Master of Education
Educational Leadership

Program Handbook
2020-2021
Dear Student,

Welcome to the Sul Ross State University Master of Education in Educational Leadership Program and congratulations on making the decision to continue your formal education. The purpose of the Master of Education in Educational Leadership Program is to prepare students in the Middle Rio Grande region and beyond for positions as Educational/Instructional Leaders by providing them with a strong foundation in the theoretical and practical aspects of educational leadership. All courses require students to convert research-based theoretical knowledge into practical classroom applications as they relate to the levels of early childhood through grade 12.

This handbook will serve as your guide throughout the program; however, information contained in this handbook does not replace information from the program coordinator or your advisor. When in doubt, please contact a program staff member with your questions or concerns. I am always happy to help you in any way I can.

Wishing you success and fulfillment as you begin this graduate school journey,

Chris A. Tresslar, Ph.D.

Chris A. Tresslar, Ph.D.
Educational Leadership Program Coordinator
christopher.tresslar@sulross.edu
Acknowledgement and Agreement Form

Signature of Acknowledgement

This is to acknowledge that I have received and understood the Sul Ross State University M.Ed. Educational Leadership Program Manual. I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by standards, guidelines, and policies set forth in the program manual.

Student Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________
Purpose of Handbook

This Handbook is intended for students in the Educational Leadership program in the College of Education at Sul Ross State University Rio Grande. It provides an overview of program requirements, policy, rules, and regulations. The information included is designed to facilitate students’ progress toward the attainment of their degree objectives. The purpose of this handbook is to supplement and clarify – not supersede – policies and procedures provided at the College of Education.

Goals of the Program

The Master’s Program in Educational Leadership provides a strong foundation of knowledge, skills, real world experience, and innovative research intended to prepare students to serve as effective educational leaders and local change agents. Graduates fill an important need in the community, serving in diverse positions in both public and private educational institutions.

The degree fulfills requirements for the Texas Standard Principal Certificate (in conjunction with passing the PASL and TExES 268 exam). Successful progress through the program requires academic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and professional skill development. Participation in the program necessitates students balance their personal commitments (e.g., current employment, family, personal health, finance) with the professional development commitments associated with the program.

The program is designed to meet the standards and competencies of the Domains and Competencies set forth by TEA. See the link below for Domains and Competencies.

https://www.tx.nesinc.com/Content/StudyGuide/TX_SG_obj_268.htm
Program Overview

Program Options
There are two options for students seeking certification as a Principal. Students without a Master's degree will work toward obtaining a Master of Education in Educational Leadership Degree. Those students already holding a Master's degree are eligible for the Certification Only option. See below for a brief description of the requirements for each option.

Master of Education in Educational Leadership Program
This is a 30-hour graduate program leading to a Master of Education degree with an educational leadership/principal certification. Prospective students will follow the admission procedures outlined in a subsequent section of this handbook. Students will be responsible for completing all required coursework (which includes a 160-hour practicum), a comprehensive oral exam, complete state mandated PASL activities, and state-mandated TExES 268 Standard Principal Exam for certification.
https://www.ets.org/ppa/test-takers/school-leaders/about

Certification Only/Non-degree Program
This option is for students already holding a Master's degree in education or a related field from an accredited college or university. The Certification Only student will be responsible for completing required educational leadership courses assigned to them upon review of transcripts. The student must apply to the university and meet the admission criteria. Upon university acceptance, a transcript review will be completed by the Chair of the Department of Education to determine proficiency. Additional coursework may be required if an acceptable level of proficiency is not demonstrated by previous coursework and experience.
Admission

Application Process
Students should begin the application process on the Sul Ross State University webpage at www.sulross.edu Access and submit the online application at Apply >Apply Online>Apply Texas. If you have questions regarding applying to Sul Ross please contact the VP for Enrollment Management, Dr. Lisa Harris at 432-837-8432 or email allison.harris@sulross.edu. At Rio Grande College you can contact Ulisses Gallegos at 830-703-4816 or ulisses.gallegos@sulross.edu.

Once you are accepted into the University Graduate Program, you will receive a letter outlining your specific program request and any additional requirements you will need to complete. Please contact the Education Department where you will request to be scheduled for screening. Once you have been given formal acceptance into the program, a degree plan will be developed, you will receive an email with a copy of the degree plan, as well as a Statement of Affirmation regarding the Educator Code of Ethics and a FERPA consent form. Required paperwork to complete the admissions process must be turned in within 7 working business days to include years of service record, teaching certificates, Ethics Affirmation, FERPA consent form, electronic letter of acceptance signature, and a signed program handbook verification form. Any paperwork you receive requesting further information and/or signatures must be returned promptly to the Education Department.

