



Thank you for your interest in Gardner-Webb's Doctoral and Educational Specialist cohort programs. We are pleased to bring our convenient advanced degree programs to your local area. Each cohort enrolls a minimum of 10 students and a maximum of 15. Once you submit your Application for Admission, Graduate Cohort Registration Form, and Application Fee (Steps 1-3 below), I will be able to hold your place in class until your application file is complete and submitted for admission review.

This packet includes all of the information that you will need to be considered for admission into the program. Read through this packet carefully, and be sure to contact me if you have any questions. My team and I are committed to guiding you through the application process. Choosing where to get your advanced degree is an important step, and I want to help you in any way that I can. You can reach me by phone at **(704) 325-2527** or by email at [kcreamer@graduateprogram.org](mailto:kcreamer@graduateprogram.org).



**NOTE: For the Ed.D. cohort programs, Gardner-Webb University strictly limits class size to 15 students and applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.\***

**Complete steps 1-3 below to confirm your application to this program.**

Apply online at <https://www.graduateprogram.org/gardner-webb/apply-now/edd-and-eds-application-checklist/> for faster processing.

## 1 Application (Pages 3 & 4)



Submit your [application online](#) or complete pages 3 & 4 and return by fax to **(800) 504-7618**.

## 2 Graduate Cohort Registration Form (Page 5)



Submit your [cohort registration form online](#) or complete page 5 and return by fax to **(800) 504-7618**.

## 3 Application Fee (Page 6)



Use our secure payment center to submit your **non-refundable** [application fee online](#) or complete page 6 and return by fax to **(800) 504-7618**.

Once you have reserved your seat, turn to Page 2 or visit the [online checklist](#) to complete the remaining admission steps. **A seat reservation alone does not guarantee admission to Gardner-Webb University.**

\*If applications for each site exceeds 15, acceptance will be based on most qualified candidates as determined by prescribed criteria.

Sincerely,

**Kristie Creamer**

Graduate Information Office  
(704) 325-2527

[kcreamer@graduateprogram.org](mailto:kcreamer@graduateprogram.org)



Once you have confirmed your application, please continue with the following steps to complete your admission file for acceptance consideration.

Complete your application steps online at: <https://www.graduateprogram.org/gardner-webb/apply-now/edd-and-eds-application-checklist/>

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## Financial Aid & Payment Options (Pages 7 & 8)

Determine how you plan to pay for the program: Financial Aid or Pay-As-You-Go. If using Financial Aid, Complete the [FAFSA online](#). For more information, see page 7. **It is in your best interest to complete the financial aid process as early as possible.** If using a Pay-As-You-Go plan, follow the instructions on Page 8.



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## Official Transcripts (Page 9)

Applicants must submit an official transcript from the institution where the bachelor's degree was conferred. This transcript must indicate the conferral of the degree and must be sent directly from the institution to the Office of Graduate Admissions. **Note: Students may be registered for one semester while awaiting the official transcript showing degree conferral. A registration hold will prevent enrollment in subsequent terms until the transcript is received and verified.** Applicants for post-master's licensure or add-on programs (e.g., School Administration) must submit an official transcript from the institution where the master's degree was conferred. Additional official graduate transcripts may be required to verify program-specific prerequisite coursework.



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## Copy of Current Teacher's License

Proof of a current North Carolina principal's license or the equivalent is required for admission to the Ed.S. in Executive Leadership Studies or Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. Proof of a current North Carolina teaching license or commensurate experience is required for admission to the Ed.D. in Curriculum & Instruction. **You must have a minimum of three years of experience in the education field, preferably in administration.** Please attach a copy of your license to the [online system](#), or fax or mail a copy to the number or address below. A copy of your license is typically available in your personnel file with your school or district. *\*If you are a licensed educator in South Carolina, you must submit an out-of-state/online-program approval form to the SC Department of Education and provide a copy of the letter of approval you receive from SCDOE in order for Gardner-Webb to recommend you for licensure in SC.*



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## Three Professional Reference Forms (Page 10)

The easiest and fastest way to request a recommendation is to use our [online system](#). This allows us to e-mail a reference form directly to your recommender on your behalf. If you prefer to use the traditional paper form, see page 10. At least one reference must be completed by someone at the central office level. **Personal references are not accepted.**



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## Essay

The easiest and fastest way to submit your goal statement is to use our online system. Please submit a personal essay explaining your purpose for obtaining an advanced degree from Gardner-Webb University.



