



Acacia  
University  
ARIZONA



PROGRAM  
CREDITS

**60** CREDIT  
HOURS

[www.acacia.edu](http://www.acacia.edu)



DOCTOR OF  
EDUCATION IN  
EDUCATIONAL  
LEADERSHIP









## About **Acacia University**

Acacia University, Arizona, US, stands as a symbol of regeneration, perseverance, and integrity and is on a mission to make learning a long-lasting, invigorating experience.

Acacia's origin dates back to 2003 when Educational Cyberconnections, Inc. began a partnership with the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA) to provide onsite training to CITA schools in Egypt, Pakistan, United Emirates, and China. This training created a demand for additional and continuing training that resulted in establishing an onsite and online program under the title of CITA Teacher Certification Program. Then in 2005, Power-Ed and CITA developed and delivered a web-based curriculum (24 credits) that could be delivered via the Internet throughout the world. The school became the American Graduate School of Education and the name change to Acacia University was approved by the State Board for Private Postsecondary Education - State of Arizona on May 11, 2012, effective June 1, 2011.

Acacia University provides accessible, quality education to a multi-cultural, global learning community through online/distance learning. As technology advances and students look for greater flexibility and accessibility with education, Acacia utilizes the capabilities of digital pedagogies to create new experiences and services.

Acacia offers academic programs at the master's level in elementary education, secondary education, English as a second language, and educational administration as well as a doctorate in educational leadership. It also features non-degree studies to provide focused training in specialized areas for adult learners.

Designed by educators to envisage the possibilities of the learner's career, the educational programs offered by Acacia are affordable, convenient, supportive, and relevant.

Acacia University envisions a change by empowering learners to expand their abilities, revive their passion in their respective fields, and develop their capacities for new roles. Acacia commits to provide unparalleled learning standards by delivering the highest quality educational programs through smart, innovative forms of learning.

Acacia redefines education and helps learners realize their full potential, propelling them into excellence by delivering education through innovative forms of online learning.

# Why Acacia University?

Acacia University, a pioneer in distance learning since its founding in 2003, consistently meets the needs of professionals whose geographic, professional, or personal time constraints may potentially limit success at traditional brick-and-mortar schools. Acacia University provides quality educational opportunities for learners:

- Affordability
- Convenience
- Practicality
- Qualified Professors
- Cohorts and Learning Communities
- Applicability
- Accredited: Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) ensures that the institution meets a recognized set of standards in distance education

## Mission

Acacia University's mission is to develop creative, innovative ideas amongst learners, and deploy contemporary technology to develop relevant learning models that are scalable, accessible, and affordable, with a focus on developing ethical, principled world leaders who can change the world.

## Vision

Acacia University's name reflects our belief of life-long learning. The symbol and name of the acacia as the "tree of knowledge," embodies our ongoing commitment to provide unparalleled standards and vehicles for learning. Acacia is committed to delivering educational programs of the highest quality through innovative forms of distance learning. Our vision is to empower people through access to high quality education that is affordable and flexible beyond boundaries.

## Core Values



Excellence in teaching/learning by offering a high-quality and student-focused education



Organizational integrity by operating with the highest ethical standards



Diversity and civility by supporting multicultural understanding and maintaining respect for all learners and staff

## Accreditation and Licensure

### Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC)



Acacia University is accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC). The U.S. Department of Education lists the Distance Education Accrediting Commission as a nationally recognized accrediting agency.

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).



## CAEL Membership



Acacia University proudly partners with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), established in 1974. CAEL supports adult learners by offering expertise, resources, and solutions to bridge education and employment. Through collaboration with educators, employers, and community leaders, CAEL promotes lifelong learning and career pathways for adults, enhancing social mobility and prosperity. Today, CAEL assists over 300 institutions, employers, and government agencies worldwide.

