



**Doctoral Program in Education
(Ed.D.)
Student Handbook 2026-2027**

**Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership for
Diverse Learning Communities**

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DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Dear Students,

On behalf of our Ed.D. program, we would like to welcome and congratulate you on your acceptance. Our Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities at Molloy University is uniquely designed to prepare future social justice leaders in education to advocate and serve the needs of our increasingly diverse students and families. Over the next several years, you will experience our signature pedagogy model that consists of field-based practitioner research, inquiry-driven ethical leadership, and multiple mentorship.

Molloy University is a mission-driven educational institution, guided by the four pillars of Dominican Life: community, study, spirituality/contemplation, and service. In alignment with these pillars, the Ed.D. program is committed to developing educational leaders who are devoted to using research and ethical leadership to contribute to the betterment of the world. Students in the Ed.D. program, as dedicated community members, pursue their studies in search of deeper truths that can inform decision-making in the name of equity and justice for all learners. Throughout the program, Molloy Ed.D. students learn to be advocates and agents of change as they integrate research and theory with practice and policy in their pursuit of improving educational equity.

Choosing to pursue doctoral studies demonstrates your extraordinary commitment to the field of educational leadership and your pursuit of knowledge. By the time you complete your dissertation, you will be an expert in your chosen area of study. Ed.D. faculty and Molloy University staff will support you in your academic and professional advancement as you pursue your passion for improving education to be more equitable for all.

This handbook provides you with important information about the Ed.D. program's mission, goals, policies, and procedures. You should familiarize yourself with this document and the Molloy University Graduate Catalog which provides information about university-wide policies pertaining to graduate students.

Welcome to the Ed.D. community! We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

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School of Education and Human Services

Molloy University

MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

Molloy University Mission Statement and the Doctoral Program in Education

Molloy University, an independent, Catholic college, rooted in the Dominican tradition of study, spirituality, service, and community, is committed to academic excellence with respect for each person. Through transformative education, Molloy promotes a lifelong search for truth and the development of ethical leadership.

The Doctoral Program in Education, Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities, reflects the mission of Molloy University rooted in the Dominican tradition of study, spirituality, service, and community. The program provides a value-centered experience that embraces intellectual, ethical, spiritual, and social development in an environment where academic freedom, a spirit of inquiry, and respect for each individual's worth and dignity prevail.

The three components of our Signature Pedagogy include:

1. Field-based, practitioner-oriented research that addresses authentic, contemporary educational topics concerning diversity.
2. Inquiry-driven, ethical leadership that responds to current local, state, national, and international educational trends.
3. Multiple mentorship that includes ongoing support by a cohort advisor and a dissertation mentor to facilitate students' progress of study, advisement, and research development.

The comprehensive, rigorous, and research-based curriculum is designed to prepare doctoral graduates to act as contemporary educational leaders in diverse environments with a focus on advocacy for equitable education in its broadest sense. The culminating dissertation will be based upon a solid foundation of core courses and specialization in leadership and field-based research to support diverse populations. Ongoing opportunities will be created for students to be engaged with doctoral faculty in collaborative inquiry.

Goals

The broad-based goals of the program are to prepare educational leaders and advocates who possess:

- Knowledge of leadership, diversity and advocacy for equity education
- Knowledge of various research methods, data collection and assessment techniques
- The ability to communicate research findings and inform issues of diversity
- Skills and dispositions for ethical decision-making for issues in equity, diversity and public policy
- Vision, pedagogical knowledge and critical thinking skills to question and challenge inequities in schools and communities
- Understanding, appreciation, and respect for the value of collaborative approaches to problem-solving, leadership and action research
- Skills and competency to think locally and globally to build partnerships, share leadership techniques and demonstrate integrity of the highest magnitude in order to effect change.

Graduates of the Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities (Ed. D.) program are prepared to:

- Serve as leaders in advancing the field of education for diverse learners through practitioner-oriented authentic research, collaborative inquiry, and policy analysis
- Participate fully in diverse educational communities to promote the creation of knowledge that advocates for reform initiatives that lead to equitable education
- Generate, test, and extend knowledge through research and theory development and disseminate the findings to directly impact schooling and education
- Influence educational policy to advance best practices at the local, regional, state, and national levels
- Integrate research in educational equity with practice through coursework, fieldwork, dissertation writing, publication, and active membership in scholarly, professional organizations
- Embrace the Molloy University hallmark of the Four Pillars of the Dominican tradition of study, spirituality, service, and community
- Support the ideals of educational reform, collaboration and change through the stewardship of teaching and leading
- Examine educational service delivery models and determine if they are fair, equitable, and just
- Develop strategies to foster shared decision making and build teacher capacity to support student learning needs in diverse communities
- Initiate and advance approaches to develop research that informs instruction and determines best practices for student achievement

ED.D. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Doctor of Education Program Philosophy

Doctoral education fosters the highest level of scholarly inquiry to promote self-transformation, enabling graduates to demonstrate excellence in leadership, education, and service. A Doctor of Education degree represents the culmination of the formal educational process. Through scholarly inquiry and intellectual engagement, the graduate will provide leadership and advocacy for diverse learner needs and generate new knowledge by designing and conducting research to advance the understanding of societal changes and needs.

The Molloy University School of Education and Human Services offers a unique contribution to doctoral education, the field of education, the local and regional communities, and the larger society. The doctoral program is responding to an emerging need to prepare teachers and related educational professionals who will contribute by offering leadership to spearhead reform initiatives closely tied to the actual practices of those involved in the doctoral program. This response is a natural progression from Molloy's history of teacher education at the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as its mission, vision and the conceptual framework of its educational unit.