Completing your application steps online at <https://www.graduateprogram.org/gardner-webb/apply-now/edd-and-eds-application-checklist/> will allow for more immediate processing of your application. If you choose to submit paper forms for any of the steps above, documents should be faxed or mailed to:



**Gardner-Webb University**  
Graduate School Admissions Office  
P.O. Box 1896  
Boiling Springs, NC 28017



**(800) 504-7618**



# Application for Admission (page 1 of 2)

In order to reserve a seat in a cohort program, please submit this Application for Admission along with your \$40 non-refundable application fee (page 6) and your Graduate Cohort Registration Form (page 5) by fax to **(800) 504-7618**, by mail to Gardner-Webb University, Graduate School Admissions Office, P.O. Box 1896, Boiling Springs, NC 28017, or [online](#).

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name  First  Last  Middle  
 Preferred Name  Previous Name

Date of Birth  Gender:  Male  Female

Marital Status  Divorced  Married  Separated  Single  Widowed

Ethnicity:  American Indian  Asian or Pacific Islander  Hispanic - Other  Resident Alien  Unreported  
 White  Black/African-American  Mexican or Mexican American  Non-Resident Alien

Social Security Number  -  -  (Needed for Financial Planning)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing Address  Street  City  State  Zip Code

Physical Address  Street  City  State  Zip Code

Home Phone (  )  Mobile Phone (  )  Business Phone (  )

Email Address

## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Are you a U.S. Citizen  Yes  No Religious Preference

Country of Citizenship

If not a U.S. Citizen, are you a Permanent Resident?  Yes  No

Are you a Veteran receiving Veteran's Benefits?  Yes  No

Did Anyone in Your Family Attend Gardner-Webb?  Yes  No Family Member's Name

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Semester:  Fall 2026

Program:  Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership  Doctor of Education in Curriculum & Instruction  
 Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership  Educational Specialist in Curriculum & Instruction

Cohort Location:  Low Residency- GWU Main Campus  Low Residency- Goldsboro (Wayne Community College)  
 Low Residency- GWU Charlotte Campus  Low Residency- Thomasville/Lexington (East Davidson High School)

I have taken the:  MAT  GRE Do you have a current principal's license or teacher's license?  Yes  No  
 If yes, which?

## COLLEGE INFORMATION (Additional college or university information can be listed on the back of this page.)

Name of College/University	City, State	Currently enrolled?	Degree Received?	Degree Level
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate



# Application for Admission (page 2 of 2)

### WORK EXPERIENCE

Please list your most recent/current administrative or teaching position below. **You must have a minimum of three years of experience in the education field, preferably in administration to be eligible for this program.**

School / Organization

Address  Street  City  State  Zip Code

Grades / Subject Area (Teachers)

Job Title (Admin. Positions)

Dates Held  Employer Phone (  )  Employer Fax (  )

### PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Please visit our [online system](#) or see page 10 to fill out our official reference forms. Remember, at least one reference must be completed by someone at the central office level and no personal references are accepted.

Reference 1 - Please indicate whether this reference is a  Professional Reference or  Academic Reference

Name  Title

Reference 2 - Please indicate whether this reference is a  Professional Reference or  Academic Reference

Name  Title

Reference 3 - Please indicate whether this reference is a  Professional Reference or  Academic Reference

Name  Title

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you answer yes to any questions below, you must submit a Letter of Explanation accounting for the circumstances.

Have you ever been dismissed, suspended, or placed on probation at any school?  Yes  No

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation?  Yes  No

Are there any criminal charges pending against you at this time?  Yes  No

*Gardner-Webb University supports the attainment of equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex, national origin, age or disability. The University is committed to compliance with the American Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Federal law prohibits the University from making inquiries prior to admission, but the information voluntarily given will not affect any admission decision and will be used to assist students. If upon admission you require services because of a disability, you should notify the office of the Noel Programs for Students with Disabilities at Gardner-Webb University by phone at (704) 406-4270.*

*By signing and submitting this application, I certify that all answers and statements made in this application are true. If accepted, I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the University as set forth in the graduate catalog and other official publications of the University. The online graduate catalog is available on the GWU homepage under the "Academic Publications" listing, under the "Academic" tab.*

Print Name

Signature  Date



# Graduate Cohort Registration Form

In order to reserve a seat in a cohort program, please submit this Graduate Cohort Registration Form along with your \$40 **non-refundable** application fee (page 6) and your Application for Admission (Pages 3 & 4) by fax to **(800) 504-7618**, by mail to Gardner-Webb University, Graduate School Admissions Office, P.O. Box 1896, Boiling Springs, NC 28017, or online at <https://www.graduateprogram.org/gardner-webb/apply-now/edd-and-eds-application-checklist/>.

