as needed.
- Provide the candidate with exposure to various building-level leadership opportunities.
- Orient the candidate to school leadership as a career and provide coaching on the job search and interview process.
- Meet with the candidate and internship supervisor to review progress and discuss the internship experience.
- Provide formal feedback and assessment of the candidate's work and leadership development at the conclusion of the internship.
- Be mindful of the candidate's strengths and encourage them to take on responsibilities outside of their comfort zone.
- Provide exposure to the practices of other leaders and various leadership styles.
- Offer presentation opportunities.
- Demonstrate balance and encourage discussion about the whole person, so candidates can explore issues of work, family, and career balance.

The Role of the Internship Supervisor (EPP)

The internship supervisor provides collegial and individual support to their assigned candidate throughout the internship. They facilitate ongoing reflection of the candidate's experiences through individual, group, and seminar meetings. The internship supervisor's responsibilities include:

- Identify potential leadership projects that meet RISEL standards.
- Meet formally with each candidate one-on-one, in small groups, and in seminars. During these sessions, the internship supervisor encourages candidate reflection on the leadership role and work, facilitates discussions of internship challenges and leadership strategies, and fosters leadership development.
- Meet with each candidate on-site a minimum of two times each semester.

- Monitor each candidate's logs and reflective journal.
- Meet regularly with the candidate and clinical educator to discuss internship content, address problems and challenges, and identify new learning opportunities.
- Provide formal feedback and assessment of the candidate's work and leadership development at the conclusion of the internship.

Lines of Communication

The candidate's first lines of communication are their on-site clinical educator and the internship supervisor. Candidates will be given their contact data during the orientation session, prior to your first day on the internship. Your clinical educator and internship supervisor should be seen as your first source of information and advice if you encounter any difficulties. If you are unable to negotiate issues with either of them, you should then contact the program director.

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Section 3 - Clinical Experiences

Introduction

The purpose of the clinical experiences in the Educational Leadership & Policy program is to immerse candidates in various leadership situations, starting from their first professional education course and continuing throughout the program, culminating in an internship. Throughout each semester, candidates are given opportunities to progressively engage in leadership roles until they fully assume internship responsibilities. This comprehensive set of clinical experiences are designed to provide a continuum of opportunities that enable candidates to develop the dispositions, knowledge, skills, and competencies essential for their professional growth.

Clinical experiences serve multiple purposes:

- **Expand Exposure to Diverse Settings:** Candidates are introduced to a range of educational environments, cultures, and leadership styles. Candidates will be required to spend time outside of their school in a variety of settings.
- **Offer Practical, On-the-Job Learning:** These experiences allow candidates to apply theoretical knowledge in practical, real-world situations, enhancing their learning and professional development.
- **Promote Professional Networking:** Candidates have opportunities to connect with experienced professionals, building valuable relationships and gaining insights from seasoned leaders in the field.

Release Time

As a condition of acceptance into the Educational Leadership & Policy program, candidates are required to secure fifteen (15) days of release time to complete clinical experiences. Nine days will be allocated for fieldwork experiences during coursework, and an additional six (6) days will be dedicated to practicum experiences, with candidates completing three practicum days each semester. Candidates must obtain letters of support from their building principal and superintendent, agreeing to provide the required fifteen (15) release days throughout the program.

Field Work

Overview

Field work is a crucial component of the Educational Leadership & Policy program, required for nine courses within the curriculum. Each course includes 15 hours of field work, incorporating one release day, and collectively accounting for 135 of the 500 required clinical experience hours. These field work experiences provide candidates with authentic opportunities to integrate

theory and practice in real-time and settings, expanding their exposure to diverse educational environments, cultures, and leadership styles.

Each course syllabus will outline specific requirements for field work. Field work may be completed either on-site in the candidate's home school/district or off-site in a different school/district. Candidates are expected to document their hours, reflect on their experiences, and submit this documentation to their course instructor. This reflective process encourages candidates to critically analyze their learning outcomes and understand the application of theoretical concepts in practical settings, fostering their professional growth and bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Evaluation of Field Work

Candidates are evaluated based on the completion of required hours, the quality of their reflective documentation, and the timely submission of detailed accounts of their activities. Course instructors will also assess candidates' active engagement and participation in field work activities, as well as feedback from site-based supervisors and university faculty. The field work component will contribute to the final course grade.

Internship

Overview

The internship is a collaborative effort involving the candidate, a school district, and the university. This flexible two-semester experience requires candidates to complete specific core experiences in school administration, strengthening their understanding of the RISEL standards and practicing their application. Candidates must complete two internship courses, EDL 510-Internship I and EDL 51-Internship II, totaling a minimum of 400 clock hours to meet the required clinical experience hours. Each course earns three credits and includes core internship activities, a leadership project, an internship log, and a reflection journal. Additionally, candidates engage in seminar sessions to reflect on their experiences, discuss supplementary readings and resources, construct a leadership portfolio, and provide mutual support as they progress toward principal certification.

The internship has five major components:

- **Core Internship Activities (Key Assessment #5)**
 - Core Internship Activities are designed to provide candidates with practical, hands-on experience through a series of structured activities aligned with the RISEL standards. To successfully complete each semester of the Internship, candidates are required to engage in, document, and reflect on ten Core Internship Activities.
- **Leadership Projects**
 - Candidates are required to complete a leadership project aimed at positively influencing the learning environment to improve student learning. This project

serves as a structured approach to identify a specific need, implement targeted actions or interventions to address that need, and gather data to assess the effectiveness of the actions taken. Designed to mirror real-world initiatives typically led by principals, the project challenges candidates to lead from inception to completion, demonstrating their capacity to enhance schools and improve the delivery of services. Candidates are to complete one leadership project in EDL 510 and EDL 511. The internship supervisor will evaluate this assignment.