In the Doctor of Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities (Ed.D.) program, our purpose is to prepare highly qualified and effective practitioners and professionals, including teachers, administrators, counselors, professionals in higher education and related fields, and future instructional leaders who will advocate for programs and policies for diverse learners and contribute to the advancement of knowledge concerning the organizational, structural, and cultural conditions that are vital for providing educational equity for all learners.

Program Signature Pedagogy

Three components of the Molloy University Ed.D. Program referred to as signature pedagogy—the unique characteristics for how teaching and learning take place—are as follows:

1. Field-based, Practitioner-oriented Research

Molloy faculty work with doctoral program students to develop modes of inquiry for creating a systematic and orderly way to observe education-related issues and develop a plan of action to address authentic, contemporary educational topics concerning diverse learners. Throughout the course of doctoral studies, Molloy faculty work closely with all doctoral students to bridge the gap between theory and practice in order to become agents of change and assure equity in their current and future educational settings.

2. Inquiry-Driven, Ethical Leadership

The School of Education and Human Services is committed to developing leaders who are:

- Well-versed in the importance of ethical decision making
- Aware of, and responsive to, current local, state, national and international educational

trends

- Knowledgeable of the historical underpinnings of the American educational experience
- Informed policy makers willing to make instructional, programmatic and policy changes in local school settings, which are necessary for educational achievement for all

3. Multiple Mentorship

A unique mentoring design has been created to ensure that all students receive the necessary guidance toward completion of their doctoral studies. The initial advisor (Ed.D. Program Director), the cohort mentor (Faculty Advisor), and the dissertation mentor (Dissertation Chair) work in collaboration to facilitate each student's progress of study, advisement, and research development. The cohort mentor guides the doctoral student through the program's required coursework and a dissertation mentor is selected during year 3 while finalizing a dissertation topic. Peer mentorship and faculty mentorship are also available to our students.

Throughout the Molloy doctoral experience, the program emphasizes ethical leadership, the research of educational problems of practice and suggested innovative changes to instruction/curriculum and public policy as it applies to diversity and the diverse needs of all learners.

ED.D. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

To earn the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership for the Diverse Learning Community degree at Molloy University School of Education and Human Services, the doctoral student must:

1. Have earned a minimum of 54 graduate level semester credits beyond the master's degree as follows:
 - a. Earned 45 graduate level semester credits in courses beyond the master's degree, a minimum of 33 of these credits must have been earned at Molloy University.
 - b. Earned a minimum of 9 credits for the dissertation requirements. Six credits are earned in the dissertation seminars, and 3 additional credits are earned in the dissertation progression course leading to the final dissertation defense.
 - c. Up to twelve graduate/doctoral level semester credits may be transferred and applied to the 45 graduate level semester credit requirements for the Ed.D. program with approval.
2. Meet the Cumulative Grade Point Average Requirement. Students are expected to succeed academically and maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale). If the GPA falls below 3.2, the student will be put on academic probation and must raise their GPA to 3.2 by the end of the following academic year. Students who fail to raise their GPA to 3.2 may be dismissed from the program (see Academic Policies and Procedures section).
3. Achieve successful completion of Benchmark I, the Research Topic Prospectus and Benchmark II, the two-part Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (see the "Academic Benchmarks" and "Comprehensive Examination" in Ed.D. Program Sequence section).
 - a. After successful completion of the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam, the student will receive confirmation of doctoral candidacy and will be permitted to enroll in the Doctoral Dissertation Sequence.
4. Complete the Doctoral Dissertation Sequence.
 - a. In collaboration with the Cohort mentor, students will finalize their Dissertation Chair and Committee Members and file the Dissertation Committee Membership Form. Students must notify the Ed.D. Program Office and their advisor about any requested changes to their Dissertation Committee through the submission of the Change in Dissertation Committee Membership form. Dissertation forms can be found in the Ed.D. Student Resources module in Canvas.
 - b. Present a proposal to their dissertation committee and defend it. To schedule the proposal defense, students must submit the Scheduling Form for the Proposal Defense a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the proposal date. After the proposal presentation, the Committee Chair will submit the completed Scheduling Form for the Proposal Defense to the Ed.D. Program Office.

- c. Seek IRB approval before initiating the dissertation research process (see Molloy University Institutional Review Board application protocol on the Molloy University website).
- d. Complete the dissertation sequence with direct supervision and support from the Dissertation Chair (see "Step-by-Step Guidelines regarding the Dissertation Process" in Education Program Sequence section).
- e. Based on the anticipated doctoral dissertation defense date, the student must complete application materials for graduation in accordance with prevailing Molloy registrar policies.
- f. In agreement with the Dissertation Chair and Committee members, the student must schedule the dissertation defense by submitting the Scheduling Form for Dissertation Defense form a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the defense date.
- g. Successfully defend their doctoral dissertation. The Oral Defense of Dissertation form will be completed by the Committee Chair and submitted to the Ed.D. Program Office. Final approval must also be recorded on the individual student signature pages that are required for graduation clearance and dissertation publication.
- h. After completing the requirements to earn the Ed.D. degree, students will publish their dissertations as indicated in the post-defense guidelines (see "What Happens after the Final Defense: A Step-by-Step Guide" in Education Program Sequence section).

