



Department of Educational Leadership  
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## Master of School Administration (MSA) Student Handbook

Policies, Procedures, and Requirements for the Study and Completion  
of the MSA Degree in Educational Leadership

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Dear MSA Students,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Master of School Administration (MSA) program at East Carolina University.

You should take pride in your outstanding record, accomplishments, and your potential as a school leader that has made your admission to our program possible. We are confident that our rich learning environment will allow you to continue to excel in your academic and personal goals and that you will make a valuable contribution to our school's tradition of leadership and service. The vision of the Department of Educational Leadership is to graduate *Servire* leaders who lead, serve, and transform complex and changing educational environments. We recognize that this scholarly endeavor will require much time and energy from you over the next 2 years. Please be assured that we will be available to help you earn this prestigious principal preparation degree.

The MSA program faculty have developed this handbook to guide you through the program. Please review this handbook carefully as it will answer many questions that you may encounter as you embark on this professional and personal venture. This handbook is not intended to be used in isolation, but rather in association with other university documents including, but not limited to, the Graduate Catalog. Additional details about the program and the Educational Leadership Department, as well as resources for students, can be found on our website at [www.ecu.edu/edleadership](http://www.ecu.edu/edleadership).

Our faculty and staff join me in congratulating you on your admission and in extending our best wishes for your future success in the MSA program at ECU. We are impressed by your passion, determination, and accomplishments. We know you will bring something original and extraordinary to the program and we look forward to working with you.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marjorie Ringler".

Marjorie Ringler, EdD  
Professor and Department Chair  
Department of Educational Leadership

## **Introduction to the Master of School Administration**

The Master of School Administration degree (MSA) is designed to prepare individuals to become school leaders. Program studies include a significant service-learning component. ECU Faculty deliver MSA course content in an instructional environment that encourages and supports students to serve as problem-solvers, communicators, innovators, collaborators, and change agents in their respective schools and school districts. A supportive school and district setting is essential for MSA students as they immerse themselves into these service-learning experiences.

The MSA is designed to allow full-time or part-time study. Part-time students begin the program in the second term of summer and continue for six continuous semesters. The part-time MSA program of study coursework is delivered hybrid face-to-face at an off campus partner location (i.e.; school, district office, etc.) and online. The MSA program consists of 42 semester hours (s.h.), including 27 s.h. of coursework and 15 s.h. of a year-long internship (see program of study section). The program is also offered in a completely online format, with weekly synchronous class meetings in the evenings.

## **MSA Program Vision and Mission**

*Vision* - To graduate *Servire* leaders who lead, serve, and transform complex and changing educational environments.

*Mission* - To prepare educational leaders who respect diversity, build trustful relationships, apply scholarship to address practice, and engage in purposeful collaboration to confront the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

## **MSA Student Outcomes**

*Content Knowledge* - MSA candidates will demonstrate the core body of knowledge associated with the North Carolina State Standards for School Executives and the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) through service leadership projects that impact school improvement.

*Professional Dispositions* - MSA candidates demonstrate the ability, skills, and dispositions to promote school improvement.

*Evidence of Planning* - MSA candidates effectively plan for school improvement based on school needs.

*Diversity* - MSA candidates communicate, interact and work positively with individuals from diverse cultural groups.

*Leadership Development* - MSA candidates demonstrate (or practice) leadership skills and their ability to lead complex educational organizations.

*Diverse Clinical/Field Experiences* - MSA candidates that complete the intensive yearlong administrative internship will examine the overall school vision, become immersed in the school's improvement process, and make a significant contribution to the vision and process as the candidate refines his/her leadership skills.

## Admission to the Program

### Prerequisites

A supportive school and district are essential for MSA students as they immerse themselves into these service-learning experiences. MSA applicants need to be able to demonstrate in their application strong evidence of teacher leadership with at least three years of teaching experience.

### Application Process

All application materials are submitted through the [ECU Graduate School application portal](#).

- **Transcripts** – applicants are required to submit official transcripts to the ECU Grad School.
- **MAT or GRE Official Report** - current (within 5 years) GRE or MAT score. The ECU Graduate School requires a score at or above the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile. NOTE: The GRE/MAT may be waived for applicants through the “Professional Admissions” process. At least one of the these two conditions must be met to be eligible: 1) 5 or more years of teaching experience by the end of this school year as indicated on the North Carolina teaching license and resume, or 2) an existing Master’s Degree in an educational related field as indicated by an “M” license on the NC teaching license.
- **Statement of Purpose** and response to **three Written Scenarios** are included as a supplemental application through the graduate school. The **Statement of Purpose** - is a narrative document that should express the reasons the applicants wants to be considered for admissions and how the MSA will assist them in realizing their professional goals and aspirations. The **Written Scenarios** - require brief responses (250 words or less) to three Leadership Scenarios.
- **North Carolina Teaching License** - upload a scanned copy of current SP2 North Carolina teaching license: Candidates for the MSA program must have an entry-level school license and a minimum of three years teaching/school experience (SP 2 license). SP1 candidates who will be eligible for the SP2 license at the end of the current school year are eligible to apply.
- **Current Resume**- upload your current resume highlighting teacher leadership experiences.

