

M.S. IN HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION (ONLINE)

Overview

The MS in Higher Education: Data, Strategy, and Innovation (MS-HED+) prepares adaptable leaders to address evolving challenges in higher education and beyond using data-driven decision-making and strategic problem-solving. Through the integration of theories from diverse disciplines such as higher education, psychology, sociology, and law with practical application, students develop the skills necessary to collect and analyze various data, make informed and responsible decisions, and lead effectively.

This program is designed for individuals who want to become innovative and solution-driven leaders in higher education and related fields.

Graduates will leave this program with a strong foundation in leadership, strategy, and data-driven decision-making that prepares them for careers in higher education, government, nonprofit organizations, and other sectors. Whether leading within institutions or launching new initiatives, they will be equipped to apply their expertise across industries, drive innovation, and contribute to lifelong learning and professional growth.

Application Requirements

Admission to all graduate-degree concentrations in the School of Education and Human Development is based on the recommendation of the faculty. Admissions decisions are based on faculty review of the following general requirements that apply to **all** Graduate Programs in the School as well as specific documents listed under each concentration.

Applicants must:

- Be aware that Graduate Record Exam (GRE) requirements are waived for applications, to this program. International applicants whose native language is not English or applicants whose degrees are from a non-U.S. university must pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS).
- Provide official transcripts showing completion of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution and an acceptable undergraduate grade point average. A minimum of 3.0 undergraduate GPA is required. Official transcripts from every institution attended by an applicant, whether or not the applicant completed a degree program at the institution, are required;
- Provide three letters of recommendation that address the issues and meet the criteria established by the program being applied to;
- Provide a personal statement that addresses the mission and purpose of the program being applied to;
- Provide a current resume;
- Take part in an admissions interview (required by some programs); and
- Exhibit personal and professional experiences and characteristics that are relevant to the profession and/or field and/or degree program for which the application is being submitted.

International Applications

All international applications must provide additional information and meet additional requirements as required by the UM Graduate School and the Office of International Student and Scholar Services. For an appropriate link to these requirements, please visit the Graduate School website.

Admission Decision

Once an applicant has been admitted to graduate study, that individual should meet with the faculty advisor who was appointed to serve in that capacity and whose name appears in the admissions letter. This advisor will help the student enroll in courses that are appropriate to the program and develop and refine a Course Sequence Plan that must be on file in the Office of Graduate Studies by the end of the first semester of enrollment.

Honor Code/Handbook of Policies and Procedures

The School of Education and Human Development follows the Graduate School's Honor Code. All students are required to review the Graduate Student Honor Code and the School of Education and Human Development's Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Graduate Students and to submit the signed Acknowledgement of Receipt located on Page 3 by the end of their first semester of enrollment.

Curriculum Requirements

MS in Higher Education Administration: Data, Strategy, and Innovation

This interdisciplinary and applied curriculum combines foundational data analysis skills with specialized leadership courses, real-world projects embedded in coursework, and strategic communication training.

Students will engage with data analytics and emerging technologies while developing leadership competencies through hands-on, theme-based coursework and direct engagement with higher education institutions.

Foundational Data Collection and Analysis (4 Courses)

Students build essential qualitative, quantitative, and computational data collection and analysis skills, exploring how machine learning, AI, and game or app design can be applied in higher education. These courses provide the analytical foundation for leadership in data-informed decision-making.

Thematic Leadership Courses with Hands-On Data Analysis (4 Courses)

Each course blends theoretical learning, hands-on projects using real-world data, communication strategies, and cross-sector applications to ensure students develop practical and strategic leadership skills.

Each course follows a structured approach:

1. Theoretical foundations – Understanding key leadership and policy frameworks (6 weeks)
2. Applied data analysis – Using real institutional datasets to generate insights (4 weeks)
3. Strategic communication – Developing policy briefs, building websites, and presenting findings (2 week)
4. Cross-sector application – Connecting insights to corporate, nonprofit, and international contexts (2 weeks).

Global Engagement and Institutional Strategy in Higher Education (1 Course)

Students will select a global higher education institution and conduct a comparative study, analyzing institutional structures, policies, and leadership approaches. Based on their findings, they will develop recommendations for enhancing both institutions. As part of this course, students will visit the selected global institution, gaining first-hand experience of international education systems and building cross-border professional networks.

