

2006

# Distance Learner Handbook

College of Education

EDA

Distance Learning Program

# EDA

## Distance Learner Handbook



Florida State University  
College of Education

Department of Educational  
Leadership & Policy Studies

## Mission Statement

The Florida State University Educational Leadership/Administration Distance Learning Program develops and hones outstanding leadership skills for the renewal and improvement of schools and school systems. Our program is designed to help those in leadership roles provide effective teaching-learning guidance. Our program philosophy embraces democratic values, participatory and public decision making, pluralism, accountability, and organizational integrity.

Our faculty seek to improve leadership for present and future schools. Our student-teacher relationship values reflexive, practice-oriented research and inquiry. We are pledged to promote the leadership qualities of honesty, integrity, commitment, competence, and *esprit de corps*. We value high-quality and action-oriented leadership and endorse a shared leadership style that respects all individuals.



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## Acronyms & Key Words

|      |   |
|------|---|
| DLS  | Distance Learning Site (formally referred to as cohort) |
| EDA  | Education Leadership Administration                     |
| ELPS | Educational Leadership & Policy Studies                 |
| FELE | Florida Educational Leadership Exam                     |
| FSU  | Florida State University                                |
| APPS | Academic & Professional Program Services                |

**Adjunct Instructors**—are EDA program faculty who teach online courses for students enrolled in FSU's various distance learning classroom sites. Adjunct instructors also conduct minimum "face-to-face" time instruction as well.

**Blackboard (Bb)**—is the primary software used to create web-supported and online classes at FSU. Instructors can deliver content and coordinate online activities through Blackboard course websites. Blackboard is the most widely used and *feature-rich* online educational software available. FSU participated in Bb's development and continues to use it because the software is easy to learn and manage.

**Mentors**—are students who serve as assistants to adjuncts and help with the day-to-day functions embedded in the distance learning course. Each distance learning course is assigned at least one mentor. In some cases, two mentors may be assigned. Mentors are hired by the ELPS Department.

**EDA Students**—are non-traditional students who have chosen to further their education online. Specific classifications are listed below:

### Regular Degree Seeking Student:

A "regular degree seeking student" is a student who has a specific program of study and has completed every item on the admission checklist prior to the commencement of classes.

### Modified Student:

A "modified student" is a student who has entered the EDA Distance Learning program in order to complete the 24 hours worth of course work required to take the Florida Educational Leadership Exam (FELE). The 24 hours is required by the Florida Department of Education.

### Provisional Student:

A "provisional student" is a student who has been admitted for one (1) semester only. The provisional status is designed to afford the student additional time to complete his or her Admission File. The EDA Department is currently designing a provisional status policy which will clearly delineate those items which may be obtained during the one (1) semester grace period.

### Special Student:

A "special student" is a student who has not chosen a specific program of study and does not desire to take the FELE exam. Many special students have mistakenly assumed that all completed courses can be applied toward his or her eventual program of study. This not the case. Special students must remember that only 12 hours of course work may be transferred to a specific program of study. Also, by the end of the first semester, the special student must have completed all graduate admissions requirements.

# What EDA Distance Learning Students Need to Know



Make Sure Online learning is Right For You

Visit the website at:

<http://learnonline.fsu.edu>

When the page appears:

Look to the left for "Why FSU Online"

Look to the right for "Personal Characteristics"

## EDA Distance Learning History & Brief Overview

The new millennium bore witness to The Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies entrance into online scholarship. In an effort to remain technologically competitive and to prepare future Florida educators, in 2000 our department offered its first online Master's degree in Educational Leadership & Administration. Our first distance learning site was established in Monroe County, Florida, and successfully graduated online students in fall, 2002. The program received national recognition as "A University in the Lead" by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB); and is a distinguished member of the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA).

### Program Format

Our unique Distance Learning Master's Degree Program normally includes Friday and Saturday evening face-to-face meetings coupled with weekly online assignments and activities. Our courses are delivered over a 13-week semester in the fall, spring, and summer and are currently taught at our Ocala, Panama City, Pembroke Pines, and Tallahassee distance sites. The online portion of our courses are supported by the Blackboard® software system.