Program Requirements

Course Requirements
The Educational Leadership graduate program strives to meet the needs of students who maintain full-time employment and fulfill other duties outside the classroom. Our hybrid delivery of instruction allows students to continue employment while obtaining an advanced degree. Sul Ross utilizes the Blackboard course management system to deliver high quality instruction online as well as meeting in class.
The following courses are required for a Master of Education in Educational Leadership degree:

- EDUC 5301 Research Methodology (must be done in first 6 hrs)
- EDUC 5302 The Principalship
- EDUC 5316 The Multicultural Learner
- EDUC 5318 Administration of Personnel Services
- EDUC 5319 School Law
- EDUC 6304 Organization and Theory in School Administration
- EDUC 6307 School Public Relations
- EDUC 6315 Curriculum Theory and Development
- EDUC 7313 Administration Practicum I (semester in length)
- EDUC 7313 Administration Practicum II (semester in length)

Additional Requirements:

- Successfully complete the RGC Educational Leadership Test Approval process (end of handbook)
- Register and successfully pass the TExES 268 Standard Principal Exam
- Successfully submit and pass all portions of the PASL
- Graduate students are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA average throughout the program. Making a grade of a “C” or below will not be accepted in the program.
Certification as a Texas Principal requires:

Criteria for receiving Principal as Instructional Leader certification:

- a Master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education
- a valid Texas Teacher Certification
- a minimum of two years teaching experience in a TEA accredited school
- Successful completion of the PASL
- a passing score on the TExES 268 (Principal as Instructional Leader).

Degree Plan/Certification Plan
A degree plan will be developed once the student is accepted into the program. This degree plan will be sent to the student with the departmental letter of acceptance, along with a copy of the Educator's Code of Ethics and the Statement of Affirmation.

Students should keep a copy of their signed degree plan for their records. Students seeking a Master's degree will have a degree plan, while students seeking certification only will have a certification plan. Both are developed upon entering the program because they serve as the primary tool for advisement. It is the student's responsibility to keep the degree/certification plan updated after each semester.
**Comprehensive Examination**
Graduation requirements for students in the RGC Educational Leadership program include a comprehensive written examination. Students will apply for comprehensive exams during their last semester of coursework. Students can select up to three faculty members to serve on their committee. Dr. Tresslar and Dr. Salazar will be on each committee.

**Break in Enrollment**
Non-enrollment for the period of one long semester will result in official removal from the program and TEA. This will also require that a student reapply to the university as well as the Education department upon return.

**Practicum/Field-Based Experience**

**Practicum Requirements:**
Students seeking the Standard Principal Certificate must complete a structured, field-based practicum focused on actual experiences with each of the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) standards. The established practicum courses are not a checklist of activities, but an opportunity to plan, produce, participate in, and reflect upon campus leadership. By establishing an environment of opportunities, students learn how to self-analyze their strengths and weaknesses throughout these critical developmental stages. The design of the field based experiences utilizes and enhances the knowledge, skills, and other attributes and attitudes (KSAs) emphasized in the courses of the Principal Certificate program components. This collaborative design encompasses the students, mentors, school community, and university supervisor in order to assimilate the organization and leadership essential to a schools’ success. The practicum is limited to those students that have enrolled as students for a Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership or their certificate program and is taken at the completion of all courses. The year-long practicum experiences aim to provide the student with a deepened understanding of the year-long operations and commitment that a principal makes to the school community. It is intended to serve as the cumulating experience in the Educational Leadership program and concludes at the end of the year with a capstone binder/portfolio that will include an essential log of hours. A copy of the logged hours must also be provided to the professor and the certification director who, in turn, must keep a copy on file with the program area files for at least 5 years.

**Background Checks**
Many school districts require a criminal history background check before granting access to the campus. It is the responsibility of the student to provide the hosting school district with the information required and pay any fees associated with the background checks. If you are completing the practicum experience on the campus in which you work, this will not be an additional requirement.
Course Sequence
Several of the required courses are only offered once a year; therefore, it is important to plan the sequence in which you take the courses carefully. By taking two courses during the long semesters and two courses during each summer session, the program can be completed within two years; however, students are allowed up to five years in which to complete the program. Your major advisor is available for consultation when planning your course sequence.

Testing Course
EDUC 7313 Administration practicum is the capstone course and is offered Fall and Spring semesters. Due to the rigor of this course and the requirement to complete the test approval process, pass the Certify Teacher Practice Test, and official exam during the practicum in order to complete certification, candidates are not to enroll in other courses in the same semester. Candidates may begin the test approval process in order to receive permission for the TExES 268 exam during their final semester of course work and must take the TExES 268 prior to completing EDUC 7313 Administration Practicum.