Strategic Planning and Change Management as C-Suite Leaders (1 Course)

A capstone-style course integrating all program components. Students work on real-world consulting projects, applying strategic leadership, financial planning, and policy development to address challenges in universities, nonprofit organizations, or corporate education sectors. Students will complete a final consulting project, solving real-world challenges for higher education institutions, nonprofits, or corporate partners. These projects will solidify students' ability to analyze, strategize, and communicate data-driven solutions in leadership settings.

Note: Additional courses could include EPS 717 – Survey Research, EPS 742 - History of HE, EPS 737 – Organization & Administration of HE, EPS 744 – Students in HE, EPS 751- Contemporary Issues in HE, and EPS 764 - Workshop in Ed: Administrative Issues and Problems

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Foundational Data Collection & Analysis		
EPS 702	Quantitative Methods II (Survey & Measurement)	3
EPS 714	Qualitative Methods I (Program Evaluation, Qualitative Methods, & Text Analysis)	3
EPS 711	Advanced Topics in Research, Measurement, and Evaluation (Machine Learning using Python)	3
EPS 711	Advanced Topics in Research, Measurement, and Evaluation (Use of Cutting-Edge Technologies in Higher Education)	3
Thematic Leadership: Higher Ed Core		
EPS 745	Organization Administration of Higher Ed II: Governance, Leadership and Finance	3
EPS 746	College Student Development: Theory, Research and Practice	3
EPS 748	Enrollment Management: Theory and Practice	3
EPS 766	Workshop in Education: Institutional Research Higher Ed Policy Analysis	3
Global Engagement		
EPS 764	Workshop in Education: Selected Topics (Global Engagement & Institutional Strategy in Higher Education)	3
Capstone		
EPS 765	Workshop in Education: Selected Topics in Higher Education (Strategic Planning & Change Management in Higher Education)	3
Total Credit Hours		30

Sample Plan of Study

MS in Higher Education Administration: Data, Strategy, and Innovation

This is a sample Plan of Study. Your actual course sequence may vary depending on your previous academic experience as well as current course offerings. Students should meet with their academic advisor each semester to determine the appropriate course selection.

Year One		Credit Hours
Fall		
EPS 702	Quantitative Methods II (Survey & Measurement)	3
EPS 714	Qualitative Methods I (Program Evaluation, Qualitative Analysis, & Text Analysis)	3
EPS 745	Organization Administration of Higher Ed II: Governance, Leadership and Finance	3
Credit Hours		9
Spring		
EPS 711	Advanced Topics in Research, Measurement, and Evaluation (Machine Learning using Python)	3
EPS 746	College Student Development: Theory, Research and Practice	3
EPS 748	Enrollment Management: Theory and Practice	3
Credit Hours		9
Summer I		
EPS 711	Advanced Topics in Research, Measurement, and Evaluation (Use of Cutting-Edge Technologies in Higher Education)	3
EPS 766	Workshop in Education: Institutional Research Higher Ed Policy Analysis	3
Credit Hours		6
Summer II		
EPS 764	Workshop in Education: Selected Topics (Global Engagement & Institutional Strategy in Higher Education)	3
EPS 765	Workshop in Education: Selected Topics in Higher Education (Strategic Planning & Change Management in Higher Education)	3
Credit Hours		6
Total Credit Hours		30

Mission

The Higher Education Administration Program leading to a Master of Science in Higher Education Administration: Data, Strategy, and Innovation prepares students in diverse research methodologies, equipping them with the ability to formulate strategies aimed at promoting student success, supporting faculty and staff, and ensuring organizational sustainability.

Goals

Our program is designed to equip students with the tools to lead with confidence and adaptability in an evolving higher education landscape. This program is ideal for early-to-mid career professionals in higher education, nonprofit management, corporate learning, and government sectors who want to enhance their leadership, strategic planning, and data analytics skills. Graduates will be prepared for roles in higher education administration, policy analysis, financial planning, student affairs, research leadership, and executive management.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will develop the ability to:

- Build leadership and communication skills by developing self-awareness, cultural competence, and ethical decision-making to lead diverse teams and organizations.
- Apply data and research methods to assess challenges and inform policies, using both qualitative and quantitative analysis to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Think strategically across industries by developing skills that can be applied in government, nonprofit leadership, education policy, and entrepreneurship.
- Develop forward-thinking solutions to improve institutional effectiveness, student success, and workforce development in higher education and beyond.
- Understand organizational structures and financial sustainability by learning how institutions function, how to allocate resources effectively, and how to manage change.
- Navigate higher education policy and governance by examining historical and current trends that shape educational institutions and policy decisions.
- Use entrepreneurial and innovative leadership to build sustainable programs, form partnerships, and drive meaningful organizational improvements.