** Fillable PDF forms are available in Canvas in the Ed.D. Student Resources Module.*

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR MOLLOY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE (DOCTORAL) PROGRAMS

Integrated competencies will work together to influence and support advocacy, leadership and change

I. Advanced Communication Skills

- Advanced oral communication and presentation/public speaking skills
- Clear, concise, and highly effective writing skills
- Ability to relate to and collaborate with others in order to engage in effective and meaningful interaction
- Ability to effectively communicate research findings
- Ability to convey complex information to a variety of audiences

II. Highly Developed Critical Thinking, Information Literacy and Scholarly Inquiry

- Ability to synthesize pedagogical knowledge through critical, strategic, creative thinking and complex problem solving
- Competencies in inquiry and analytical skills
- Competencies in quantitative and qualitative research and responsible conduct of research
- Statistical knowledge and ability to analyze and interpret data
- Ability to integrate research with theory and practice and disseminate findings
- Use of multiple perspectives to view and resolve challenges
- Advanced information literacy
- Knowledge of and ability to use information systems technology
- Mastery of knowledge related to the student's chosen path of study

III. Social Responsibility and Ethical Leadership

- Highly ethical conduct, integrity, and professional responsibility
- Ability to make ethical decisions in personal and professional contexts
- Adherence to standards and principles of academic integrity
- Commitment to social justice and basic human rights
- Belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all individuals and appreciation of diversity

VI. Effective Leadership in Professional, Community, and Personal Spheres

- Leadership and professionalism
- Career development, mentoring, and supervisory skills
- Advocacy skills and ability to influence public policy in the field
- Effective collaboration among diverse groups
- Application of knowledge and theoretical perspectives in community and professional settings
- Living out the University's core values in the community and workplace
- Reflective practice
- Interprofessional collaboration
- Organizational skills
- Civic knowledge and engagement
- Intercultural knowledge and competence

V. Integration of I–IV in the Expansion of Communication, Critical Thinking, Ethical Leadership and Effective Professional and Community Leadership Competencies

- Skills in expanding all levels of inquiry toward developing a base of knowledge and finding evidence for the discipline
- Application of systematic approaches and analytical processes to build on evidence
- Effective communication in speaking and writing to disseminate information and knowledge to larger audiences
- Application of evidence in guiding professional services to solve authentic problems
- Understanding regarding how policy is enacted for local to global communities to best influence and advocate ethically for the public
- Proficiency in the use of information systems and technology to improve quality of services delivered in the discipline and to support decision-making
- Influence with regard to policy to advance best practices in the field at the local, state, regional, and national levels
- Integrity in disciplinary practice, scholarship, and leadership

ED.D. PROGRAM COURSE SEQUENCE

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities

Core Requirements

EDU 6020: Introduction to Educational Research	3
EDU 6040: Change Leadership for Equity, Social Justice and Excellence	3
EDU 6060: Ethical, Moral and Legal Issues in Educational Leadership	3
EDU 6080: Quantitative Research	3
EDU 6080A: Quantitative Research Lab	1
EDU 6120: Learning, Cognition, and Diversity	3
EDU 6140: Qualitative Research	3
EDU 6140A: Dissertation Writing Seminar	1
EDU 6160: Critical Issues in Education	3
EDU 6180: Preparing for the Dissertation	3
EDU 6220: Curriculum Theories and Best Practices for the Diverse Learner	3
EDU 6240: Research Internship	3
EDU 6260: Collaborative Leadership in 21 st Century Diverse Educational Organizations	3
EDU 6280: Dissertation Research Design	3
EDU 6280A: Preparing for the Comprehensive Exam	1

Cognates (Electives)*: 6

Course offerings vary from year to year.

i.e.: EDU 6300- Educational Assessment of the Diverse Learner

Cognate requirements are automatically satisfied for students pursuing a Higher Education Leadership concentration within the Ed.D. program and for students who pursue the completion of the PAC, SBL/SDL certificate programs.

See Transfer Policy in Molloy University Graduate Catalog and in following section.

Total Course Sequence Credits 45

** Prior to beginning the Dissertation Sequence, a Doctoral Comprehensive Examination must be successfully passed.

Dissertation Sequence:

EDU 7000: Dissertation Seminar-Part One	3
EDU 7001: Dissertation Seminar-Part Two	3
EDU 7010: Dissertation Progression	3
EDU 7020: Dissertation Continuation	(1)
(If necessary, continued enrollment for 1 credit per semester until dissertation defense)	

Minimum Total Program Credits (including Dissertation Sequence) 54

ED.D. PROGRAM SEQUENCE AND PROGRESSION

ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

The Director of the Ed.D. Program advises all newly admitted students prior to enrollment as well as during their first academic year in the program. Thereafter, each cohort of students is assigned to a Faculty Advisor, who will serve as the Cohort Mentor.

The Cohort Mentor/Faculty Advisor:

- Guides the student through the plan of study.
- Regularly reviews and discusses student progress on Lion's Den.
- Provides academic counseling to facilitate the program of study, transition procedures, and selection of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee Chair.
- Provides mentoring to facilitate career planning.

When the student's dissertation committee has been approved, the Chair of the Dissertation Committee and the Cohort Mentor will jointly serve as the student's Faculty Advisor until graduation.

Student Responsibilities in the Advisement Process:

- Initiate written requests in advance for accommodations applicable to the Americans with Disability Act.
- Supply documents required to fulfill transfer requests for coursework.
- Read written communiques and adhere to policies and procedures applicable to the Doctoral Program. (These may change during a student's enrollment and students are required to stay updated on changes).
- Initiate any changes to the program of study in writing to the faculty advisor and the Ed.D. program office. Make sure you obtain and complete any necessary forms in a timely manner (for example, leave of absence, incomplete request, resignation, and so on)
- Communicate any personal changes during the program in a timely manner with the advisor and Director of the Ed.D. Program.
- Maintain current personal information (phone, personal email, and address information) on Lion's Den

ACADEMIC BENCHMARKS

Students will complete four (4) academic benchmarks throughout their time in the EdD program:

- I. Research Topic Prospectus (1.5 years)
- II. Comprehensive Assessment (3 years)
- III. Dissertation Proposal (3.5 years)
- IV. Dissertation (4.5 years+)

Benchmarks are designed to be both formative and summative providing students an opportunity to 1) submit independent scholarship and receive feedback and guidance from the EdD faculty and 2) receive assessments about their progress toward the dissertation and completion of the doctoral degree.

