

**Memorandum of Understanding  
between  
Fort Hays State University  
and  
University of Southern Indiana**

**Education Specialist to Doctor of Education Pathway**

**Purpose**

This Memorandum of Understanding shall set forth the nature and extent of a collaborative agreement between the University of Southern Indiana of Evansville, IN, and Fort Hays State University of Hays, KS, related to their respective Education Specialist and Doctor of Education programs.

**Definitions**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| EdD  | Doctor of Education OR Educational Doctorate    |
| EdS  | Education Specialist OR Specialist in Education |
| FHSU | Fort Hays State University                      |
| MOU  | Memorandum of Understanding                     |
| USI  | University of Southern Indiana                  |

**Background**

FHSU currently offers EdS programs but does not currently offer an EdD or a related doctoral program for their students to further their education. Over the years, FHSU faculty have maintained an informal running list of universities that have transferred FHSU EdS coursework into their associated doctoral programs previously. This running list maintains that some universities have transferred up to the full 30 credit hours of the FHSU EdS.

**Goals**

To provide an experience for USI and FHSU that mutually benefits both parties in alignment with their shared mission, vision, and goals as regional comprehensive universities within their respective primary service regions.

To provide a guaranteed and cost-effective pathway for all previous, current, and future FHSU EdS students to pursue an EdD at USI that minimizes earned credits from being disregarded for transfer.

To create a new pipeline of doctoral students for USI by recognizing FHSU as a transfer partner for EdS students that intend to further their education with a terminal degree.

To recognize the existing collaborative agreement with Kansas State University as a preferred transfer partner for FHSU students completing the EdS in Education Administration (Superintendent).

Fort Hays State University  
600 Park St | Hays, KS 67601  
785.628.3478 | [www.fhsu.edu](http://www.fhsu.edu)

University of Southern Indiana  
8600 University Blvd | Evansville, IN 47712  
812.464.8600 | [www.usi.edu](http://www.usi.edu)

### **Scope of Agreement**

Whereas, USI and FHSU recognize an EdS as a credential for students that have completed a master's degree.

Whereas, USI recognizes the academic integrity and rigor of the EdS degree that FHSU offers in the following five concentrations: Business Education and Workforce Leadership, Education Administration (Superintendent), Education Innovation and Leadership, Leadership in Reading, and School Psychology.

Whereas, FHSU recognizes that USI has structured a four-year EdD program of study with an EdS being built into the first two years.

Whereas, USI and FHSU recognize that a course-by-course articulation may not be in the best interest of USI faculty or FHSU students.

Therefore, USI and FHSU agree to the following:

USI will recognize a conferred EdS from FHSU as equivalent to the first two years of their EdD program of study (30 credit hours) for all intents and purposes, leaving FHSU EdS graduates that are accepted into USI's EdD program with 30 credits left to complete.

FHSU will recognize USI as a transfer partner for their EdS graduates alongside existing agreements.

FHSU EdS graduates intending to complete their EdD in this partnership must meet all admission requirements and pay all tuition and fees, as established by USI.

### **Program Application and Admission**

Applicants to the EdD program at USI must meet all admission requirements set forth by their School of Graduate Studies and Department of Teacher Education:

1. Submit an online application, \$40 application fee, and a list of 3 references (names, relation to you, and email address).
  - One must be an employment supervisor and the other two must be professional references.
2. Upload the following to your application account:
  - A current resume/curriculum vitae.
    - The file should be a PDF and use the following naming convention: First Name Last Name EdD resume.pdf (example: Joe Smith EdD resume.pdf).
  - A second PDF answering the following questions (statement of purpose):
    - How do you foresee this program positively impacting your community?
    - What do you perceive as a major social justice issue in your field? How do you hope to address it?
    - How will your work contribute to equitable outcomes in education?

- Imagine yourself in 5 years from now/after you graduate, what do you see yourself doing professionally and with whom will you be working with?
- 3. Submit transcripts to the School of Graduate Studies.
  - Official transcripts are required only from the institution at which your highest degree was earned. Electronic transcripts are preferred and can be emailed *from the previous institution* to [graduate.studies@usi.edu](mailto:graduate.studies@usi.edu) through the National Student Clearinghouse.
- 4. Read the full transcript policy by [clicking here](#).
- 5. International applicants may be required to submit additional information.

### **Tuition and Fees**

The total cost of the program comes out to be \$16,599.20. This is based on the current tuition and fees for the 2024-25 academic year in relation to the course sequence of the associated program of study. The breakdown of these costs can be seen below:

- \$1,540.82/three credit hour class
  - \$446.94/credit hour (Graduate Online Tuition)
  - \$50.00/credit hour (Non-Resident Distance Education Fee)
  - \$50.00/course (Online Learning Fee)
- \$190-\$202.75/semester
  - \$180/semester (Athletics Fee)
  - University Services Fee
    - \$10.00/semester, if enrolled in 1-3 credit hours
    - \$22.75/semester, if enrolled in 4-7 credit hours

*\*Tuition and fees are evaluated and subject to change at the start of any given academic year.*

### **Scholarships**

Upon admission, the University of Southern Indiana Teacher Education Department has several internal scholarships for USI doctoral students that are currently underutilized by students:

- Aline Nunn Renner Scholarship
- Bower-Suhreinrich Endowment for Teaching Excellence Scholarship

Preference is given to current educators; however, all students are encouraged to apply for funding. The award amounts are \$1,000-2,500/year. All newly admitted and current students are notified of these opportunities each year by the program director.

We also offer a Graduate Scholarship through the School of Graduate Studies. Students must have a USI log in to apply to this one.