**Name**  Last  First  Middle

**Address**  Street  City  State  Zip Code

**Home Phone** (  ) **Cell Phone** (  )

**Email Address**

**Current State of Residence**  **Intended State of Licensure**

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

**Semester:**  Fall 2026

**Program:**  Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership  Doctor of Education in Curriculum & Instruction  
 Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership  Educational Specialist in Curriculum & Instruction

**Cohort Location:**  Low Residency- GWU Main Campus  Low Residency- Goldsboro (Wayne Community College)  
 Low Residency- GWU Charlotte Campus  Low Residency- Thomasville/Lexington (East Davidson High School)


## REGISTRATION AGREEMENT


*As part of the cohort program, I understand that I will be registered for the entire cohort and remain registered unless written notification is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and the University Registrar before the beginning of each course. I acknowledge that I am financially responsible for all charges in the event of withdrawal from classes, as outlined in Gardner-Webb University's current tuition refund policy.*

**Signature**  **Date**

**Important: Registration cannot be processed and your seat will not be reserved without your signature below.**

Please return all materials by fax or by mail to:

 **Gardner-Webb University**  
 Graduate School Admissions Office  
 P.O. Box 1896  
 Boiling Springs, NC 28017

 **(800) 504-7618**



# Application Fee Payment Form

In order to reserve a seat in a cohort program, please submit your \$40 non-refundable application fee, along your Application for Admission (Pages 3 & 4) and your Graduate Cohort Registration Form (page 5) by fax to **(800) 504-7618**, by mail to Gardner-Webb University, Graduate School Admissions Office, P.O. Box 1896, Boiling Springs, NC 28017 or online at <https://www.graduateprogram.org/gardner-webb/apply-now/edd-and-eds-application-checklist/>.

### TO PAY ONLINE:

- Go online to <https://www.graduateprogram.org/gardner-webb/apply-now/edd-and-eds-application-checklist/> and click the "Application Fee" button.
- **Note:** Transaction will appear on your credit card statement as a charge from the K-12 Teachers Alliance.

### TO PAY BY CREDIT CARD:

- Please fill out this section only to pay your \$40 **non-refundable** application fee.
- If you prefer, please contact the Graduate Information Office at **(704) 325-2527** to make your payment by credit card over the phone.

Student Name

Name on Card

Cardholder Address

City  State  Zip Code

Card Type  Visa  MasterCard  Discover Expiration Date  Amount: **\$40.00**

Card Number  Three Digit Security Code *(located on back of card)*

Cardholder Signature

**Note:** Transaction will appear on your credit card statement as a charge from the K-12 Teachers Alliance.

### TO PAY BY PERSONAL CHECK:

- Please fill out this section only to pay your \$40 **non-refundable** application fee
- Please Make checks payable to GARDNER-WEBB UNIVERSITY and mail your check to Gardner-Webb University, Graduate School Admissions Office, P.O. Box 1896, Boiling Springs, NC 28017.

Student Name

I Will Be Sending My Application Fee by Check on (Date)

Student Signature  Today's Date

Please return all materials by fax or by mail to:



**Gardner-Webb University**  
Graduate School Admissions  
Office  
P.O. Box 1896  
Boiling Springs, NC 28017



**(800) 504-7618**



Complete all steps below to apply for financial aid. **Note: The student loans available for this program are not based on financial need.** Most students use financial aid to pay for the program. We recommend that you complete these steps as soon as possible to make sure that your payment arrangements are in order by the first night of class. For help, please contact the Financial Planning Office at **(704) 406-4243**.

## HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

- 1 Complete the 2026-2027 Free Application for Federal Student Aid at [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov).** You will need your 2024 Federal Tax Return, your FSA ID (<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/landing>) and **Gardner-Webb's School Code (002929)**. Graduate students are considered independent for financial aid purposes.
- 2 Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) for accuracy.** You will receive an email confirmation after the FAFSA is submitted. If there are any errors on your SAR, log back into your FAFSA to make corrections.
- 3 You will receive an email notification that your financial aid award is ready to view via your Gardner-Webb e-mail account.** The email contains instructions on how to view and process your E-Award through My GWU. The E-Award lists the financial aid that you are eligible to receive. You will have an opportunity to accept or decline all or a portion of the award. Be sure to contact the Financial Planning Office if you have any questions.
- 4 Complete Loan Entrance Counseling and the Master Promissory Note.** Entrance Counseling is only required for first time Federal Direct Loan borrowers; all borrowers must complete a Master Promissory Note. Both can be completed at [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov) (you will need your FSA ID from Step 1).