### Program Content

Our program is designed to prepare professionals for entry-level administrative positions in schools, school districts, and educational agencies. Course content is aligned with state and national standards and addresses both theoretical and practical approaches to K-12 educational leadership. Two creative program assessment tools are used to assess student knowledge and leadership ability. They are: the electronic portfolio and the online Competency-Based Assessment instrument. These tools provide students with leadership-skill direction and a marketable evidence of their ability. Our graduates are prepared to meet the educational challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

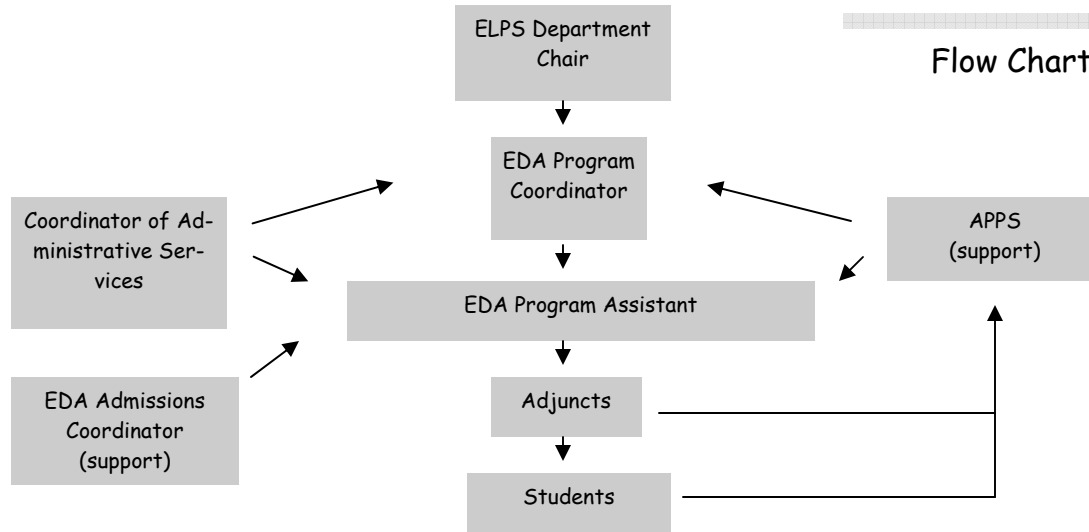
#### Note

This handbook reflects a recent change in technical support. What is now referred to as the Office of Academic & Professional Program Services used to be referred to as ODDL (The Office of Distributive and Distance Learning). Some of the emails and website URL's are in the process of changing, thus Web-based inquiries and personnel emails might not prove fruitful until the changes are complete

Emails with **campus.fsu.edu** in the address reflect the most recent changes and should work fine. The following contact should help answer any APPS questions:

Inquiries Desk  
1-877- FLSTATE (357-8283)

Flow Chart



**ELPS Department Chair**

Position oversees entire EDA command and control structure

Collateral Duty

Current position maintained by:

|                            |                 |                |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Dr. Joseph Beckham:        | room 113 "Q"    | Stone Building |
| Email: beckham@coe.fsu.edu | Phone: 644-5553 |                |

**EDA Program Coordinator**

Position oversees Tallahassee, Panama City, and Distance Learning locations

Collateral duty

Current position maintained by

|                           |                  |                |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Dr. Lynn Wicker:          | room 113 "P"     | Stone Building |
| Email: wicker@coe.fsu.edu | Phone: 644- 3583 |                |

**Coordinator of Administrative Services**

Position ensures EDA administrative programs conform to university guidelines.

Collateral duty

Current Position maintained by:

|                             |                 |                |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Amy McKnight:               | room 113 "C"    | Stone Building |
| Email: mcknight@coe.fsu.edu | Phone: 644-4704 |                |

**APPS**

This office provides online training and technical support for EDA structure

Collateral duty

Current contact:

|           |                       |                   |
|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Help Desk | APPS                  | University Center |
| Email: NA | Phone: 1-877-357-8283 |                   |

**EDA Program Assistant**

Position ensure efficient operation of EDA Distance program

Primary

Current position maintained by

|                      |           |                |
|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Richard Daye         | room NA   | Stone Building |
| Email: rld05@fsu.edu | Phone: NA |                |

**EDA Admissions Coordinator—Student Support**

Position assists

Coordinator of Administrative Services and EDA Program Assistant

|                             |                 |                |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Jimmy Pastrano:             | room 113        | Stone Building |
| Email: pastrano@coe.fsu.edu | Phone: 644-6781 |                |

**Student Classifications**

This section is designed to clarify the different classifications of EDA Distance Learning students and the admissions procedures. There are four student classifications. They are:

- Regular Degree Seeking Student
- Modified Student
- Provisional Student
- Special Student

**Regular Degree Seeking Student:**

A "regular degree seeking student" is a student who has a specific program of study and has completed every item on the admission checklist prior to the commencement of classes.