### **Program of Study**

Upon admission, the below course sequence and program of study will be completed by FHSU graduates that hold an EdS:

#### **Year 1 – 15 Credit Hours**

|                        |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Fall   | EDLE 705: Introduction to Educational Research          | Advised by Dr. Wilkins  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fall   | EDLE 725: Becoming a Community-Based Educational Leader | Checkpoint: 10 Pages of Literature Review                             |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Spring | EDLE 707: Survey of Qualitative Research Methods        | Chair Selection and Committee Membership                              |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Spring | EDLE 706: Survey of Quantitative Research Methods       |   |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Summer | EDLE 708: Advanced Research Methods and Design          | Checkpoint: Written Chapter 3 Methodology<br>Topic Selection Form Due |

#### **Year 2 – 15 Credit Hours**

|                        |   |  |
|------------------------|---|--|
|                        |   | Checkpoint: First three chapters (Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology)                                  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fall   | EDLE 800: The Research Proposal                           | Committee Forms Due in October<br>Submit graduation application by October 1.  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Spring | EDLE 899: Dissertation in Practice (1 <sup>st</sup> )     | Goal: Research Proposal Defense of first three chapters.<br><b>*Must have proposal approved Ongoing research/IRB</b> |
| XX*                    | EDLE 899: Dissertation in Practice (2 <sup>nd</sup> )     | Goal: Ongoing research, and data collection  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Summer | EDLE 805: Seminar in Community-Based Educational Research | Checkpoint: Focus on Needs in Research   |
| XX*                    | EDLE 899: Dissertation in Practice (3 <sup>rd</sup> )     | Complete DiP defense by October 1st to walk in Fall Commencement.  |

*\*Nine credit hours of EDLE 899 will be scheduled through an agreement with the student and their chair. This is the proposed timeline for dissertation completion.*

*\*\*All courses within the program of study are taught in 7-week terms and non-EDLE 899 courses will meet online synchronously on Wednesdays, 5:30-8:15 PM CST.*

*\*\*\*Additional information regarding requirements for EDLE 899 (Dissertation in Practice) can be found in the following three sections.*

### **EDLE 899 Completion/Incomplete Policy**

Enrollment in each EDLE 899 is scheduled with the student and their chair. Each offering of the EDLE 899 has a milestone or checkpoint attached. If the milestone/checkpoint is not reached, an Incomplete (IN) will be given.

All incomplete grades must be adjusted to Pass (P) or No Pass (NP) within one year. If the incomplete is not rectified the student will then have to meet with the Director of Doctoral Programs to determine the next option, which could include an independent study (EDLE 790) or removal from the program.

### **Proposal**

The first EDLE 899 milestone is the completion of their proposal. The proposal is the completion of their intended research, as well as chapters one through three. If the student cannot complete their proposal, they will receive an Incomplete (IN) in the course and cannot enroll in the next EDLE 899 until the proposal is defended and approved by the student's committee.

### **Dissertation**

After the proposal has been defended successfully, the next step is to begin the actual research. As part of the proposal process, all necessary permissions, IRB approval, access issues, and timelines should be in place. It is possible to begin editing the first three chapters of the proposal simultaneously to conducting your research.

While some variation in the dissertation in practice format is permissible with the approval of a candidate's dissertation chair, dissertations will take the form of five dissertation chapters:

- Chapter One (1): A Problem of Practice
- Chapter Two (2): A Review of Relevant Literature
- Chapter Three (3): Methodology
- Chapter Four (4): Findings
- Chapter Five (5): Discussion

Any variation of this format will need prior approval from the dissertation chair. The dissertation chair may require additional information and components to be added to the dissertation in practice that may not be listed. The student must consult the dissertation chair to determine the components required for each dissertation.

Chapters from the proposal will shift from future to past tense as the dissertation research and writing proceeds. Other changes will be required too, as there are often confounding variables and other issues that emerge during the research process that necessitate changes. When all the research has been conducted and the editing of Chapters 1-3 has been completed, it will be time to exhibit the findings in Chapter Four and interpret them in Chapter Five.

### **Chair Selection and Committee Membership**

The chair of the dissertation committee must be a full-time faculty member within the USI Teacher Education Department. The USI Director of Doctoral Programs can provide recommendations to the EdD candidate, as needed.

The remaining two committee positions can be filled by any person with a terminal degree in a relevant field. This includes faculty, staff, and/or administrators at USI, FHSU, and/or others within other professional and academic circles of the EdD candidate.

All three committee members will receive a \$250.00 stipend upon any successful dissertation defense of an EdD candidate at USI.

#### Review Frequency

Stakeholders from USI and FHSU will review this MOU every year, beginning after the first possible date of an FHSU EdS graduate is able to begin their EdD with USI. This will allow both institutions to evaluate the success of the program and make necessary agreements, as needed.

For example, if this partnership were to become effective for the Fall 2025 Semester, the plan to review this would for Fall 2026. If this partnership is mutually agreed upon to begin, specific dates will be solidified and included in this section.

#### Conclusion and Signatures

It is the intent of FHSU and USI that this MOU is in full force and effective as of the signature date(s) below. This MOU may be amended at any time upon the joint execution of a written amendment document by both parties.

In witness whereof, the principals hereto have caused this MOU to be signed by their duly authorized principals.

On behalf of  
Fort Hays State University:

On behalf of the  
University of Southern Indiana:

Tisa Mason 11/26/24  
Tisa Mason, EdD, CAE Date  
President

Shelly B. Blunt 7-3-2025  
Shelly B. Blunt, PhD Date  
~~Interim~~ Provost

Approved as to Form  
Fort Hays State University  
General Counsel

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