- **Practicum Experiences**

- Practicums are full-day experiences designed to allow candidates to observe leaders in school communities different from their own. Occurring during the Internship I and II courses, candidates are required to complete six practicum days (three each semester) at schools with different demographics and grade levels than their current workplace.

- **Bi-Weekly Seminars**

- Biweekly sessions led by the internship supervisor designed to support candidates reflect on their experiences, discuss supplementary readings and resources, construct a leadership portfolio, and provide mutual support as they progress toward principal certification. Seminars may also feature panel discussions with experts, presentations by experienced administrators, and simulation activities.

- **Reflection Journals**

- Candidates are required to maintain a weekly reflective journal. This journal serves as a tool to document your experiences, insights, and the application of theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios in your internship role. The purpose of this journal is to deepen your understanding of your field, enhance your professional skills, and reflect on personal growth.

Internship Prerequisites

1. All candidates must be admitted to the Educational Leadership & Policy graduate program in the College of Education at the University of Rhode Island.
2. Candidates are supported by a certified, practicing school administrator and must have written approval of the administrator of the host school and the superintendent. An application form is in the appendix.
3. Unless otherwise approved, candidates must have completed 10 courses prior to enrollment in the internship or take the tenth class in tandem with the first internship course.
4. Candidates will develop an Internship Action Plan. This plan should outline tentative goals, identify possible mentors, propose potential leadership projects, and designate anticipated sites for completing practicum experiences.
5. Candidates will meet with the Program Director, Clinical Educator, and Internship Supervisor. The team will review the following:
 - a. Key Assessment Results in Taskstream
 - b. Candidate Reflection Statement

- c. Candidate Self-Assessments
 - i. RISEL Self-Assessment
 - ii. Leadership Competency Self-Assessment
 - iii. Disposition Self-Assessment
- d. Internship Requirements
- e. Internship Action Plan

Seminars

A seminar, within the context of the internship program, is a biweekly session led by the internship supervisor that occurs during the internship course. Seminars are designed to support candidates, provide professional development and foster collegial discussions among candidates. These sessions include a variety of activities such as School Leader Licensure Assessment (SLLA) practice quizzes, Foundational Leadership Competency discussions, reflections on internship challenges, and small group discussions. Seminars may also feature panel discussions with experts, presentations by experienced administrators, and simulation activities. Attendance is mandatory. Additional information may be found in the course syllabus for Internship I and Internship II.

Practicum

Overview

Practicums are full-day experiences designed to allow candidates to observe leaders in school communities different from their own. Occurring during the Internship I and II courses, candidates are required to complete six practicum days (three each semester) at schools with different demographics and grade levels than their current workplace. These experiences provide valuable insights into diverse educational environments. Practicum hours count towards the 200 required clinical experience hours for each internship course.

Evaluation of Practicum

Candidates will reflect on their practicum experiences and submit documentation through the internship log and weekly reflections journal. Course instructors will also assess candidates' active engagement and participation in practicum activities, as well as feedback from the clinical educator and internship supervisor. The practicum will contribute to the final course grade.

Evaluation of Internship

The evaluation of EDL 510 and EDL 511 will be conducted by the internship supervisor in accordance with the syllabus for each course. During the 5th and 10th week of the semester, the candidate and internship supervisor will meet to discuss progress. If any serious concerns are identified during these meetings, the internship supervisor will contact the program advisor. Should serious concerns arise, the candidate may be asked to develop a plan of remediation.

Timeline for Completion

Candidates are expected to complete the internship program in a timely manner. If an intern is working on a particular project with their clinical educator and requests an extension to see the project to fruition, approval will be granted or denied on a case-by-case basis by the internship supervisor in consultation with the program advisor.

In cases where the candidate encounters serious personal or health-related issues, their status may be suspended for up to one academic year until they are able to resume the duties of the internship. Any student in this situation must contact the program director as soon as possible, either directly or, if incapacitated, through a personal representative. The candidate will be allowed to resume duties once they are able to return.

Examples of serious personal or health-related issues include:

1. Death of an immediate family member (parent, spouse, child).
2. Serious injury or debilitating illness of the student.
3. Serious injury or debilitating illness of an immediate family member (parent, spouse, child) requiring the intern to focus on family rather than the internship.
4. Serious destruction or loss of one's family residence or primary residence.

Internship Monitoring & Site Visits

As part of the internship experience, all candidates will be observed a minimum of two times by the internship supervisor for each internship course (EDL 510/511). Following each observation, the internship supervisor will meet with the candidate for a private conference to discuss their leadership development. Additionally, the supervisor will meet with the clinical educator a minimum of two times during each course..

Remediation Process

At times, circumstances might warrant intervention to assist the candidate in developing stronger leadership skills and/or competencies. One indication of such a need would be failing to achieve a "meets the standard" rating on any of the required Key Assessments associated with EDL 510/511. When it is determined that remediation is warranted, the candidate will meet with the internship supervisor and program advisor to develop a remediation plan.

Appendix

- I. [Foundational Leadership Competencies](#)
- II. [Core Internship Activities](#)
- III. [Leadership Project](#)
- IV. [Reflection Journal](#)
- V. [Internship Log](#)
- VI. [Leadership Portfolio](#)

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