- **MSA Letter of Support Form** - upload a scanned copy of the signed [“MSA Letter of Support Form”](#). This letter must be signed by the applicant, principal, and superintendent/designee. This agreement is required to assure the MSA candidate has the support of a school principal and school system to pursue this program. Upon admissions, a final “MSA Letter of Agreement and Support Form” will be signed to solidify the partnership with the MSA program and to establish guidelines of agreement for the MSA student, the principal, and the superintendent/designee.
- **Three References** – as required in the online application process, list the names and email addresses for your 3 professional letters of recommendation (one must be from the applicant’s current principal or immediate supervisor). A secure email will be sent to each requesting a reference.
- **Interview** - once the Graduate School informs the Department of Educational Leadership that the candidate’s application is complete, an Admission Interview will be scheduled via WebEx.

**Programs of Study**

The MSA program consists of 42 semester hours (s.h.), including 27 s.h. of coursework and 15 s.h. of a year-long internship as follows:

Core: LEED 6901, 6902, 6903, 6904, 6905, 6906, 6907, 6908, 6909 - 27 s.h.

Internship: LEED 6921, 6922, 6924, 6925 – 15 s.h.

**Part-Time MSA**

Program of Study (42 s.h.) - Projected

Semester	SS2	Fall	Spring	SS1	SS2	Fall	Spring
Course(s)	LEED 6901 (3)	LEED 6902 (3) SL LEED 6903 (3) SL	LEED 6904 (3) SL LEED 6905 (3) SL	LEED 6907 (3) SL LEED 6921 (3)	LEED 6909 (3) LEED 6922 (3)	LEED 6906 (3) SL LEED 6924 (4)	LEED 6908 (3) SL LEED 6925 (5)

*MSA program of study leads to eligibility for these licenses in: North Carolina Principal (P-012) and Curriculum Instructional Specialist (SG-113). Currently the 113 license requires a passing score on the Praxis in School Leadership.*

## **MSA Course Descriptions and Course Numbers**

6901. Introduction to School Leadership (3) P: Admission to MSA program. Assessment of leadership skills and behaviors.

6902. Strategic Leadership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools (3) (SL P): Admission to MSA program. Leadership theory and strategic planning models.

6903. Micro-Political Leadership and Decision-Making within a Legal Context (3) (SL P): Admission to MSA program. Effective decision-making within the context of school organizations and legal contexts.

6904. External Development Leadership for Cultivating Partnerships (3) (SL): Admission to MSA program. School community partnerships and effective communication skills with internal and external stakeholders.

6905. Managerial Leadership for Complex School Operations (3) (SLP): Admission to MSA program. Resource maximization by establishing processes and systems that lead to school improvement and student success.

6906. Human Resource Leadership for Professional Growth (3) (SLP): Admission to MSA program. Effective recruitment, placement, induction, mentoring, evaluation, development, and empowerment of teachers and staff.

6907. Leadership Skill Development (3) P: Admission to MSA program. Simulations for leadership development.

6908. Instructional Leadership for Teaching and Learning (3) (SLP): Admission to MSA program. Integrating purposeful and proactive organization, sequencing, and management of teacher and student interactions.

6909. Cultural Leadership for Systemic School Improvement (3) (SLP): Admission to MSA program. School improvement by promotion of a school culture of collaboration, diversity, safety, ethical values, and high expectations.

6921. Internship in Management (3) Part-time students. P: Admission to MSA program. Development and refinement of K-12 management skills.

6922. Internship in Leadership (3) Part-time students. P: Admission to MSA program. Development and refinement of K-12 leadership skills.

6924. Internship in Management and Leadership (4) Part-time students. P: Admission to MSA program. Development and refinement of K-12 leadership and management skills.



6925. Internship in Management, Leadership, and Supervision (5) Part-time students. P: Admission to MSA program. Development and refinement of K-12 leadership, management, and supervisory Skills.

### **Registration**

The support staff of the Department of Educational Leadership works with each MSA student each semester. As the program works in a cohort model, it is important that students are registering for the correct course sections. The Department of Educational Leadership support staff will email students on or before registration opens to guide them to register for the correct sections for their cohort. Students are expected to check their course registrations once registration opens at ECU to verify their classes and pay tuition.