Graduation (Master's Students Only)
Students should be aware of the deadlines for graduation and submit the necessary forms and paperwork. Graduation applications forms can be found on the SRSU webpage.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Confidentiality
Confidentiality is of utmost importance for the students enrolled in the Educational Leadership program at Sul Ross State University. We take the issue of confidentiality of students and families very seriously; therefore, violation of confidentiality could result in dismissal from the program without refund of tuition and fees. Responsibility in maintaining confidentiality extends to discussions posted on Blackboard. All information discussed will be strictly among students in the course and the instructor and will be on a strict need-to-know basis.

Class Attendance
Students will be dropped from courses for non-participation. Students should review the SRSU Online Absence Policy posted in each course syllabus.

Dress Code
Students should present themselves as professional educators. As a minimum, students will follow the dress code policies for faculty and staff of the school district in which they conduct the practicum. Specific questions and/or concerns should be addressed to your major advisor.
PROFESSIONAL TESTING & CERTIFICATION

To become certified as a Texas Principal all educational leadership candidates will be required to take and pass the state certification examination, referred to as the TExES 268 Principal Test and successfully complete the PASL. Information is provided below regarding testing requirements for educational leadership candidates.

Official EPP Test Approval Process: Certify Teacher Practice Exam
All students in the program are required to complete the test preparation schedule selected by the Education Department in order to prepare for the TExES 268 exam. Further information can be obtained by calling the Certification and Test Coordinator, Susan Land at (830) 279-3041 or emailing her at sharper@sulross.edu.

It is the responsibility of the educational leadership candidate to obtain the educator standards for Texas Principal. We encourage that all candidates review the free Pearson preparation manual prior to seeking formal test approval. In the last semester of courses, the candidate should request test approval. Once all portions of the test preparation manual are complete and the minimum level of proficiency is scored on the practice test (260 points), approval will be granted to the candidate to register for the TExES 268 test.

Additional information can be found on the Certify Teacher website at www.certifyteacher.com. Students can contact Ms. Land for information on acquiring access.

TExES 268 Certification Test
Educational Leadership students are advised to take the TExES 268 Principal Test as soon as they are given granted approval by SRSU. After 30 days your approval will be removed. https://www.tx.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/TX268_PrepMaterials.html

If the TExES 268 is not passed, a remediation plan will be developed prior to approval to retest. This may include additional coursework or individualized study sessions. HB 2205 reads in part as follows "A person may not retake an examination more than four times, unless the board waives the limitation for good cause as prescribed by the board." Retesting information can be found on the TEA website.

Candidates are also required to complete the state mandated PASL activities successfully in order to fulfill the certification requirement.

https://www.ets.org/ppa/test-takers/school-leaders/about.
Certification

To be eligible to receive the standard Texas Principal Certificate, a candidate must:

- complete all requirements of the Educational Leadership program
- hold a valid Texas teaching certificate
- complete a minimum of two years teaching in a TEA accredited school
- hold a Master's degree
- pass the TExES Principal 268 examination
- Successfully complete the state mandated PASL activities

Certification Checklist

This checklist outlines the procedure for applying for a Principal Certificate.

1. _______ University requirements are completed.
   - Degree/certification plan has been completed.
   - Certify Teacher Practice Test has been passed and scores have been received by the SRSU certification specialist.

2. _______ TExES 268 certification exam has been passed.

3. _______ Scores have been received by SRSU certification office.

4. _______ Successfully completed PASL activities.

5. _______ Application is on file with the Texas Education Agency (TEA).
   - Go to the TEA website (http://www.tea.state.tx.us) and use your TEAL login.
   - On the MAIN MENU on the left side of the screen, choose APPLICATIONS, which has a drop-down selection list. Choose STANDARD CERTIFICATE TEXAS PROGRAM.
   - Follow instructions to APPLY.
   - NOTE: After the affidavit you must indicate the "recommending entity." Choose Sul Ross State University - Alpine - University Based. The next line asks what you are applying for. Type in the name of the certificate you are seeking (i.e., Reading Specialist).
   - Pay the certification fee. If you have not previously applied for certification, you will be required to complete the fingerprint process.
   - If you have problems of questions about the online application, you may call TEA at 1-888-863-5880.
6. __________ Practicum Binder/Portfolio/Videos are completed and turned in.

7. __________ Practicum Supervisor Observations completed and uploaded and shared in the practicum blackboard portfolio.