**Questions? Call the Senior Financial Planning Counselor, Abbey Smith, at (704) 406-2226.**

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## FEDERAL LOAN REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to borrow funds under the Federal Direct Loan Program, you must:

- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  - Be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident
  - Not be in default on prior educational loans
  - Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- 

## THE FEDERAL (TITLE 1) TEACHER LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM

If you and your school qualify, this program may provide loan forgiveness for eligible Federal Direct Loans. This is a separate program requiring separate forms and processes. The U.S. Department of Education will determine your eligibility for this program. Gardner-Webb University is not responsible to verify your eligibility for this or any other program. Please do not base your enrollment on this program as it can be difficult to ensure qualification for Government Programs, which are subject to reform and funding changes.

**You must call 1-800-4-FED-AID to verify your eligibility or visit <https://studentaid.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/teacher> for more information.**



## Pay-As-You-Go payment plans are available for tuition.

Complete all steps below to enroll in a Pay-As-You-Go payment plan. These plans will allow you to make tuition payments over the course of the semester and will break your tuition bill into more manageable payments.

Federal Student Loans are also available for graduate students (see page 7).



**Note: Your tuition will be due the first week of class. If you do not have financial aid in place, you may have to make payments until your student loans are fully processed.**

## HOW TO ENROLL IN A PAY-AS-YOU-GO PAYMENT PLAN

- 1 You will receive a postcard at the beginning of each semester to notify you that online billing is available. Paper bills are not mailed to students unless they are requested. The Pay-as-You-Go payment plan allows you to pay your semester's costs in payments over a three-month period during the fall and spring semesters (a two-month period during the shorter summer semester). This option is found by clicking the "Use a Payment Plan" button at the bottom of your online bill.
- 2 Clicking the "Use a Payment Plan" button takes you to a "Deferred Payment Plan" page outlining the payment amounts and due dates for which you are responsible. By pressing the Accept Button, you agree to the conditions of the Deferred Payment Plan. Before clicking "Accept," please print a copy of this plan for future reference.
- 3 Your first payment will be due the first week of the semester. The plan includes a \$15 payment plan application fee and a nominal service fee of 2% on the deferred balance. Your student account will reflect the deferred payment arrangement once you have actually submitted your first payment. Please note that failure to make payments per the agreement may result in late fees or additional interest charges. Unpaid balances are not carried over from one semester to another and all indebtedness to the University must be satisfied before students will be permitted to register for the next semester.

**Questions? Contact the Student Accounts Office at (704) 406-4287**

## IMPORTANT

- Gardner-Webb University recognizes that many companies offer tuition reimbursement to their employees. To enable students to take advantage of this benefit, GWU has established policies to allow a student to defer payment of all or a portion of a student's tuition and related costs. **A new letter must be submitted for each semester that a deferment is desired.** This option can be utilized by clicking "Employer Reimbursement Policy" found at the bottom of the online bill.
- If you are using financial aid to pay for tuition, you must be admitted and enrolled to the program of your choice before your student loan funds can be released.



# How to Request Transcripts

Applicants to post-master's licensure, Doctoral, or Educational Specialist programs must submit an official transcript showing the conferred master's degree. If prerequisite graduate coursework was completed at another institution, additional official transcripts may be required to verify eligibility.

Follow the steps below to request official transcripts from the appropriate institutions. Transcripts must be sent directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions in a sealed envelope or through a secure electronic delivery service.

## TO ORDER TRANSCRIPTS

There are multiple ways to request transcripts, and each college or university will have its own process.

Typically, the easiest way to order official transcripts is:

- 1 Contact the Registrar's office at your previously attended school, either by phone, email, or through your university's website.
- 2 Submit a transcript request following that school's procedures. Most colleges and universities require a signature or other official request in writing. Many schools have a Transcript Request Form available to download on the Registrar's website. Some will allow you to order transcripts online.



**Note: Most colleges and universities charge a small fee for official transcripts. Be sure to enclose your fee with your transcript request to avoid a delay in processing.**

- 3 It can often take several days for a transcript request to be processed. When your transcripts are received, the Graduate Information Office will contact you, but if you have not received confirmation within 14 days, please contact us at **(704) 325-2527**.

## Please have electronic transcripts sent to:

[gradinfo@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:gradinfo@gardner-webb.edu)

## Send hard copy transcripts to:

Gardner-Webb Graduate Admissions Office  
P.O. Box 1896  
Boiling Springs, NC 28017

**Students who meet full admission criteria may be registered for one semester while awaiting the official transcript showing degree conferral. A registration hold will prevent enrollment in future terms until the transcript is received and verified.**



# Three Professional/Academic Reference Forms



**Note:** The easiest way to complete your references is to have them emailed directly to each reference by going to <http://graduateprogram.org/gardner-webb/eds/application-checklist> and clicking "Reference Forms." At least one reference must be completed by someone at the central office level.