Benchmark assignments take place outside the normal course curriculum and are designed to provide

students with an opportunity to demonstrate their scholarly independence, academic research and writing capabilities, and ability to synthesize and apply course content to a unique topic of research interest. Benchmarks are both scholarly and reflective, asking students to demonstrate scholarly expertise and reflexivity of their development as a leader and scholar.

BENCHMARK I: RESEARCH TOPIC PROSPECTUS

After students have taken all three of their introductory research methods courses (EDU 6020, 6080 and 6140), typically after 1.5 years of coursework, students should have a general idea of a research topic of importance that they might like to pursue for their dissertation. They should have knowledge of related literature, theories that may be useful for analysis, and potential methods that could be used to conduct research on the topic. Using the knowledge they have acquired through course required and independent reading during their first 3-4 semesters, students will write a research prospectus and provide a 10-minute presentation that addresses the following:

- Identify an educational issue of importance that warrants research. Using evidence and research literature, provide a logical rationale for the importance of researching this issue. (300 words)
- Provide a brief synthesis of scholarly literature that supports the rationale for researching this issue. Use at least ten resources (at least two empirical articles from the last 7 years, at least 5 peer reviewed articles from journals in your field, at least 1 metanalysis or systematic review of the literature in your field). Make specific reference to two studies you have found most compelling. (800 words)
- Briefly describe two theories that could be used as lenses in a study about your topic and explain why they might be useful. (300 words)
- Briefly describe two research studies you have read about your topic that have used qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods designs. How do the different designs contribute differently to what is known about the topic? (300 words)
- Briefly describe two research studies you have read about your topic that have used different theories. How do the theories contribute to different ways of framing the topic and guiding the analysis? (300 words)
- Why are you motivated to pursue this topic given your own history and experiences? How does your lens as a practitioner contribute to your understanding of this topic? How has the research you have read contributed to your understanding of this topic? How are your practitioner knowledge and research knowledge about this topic similar and different? How has your view of research and your topic changed as a result of participating in this Ed.D. program? (400 words)
- List all references in APA format

BENCHMARK II: COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The purpose of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination is to determine whether the student meets minimum criteria for knowledge of educational leadership and research methods at the doctoral level. The comprehensive examination is designed to test the student's knowledge related to analysis and synthesis of the doctoral curriculum content. The content will include theory, research, and specialized substantive knowledge. Students must have completed all course work including cognates before taking the examination.

The procedure for the Comprehensive Examination is as follows:

- a During the semester when the student is projected to complete the course sequence (including

the cognate requirements) and prior to beginning the Doctoral Dissertation Sequence, the student will be scheduled to take the comprehensive exam. The course professor for EDU 6280 and Director of the Ed.D. Program will schedule the exam to take place at the end of the semester.

- b. The examination will be evaluated by members of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Committee. The examination will be graded as either “eligible for candidacy”, “eligible for candidacy with conditions” or “not eligible for candidacy” by the committee. If there is not a unanimous decision about the grade, the Ed.D. Director will reconcile differences in evaluations.
- c. A student may be assessed as “not yet eligible for candidacy” only once. A student receiving a grade of “not yet eligible for candidacy” will meet with the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Committee to discuss areas of needs. The cohort mentor or designated faculty member will provide further feedback and guidance to assist the student in preparing for a second administration of the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination.
- d. A second grade of “not yet eligible for candidacy” will result in dismissal from the program.
- e. Both the written and oral components of the comprehensive examination must be successfully passed before a student begins the dissertation sequence.

The comprehensive exam comprises two components. The first component will consist of a take-home leadership journey essay and portfolio. The second component will include a virtual presentation of the student’s research design submitted for EDU 6280. Preparation for the exam will be supported by the 1 credit course EDU 6280A.

Part 1. Leadership journey essay. In an essay of 2,000 words maximum, students will describe the education leadership journey they have constructed during their time in the doctoral program explaining how they evolved as a social justice scholar and leader. The student will identify four artifacts that represent turning points in this leadership journey. Artifacts may come from course assignments or outside experiences, but they need to be closely aligned to the social justice themes and research. Examples of artifacts are a paper written for a course, a publication, a written description of a curriculum the student developed, meaningful samples of fieldwork assignments, materials related to an organizational change process in the student’s workplace, materials related to a conference presentation, and so on.

Artifact memos. For each artifact selected, the student will prepare an artifact memo. The artifact memo serves as a cover sheet for the artifact and provides the following information:

1. Name of artifact:
2. Approximate date(s) of its production:
3. Rationale for choosing artifact (50 words):
4. Explanation of context in and purpose for which it was produced (100 words):
5. Summary of the meaning of the artifact to the student’s leadership journey consistent with what the student has written in the leadership journey essay (100 words), including page number reference.

(Adapted from the University of Massachusetts--Lowell Ed.D. Handbook.)

Part 2. After students submit Part 1, they will participate in Part 2 of the examination. Students will prepare a **10-15 minute live presentation** which will be presented to two faculty members on the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Committee. The presentation will include a succinct, detailed description of the following:

- Descriptive title
- Research problem, purpose and significance
- Research questions
- Researcher worldview
- Research approach and/or methodology
- Population, sample, participants, selection criteria and research site (if applicable)
- Data collection procedures
- Data analysis procedures
- Research quality: Reliability, validity, trustworthiness, authenticity
- Limitations
- Ethical issues

Achieving Doctoral Candidacy

With successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination, the student is deemed by the Comprehensive Examination Assessment Committee as qualified to begin the doctoral dissertation sequence. Upon review that the student has fulfilled all criteria, a letter verifying candidacy status will be issued by the Ed.D. Program Director and the Comprehensive Examination Assessment Committee. Students who do not successfully pass the Competency Exam should consult with their advisor to determine the next steps needed to prepare to retake the exam.

DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS (BENCHMARKS 3 & 4)

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee chair, in conjunction with the other selected committee members, helps guide the doctoral student through the intellectual stages and institutional requirements of the dissertation work. Each student is required to conduct original, independent research that contributes to knowledge development in education. In consultation with the chosen Dissertation Chairperson, the student must select two other members to serve on their Dissertation Committee composed of:

1. a Dissertation Chair from the Ed.D. faculty,
2. another committee member who must be a Molloy faculty member,
3. a third committee member who may also be someone from Molloy or may be from outside the college.

All committee members must hold a terminal degree and receive approval from the Ed.D. Program Director.

Typically, a dissertation committee consists of a Dissertation chair and two members; however, in consultation with the chair, a student may opt to have a fourth member. The dissertation committee chair, in conjunction with the other selected committee members, helps guide the doctoral student through the intellectual stages and institutional requirements of the dissertation work.

Second, third and fourth members are chosen together with the Chair to compose a complementary dissertation committee. They are often chosen to provide thematic or methodological expertise. Readers often read only the completed proposal prior to the proposal defense and dissertation before the final defense, although they are available for consultation throughout the process and may be more closely involved in sections or issues in which they have particular expertise.

The chair and committee members should:

- Coach the student about their working style and what the student can do to contribute to a good working relationship.
- Refer the student to appropriate resources if they become aware of significant problems or challenges (e.g., in the student's writing, research-related skills, or personal circumstances).

1. Responsibilities of the Chair:

- Assist the student to select and refine the dissertation topic.
- Help the student formulate a long-term plan for the research and writing of the dissertation, including a timetable and tentative completion date. Ask the student to revise the plan, if needed.
- Reach agreement with the student as to the frequency of consultation and work submitted for critique.
- Seek a progress report from the student at least once a term.
- Work with the student to schedule and plan for committee meetings.
- If a member of the committee is not responding to the student's communication or failing to review the draft sections of the dissertation in a reasonable amount of time, the chair will coach the student about how to proceed or intervene directly if the problem is severe. If all

- efforts fail, the student will consider finding a replacement.
- Take responsibility for dealing with conflicts among committee members (e.g., personal conflict, and intellectual disputes that create a roadblock for the student).
- Emphasize data collection and record keeping.
- Review ethical issues, including human subject protections.
- Build backup ideas into the research project.
- Follow the student's development and make adjustments in assignments.
- Be aware of conflicts and take steps to mediate as necessary.

2. Responsibilities of the Committee Members:

- In collaboration with the Dissertation Chair, provide timely and thorough guidance to a student on dissertation development and/or manuscript drafts.
- Respond to student drafts on a timely basis. A reasonable guideline is no more than ten working days turnaround time upon receipt of a draft or a response to a student if more time is needed within that ten working day window. It is also important to keep the Chair informed of feedback being provided to students outside of the formal defense settings.

3. Responsibilities of the Student

Students are ultimately responsible for the crafting and execution of the dissertation project through all of its phases including the completion of a final manuscript that has been properly edited and follows all of the expected conventions described in their course work. In addition, students are expected to:

- Refer to the Chair as the central point of contact for the development of ideas, selection of an appropriate committee and development of early drafts; the approval point for submission of materials to the Committee; and the gatekeeper of a final manuscript for submission to the Ed.D. Program Director.
- Schedule regular meetings with the Chair to discuss the project and its development and when directed/suggested by the Chair, with members of the Committee.
- Obtain and maintain human subjects research certification- CITI certification <https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/> upon approval of the dissertation proposal
- Submit all their own, original work and as appropriate to the conduct of research, properly cite the works of others that inform the study. Students should be familiar with policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Misconduct in these arenas is treated seriously and can result in academic dismissal. [See the Molloy University Graduate Catalog re: Honor Pledge and Academic Honesty].
- Complete IRB proposal paperwork.
- Take personal initiative to move the project forward and to discuss with the Chair any problems that may arise.
- Be aware of and accountable to established defense date and manuscript submission deadlines.
- Recognize that crafting a dissertation is an iterative process between the student and the Chair, and at key moments, between the student, the Chair, and the Committee. As such, they must be mindful of the fact that Chairs and Committees have many other duties pressing on their time. Thus, realistic expectations around holiday and vacation times as well as normal busy periods (e.g., ends and starts of semesters) are necessary.

Step-By-Step Guidelines Regarding the Dissertation Process

Step 1: Selection of the Chair

EDU 6280, 3rd Year

In consultation with the Cohort Mentor and the EDU 6280 professor(s), each student will indicate their preference for a Chair and requests will be evaluated based on relevance and availability. Students will then be asked to invite the recommended faculty member to serve as Chair of their dissertation committee.

Questions that the student should consider when choosing a Chair:

- --Will their content or methodological expertise support you in your research goals?
- --Is their intellectual and professional approach one you find compatible?
- --Is the professor someone with whom you find it helpful and easy to brainstorm?
- --Have you found feedback on earlier work with that faculty member to be supportive?

Please review the Faculty Profiles available on the Molloy University website: [Ed.D. Program Faculty](#)

When a faculty member agrees to serve as Chair, the student will notify the Cohort Mentor and the Director of the Ed.D. Program. The student is required to complete the *Dissertation Chair Membership Form*, collect the signature from the chair, and submit for approval to the Ed.D. Program Director, and cc: the Dissertation Chair, the Cohort Advisor, and the Program Coordinator.