### **Adequate Progress**

Students must maintain a minimum of a B average in the MSA program. A score lower than a B in any internship course will result in dismissal from the internship and the program. A score of a C in two or more courses (excluding the internship) can result in dismissal from the MSA program. A score of an F is an automatic dismissal from the MSA program. To begin each semester in the MSA program, students must have a minimum of a B average in each course taken and completed the Service Leadership Projects (SLPs) associated with these courses. Students that earn a grade(s) of incomplete may not continue in the MSA program until the incomplete grades are resolved and grades are changed. Exceptions may be made by the MSA Advisor.

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend and participate actively in more than 2/3 of the class meetings in any course in order to receive a passing grade. This figure includes absences for emergencies, sickness, family needs, work, etc. Therefore, if a student has taken absences for non-essential reasons and then finds him/herself over the limit due to a late-coming emergency, he/she may fail the course.

Please note that this is the department minimum. Individual instructors may have higher attendance expectations. It is the student's responsibility to learn and adhere to the attendance expectations in any particular class. It is each student's responsibility to observe these requirements and to keep track of his/her absences in each class. It is each student's responsibility to observe these requirements and to keep track of his/her absences in each class.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is expected of every East Carolina University student. Academically violating the Honor Code consists of the following:

- Cheating. Unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work.
- Plagiarism. Copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting same as one's own original work.
- Falsification. Statement of any untruth, either unspoken or written, regarding any circumstances relative to academic work.
- Multiple Submissions. Submission of substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without authorization from the faculty who receives the later response. This includes making minor revisions to an assignment that already received credit in a course and submitting it to another class as if it were new work.
- Attempts. Attempting any act that if completed would constitute an academic integrity violation as defined herein.

Procedures governing academic integrity violations are described in the East Carolina University Student Handbook and in the Faculty Manual.

ECU provides guidelines to students regarding academic integrity while enrolled. The instructor of this course adheres to the established policies and will not tolerate acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize or falsify. Should the

instructor determine that an academic violation has taken place, the instructor reserves the right to assign a grade sanction, which can include failure of the course and dismissal from Graduate School and your program of study, and/or refer the case to the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities for a hearing. No student may drop the involved course or withdraw from school prior to resolving an academic integrity charge. It is important for students to understand that the policy of ECU is to remove students who commit academic integrity violations from the school.

<https://osrr.ecu.edu/policies-procedures/>

## **Internship**

An intensive internship is the culminating activity for the Master of School Administration candidates at East Carolina University. This yearlong internship provides the time for candidates to apply theory and knowledge about school leadership learned in the classroom. This on-the-job training provides opportunities for interns to develop and refine leadership skills as they contribute to the total school program.

### **Purpose of Internship**

The purpose of the internship is to blend the theoretical and research-based content of course offerings with the practical day-to-day experiences of school leadership. Ultimately, the internship affords candidates a realistic notion of school administration and allows candidates to learn from past experiences while they develop an appreciation for reflective practice.

In order to reap the full benefits of internship learning opportunities, an intern must be directly involved in the many diverse activities a principal encounters on a daily basis. An intern is expected to examine the overall school vision, become immersed in the school's improvement process (ELCC 1.3), and make a significant contribution to this vision and process as he/she refines his/her leadership skills (ELCC 2.1). It is expected that, upon successful completion of the program, an intern will be prepared to assume a school leadership position.

### **Eligibility for Internship**

The intent is that an internship should follow study of leadership theory, change theory, education law, ethics, curriculum, communication and other topics in order for that knowledge base to be tested in practical application. Full-time and part-time MSA

candidates complete their internships during the second year of a two-year program. Full-time candidates complete their internship fall and spring semesters. Part-time candidates complete their internship summer 1 & 2, fall and spring semesters. The gateway to begin the internship 1st summer session, students must have a minimum of a B in each course taken and completed the SLPs associated with these courses. The MSA Coordinator may make exceptions.

### **The Intern's Calendar**

North Carolina state legislation requires a significant, yearlong internship for candidates enrolled in the MSA program in Educational Leadership. At ECU the internship carries fifteen (15) semester hours of credit four semesters. Part time interns enroll in LEED 6921 (1st summer session), LEED 6922 (2nd summer session), LEED 6924 (fall) and LEED 6925 (spring).

## **Completion of MSA Internship – Adequate Progress**

Students must maintain a minimum of a B average in the MSA program. A score lower than a B in any internship course will result in dismissal from the internship and the program. A score of a C in two or more courses (excluding the internship) can result in dismissal from the MSA program. A score of an F is an automatic dismissal from the MSA program.

