

Educational Leadership Program (EDL)
The Department of Educational Policy Studies and Practice

The aim of the Educational Leadership Program (EDL) is to train the next generation of culturally diverse professional field (practitioner) and academic thinkers, researchers, and change agents differently and better. The goal is to address persistent issues and emerging problems of educational leadership practices in order to improve the human condition, particularly for children, through education in schools and communities of the Southwest and the Nation.

In an enriched intellectual environment, a more diverse faculty and diverse graduate students understand and approach educational challenges with profound implications for 21st Century leaders. Leaders' challenges include taking on new demands of educating multicultural and transnational children and youth in which non-whites make-up the majority of K-12 public school enrollment and no ethno-racial group will be the majority enrollment by mid-century. Concomitantly, faculty and graduate students focus on success and effectiveness models of leadership in schools that create culturally responsive engagement of teachers and staff to improve equality of educational opportunities for children from different family backgrounds, socioeconomic groups, ethnicity, race, gender, language, disability, religion, gifted and talented, immigrant status, and sexual orientation.

With faculty, graduate students practice and study the charge for leaders' democratic, justice, and moral purpose. The charge is to help close the achievement gap and expand educational equity; to confront schisms between segregated and desegregated PK-12 schools, separate and unequal schools, private and charter public schools, unequal school resources and teacher effectiveness; and, to interrogate consequences of intergenerational divisions between the rich and the poor, the privileged and disadvantaged, challenges which are tenacious in schools, and echoed in families and children's unequal social mobility.

EDL fosters an interdisciplinary approach and commitment to rigorous scientific and evidence-based research traditions, theoretical perspectives, eclectic curriculum and pedagogy, politics, and practice across characteristic divides among anthropologists, curriculum insurrectionists, critical theorists, critical race theorists, educational psychologists, feminist theorists, organizational theorists, policy analysts, school administrators, sociologists, and teacher educators.

Drawing upon the interdisciplinary strengths of the coordinated synergies, EDL supports students and faculty to fortify collaborative inquiry with each other, school leaders, classroom teachers, school districts, community agencies, and government in situ. The promise is to prepare graduate students to conduct and disseminate relevant research that identifies and solves specific problems, creates innovative solutions and practices, influences policy, informs policy makers, advances students' careers in education, and most importantly, improves the human condition particularly for children, through education.