Step 2: Selection of the Committee Members

EDU 7000, 4th Year (after candidacy status is established)

Together, the student and Chair will decide on additional faculty members who will be invited to serve on the Dissertation Committee. This process will be facilitated by the dissertation Chair who will formally invite committee members. The student is required to complete the *Dissertation Committee Membership Form* and collect the signatures from the committee to be submitted for approval to the Ed.D. Program Director and cc: the Dissertation Chair, the Cohort Advisor, and the Program Coordinator.

If changes to the committee are required, including if a faculty member's service is no longer needed given changes that may occur as the student develops the dissertation proposal, the chair is responsible for communicating with committee members on behalf of the student. The student must also fill out a *Change in the Dissertation Committee Form*.

Step 3: Dissertation Proposal

EDU 7000, second semester of 3rd Year

A written dissertation proposal must be approved by all members of the student's Dissertation Committee before moving to the dissertation proposal defense. Based on the outcome of the proposal defense, a student is required to address all of the recommendations from the committee and submit it

to the chair for approval before starting the IRB application or data collection activities.

Form to be filed: *Scheduling Form for the Proposal Defense*

Step 4: IRB Approval

EDU 7001, Year 4

Upon a successful proposal defense, the student may proceed with the completion of the Institutional Review Board application to obtain human subject approval to initiate the study. The application is to be completed with the guidance of the Chair, who also serves as a co-investigator of the study.

Consult the [Molloy University IRB website](#) for further information.

Step 5: Data Collection & Analysis

EDU 7001/7010, Year 4

Following the IRB approval letter, students may begin data collection and data analysis procedures. Students must first design a data plan and obtain chair approval. Then, they must submit evidence of the data analysis steps they will take to come up with their themes and findings. In case of any challenges during data collection, the student is required to notify and consult with the chair. If there are any changes to the original plan outlined on the IRB application, the student and the chair must submit an IRB amendment request.

Step 6: Writing Chapter 4 & Optional Chapter 5

EDU 7010/7020, Year 4.5+

The student will write the dissertation Chapter 4 Findings & Chapter 5 Conclusion with close assistance from the chair. As this is a guided writing process, the chair will ask for an outline and drafts of different sections in each chapter. Besides working with the chair, it is strongly recommended that the student relies on the expertise of the other committee members and consults with them on the final interpretation of the results of the study with approval of the chair. Students may also take advantage of an independent study course based on faculty availability to support them in writing dissertation chapters over the summer (e.g. help with analyzing data, guidance in writing and APA style, etc.).

Step 7: Submission of the Final Dissertation Draft for Committee Review

EDU 7010/7020, Year 4.5+

The student will submit the final draft of the dissertation to the chair. Once approved, the chair will forward it to the dissertation committee members. The committee will require a minimum of 3 weeks to review and provide feedback on the manuscript. The student is required to address the comments prior to the final defense presentation. At the time of the final draft submission to the chair, the student and the chair should decide on the final timeline of the submission, revisions of the dissertation, and the dissertation defense presentation. The student will need to submit a brief biography and abstract of the study to be distributed as part of the dissertation defense announcement. This should be written in past tense and contain approximately 250 words. The form below must be submitted 3 weeks prior to the requested defense date.

Form to be filed: *Scheduling Form for Dissertation Defense*

Step 8: Dissertation Defense

4.5+ year

Each student is required to successfully defend the completed dissertation as evaluated by the Dissertation Committee. The committee will approve the dissertation with no changes, minor changes,

or major changes. The final oral dissertation defense is scheduled following completion of the dissertation and approval by all members of the student's Dissertation Committee. The dissertation defense is an oral presentation and inquiry open to all faculty, students, and community as deemed appropriate by the Director of the Ed.D. Program.

Upon receiving feedback from the committee about the final dissertation draft, the student will have 7-14 days to address the main concerns of the committee prior to the defense. The chair will guide the student through the process and provide feedback on the presentation.

If the dissertation committee has major reservations about the final dissertation document, the student will need to address all the concerns from the committee. In that case, the tentative dissertation defense date will need to be rescheduled. The student is approved for the final defense when the entire dissertation committee agrees the student is ready to successfully defend their dissertation. The chair will handle the communication between the committee and the student.

The committee will assess the quality of the written and oral dissertation defense, and the student will receive a pass, pass with conditions, or failing grade.

What Happens After the Final Defense: A Step-by-Step Guide

See the EdD Student Resources canvas course for the most recent procedures.

GRADUATION

The final completed dissertation with all changes requested by the committee must be approved by the Dissertation Chair, the Ed.D. Program Director and the Senior Dean of Research and Scholarship in order to graduate. Dissertation submissions will follow Molloy University standards and include submission to the Molloy University Library via the ETD system (<https://molloy.libguides.com/etd>). The ETD program is a streamlined process for students to submit their dissertation for electronic publishing and inclusion in ProQuest's Dissertations & Theses full text database as well as Molloy's Institutional Repository (Digital Commons).

In addition, the student must submit an approved Application for Graduation Form with all required signatures and an application fee, according to the deadlines in the Academic Calendar for December, May or August graduation. The graduation application is only accessible to students through Lion's Den and can be found in the "My Academics" tab in the left column.

Students must maintain continuous registration until graduation by taking EDU 7020, a one-credit Dissertation Continuation course each semester while engaged in dissertation activity **after** the required 9 credit hours are completed in EDU 7000, 7001 and 7010. If students are unable to maintain continuous registration, students must file a separation from college form. Students must contact the Ed.D. office to request reactivation into the program. If readmitted, the student continues to be subject to the policy related to length of time to complete program requirements.

