**The Master of Education in Instructional Leadership (MEIL) Program Overview**



WEST VIRGINIA   
STATE

UNIVERSITY

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# Master of Education in Instructional Leadership

## 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 will provide an opportunity for 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 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 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 level.
* 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 and is further solidified based on research findings. Overall, these three areas of emphasis will allow the WVSU MEIL to be unique and allow for the integration of these key features required of instructional leaders today.

## 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, and today WVSU offers 22 bachelor's degrees and five master's degrees. With a rich history, and promising future, WVSU is positioned to become the most student-centered research and teaching, land-grant University in West Virginia, and beyond.

In accordance with the vision and direction of the WVSU Department of Education and the WVSU Administration, and the Board of Governors, West Virginia State University began exploration of expanding services and programs for our students. After departmental meetings and conferences with educational representatives from public schools, and with directive of the 2011WVSU Strategic Plan, the Education Department at West Virginia State University began planning for a graduate program in the spring of 2013. It was decided that the department would focus on a Master of Education in Instructional Leadership with an emphasis on social justice, fairness and equity, the first of its kind in West Virginia. The new degree program was approved by the WVSU Board of Governors in February 2014, approved by the West Virginia Higher Education Program Council (HEPC) in May 2016 and the West Virginia Board of Education in August 2016.

**Advanced Programs-Statement of Purpose**

The primary objective of the WVSU’s Advanced Education Programs is to create opportunities for potential and current school and district level administrators to explore and apply new techniques and concepts in instructional leadership. This program will allow leaders to create pathways for the successful achievement of educational goals and retention of public school students and staff members through the professional growth of the candidate.

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**MEIL-Statement of Purpose**

The Master’s Program will provide an opportunity for 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 to our Leadership Candidates. 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 personal 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 Candidate will acquire the necessary skills, dispositions and knowledge base to become exceptional leaders within their organization and beyond. Our Mission is to equip our Candidates with leadership strategies, assist in the development of belief systems and promote effective behaviors for personal and professional growth.

## MEIL Coursework

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 program and 2.) Degree Stream for candidates who are seeking a Master’s degree with the application 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 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). 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.

**Students who complete either program will be eligible to apply for licensure in all three areas of educational leadership: Principal, General Supervisor of Instruction and Superintendent.**

## Enrollment

The MEIL program offers open and rolling enrollment at the beginning of the fall, spring and summer semesters. Because the program utilizes open enrollment, there will be no elective courses—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. Students will have the opportunity to complete two courses per eight week course schedule, and projections are for Licensure candidates to complete the program in 1-2 years and Degree stream candidates to complete the program in 2-4 years.

Included in the required Degree stream is LS 645 & 655, the Action Based Research Project. This course is the Degree capstone course in the program and it utilizes the best practices in public school leadership. In these classes, the students will undertake a capstone project. This capstone project is an applied research endeavor that will demonstrate the extent of the competencies learned from the courses taken in the MIL. 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 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. The following courses have been developed as part of the degree 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 (summer only)

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

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

**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 identifyand 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 identifyand explore statues, 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.

**The Courses will be sequenced as follows:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **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** |

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