

The Master of Education in Instructional Leadership (MEIL) Program Handbook



**WEST VIRGINIA
STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Adopted June 27, 2025

Master of Education in Instructional Leadership	3
General Notes	3
Program Overview	3
Program Context.....	4
Admissions Requirements	5
Transfer Credit	6
MEIL Program Options	6
Licensure	7
Enrollment	7
Capstone	7
Student Performance	8
Course Descriptions	8
Course Sequence.....	12
Field Experience and Internship.....	12
Faculty in the Department of Leadership Studies	13

MASTER OF EDUCATION IN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

General Notes

This program handbook provides general information about the MEIL programs housed within the Department of Leadership Studies at West Virginia State University. Additional information can be found in the Graduate Studies Handbook, the WVSU University Catalog and other resources. This handbook should be considered a reference document and if there is a question regarding information, source documents should be consulted.

Program Overview

The primary objective of the Master of Education in Instructional Leadership (MEIL) program is to create opportunities for potential school and district level administrators to explore and apply new techniques and concepts in instructional leadership. This program will allow instructional leaders to create pathways for the successful achievement of educational goals for students and staff members. This program can lead to administrative licensure in West Virginia for school principals, instructional supervisors and superintendent positions via the successful completion of requirements of the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and beyond. To increase student achievement in the public schools of the region, state and nation, the program will develop the professional knowledge skills and dispositions of Instructional Leadership candidates so that they may demonstrate their ability to the following:

- Expand the knowledge base and practices of potential educational leaders, including identifying and implementing components of change leadership for student achievement, professional development and community relations at the school and district level.
- Provide a positive, action-based series of learning opportunities for the completion of a Master's degree and/or licensure for positions of instructional leadership including school administrators, instructional supervisors and superintendent/central office positions requiring administrative licensure.
- Integrate historical, legal, developmental, and sociological research to meet the instructional needs of all student populations at the school and district level.
- Design, develop, conduct and share findings from action research projects that address meeting the needs of diverse students, staff and communities.
- Through study of evidence-based practice and current trends, identify, develop and integrate educational technology at the school and/or district level to increase student achievement.
- Increase instructional leadership skills in communications, evaluation, and networking to be responsive to the needs of a variety of public school audiences at the school and district levels.
- Identify and explore diverse student populations, their unique needs, and methods to insure development of their personal goals and academic success.

WVSU is providing students with the opportunity to participate in a research-based program in instructional leadership that will help graduate students develop the critical thinking and problem solving skills to improve teaching and learning in school and district settings. This is an instructional leadership program with an emphasis on social justice, fairness, and equity as supported by research. These key areas distinguish the WVSU MEIL program, integrating essential features crucial for instructional leaders in the field.

Program Context

West Virginia State University

West Virginia State University was founded under the provisions of the Second Morrill Act of 1890 as the West Virginia Colored Institute, one of 19 land-grant institutions authorized by Congress and designated by the states to provide for the education of Black citizens in agriculture and the mechanical arts. In 2004, the West Virginia Legislature approved WVSC's transition to University status.

In alignment with the vision of the WVSU Department of Education, administration, and Board of Governors—as well as the 2011 Strategic Plan—WVSU began planning in 2013 for expanded graduate offerings. After consultation with public school representatives, the University developed a Master of Education in Instructional Leadership (MEIL) program focused on social justice, fairness, and equity—the first of its kind in West Virginia. The MEIL program was approved by the WVSU Board of Governors in 2014, the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission in 2016, and the West Virginia Board of Education shortly thereafter.

Building on this foundation, planning for a doctoral program began in the Department of Education at WVSU and in the fall of 2023 the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) formally established West Virginia State University as a doctoral-granting institution. The new program, the EdD in Leadership Studies accepted students into the inaugural cohort in May 2024. To support this growth, WVSU launched the Department of Leadership Studies, which now houses both the MEIL and EdD programs.

With a rich history and a promising future, WVSU is positioned to become the most student-centered research and teaching, land-grant university in West Virginia—and beyond.

MEIL-Statement of Purpose

The Master of Education in Instructional Leadership Program will provide an opportunity for West Virginia administrative licensure for school principals, instructional supervisors and

superintendent positions via the successful completion of requirements of the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and beyond. To increase student achievement in the public schools of the region, state and nation, the program will develop the professional knowledge, skills and dispositions of Instructional Leadership Candidates.

WVSU's Department of Leadership Studies Vision Statement for Advanced Programs

It is the Vision of the Department of Leadership Studies to promote social justice, equity and fairness in our programs. It is our Vision they will coordinate these concepts, along with Leadership Strategies, Professional Responsibilities, and Individual Beliefs to help every organization member and every community member to greater achievement and growth.

