Answers to Frequently Asked Questions
Higher Education Administration Concentration

1. I’ve been contacted by the Student Development Specialist (SDS). Is she my advisor?

No, students are assigned faculty advisors when they are accepted into the program. The Student Development Specialist, Elisha Reynolds, is here to compliment the advising done by faculty members. In addition to helping expedite the admissions process, Elisha helps students complete paperwork, schedule and facilitate new student orientation, recruit, coordinate the comprehensive exams, and generally handle student issues. The SDS’s job is to help students through all stages of their degrees to ensure that they are on track and stay on top of their requirements. The SDS can help with MOST issues or we can at least point students in the right direction.

2. How do I find out who my advisor is? When should I get advised?

The name of your advisor was listed in both the acceptance letter from the Graduate School and the acceptance letter from our department. If you’ve misplaced this you can email or call Elisha (elisha.reynolds@utsa.edu). Your adviser’s job is to help provide guidance to you when you have questions beyond registration for courses. Thus, you do not have to contact your advisor immediately after acceptance, but should you have questions about the coursework, the discipline, future plans, etc., make an appointment as needed. If you need an unofficial degree plan, please visit our website or email Elisha.

3. What courses should I register for?

You should have received a Course Plan in the mail along with your letter of acceptance from the department. If you need a degree plan, please visit the “Forms and Helpful Links” section of our website, http://education.utsa.edu/educational_leadership_and_policy_studies/, or email Elisha.

While you can take any coursework except for the internship and comps in the order that you wish, it is strongly recommended that you take the Core Course Research Methods during your first semester. This course will provide the foundation to understand the research in the articles in your other coursework. You should take the other Core Courses as early as possible. Other than Research Methods and other Core Courses, it is strongly recommended that you take other higher education coursework (HSA courses) whenever they are offered (please consult Column 3 of the Modified Course Plan found at the end of this document). This is because the non-Core HSA courses are offered less often than the Core Courses. So, you may delay your progress toward the degree if you do not take those courses when they are offered. The only course that students cannot take until their last semester of coursework is the Internship.

NOTE: Students Seeking ONLY Certificate in Higher Education: You only need to take one Core Course (EDL 5303, Human Relations in Educational Administration) and five of six other
4. **I want to transfer in credits from another university. How do I do that?**

Students are allowed to transfer in usually not more than 6 hours of appropriate graduate-level coursework from another university. This coursework cannot have already been used toward a degree. The first step to transferring course work is to meet with your advisor to decide whether courses from outside universities are acceptable and where they fit into your degree plan. Following that consultation, and assuming that your advisor feels that the coursework can be transferred in, contact Elisha so she can help you with the paperwork. The following items may be required: a letter from the student stating why they are requesting the transfer, a letter of support from the student’s advisor, course syllabi, course descriptions, a transcript from the institution reflecting the course term and grade awarded, and any other supporting documents from the course. For more information on transferring coursework, consult the Graduate Catalog, pp. 29. PLEASE NOTE: Students should be advised that the coursework taken in the course for which transfer credit is being requested must align extremely closely with the courses offered in the UTSA curriculum.

5. **What is a Special Graduate Student?**

From the Graduate Catalog, a Special Graduate Student is, “A student who is admitted to UTSA for the purpose of enrolling in graduate and/or undergraduate courses in one or more colleges of the University without entering a degree program.”

Many students are only seeking certification and not a master’s degree so they would apply as a Special Graduate. For some students, we may have suggested applying as a Special Graduate Student if they did not meet the GPA requirements for our program. In this case, students may begin taking graduate level work to help them raise their GPAs. The coursework Special Graduate Students complete can then be applied to their Master’s degrees once their GPA is raised to the required level. HOWEVER, no more than 12 hours of coursework done as a Special Graduate Student may be applied to the Master’s degree. Therefore, it is important for students to remain aware of how many hours they have completed so that they do not lose hours if they eventually want formal degree credit.

6. **I was admitted as a Special Graduate Student and am ready to switch over to “Graduate Degree-Seeking.” How do I do that?**

Students who wish to change their classification from Special Graduate Student to Graduate Degree-Seeking Student must reapply to our program as a Degree-Seeking Student. Students can apply on Embark, [https://apply.embark.com/grad/utsa/39/](https://apply.embark.com/grad/utsa/39/). Please contact the Graduate School to determine whether you need to submit any additional documents with your application, 210-458-4331.
7. **Where do I find out about financial aid?**

Students who are interested in finding out more about financial aid should make an appointment with the Financial Aid office on campus. More information about filling out the FAFSA, grants, loans, etc., can be found at [http://www.utsa.edu/financialaid](http://www.utsa.edu/financialaid). UTSA does set aside grant money for graduate students and there are opportunities for free money! The best advice we can give you is to do your research and apply for aid early and often.