## **Completion of MSA Internship--Time Requirement**

The 1,000-hour administrative experience requirement of the internship for interns employed with a school system or full-time MSA Candidates is two-fold: (1) interns must log a minimum of 600 directed administrative hours during the academic year (including summer months), and (2) will complete 400 supplemental hours at the discretion of their university supervisor. Interns will consult with their site supervisor, a licensed practicing principal, to determine the completion date of the internship and receive approval from their university supervisor. MSA interns not employed with a school system must log 1000 hours of administrative experience at a school with their site supervisor and received approval from their university supervisor.

MSA administrative interns can fulfill this time requirement in one of the following ways:

### **I. Part-Time MSA Candidates Employed in a Full-Time Administrative Position**

These interns are employed by a school district in an administrative position five days a week. Although these candidates enjoy full-time employment with full-time administrative responsibilities, the reflective internship experience provided through seminars, journaling, collection of artifacts, and professional leadership portfolio development will enrich their practice and enhance their administrative skills. Occasionally, these candidates may be granted leave to take a morning or afternoon course on campus with full-time candidates.

### **II. Part-Time MSA Candidates Employed in a Teaching Position (Extended Interns)**

Extended interns hold regular teaching positions in a school system and undertake an internship in addition to their teaching responsibilities. Although the ECU faculty strongly recommends one of the two previously mentioned options, they recognize that this arrangement may be necessary for some candidates. While full-time interns and administrative employees easily invest at least one thousand hours in their administrative experiences, “extended” interns who log administrative hours while they continue to teach must monitor their hours more carefully. It is essential that extended interns work closely with their site supervisor to determine how they will experience a wide variety of administrative responsibilities. The 1,000-hour administrative experience requirement of the internship is two-fold: (1) interns must log a minimum of 600 directed administrative hours during two summer sessions and a fall and spring semester and (2) complete 400 supplemental hours at the discretion of their university supervisor.

## **Final Evaluation of an Intern's Performance**

The internship assessment is an evaluation of four requirements of an intensive year-long internship: (1) attendance and active engagement in seminar activities; (2) observations by the university supervisor and the site supervisor, a licensed and practicing school principal; (3) completion of a webfolio (including summative activity) that documents professional growth; and (4) completion of an oral examination based on the webfolio evidences.

*Seminar activities* include attendance at *each* of the 8 seminars, being prepared with an artifact that matches the appropriate "required experience" for the month, the preparation and sharing of a reflection about learning associated with the artifact, participation in discussions following peer presentations of artifacts and reflections. The artifacts are required to show alignment with the North Carolina School Executive Standards (NCSES) because licensure in North Carolina is based on these standards. The MSA program at ECU developed a table aligning the NCSES with ELCC and the NCSES Preservice Evaluation Standards (NCSEER).

*Observations* include school visits, e-mail correspondence with site supervisor, and formative and summative data from the site supervisor. Throughout the year, the university supervisor seeks feedback from the site supervisor, the intern, and other school district administrators regarding the effectiveness of the internship program. This will include a formative and summative assessment from the site supervisor using the DPI assessment instrument. At the time of the university supervisor's final visit to the school, the site supervisor, and the intern evaluate not only the intern's progress, but also the effectiveness of the internship program.

*Webfolio* includes documentation of a *minimum* of 600 hours of quality work in a school in an administrative capacity.

## Licensure Information

The department chair's verification of the completion of all degree requirements including SLPs is necessary to meet North Carolina principal license statutes (012, class P) and be eligible for the North Carolina curriculum instructional specialist level 1 license (113, class S). To add the permanent 113 license, North Carolina requires the candidate pass the Praxis II in Educational Leadership.

As a partial requirement for candidates to be recommended for licensure they must successful complete all requirements for the degree including course work, comprehensive examinations, and computer proficiency.

The primary requirement for principal licensure (012) is successful completion of the six (6) service leadership projects related to the Leadership Evidences (see [Service Leadership Handbook](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/leed/Current.cfm) - <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/leed/Current.cfm>). A team of faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership will review the completed projects and determine if the candidates have demonstrated a level of "proficient" in all the identified descriptors for the North Carolina School Executive Standards. In addition, the licensure application should include the NCDPI Summative Certificate of Competency demonstrating that the candidate met NCSES competencies and signed by the site supervisor, the candidate, and the ECU MSA coordinator

Candidates apply for licensure through the online system at the NC Department of Public Instruction. The candidate's application must also include a summative assessment of the candidates skills as evaluated by the site principal, agreed to by the candidate, and signed in agreement by a representative of the Department of Educational administration.

Please note that any incomplete grade must be removed before one can graduate and be recommended for licensure.