WVSU's Department of Leadership Studies Mission Statement for Advanced Programs

It is the Mission of the Department of Leadership Studies to ensure that every Graduate/Doctoral Student will acquire the necessary skills, dispositions and knowledge base to become exceptional leaders within their organization and beyond. Our Mission is to equip our students with leadership strategies, assist in the exploration of belief systems and promote effective behaviors for personal and professional growth.

Admissions Requirements

Please submit all admissions documentation to the Department of Leadership Studies, attention Director of Leadership Studies. Deadlines: All admissions documentation must be received no less than 2 weeks before the start of the next semester in order to ensure time for the admissions and enrollment processes.

- An undergraduate degree in Education or a related field.
- GPA and GRE – a minimum overall GPA of 2.7 on a 4 point scale for all undergraduate work from accredited institution(s) with a GRE Verbal Reasoning Score of 144 or
 - GPA of 2.6 and a GRE Verbal Reasoning Score of 146 or
 - GPA of 2.5 and a GRE Verbal Reasoning Score of 148
- Successful Test of English as a Foreign Language scores for those whose native language is not English.
- Professional Educator License from a State Department of Education.
- Resume/CV documenting successful professional experiences, commitment to community service and professional development.
- A personal statement indicating the applicant's aspirations and reasons for pursuing the Master of Education in Instructional Leadership at WVSU.

- Three letters of recommendation attesting to the candidate's professional and/or personal qualities.

Transfer Credit

For additional information, please see the University Catalog for the year of admission (<https://www.wvstateu.edu/academics/university-catalogs.aspx>).

University Policy dictates that transfer credits will satisfy elective requirements only. Requests for transfer credit will be considered by the Director of Leadership Studies.

MEIL Program Options

The coursework is divided into two streams—a 1.) Licensure Stream for candidates who are entering the program holding a master's degree from an accredited institution and 2.) Degree Stream for candidates who are seeking a Master's degree in addition to the coursework for administrative licensure. Each stream begins with foundational courses and progress to more advanced courses, each meant to impart necessary content and skills that will make student success possible in later courses, and each ending with a summative experience. For the Licensure stream, that culminating experience will be an administrative Internship (LS 650) and for Degree candidates, the Internship (LS 650) and an Action Research Capstone. (LS 645, LS 655) serve as culminating experiences. All classes will be coordinated with national standards from the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) including the National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards and the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) Standards.

The Licensure Stream focuses on organizational issues necessary for implementation of administrative actions: Principles of Educational Leadership, Educational Policy and Law, Change, Innovation and Professional Development in Education, Financial and Human Resource Management of Schools, and Data-Based Decision Making for School Improvement.

The Degree Stream includes these concepts and partners with an intensive overview of factors necessary to ensure success for all students from a variety of diverse communities and includes Addressing Diversity through Educational Leadership, Ethical Leadership for Social Justice, Technology for Educational Leadership, and Leadership in Diverse Communities.

The following courses have been developed as part of the program:

Licensure Credit Hours for Administrative Certification (Educators holding a Master's Degree):

LS 600. Principles of Educational Leadership

LS 610. Educational Policy and Law

LS 620. Change, Innovation and Professional Development in Education

- LS 630. Financial and Human Resource Management of Schools
- LS 640. Data-Based Decision Making for School Improvement
- LS 650. Internship (summers only)

Degree Coursework (combined with Licensure Credit Hours for MEIL degree):

- LS 605 Addressing Diverse Needs and Equity in Facility Management
- LS 615. Ethical Leadership for Social Justice
- LS 625. Technology for Educational Leadership
- LS 635. Leadership in Diverse Communities
- LS 645. Action Research in Educational Leadership I
- LS 655. Action Research in Educational Leadership II

Licensure

The programs are designed to lead to licensure in all three areas of educational leadership: Principal, General Supervisor of Instruction and Superintendent in West Virginia. In addition to the program courses, there are ancillary requirements for licensure such as test results, experience requirements, Evaluation Leadership Institute, etc. Please be sure to review WVBE Policy 5202: Minimum Requirements for the Licensure of Professional/ Paraprofessional Personnel and Advanced Salary Classifications (<https://wveis.k12.wv.us/wvboe/policies/>) Applications for licensure are submitted through the West Virginia Department of Education (<https://wveis.k12.wv.us/certportal/>). Qualifying scores of 146 on the ETS Praxis test 5412 – Educational Leadership: Administration and Supervision are required for licensure. You can find more information on the Praxis test here: <https://praxis.ets.org/test/5412.html>

Enrollment

The MEIL program offers enrollment generally each fall. WVSU will offer the same 12 courses in rotating sequence with each course designated as fall, spring or summer semester course offering. Each course is three semester hours of credit. The WVSU MEIL Degree program consists of 36 credit hours of required courses. The WVSU MEIL Licensure program requires eighteen credit hours in addition to the previously earned Master's degree. *If a student enrolls outside of the first 8-week session of the fall semester, course rotation should be noted and completion of the program may be delayed due to prerequisite requirements.*

Capstone

Included in the required Degree stream is LS 645 & 655, the Action Based Research Project. These courses are the capstone courses in the degree program and utilize best practice in public school leadership. In these classes, the students will undertake a capstone project, an applied research

endeavor that will demonstrate the extent of the competencies learned from the courses taken in the MEIL program. The student will utilize the management and research skills to produce a topical piece of research based at the school or district. This research will exemplify the link between the coursework and professional practice of public school administration and leadership.