## ACE Membership



Acacia University is a proud member of the American Council on Education (ACE), a leading membership organization in higher education. Representing over 1,700 colleges, universities, and related organizations in the U.S. and abroad, ACE is unique in its inclusive representation of all accredited, degree-granting institutions, including two-year and four-year, public and private.

## CONIES Membership



CONIES is recognized by the founding member universities of CONIES Confederación Internacional de Educación Superior and accredited by BQS Board of Quality Standards (an INQAAHE member and ISO 17021 Management System Certification Body). CONIES offers two types of certifications and accreditations to member universities: Quality Management System certification and Programme Accreditation.

## ICDE Membership



Acacia University is proud to announce its membership with the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE). As a leading global membership organization, ICDE works towards providing accessible and quality education for all through open, flexible, and distance learning. ICDE offers a worldwide network of online educators, policymakers, and innovators that collaborate on projects and initiatives, sharing best practices and industry knowledge.

## Registered under WES



Acacia University is registered with World Education Services (WES) under ID number 4671, enabling WES to verify and evaluate the credentials of its students. Founded in 1974 and headquartered in New York, WES is a respected nonprofit organization that offers credential evaluations worldwide. Its mission is to assist international students and professionals in achieving their academic and career objectives by providing precise evaluations of academic transcripts, degrees, and other qualifications to ensure alignment with U.S. educational and employment standards.

# Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

- › Provides opportunities for educators to learn and develop skills and strategies in the areas of school management, education law, education finance, and instructional supervision to be effective leaders.
- › The Ed.D. prepares educators for advanced professional responsibility and leadership in effectively organizing, planning, implementing, and evaluating staff and programs, addressing diverse school environments, and building and fostering effective learning communities.
- › The 60 credits for the doctoral program do not include the Comprehensive Exam and four One-Day Virtual Residencies.
- › The Comprehensive Exam is required after completing 27 or more course credits, including the International Virtual Leadership Residency, and prior to starting the dissertation research.
- › The Comprehensive Exam is proctored and includes both written and oral components.
- › The four One-Day Virtual Residencies are scheduled throughout the year to provide discussions and critical skills seminars for small groups and individuals. While no credit is given for these residencies, all VR objectives must be met within the guidelines, directions, and timelines provided.
- › Failure to perform assignment tasks will result in repeating the residency.





# Program Prerequisites and Requirements

- 01 > Bachelor's degree from an accredited university. The degree must be verified on an original official transcript duly signed and certified by the Registrar or other responsible officer of the undergraduate institution.
- 02 > Master's degree from an accredited university. There is no minimum GPA required for admission to Doctoral study, but superior academic performance in courses related to the intended field of study is highly desirable. Demonstrated improvement in academic performance over time is also desirable. The degree must be verified on an original transcript duly signed and certified by the Registrar or other responsible officer of the Master's institution.
- 03 > Transcripts of undergraduate and graduate degrees from accredited universities. The degrees must be verified on official transcripts duly signed and certified by the Registrar or other responsible officer of the prior institution. Mail or secure electronic delivery is accepted. Applicants submitting transcripts from non-US institutions may be required to have their transcript evaluated by a National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) member agency.
- 04 > Applicants must currently hold or have held a professional position or be otherwise actively engaged in work that relates to the intended field of study.
- 05 > For the Doctor of Education, ongoing access to a K-12 school or educational institution.
- 06 > Essay – A personal statement, not to exceed five hundred (500) words that discusses: your reasons for pursuing the doctorate; your career goals; how the doctorate would help you meet career goals; and prior experiences which relate to your interest in, and aptitude for this program.
- 07 > Applicants whose first language is not English and who do not have a master's degree from a university in which instruction is conducted in English must provide evidence of English proficiency. The following are accepted exams and minimum scores required for admission:
  - ▶ 65 on the paper-delivered Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL PBT), or 80 on the Internet Based Test (iBT)
  - ▶ 6.5 on the International English Language Test (IELTS)
  - ▶ 58 on the Pearson Test of English Academic Score Report
  - ▶ 105 on the Duolingo English Test
  - ▶ 55 on the 4-skill Michigan English Test (MET)
  - ▶ 650/LP on the Michigan Examination for the Certificate of Competency in English (ECCE)
  - ▶ 650/LP on the Michigan Examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in English (ECPE)
- 08 > An online interview with one or more representatives of the University.