**Modified Student:**

A "modified student" is a student who has entered the EDA Distance Learning program in order to complete the 24 hours worth of course work required to take the Florida Educational Leadership Exam (FELE). The 24 hours is required by the Florida Department of Education.

**Special Student****Provisional Student:**

A "provisional student" is a student who has been admitted for one (1) semester only. The provisional status is designed to afford the student additional time to complete his or her Admission File. The EDA Department is currently designing a provisional status policy which will clearly delineate those items which may be obtained during the one (1) semester grace period.

**Special Student:**

A "special student" is a student who has not chosen a specific program of study and does not desire to take the FELE exam. A special student is a student who has chosen to commence his or her Master's level education without a specific educational focus. Many special students have mistakenly assumed that all completed courses can be applied toward his or her eventual program of study. Special students must remember that only 12 hours of course work may be transferred to a specific program of study. Also, by the end of the first semester, the special student must have completed all graduate admissions requirements.

**Educational Leadership/Administration Class Schedule**

The EDA Distance Learning Class Schedule is a continually updated schedule containing specific data regarding the individual Distance Learning locations. Distance Learning location data consists of the following:

- The course identifier, section number, and reference number (e.g., EDA 5218-01, ref # 07503)
- The date and time when the instructor and the students are physically present in a classroom.
- The name of the instructor

Hard copies of the schedule can be obtained in the Coordinator of Administrative Services' office and the EDA Program Coordinator's office. The schedule can also be viewed online at:

**<http://www.fsu.edu/~elps/>**

(Go to EDA Distance Learning, look for current month's class schedule).

**Academic & Professional Program Services (APPS)**

EDA Distance Learning Personnel, to include Distance Learning adjuncts, can access APPS for myriad technical support functions. There are five basic support functions. They are: Teaching Enhancement, Online Support, Learning Resources, Digital Media, and the Mentor Program. However, after admissions, the most crucial step for the student is to complete APPS's online orientation. Historically, distance learning students inundated the Educational Leadership & Policy Studies Department with numerous questions and quests for administrative favors. APPS has been instrumental in shifting the responsibility for successful student learning to the individual student. In short, the EDA program office will assist the student during the initial admissions phase, but it is the student's responsibility to visit the APPS website and complete the online orientation.

**NOTE**

**The distance learning student must complete APPS online orientation**

How To access APPS online orientation:

1. Goto: <http://www.fsu.edu/> (FSU Homepage)
2. Click "online learning"
3. Click "online degrees"
4. Click "orientation"
5. The screen will display:

- **Step 1** - Request an FSU Card.
- **Step 2** - Generate an FSU computer account.
- **Step 3** - Complete and submit the Computer Account Verification Form. Then, wait to receive an e-mail response before proceeding to Step 4.
- **Step 4** - Log in to FSU's online course management system (Blackboard) to complete your orientation.

These steps are necessary to identify yourself as an FSU student, to gain access to the University's various services, and to communicate with the University community. Once you have completed steps 1, 2, and 3, you will be e-mailed additional instructions at your new FSU e-mail address, which are necessary for completing your FSU Online Orientation.

In addition to numerous functions, Blackboard allows the student to register for classes and to initiate financial aid.

APPS Contact Information:

APPS  
Suite C3500  
University Center Tallahassee, FL, 32306-2550

inquiries@oddl.fsu.edu  
1-877-358-8283

## Distance Learning Student

Section  
6.1

### Section Contents

This section will address the following items:

#### Administration Requirements

Graduate Admissions Checklist

p. 11

Admission Steps

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## Distance Learning Students

Section  
6.2

### Graduate Admissions Checklist:

Bullet checklist requirements are listed below. Refer to pages 11-14 (Admission Steps) for a complete description of each of the checklist items.

- Completed Graduate Application
- Admission Fee
- Transcripts
- GRE Scores
- Resume
- Statement of Purpose
- Three (3) Letters of Recommendation
- Online Supplemental Application

#### NOTE

**Appendix B Contains a copy of Admissions Checklist**

## Distance Learning Students

Section  
6.3

### Admission Steps:

The following steps are for all EDA Distance Learning students. The Office for Graduate Admissions requires the following:

- 1) The student must complete the Graduate Student application online at:

<http://www.fsu.edu/prospective/admissions/online/usgrado.shtml>.