Moreover, the students will create a portfolio during the internship (LS 650) that presents their professional work. The intent is for this portfolio to be a resource of the student's achievements that they can utilize to enhance their career, review concepts and practices, and amass professional information for employment purposes.

Student Performance

For additional information, please see the University Catalog for the year of admission (<https://www.wvstateu.edu/academics/university-catalogs.aspx>).

In courses applicable to graduate degrees, only the grades A, B and S represent satisfactory scholarship. A student is considered in probationary status and subject to dismissal if the cumulative scholarship in any work attempted in graduate status falls below a B average (3.0). The Director of Leadership Studies determines a student's eligibility to continue graduate study. If allowed to continue in probationary status, the student is required to make expeditious progress toward improvement in scholarship. Graduate students may repeat no more than two courses, with no course being repeated more than once.

Course Descriptions

LS 600. Principles of Educational Leadership

Students will gain an overview of leadership theory and its application in the interest of school governance, improvement and student achievement. This course will serve as an overview of leadership theories and their application in the interest of school improvement. This is an introductory course for administrative certification. Focus will be on school/district leadership, particularly the leader's role in the learning process within the greater learning community.

LS 610. Education Policy and Law

This course serves as an introduction to state and federal law and policy governing education systems. The course will explore historical and contemporary legal issues and their impact on the school and district communities, with particular

regard to the administration. The course will explore the relationship of law and policy to student achievement and development of effective school practices.

LS 620. Change, Innovation & Professional Development in Education

Students will identify and explore merging trends and issues in change process with emphasis on sustaining innovation through supervision and professional development. Students will examine local, state and national policies to the teacher observation and evaluation process and their relationship to student achievement. Students will undertake a practical opportunity to develop a yearlong plan of staff development based on basic research methods to a school-based need or problem.

LS 630. Financial and Human Resource Management in Education

Students will gain an overview of how to legally and effectively manage financial and human resources. Students will identify and explore statutes, policies and trends in financial practices with emphasis on sustaining innovation and social equity through budgets, expenditures, billing and collection of funds. Students will undertake a practical opportunity to develop a year-long budgetary plan based on basic research methods to a school-based needs. Students will examine local, state and national policies to the teacher/staff hiring process and the relationship of policies to student achievement and develop a plan to identify long-term staffing needs.

LS 640. Data-Based Decision Making for School Improvement

Students will identify and explore a variety of informational sources related to student achievement and effective school practices using measurable and quantifiable methods. Students will gain knowledge to identify, understand and utilize the components of action-based research. Students will use data to examine and address diverse communities within student, staff and community populations.

LS 650. Internship

Students will gain an understanding of the application of leadership and management theory in a field based practicum. This course serves as a culminating experience for the certification program for administration. This field-based practicum will allow candidates to apply learning from principles of educational leadership, educational law and policy, change, innovation, and professional development, financial and human resource management, and data-

based decision making for school improvement. The final product will be a presentation portfolio containing the components listed here. Candidates will demonstrate mastery of program objectives through a presentation portfolio. *(This course is only offered during the summer session.)*

LS 605. Addressing Diverse Needs and Equity in Facility Management

Students will explore how school leaders can effectively address poverty and issues in diversity, equity and fairness for all students to maximize achievement and inclusion through the examination and usage of school facilities. This course prepares prospective educational leaders to administer various school programs for diverse student populations in various educational settings. The course is defined to inform candidates about the diverse (race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, age, religion or religious creed, disability or handicap, sex or gender, gender identity and/or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law) needs of all individuals within the school community and to prepare them to administer programs for diverse pupil populations. Emphasis will be given to basic facility concepts, issues, regulations, problems and procedures in the management of public education. Also included will be state and federal legislation and court decisions pertaining to diverse pupil populations.