Master of Education in Educational Leadership Program
Student Information

Instruction for this program may occur both in person and online. Expect that some professors will require regular class meetings while some professors will meet only at designated times throughout the semester. A portion of the instruction during EDUC 7313 will be face-to-face, but that will occur when the university supervisor visits the student for an onsite observation.

- Online students are subject to the same university policies and procedures applicable to students attending face-to-face courses on campus.
- The Course Syllabus and Calendar for each course is available prior to the beginning of each semester. These documents describe the course content, goals, assignments, due dates, and student expectations. Criteria for success for online students is as rigorous and comprehensive as those used in face-to-face courses.
- Communication between instructor and student occurs through Blackboard and/or SRSU email. Students can expect to receive feedback for their assignments within five working days and responses to their emails within 48 hours.
- Technical support is available M-F, 8:30 - 5:30, Tim Parsons tim.parsons@sulross.edu 432-837-8525; Sul Ross help desk: 432-837-8888.
- Attendance policies in effect for face-to-face instruction also apply to online students. This policy is interpreted as not participating for more than three weeks in a long semester or one week in a summer session. Any student dropped for non-participation will receive an F in the course dropped.
- Academic integrity is crucial for online instruction.
Enforceable Standards.

(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.
   (A) Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
   (B) Standard 1.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
   (C) Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
   (D) Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
   (E) Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
   (F) Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
   (G) Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.
   (H) Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.
   (I) Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.
   (J) Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
   (K) Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
   (L) Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse, or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs, and toxic inhalants.
   (M) Standard 1.13. The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.
   (A) Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
   (B) Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
   (C) Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
   (D) Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
(E) Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

(F) Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

(G) Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

(H) Standard 2.8. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

(A) Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

(B) Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

(C) Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

(D) Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

(E) Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

(F) Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

(G) Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

(H) Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

(I) Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

(i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;

(ii) the subject matter of the communication;

(iii) whether the communication was made openly, or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

(iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;

(v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and

(vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.
TExES Principal Exams Preparation Process for Principal Certification

STEPS TO TExES 268 TEST APPROVAL:

Step 1:
**Practice Manual** for content or testing area chosen for principal test TExES 268 ([https://www.tx.nesinc.com/](https://www.tx.nesinc.com/))

Go to your content preparation materials on the website and download preparation manual for your content area 268.

Complete practice test (towards the end of manual) and submit answer documents (provided in the content area in blackboard) once you assess yourself with a number grade. Once you complete the manual and do the practice test, you will submit that document showing that you completed it with your score into the appropriate location in BB.

**Book Study** for principal preparation

You will choose one of the following books:


You will read the book and prepare a written document detailing each Domain and Competency that the book addressed with specific examples of what you read, instructional strategies you would develop accordingly, and how you would apply them to an actual campus scenario. Your written statement should address each “bolded priority statement” contained in each competency for all six domains. You will drop the completed document into the appropriate location in BB.

You may substitute another approved text or study manual with permission from instructor.


Once completed go to step 2

Step 2:

**240 Tutoring Program** for the 268 TExES exam. Final completion will show results with minimum passing scores of 90% passing rate on all domains, and on all exams (240 Tutoring Program). You should contact Dr. Jorge Garza (Jorge.garza@sulross.edu) for assistance setting up account and instructions on how the program works. Once you have completed all of the tests with the needed score, you will submit all three test scores into the appropriate location in BB.
Once completed go to step 3

Step 3:

Certify Teacher Test for the 268 TExES exam.  (https://www.certifyteacher.com/
Principal practice exam minimum score is 260.  Submit results in (Exam Mode) with minimum score met via blackboard or as directed by the advisor.

To set up an account and get access to certify teacher program contact Ms. Susan Land (sharper@sulross.edu) with your Lobo email. If there is assistance needed, you may contact 866-209-9986 select option 2 for help. Choose the Test Prep option. You may choose to use study guides if wanted in addition to test prep. You will need to work through all of the preparation activities before you test.

Submit passing scores (PDF) only showing name of candidate and scores in Exam Mode in the appropriate location in BB. If you fail to make a 260 score, you will need to go back into the instructional part of the program and do additional prep work. If a student is not successful on the practice test, the student is to complete a remediation plan (found in the content area) prior to conferring with the advisor and testing again.

If candidate fails to make 260 after the third attempt, instructor may assign additional supplemental materials that must be completed before candidate will be allowed to test further on certify teacher.

When ALL steps are completed in full candidate may receive formal Test Approval for the state TExES 268 exam.

If student fails the state exam, student must achieve a 280 on subsequent Practice Exam attempts in certify teacher for all areas. Student will also be given an intervention plan that must be completed before getting additional test approval. The testing committee will determine who may proceed to the state exam if within five points of meeting minimum score or under exceptional circumstances.