The Molloy University commencement ceremony is held once a year in May and is managed by the Office of Student Affairs. Class Night is generally held once a year in May, where doctoral students are hooded and departmental honors are awarded. Information regarding renting or purchasing caps and gowns, celebrations, commencement rehearsals, hooding and Class Night and ceremonies are provided by the Ed.D. program office in the weeks leading up to the commencement exercises. It is each students' responsibility to be prepared to participate in these activities.

Length of Time to Complete Program Requirements

A student has a period of **nine (9) years** after admission to complete all program requirements. A student must complete all required coursework and be admitted to candidacy within five years after admission to the doctoral program. The student must complete all dissertation requirements within four years following admission to candidacy. Any variation from this must be requested in writing and approved by the Ed.D. Program Office as well as the Office of Academic Affairs.

Time spent away from the Ed.D. program based on an approved leave of absence will be evaluated at the discretion of the Ed.D. program director.

ED.D. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Molloy University Catalog

Each student is required to review the **Molloy University Graduate Catalog** and the Molloy University Ed.D. Student Handbook during the first semester of the program and is expected to review the policies and procedures described. Students are accountable for adhering to the published, current policies and procedures in force during their program of study.

University-Wide Academic Policies

Academic policies for the topics listed below in the Ed.D. program align with those found in the [Molloy University Graduate Catalog](#).

- Academic Integrity
- Administrative Withdrawals
- Disability Support Services
- Grade Appeal Policy
- Grievances
- Honor Code
- Privacy Rights of Students
- Program Readmission/Re-Entry
- Separation from University
- Student Health Services
- Withdrawals and Temporary Leave

Program-Specific Academic Policies in the Ed.D. Program

Policies specific to the Ed.D. Program can be found below.

Academic Probation

A student placed on academic probation will need to meet with the academic advisor (cohort mentor) and the Ed.D. Program Director to establish a course of action to discuss and develop a mutually agreed upon action plan to facilitate the student's improvement in their academic performance. The academic probation may be extended for up to one year. If the student fails to raise their GPA to 3.2 or above, they will be considered for academic suspension or dismissal from the program. Once placed on academic probation, the student's academic performance will be closely monitored. A student may be placed on academic probation up to two times during the duration of their program participation. Being placed on academic probation may impact future course registration. Students will need to discuss their ongoing program participation with their advisors (for example, students may be advised to switch to an individual pathway and take one course at a time).

Attendance and Religious Observations

Policy of Responsible Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes and participate online regularly and punctually. Consequences for excessive absences or lateness are noted in the course outlines.

Religious Observances: A student who will be absent from class because of a religious obligation or practice should inform the instructor in writing at least one week before the day. The student has the right to make up any examination, study or work requirements which may have been missed because of religious observances.

Additional information: [Academic Policies and Procedures](#)

Continuous Registration

All students are required to maintain continuous registration of a minimum of at least one credit each semester (Fall and Spring) from admission until final dissertation defense, unless an authorized Separation from University request has been granted. If the student is unable to engage in doctoral study in a given semester for a health or personal reasons, a Separation from University Form for the program must be completed and approval must be obtained from the advisor and the Director of the Ed.D. Program.

Course Waiver Requests

Occasionally, a student is admitted to the Doctoral Program who presents the credentials of having experience that is equivalent to a required course. In this instance, the student may request a waiver of course. Any student receiving a favorable waiver of course action will be required to take a course, with advisement, that will provide the appropriate number of credits to substitute for the waived course. A Transfer Credit-Course Waiver Request Form must be submitted to the Ed.D. Program office and approved by the Program Director. If approved, an acceptable course may be substituted for the required course, or a requirement may be waived. At the Ed.D. Program Director's discretion, the student may be asked to audit the course upon approval of the waiver.

Dismissal from Program

Students who do not meet the program standards for progression in their area of study may be dismissed by the Program Director and/or Dean of their School. Dismissed students should drop their courses at the Registrar's Office to assure a correct bill prior to the start of the term. The Registrar's Office will be authorized to drop dismissed students' classes prior to the start of the term to provide adequate classroom space.

Grading Policy-Cumulative Grade Point Average Requirement in the Ed.D. Program

Students are expected to succeed academically and maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale). Non-compliance with this criterion may result in program dismissal.

Grading Policy for Molloy University

The following grading system is used in the Graduate Programs: (Effective Fall 2008)

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade (Out of 100)	Quality Points (Out of 4.0)
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92.9	3.7
B+	87-89.9	3.3
B	83-86.9	3.0
F	Below 82.9	0.0

*Please note that you must receive a B or better in each course to earn a passing grade in the doctoral program. You also must maintain a 3.2 GPA to remain a matriculated student in this Ed.D. program.

Incomplete Grades in the Ed.D. Program

A grade of incomplete ("I") will be granted only in cases of hardship (circumstances which, in the judgment of the instructor, warrant special consideration). The student will have fully participated in class activities and discussions and completed all graded assignments through the mid-semester but because of extenuating circumstances was unable to complete the final assignments. Approval is granted only when the student demonstrates circumstances beyond their control which temporarily prevents completion of the coursework. In the event that a student has not made sufficient progress through the mid-semester, an administrative withdrawal or "WA" may be granted and the student may repeat the course. See the Molloy graduate catalog for more details.

If all coursework is not completed by week 14 of the semester and/or if the student encounters hardship that may prevent them from submitting a final paper on time, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor within 24 hours of the scheduled final examination/last class meeting. Students in the online program must contact the professor prior to the scheduled final examination or due date of the final course assignment to request a grade of Incomplete.

In the Ed.D. Program, all "Incompletes" must be resolved one week prior to the beginning of the new semester. A student may not register for courses with an unresolved Incomplete grade on their transcript.

