

Sul Ross State University
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership
Frequently Asked Questions

The Sul Ross State University Ed.D. in Educational Leadership is a CPED-aligned doctoral program that prepares practitioner-scholars to lead research-driven improvement in rural, borderland, and linguistically diverse educational settings. Grounded in improvement science, the program integrates systematic inquiry with leadership practice to address urgent Problems of Practice in contexts that are often underserved by traditional doctoral education.

Thank you for your interest in Sul Ross State University's Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership program. The application system is currently under development we anticipate availability by the end of January 2026. The priority deadline for applications is April 15, 2026 for the Fall 2026 inaugural cohort.

This FAQ addresses common questions about program eligibility, the application process, and our mission-driven approach to cohort selection.

When will the application portal be available?

The online application portal will launch in late January 2026. We will update the program website.

What is the application deadline?

The priority deadline for applications for the Fall 2026 cohort is April 15, 2026. Applications received after this deadline will be considered only if space remains in the cohort. The selection committee will begin reviewing completed applications immediately after the April deadline. Early submission does not confer any advantage in the selection process.

How are candidates selected for the cohort?

The inaugural cohort is limited to 15 candidates to ensure exceptional mentorship and faculty interaction. Selection is highly competitive and mission-driven. The committee recommends candidates en masse based on:

- Alignment with the program's commitment to serving rural, borderland, and linguistically diverse communities
- Demonstration of leadership capacity and readiness for doctoral study
- Quality and clarity of the identified Problem of Practice
- Holistic cohort composition that collectively represents diverse contexts and leadership challenges

Who should apply? Are there geographic requirements?

This program is designed for educational leaders whose work aligns with Sul Ross State University's mission as *"a Hispanic serving public institution for the residents of the U.S./Mexico borderlands, Southwest Texas region, and beyond."*

The program distinctively focuses on preparing leaders who serve in communities that are rural, borderland, and/or linguistically diverse. While we welcome inquiries from interested individuals regardless of location, admission decisions prioritize candidates whose professional contexts and leadership work demonstrate strong alignment with the program's mission to serve these specific communities.

What are the minimum qualifications to apply?

All applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

- **Master's degree from an accredited institution**
- **Texas Principal as Instructional Leader Certification**
- **Minimum of three years of leadership experience in P-12 education, higher education, or related organizational setting.**
- **Demonstrated potential for scholarly inquiry and leadership advancement.**

What materials are required for the application?

Applicants must submit a comprehensive digital portfolio that includes:

- Online Application Form (via Sul Ross Graduate Admissions Portal)
- Letter of Introduction / Statement of Purpose (3–5 pages) addressing professional background, Problem of Practice, motivation for pursuing the Ed.D., and commitment to serving rural, borderland, or linguistically diverse communities
- Required Video Presentation (5–7 minutes) addressing professional background, Problem of Practice, reasons for pursuing doctoral study, and alignment with Sul Ross State University's mission
- Two Letters of Recommendation (at least one from a supervisor or educational leader who can attest to leadership ability, academic readiness, and capacity for sustained improvement-focused inquiry)
- Professional Résumé or CV
- Official Transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate institutions
- Evidence of Texas Principal as Instructional Leader Certification
- Evidence of Impact (optional – examples may include reports, publications, presentations, or leadership projects)

Applicants may be invited to a virtual interview to discuss program fit and readiness for doctoral study.

What is the approval status of the program?

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) approved the program in January 2026. Final implementation remains contingent upon approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

How can I get more information?

For questions about the program, application process, or eligibility:

Email: educationdoctorate@sulross.edu

Program Director: Dr. John Decman

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