## Program Goal

The doctoral program develops scholar-practitioners who will learn and practice advanced skills in designing, implementing, and analyzing effective research-based strategies in school/district leadership so they can provide active, positive, and effective leadership in the school environment. All students enrolled in the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership degree program will demonstrate and apply knowledge and skills related to PSEL and NELP standards.

- \* Acacia University offers graduate degrees for educators to achieve their professional goals. Completion of a degree program in itself does not constitute having a professional credential. Professional certifications and licenses are governed by boards empowered via State laws and/or professional organizations and commissions. Therefore, Acacia programs are NOT a pathway to teacher licensures in the US.
- \* This information is provided per U.S. Federal Regulations, 34 CFR § 668.50 (2016 Rules), 34 CFR § 668.43 (2019 Rules), and in compliance with the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) Manual version 19.2.
- \* Acacia University is an approved institution of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) which allows the university to provide distance learning programs and coursework to students located in states other than Arizona. NC-SARA approval does not grant reciprocity or exemption from state professional licensing requirements.



<b>Program Learning Outcomes</b> Promoting the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult	<b>PSEL Standards</b>	<b>NELP Standards</b>
Articulate and implement a school mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities and models the guiding principles of the profession	Standards 1 & 2	Standards 1 & 2
Generate and use research data to inform decisions to ensure coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, support, and assessment within an inclusive school culture of family, community, and school personnel	Standards 4 & 8	Standards 3 & 4
Demonstrate educational leadership knowledge and skills in an administrative internship within school and online educational environments that afford opportunities to interact with stakeholders	Standards 1, 3, & 10	Standards 5 & 8
Develop and refine educational leadership skills and responsibilities that engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning	Standards 6 & 7	Standards 5 & 7
Apply skills to initiate and implement sound educational policy, data-based school improvement plans, and operation systems that include fiscal management as well as implementing laws, rights, policies, and regulations	Standards 5 & 9	Standards 6
Write, present, and defend a clear and coherent action research dissertation that contributes to understanding and solving problems of practice in education	Demonstrating All Standards	Demonstrating All Standards

## COURSES

- ▶ EDA509D Essential Instructional Skills for Administrators
- ▶ EDA519D Understanding Child and Adolescent Development
- ▶ EDA529D Curriculum Design and Assessment Development
- ▶ EDA539D Introduction to Special Needs
- ▶ EDA589D Human Resources Issues in Education
- ▶ EDA599D Principles of Continuous Improvement
- ▶ EDA549D Principles of School Leadership and Management
- ▶ EDA559D Legal Issues in Education
- ▶ EDA569D Understanding Education Finance
- ▶ EDA600D International Virtual Leadership Residency
- ▶ EDA605D Comprehensive Exam
- ▶ EDA649D Advanced Leadership and Effective Decision-Making
- ▶ EDA679D Foundations of American Education
- ▶ EDA709D Online Internship for Educational Leaders
- ▶ EDA710D Onsite Internship for Educational Leaders
- ▶ EDA718D Advanced Research Methods
- ▶ EDA719D Action Research Proposal
- ▶ EDA720D Action Research Dissertation

## Program Structure

### EDA509D: Essential Instructional Skills for Administrators

Prerequisites	none	Credits	3	Course Length	8 weeks	Type	Elective
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This course emphasizes methods of teaching and learning proven to be effective in all classrooms. Emphasizing visual representations, engaging students, assessing learning, and teaching comprehension, these strategies build skills that are essential for learning any content, expressing ideas, and for the transference of knowledge. Strategy examples are provided for students in various grade levels and content areas. The strategies are effective for all students (pre-K to 12th grade), including special education students and English language learners. Many classroom examples are provided for all grade levels and for special populations to assist the teacher in learning and implementing these strategies in the classroom.