8. **How and when do I register for the internship?**

Students must take the internship (HSA 6943) in their last semester of enrollment before graduation. During their next-to-last semester of study, students must be cleared by their ELPS faculty advisor to register for the internship. To be authorized to enroll in the internship, these guidelines must be followed:

1. Students must complete the Internship Clearance Form, obtain their advisor’s signature, and return it to the Student Development Specialist. This form is located on the wall outside the Student Development Specialist's Office, MB 3.480 and also on the department website under “Forms and Helpful Links” [http://education.utsa.edu/educational_leadership_and_policy_studies/](http://education.utsa.edu/educational_leadership_and_policy_studies/).
2. Students need to meet with their advisor so that he or she can verify the student’s eligibility. Students should bring an Internship Clearance Form, Course Plan, and unofficial transcripts. They can obtain a Course Plan from the department website and their unofficial transcripts from ASAP. If there are any courses not accounted for in the student’s Course Plan, the student will be contacted by his/her faculty advisor.
3. The Student Development Specialist will contact students when they are clear to take the internship.

**NOTE REGARDING INTERNSHIPS OFFERED BY OFFICES ON CAMPUS:**

Various offices across the university will occasionally advertise for student “internships.” *It is important that you do not confuse these internships with the internship opportunities associated with your M.Ed. requirements (and the HSA 6943 class). We cannot grant credit for such internships, even if the work done for them may correspond somewhat with the kind of experience you would get doing the HSA 6943 internships. You must go through the steps identified above in order to get credit for your HSA 6943/M.Ed. internship.*

9. **How and when do I sign up for the comprehensive exam?**

Students are required to take and pass a comprehensive exam before graduating (Graduate Catalog, pp. 27). Students must take their comprehensive exam in their last semester. Students are advised to not take more than 6 hours during the semester they are taking the comprehensive exams. The exams are offered in the fall and spring.
To sign up for the comprehensive exam, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Have a final degree plan on file with the Student Development Specialist that is signed by both you and your advisor.
2. Be in academic good standing.
3. Be enrolled for the semester.
4. Have applied for graduation online on ASAP.
5. Fill out a comprehensive exam application and deliver this to Elisha’s office, MB 3.480, or the department office, MB 3.310, by the deadline.

If you are not taking any other courses the semester you take the exam, you are required to enroll in EDU 6961 to maintain enrolled status through the university. Be sure to enroll in the EDU 6961 course reserved for our department’s students. This course will say “ELPS” under “Course Comments.”

10. **What if I need to take a semester off?**

    If you are a newly admitted student, you have up to one calendar year to enroll in a graduate-level course to maintain your active status with the university (i.e., if you were admitted for the fall 2012 semester, you have until the summer of 2013 to take a course). If you inactivate your status by not registering for any coursework during an entire calendar year, you will have to reapply to the university.

    Students who have already taken graduate-level courses may sit out for up to two years without inactivating. Keep in mind, a student also has six years to complete their degrees before classes expire, so there is flexibility for students who have to take time off due to unforeseen circumstances.

11. **Have more questions?**

    Elisha Reynolds: elisha.reynolds@utsa.edu; (210) 458-6620
    Office location: Main Building (MB) 3.480
    Fax: (210) 458-5848 (fax machine is in department office so please put “ATTN: Elisha Reynolds” on cover sheet)

    Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
    One UTSA Circle
    San Antonio, TX 78249
# COURSE PLAN (INCLUDING TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE)

## M.Ed. with Concentration in Higher Education Administration

### PRELIMINARY PLAN

### REVISED PLAN

### FINAL PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name:</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Course Number</th>
<th>2. Course Title</th>
<th>3. Semester Course Usually Offered</th>
<th>4. Semester Course Taken (e.g., Fall 2007)</th>
<th>5. Grade (IP = in progress)</th>
<th>6. Source (if not UTSA)</th>
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<td>Fall, Spring, Summer</td>
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<td>Foundation and Function of College Student Personnel</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
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## Core Requirements (9 semester credit hours)

- EDU 5003: Research Methods
  - Fall, Spring, Summer

## Higher Education Administration Requirements (27 semester credit hours)

- HSA 5003: History of American Higher Education
  - Fall, Spring
- HSA 5023: Foundation and Function of College Student Personnel
  - Fall, Spring
- HSA 5103: College Student Development
  - Fall, Spring
- HSA 5203: Multicultural Issues in Higher Education
  - Fall, Summer
- HSA 6003: Higher Education Law
  - Fall, Spring
- HSA 6123: Program Planning and Evaluation in Higher Education and Student Affairs
  - Fall, Spring
- HSA 6143: Administration of Student Services in Higher Education
  - Spring, Summer
- HSA 6503: The Community College
  - Spring, Summer
- HSA 6943: Internship in Higher Education
  - Fall, Spring, Summer

## Approvals:

Student: ___________________________ Date: _____________

ELPS Faculty Advisor: ________________________ Date: _____________

1. Note that all course offerings are tentative since courses may be cancelled if fewer than the required number of students register.

2. Please obtain your faculty advisor’s signature if you are seeking course substitutions, course petitions, or internship clearance. Please also notify the Student Development Specialist as additional paperwork may be required.