LS 615. Ethical Leadership for Social Justice

An exploration of historical and current issues related to educational leadership, with an emphasis on legal and ethical issues including social justice, human rights, fairness and equity. This course is designed to provide advanced exposure to current research and practice in leading for equity and inclusion within professional educational settings. This course introduces students to the fundamental principles of leadership, ethics, and critical thinking examining various approaches to conceptualizing, interpreting, and making operational social justice. The course design includes a review of the historical development of the concept of social justice in an interdisciplinary manner. The course will provide students with a strong conceptual foundation in leadership theories that enhance equity in terms of access, student outcomes, and institutional culture, with an emphasis on application of leadership approaches to real-world administrative settings in educational and human service contexts. The orientation of the course is toward enabling individuals to reflect on their personal thoughts, development, and moral practice, to determine ethical frameworks from which their decisions are influenced, and to analyze and critique social issues in various contexts. The course is practice oriented and utilizes class discussion,

personal reflections, and case studies in leadership to prepare students for taking actions in their own practice that promote equity and inclusion.

LS 625. Technology for Educational Leadership

Students will gain understanding by the exploration of technology use by the school/district administrator to enhance teaching, understand the effect of technology on student achievement, to facilitate management, to communicate with constituents, and to further the mission of the school. This course is designed so that students will gain an understanding of the role of the principal in moving beyond short-term thinking and helping schools move forward with technology. This course will form a foundation from which administrators will provide leadership and become agents for realizing the powerful potential of technology in their schools/districts. This course explores standard and emergent technologies related to effective instruction and administrative operations within a school including reliable and effective web-based communication and modalities of e-learning, and the development of a technology plan. Basic concepts of technology and planning that use systems theory are presented and various school case-studies will be examined.

LS 635. Leadership in Diverse Communities

The goal of this course is to prepare and equip educational leaders with the ability to examine critical issues related to providing leadership for diverse student, parental and community populations. Educational leaders will understand what it means to be culturally responsive and learn strategies to rectify current race, class, and gender inequities that exist throughout educational systems while achieving positive growth in student achievement and school/district culture. Candidates will examine leadership approaches and case studies to examine best practices and strategies.

LS 645. Action Research in Educational Leadership I

An introduction to research methods in educational settings. The primary purpose of this course is to introduce students to the concepts, methods, and applications of educational research. This course will allow students to determine how data can be used to make instructional decisions at the classroom, building, and district level and begin the action based research steps of identifying a need and researching possible solutions at the school or district level.

LS 655. Action Research in Educational Leadership II

This course extends the fundamental concepts, principles and methods of educational research. It is a survey course that serves as a foundation for practitioners that stresses the scientific aspects of action-based research educational research that center on hypothesis formulation and hypothesis testing. Students complete design studies that address important and current educational issues, gather data to shed light on these issues, analyze these data, and derive conclusions based on their analyses. The strengths and limitations of various educational research designs, and the types of instruments used to measure educational outcomes, will be emphasized. As part of this course students will conduct an action research project based on findings from Action Research in Educational Leadership 1. Research activities include completing and presenting a scholarly project including identification of need, proposed strategies, measurement of data and suggestions for further action research projects, based in an identified need from the student's workplace. Students will complete an action research project based on findings from Action Research in Educational Leadership 1.

Course Sequence

Fall Semester (1st 8 weeks)	Spring (1st 8 weeks)	Summer (8 weeks)
LS 600	LS 620	LS 640
LS 605	LS 625	LS 635
Fall Semester (2nd 8 weeks)	Spring (2nd 8 weeks)	LS 655
LS 610	LS 630	Summer (12 weeks)
LS 615	LS 645	LS 650

Field Experience and Internship

The MEIL licensure component that leads to administrative certification in the areas of superintendent, general supervision, and principalship must be aligned with requirements of the specialty organization. Since our most recent SPA approval, the specialty organization changed from ELCC: Educational Leadership Constituent Council to NELP: National Educational Leadership Preparation program standards. There are two sets of standards for the WVSU certification configuration: NELP Building Level Standards and NELP District Level Standards. Each set of standards requires separate, concentrated internship or clinical experience activities that last a

minimum of six months of concentrated activity. Therefore, candidates must complete a minimum of 240 hours of placement at the building level and a minimum of 240 hours at the district level for a total minimum hours of field placement and internship of 480 hours.

The MEIL licensure component that leads to administrative certification in the areas of superintendent, general supervision, and principalship is aligned with requirements of the specialty organization -- National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) Program Standards -- Building and District level. Activities in the licensure classes (LS 600, LS 610, LS 620, LS 630, and LS 640) are designed with activities that support the field experience requirements. In each of these classes, students complete field experiences: 40 hours at the building level and 10 hours at the district level. The remaining hours of field work will be completed in the summer during LS 650: Internship.

Faculty in the Department of Leadership Studies

Dr. Emily Waugh, Professor
Director of Leadership Studies
ewaugh@wvstateu.edu

Dr. Stephanie Burdette
Associate Professor and Assessment Coordinator
stephanie.burdette@wvstateu.edu