## EDA519D: Understanding Child and Adolescent Development

Prerequisites none Credits 3 Course Length 8 weeks Type Elective

This course focuses on effective implementation of developmentally appropriate strategies in the classroom and school. Participants explore domains and stages of development within ranges from birth to age 18. The role of culture in the learning process is explored in relationship of impacting development. Stages related to cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development are addressed with strategies to facilitate student growth in each area. Many examples are provided for all grade levels and for special populations to assist the teacher and administrator in understanding and providing developmentally appropriate environments.

## EDA529D Curriculum Design and Assessment Development

Prerequisites EDA519 Credits 3 Course Length 8 weeks Type Elective

This is a seminar course in curriculum content focusing on readings, research, discussions, and classroom/school observations that acquaint doctoral students with some of the current issues in curriculum development. Independently and with a seminar group each student will engage in a seminar process to share, analyze, and gain understanding of current issues and research in Universal Design for Learning principles and how they are implemented at different levels of education. This seminar will enrich professional experiences, through collaboration with other professionals, administrators, and peers. The experiences gained will give students a perspective on a range of services provided by schools in the area of content development that aligns to state and national standards.

## EDA539D Introduction to Special Needs

Prerequisites EDA509D, EDA519D Credits 3

Course Length 8 weeks Type Elective

This course focuses on special populations of students with special needs, including English language learners, gifted, and various handicapping disabilities. An overview of assessing needs, methods of teaching, and meeting needs of diverse students is presented. Many examples are provided for all grade levels and for special populations to assist the administrator and teacher in planning and implementing effective programs in the classroom and school.

## EDA589D: Human Resources Issues in Education

Prerequisites EDA569D Credits 3 Course Length 8 weeks Type Elective

This course is a survey of personnel management, coupled with a detailed study of supervision of faculty and staff in school settings. Staffing options are explored in the context of school goals and student needs. The provision of professional development, supervision, and teacher evaluation are presented with applied projects provided to build understanding of personnel administration. This graduate-level course introduces leadership standards, theories, critical success factors, and practices that educational leaders need to be effective supervisors. The course addresses the components of effective school and teaching theories that lead to school improvement. Students will develop leadership and supervisory platforms and professional development plans for individuals and schools. Various supervisory styles studied will include clinical supervision, the Charlotte Danielson model, and differentiated supervision. Special issues include hiring, mentoring, tenure, dismissal, and remediation plans. By the end of this course, students will be able to distinguish between supervision, evaluation, and professional development.

## EDA599D: Principles of Continuous Improvement

Prerequisites	EDA509D	Credits	3	Course Length	8 weeks	Type	Elective
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This course addresses the knowledge and skills needed to provide systematic and systemic planning and implementation of strategic initiatives. Principles of school improvement, strategic planning, organizing for effectiveness, and on going involvement of stakeholders related to the educational institution are explored through individual and collaborative projects. The course focuses on the process of continuous review and evaluation of activities, which lead to improved results. The goal of this course is to learn action research methods and practice the process of continuous school improvement. Students will experience designing, conducting, analyzing, and presenting an action research project that demonstrates aspects of the school improvement process.

## EDA549D: Principles of School Leadership and Management

Prerequisites	EDA539D	Credits	3	Course Length	8 weeks	Type	Core
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Required Textbook: *The Principal: Creative Leadership for Excellence in Schools, 8e*

This course presents a survey of research in leadership, management, and strategic planning. It also focuses on an in-depth study of knowledge and skills required to be an effective educational leader. The roles of the principal, district leaders, and school administrators are explored. This course highlights the role of the school principal as an instructional leader, with an emphasis on leadership skills and management abilities necessary to create a vibrant and successful school and educational community. Students will develop a knowledge base on the principal's role and responsibility in the areas of school and community relations, supervision of instruction, curriculum assessment and evaluation, administration of special services, human resource management, school facilities and fiscal management, and ethical and legal issues. Students will also learn how to apply strategies toward building positive school culture through stakeholder collaboration, working with diverse populations, and drawing from evidence-based strategic planning. Learning activities include reflective practice, activities and exercises, and analysis of case studies.