Under special circumstances an extended incomplete may be requested with written approval from the instructor and the Director of the Ed.D. Program; however, a student must still satisfy the work associated with the incomplete course before they can register for any subsequent courses.

Maintenance of Academic Standards in the Ed. D. Program

The quality point index requirement for the Ed.D. program is 3.2. If the GPA falls below 3.2, it must be raised to 3.2 by the end of the following semester. Students who fail to raise their GPA to 3.2 will be placed on academic probation.

Molloy University ADA and Rehabilitation Act

Molloy University provides a supportive environment for students with documented disabilities or chronic illness and is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Students requesting accommodations must contact the Center for Access and Disability to initiate the process. Complete the online Accommodation Request Form: https://molloy-accommodate.symlicity.com/public_accommodation/ or contact (516) 323-3315/3316 or access@molloy.edu.

Non-Matriculated Students

Students whose admission process is incomplete but wish to earn credits for specific required courses for the degree can request permission of the Director of the Ed.D. Program to enroll for one semester. Non-matriculated students should be aware that no more than 6 credits may be completed as a non-matriculated student and that non-matriculated status can be maintained for a maximum period of one semester. Taking Ed.D. courses as a non-matriculated student does not guarantee admission into the program.

Registration and Advisement in the Ed.D. Program

It is crucial that the student meet with their academic advisor for advisement purposes prior to the registration period each semester. Students are expected to have met specified prerequisites for any course they wish to take. Students are expected to clear all holds (registrar, bursar, student health) and complete an online registration agreement prior to online registration.

Repeating Courses in the Ed.D. Program

Ed.D. students must attain a grade of B or better in all courses. Any student who receives a grade lower than a B in any course must repeat that course in the following semester. A course may be repeated only once. Failure to maintain a grade of B when taking a course for the second time necessitates withdrawal from the Ed.D. Program. According to Molloy University policy, if a student retakes a failed course and passes, the F grade will be forgiven. However, students in the Ed.D. program will not be able to repeat more than one failed course. Failure of more than one course necessitates withdrawal from the Ed.D. Program. Students who have been withdrawn due to academic failure may not be readmitted to the Ed.D. Program.

Transfer Credit Policy

Effective Fall 2023 for incoming EdD students, up to 12 credits may be transferred into the Molloy University Ed.D. Program as stipulated below.

Transferring credits (graduate, post-graduate or doctoral) from other institutions to satisfy the cognate requirements:

All matriculated students may transfer up to 6 credits of coursework based on the following criteria:

- The course must have been taken within the past 10 years.
- The course must either be duplicative of courses required within the program and/or

congruent with the student's focus for cognates that support the dissertation.

- The course must have been taken after an initial master's degree.
- The course may have been a part of a second master's degree or a post-master's certificate or an advanced certificate in Educational Leadership during which an administrative School Building Leader (SBL) or School District Leader (SDL) license was earned.
- The student must have received graduate credit for the course at an accredited institution.
- The student must have earned a grade of B or above.
- If the coursework is done in a field other than education, the course must be relevant toward the Ed.D. and/or the student's dissertation research.
- A student requesting transfer of credit should submit the Transfer Credit Request Form and a copy of the course description to the Director of the Ed.D. Program. An official transcript from the institution where the course was taken must also be on file in the Registrar's Office.

Note: If a doctoral student does not have any credits to transfer to satisfy the cognate requirements, they may fulfill this requirement by taking up to 6 graduate, post-graduate, or doctoral credits at Molloy University or at another accredited institution. Prior to registration for these courses, the student must receive approval from the Ed.D. Program Director whether the courses are taken at Molloy University or another institution.

Transferring credits (doctoral) from other institutions to satisfy doctoral course requirements:

Students who have begun doctoral studies at another institution may transfer 6 doctoral credits toward coursework in addition to the transfer of credits for the cognate requirement.

- The course must be duplicative of a doctoral core course required within the Molloy Ed.D. program.
- The course must have been taken within the past 5 years.
- The course may have been a part of a doctoral degree or may have been part of an advanced certificate or second master's degree in Educational Leadership during which an administrative School Building Leader (SBL) or School District Leader (SDL) license was earned.
- The student must have taken the course at an accredited institution.
- The student must have earned a grade of B or above.
- A student requesting transfer of credit should submit the Transfer Credit/Course Waiver form and a copy of the course description to the Director of the Ed.D. Program. An official transcript from the institution where the course was taken must also be on file in the Registrar's Office. and a copy of the course description to the Director of the Ed.D. Program. An official transcript from the institution where the course was taken must also be on file in the Registrar's Office.
- If a doctoral core course is waived due to credit transfers, the doctoral student may be required to audit the course to ensure the integrity of the Molloy University doctoral experience.
- All cognate substitutes must be approved by the Director of the Ed.D. Program and

the Molloy University Registrar.

Transfer credits for students entering the Ed.D. after completion of the Molloy University School Building Leader and/or School District Leader certificate program(s):

The Ed.D. program has determined certain courses leading to Molloy's advanced certificates at the post master's level for School Building Leader (SBL) or School District Leader (SDL) may be considered equivalent to specified Ed.D. program requirements.

A minimum grade of "B" or better is required for these courses to be considered. **For students who have completed both a Molloy SBL and an SDL certificate, a maximum of eighteen (18) credits may be applied as equivalencies.** For students with a **Molloy SBL only**, a maximum of fifteen (15) credits may be applied and for students with a **Molloy SDL only**, a maximum of twelve (12) credits may be applied.

*All referenced forms may be found in the EdD Student Resources canvas course

** This is a living document. Content may be updated as necessary. Please contact the EdD Program Office for the most up-to-date information.