#### NOTE

**Hard copies of the Graduate Student Application can be obtained at the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Rm. 113 Stone Building**

- 2) The Office for Academic & professional Program Services (APPS) requires an online Supplemental Application. Access application at:

[https://wapps.oddl.fsu.edu/student/supp\\_app/index.jsp](https://wapps.oddl.fsu.edu/student/supp_app/index.jsp)

Admission Steps: (continued)

**NOTE**

To apply to FSU's Distance Learning Program, the student must also complete the APPS supplemental application . The supplemental application is not an online version of the Graduate Application. The supplemental application is a different application required for tracking purposes

**NOTE**

There is not a separate Distance Learning Program admissions application. Only the Graduate Admission application, the Supplemental Application, and the International Student Graduate Application exist

**NOTE**

International students must submit a hard copy of the International Graduate Application and a Statement of Financial responsibility. International students can download a PDF version, complete, and mail to Graduate Admissions (see steps below)

International Student Access to Graduate Application:

Goto FSU homepage (<http://www.fsu.edu/>)

Click "admissions" under *quick links* column

Click "online services"

Click "Intl Graduate" or scroll down to where you see "Intl Graduate"

Under the heading "International Graduate" you will see two links:

"Application" and "Statement of Financial Responsibility" \*

\* Both must be completed and delivered to the EDA Distance Learning Program office

2) *Application Fee:*

The student must send an application fee in the amount of \$30 to:

Florida State University  
P.O. Box 5000, Tallahassee; FL 32314-5000

**NOTE**

The EDA Distance Learning office will not commence with admission procedures until the Graduate Admissions Office confirms receipt of the \$30.00 application fee

Admission Steps: (continued)

**NOTE**  
For more information regarding the admissions process visit:  
<http://admissions.fsu.edu/>

- 3) *Transcripts:*  
The student must submit one official transcript from any college or university attended, regardless of whether or not a degree was received. Transcripts should be sent to:

EDA Distance Learning Admissions  
113 Stone Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4452  
Fax#: 850-644-1258

**NOTE**  
The EDA Distance Learning Program requires either a 3.0 or higher GPA (upper-level division) and minimum 800 on the GRE, or a GRE minimum of a 1000 if the student's GPA is lower than 3.0 (only last 60 hours are used to calculate)

- 4) *GRE Scores:*  
Students are to fax or mail official Graduate Record Exam scores to:

EDA APPS Admissions  
113 Stone Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4452  
Fax#: 850 644-1258

- 5) *Professional Resume:*  
The student will submit a copy his or her resume to:

EDA APPS Admissions  
113 Stone Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4452  
Fax#: 850 644-1258

- 6) *Statement of Purpose:*  
The student will submit a copy of his or her statement to:

EDA APPS Admissions  
113 Stone Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4452  
Fax#: 850 644-1258

Admission Steps (continued):

**NOTE**

The statement of purpose is a brief statement (no more than two [2] double-spaced pages) delineating:

- The student's current educational achievements and/or experiences
- The student's reason for pursuing his or her program of study
- The student's future application of his or her program of study

7) *Three (3) Letters of Recommendation:*

The student will obtain letters of reference attesting to his or her academic ability and his or her desire to obtain the distance degree. The student will submit a copy of his or her recommendations to:

EDA Online Distance Learning Admissions  
113 Stone Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4452  
Phone #: 850 644-4704

**NOTE**

Although all recommendations can be supplied by academic instructors, the student may wish to supply a reference from other sources (e.g., pastors, work supervisors, and volunteer organizations)

**NOTE**

Only two (2) Letters of Recommendation are needed for Modified students

Admission Steps (continued):8) *Online Supplemental Application*

All distance-learning program applicants must complete this application. This application enables the Office of Admissions to properly code students as distance-earning students. It also enables APPS's support team to track and assist students. This application should be submitted at the same time as the University application. Access application at:

**[https://wapps.oddl.fsu.edu/student/supp\\_app/index.jsp](https://wapps.oddl.fsu.edu/student/supp_app/index.jsp)**

9) *APPS Orientation*

Only undergraduate online students are *required* to complete the Online Orientation, but it is available for undergraduates and graduates in any program. Graduate distance-learning programs regularly refer students to the graduate Online Orientation for a logistical introduction to the University. Once students are accepted to the University as distance-learning program students, an APPS support team member contacts the student via email with instructions to complete the required Online Orientation, as well as information related to the logistics of enrolling.

**Welcome**

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| Section 2.1 | Table of Contents   |
| Section 3.1 | Acronym & Key Words |

**What EDA Distance Students Need to Know**

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| Section 5.2 | EDA Distance Learning Student Classifications  |
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## Appendix B

### Graduate Admission Checklist

- Completed Graduate Application
- Admission Fee
- Transcripts
- GRE Scores
- Resume
- Statement of Purpose
- Three (3) Letters of Recommendation
- Online Supplemental Application
- APPS Orientation