## EDA559D Legal Issues in Education

Prerequisites	EDA529D	Credits	3	Course Length	8 weeks	Type	Core
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This is a seminar course in legal issues focusing on readings, research, discussions, and classroom/school observations that acquaint doctoral students with some of the current issues in the principles of school law. Independently and with a seminar group each student will engage in a seminar process to share, analyze, and gain understanding of current issues and research in legal foundations of public and nonpublic schools. This seminar will enrich professional experiences, through collaboration with other professionals, administrators, and peers. The experiences gained will give students a perspective on a range of services provided by schools in the areas of general education law, public laws influencing the administration of schools, and current issues in law related to classrooms, schools, districts, and individuals. Students will learn how to interpret the U.S. judicial and legislative systems and the formation of laws relating to public education. Students will also analyze current school practices from the standpoint of potential legal controversies. By the end of the course, students will be able to analyze school legal problems by considering legal and ethical implications.



## EDA569D Understanding Education Finance

Prerequisites **EDA529D** Credits **3** Course Length **8 weeks** Type **Core**

### Required Textbook: Financing Education in a Climate of Change, 13e

In this course, education funding, financial management, and the economics of education are addressed. Sources of revenue and the administering of a school budget are explored and compared among a variety of educational institutions. Students will develop an understanding of the fundamental issues of education finance by examining sources of revenue on federal, state, and local levels, and weigh the economic, social, and legal considerations necessary for allocating and managing funding. Students will also learn about approaches and procedures for budgeting, forecasting budgets, managing business operations, the reporting and auditing of funds, and issues specific to funding special education and school choice.

## EDA600D: International Virtual Leadership Residency

Prerequisites **All 500-level courses** Credits **3**

Course Length **1 weeks** Type **Core**

The International Virtual Leadership Residency will occur online during a one-week period. This residency will allow students to meet with faculty members; enhance writing, research, and critical-thinking skills; share experiences and insights with students with similar interests; and work directly with cohort members.

## EDA649D: Advanced Leadership and Effective Decision Making

Prerequisites **All 500-level courses** Credits **6**

Course Length **16 weeks** Type **Core**

This course is designed to provide an in-depth study of leadership theories and research beginning with an historical overview of traditional approaches and showing how they have evolved over time, not only in education, but also surveying the science of administration and management as a profession in other fields, such as business, political and military and volunteer organizations. Candidates will learn about the philosophical and historical foundations of various approaches. Particular attention will be given to current leadership and administrative practices in educational settings, such as visionary leadership, servant leadership, inclusive and collaborative leadership, empowerment, and leadership in an increasingly diverse environment both within, and external to, educational organizations.

## EDA679D: Foundations of American Education

Prerequisites **All 500-level courses** Credits **6**

Course Length **16 weeks** Type **Core**

### Required Textbook: Foundations of American Education, 8e

This course explores the influences on education within the larger social, political, economic, legal and cultural environment – from the local community to the global settings. A brief overview is included of the historical, philosophical, and social foundations of education and the role of schooling in a democratic society. Most candidates will have familiarity with such foundational theories from prior degree programs. Familiarity with school structures and governance at various levels provides understanding of the context in which education takes place. This includes school site and local communities; the role of elected school boards, superintendents, and other administrators; the functions of intermediary agencies, such as county or regional offices of education; education as a constitutional state responsibility, including development of laws and policies; the evolving role of the federal government; and a perspective on education in our world, our global community.

## EDA709D: Online Internship for Educational Leaders

Prerequisites All 500-level courses Credits 3

Course Length 16 weeks Type Core

The Online Internship class involves learning and implementing mentoring skills online to students in educational administration classes. This online internship is arranged by the course professor with other instructors/professors in the master's or doctoral administration courses. The Doctoral Program Advisor oversees the Online Internship and oversees the supervision of the Doctoral Intern. The internship encompasses classroom and/or online observations and mentoring, demonstrations, modeling, feedback, and practice applying prior learned skills and knowledge in educational leadership. Application of the PSEL and NELP standards is required. The experience also includes research, analysis, surveys, interviews, discussions with others, and the maintenance of an e-portfolio. Regularly scheduled online meetings with the professor are scheduled at mutually agreed upon times. Experience gained in the Online Internship, as recorded in the e-portfolio, will be summarized and presented in a final report.

## EDA710D: Onsite Internship for Educational Leaders

Prerequisites All 500-level courses Credits 6

Course Length 21 weeks/270 clock hours Type Core

The Onsite Internship involves an administrative Internship of 21 weeks. The Internship is arranged by Acacia University in cooperation with a school administrator where the internship will occur. The internship focuses on an individualized applied project determined by the Graduate Intern, the cooperating school principal and/or district administrator, and the Doctoral Program Advisor. The Onsite Internship requires 270 clock hours of experience under the supervision of a certified school or district administrator. The internship encompasses classroom observations and mentoring, demonstrations, modeling, feedback, and practice applying prior learned skills. Application of the PSEL and NELP standards is required. The experience also includes research, analysis, surveys, interviews, discussions with others, and the maintenance of an e-portfolio. The onsite experience will involve school or district-related administrative projects planned cooperatively with the principal/administrator and the online professors. Regularly scheduled online meetings with the professor and with the onsite administrator will be scheduled at mutually agreed upon times. Experience gained in the Onsite Internship will be summarized and presented in a final Internship report.

## EDA718D: Advanced Research Methods

Prerequisites All 500-level courses Credits 6

Course Length 16 weeks Type Core

Required Textbook: Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research, 6e This course will include foundational elements for conducting independent, original research. Candidates will learn about methods of formative and summative evaluation for continuous improvement of practices in the educational environment. Candidates will also apply concepts and practice skills in research design, data collection, data analysis, and presentation of results. Students will also be presented with topics in Evaluation Research, Data Analysis and Interpretation, Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods, Approaches to Research Design and Data Analysis, and Statistical treatment of data.

## EDA719D: Action Research Proposal

Prerequisites EDA718D Credits 6 Course Length 16 weeks Type Capstone

The purpose of this seminar is to provide information and support for students as they develop dissertation proposals for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership program. Students will also apply concepts and practice skills in research design. Students will develop and refine their action research topics and ideas, write drafts of their proposals, and establish a doctoral committee of four committee members. This course refreshes doctoral candidates on the basic concepts of action research, focusing on conducting literature reviews, understanding theory, defining research problems and methods, collecting and analyzing data, communicating findings, and applying research to solving educational problems. In addition, students should be able to understand the purposes, assumptions, and logic inherent in research methodologies.

## EDA720D: Action Research Dissertation

Prerequisites EDA719D Credits 6 Course Length 16 weeks Type Capstone

Action Research Dissertation is intended to assist the Doctoral Candidate (DC) in the transition from coursework to dissertation. The outcome of this course is the completion of a dissertation that contributes to educational knowledge. The doctoral candidate will select a topic of interest based on an educational issue or problem and critically analyze and evaluate existing knowledge. Action research will be conducted to examine the problem. Conclusions based on findings should include implications for better educational practice. This course will review proposal components, with particular emphasis on research design and developing the literature review and will also focus on key issues such as dissertation format standards, psychological and time management demands, HSIRB topics, and project management.

**Note: Students may end up taking more units of dissertation (EDA7201D) credit than they can count toward their degree because students must register for the dissertation continuation course each eight-week session while working on their dissertation. Students must complete their dissertation within five years of completing 600-level courses.**





# Embrace the Journey to Excellence



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