Three (3) references are required in order to be admitted to the program; please make additional copies of this form as needed.

## TO THE APPLICANT (Please complete)

Name  Last  First  Middle  Maiden

Address  Street  City  State  Zip

Home Phone (  )  Cell Phone (  )  Email

Program  Ed.D Program - Educational Leadership  Ed.D. Program - Curriculum & Instruction

Please check one. If blank, you automatically waive the right to review:

I waive the right to review this recommendation  I do not waive the right to review this recommendation

Applicant's Signature  Date

## TO THE RESPONDENT

The above has given your name as a reference to support his/her application for graduate study as a candidate for Gardner-Webb University's Graduate program indicated above. Careful attention will be given to your appraisal. Please check each characteristic in the appropriate column. Comparison should be made with qualified peers of the applicant.

Please evaluate the applicant on the following items:

	Superior (Top 10%)	Good	Average	Below Average	Inadequate Opportunity to Observe
Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written Expression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oral Expression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional Stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Reliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Qualities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching Potential, if applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments (academic and professional fitness, interests, etc.)

Would you recommend this applicant for acceptance to the Gardner-Webb University Graduate Program indicated above?

Please check one:  Recommend with enthusiasm  Recommend with confidence  Recommend  
 Recommend with reservation  Not Recommend

Signature  Name (Print)

Title & Department  Organization

Address  Phone Number (  )

Relationship to Applicant  Duration of Relationship

Remarks (Please use reverse side of this sheet if necessary)



## What you Learn

The Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership (ESEL) at Gardner-Webb University is a fully accredited, 36- credit hour graduate program designed for experienced educators seeking advanced preparation for leadership in today's dynamic educational environments. Candidates progress through the ESEL curriculum in a cohort model, completing coursework as a learning community and developing professional relationships that support shared leadership, reflective practice, and sustained organizational improvement. Through the application of continuous improvement principles, candidates are prepared to maximize human, social, and spiritual potential within educational organizations. This practice-focused program provides a rigorous pathway to leadership without the requirement of a dissertation or capstone. Each course integrates authentic, performance-based assessments that reflect real leadership responsibilities in educational settings.

## How you Learn

This program is delivered in a hybrid, cohort-based format designed to support working professionals. Each semester students will take one course, consisting of six or 9 integrated semester hours.

**Low Residency Blended Format:** Candidates complete the program in a blended format that includes both face-to-face and online learning. During fall, spring, and summer semesters, candidates attend three face-to-face weekends. In addition to the in-person sessions, coursework is completed online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.

## Career Outcomes

Upon successful completion of all program coursework and required assessments, candidates may be recommended for S-level North Carolina licensure in Educational Leadership. In South Carolina, candidates who already hold a master's degree may apply credit hours from this program toward Master's plus 30 (MA+30) certification.

## Prerequisites

Applicants to the Education Specialist in Educational Leadership program must hold a Master's of School Administration degree from a regionally accredited institution and have earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50.

## Degree Requirements

EDLS 730	Strategic Leadership	6
EDLS 732	Instructional Leadership	9
EDLS 734	Human Resource Leadership	9
EDLS 738	Cultural and Ethical Leadership	6
EDLS 740	Managerial Leadership	6
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

## Pathway to Doctoral Study

Graduates may also pursue a seamless pathway into doctoral study through Gardner-Webb University's Ed.D. program. The 36-credit hour Educational Specialist (ESEL) coursework in Educational Leadership and Curriculum & Instruction (ESCI) may serve as advanced standing toward the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership or Curriculum & Instruction only in cases where the candidate elects not to graduate with the Educational Specialist degree. This option is designed to support candidates who initially enroll in the Educational Specialist track at Gardner-Webb University but later determine that their academic and professional goals are best served through direct progression to doctoral study. Candidates must formally declare intent prior to graduation to pursue this option.



## What you Learn

The Educational Specialist in Curriculum & Instruction (ESCI) at Gardner-Webb University is a fully accredited, 36- credit hour graduate program designed for advanced candidates pursuing leadership roles that support high-impact learning. The program emphasizes empowering individuals and communities through facilitated collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement. Candidates progress through ESCI coursework in a cohort model, completing courses together and developing professional relationships that support collaborative leadership and sustained improvement.

## How you Learn

This program is delivered in a hybrid, cohort-based format designed to support working professionals. Each semester students will take one course, consisting of six or 12 integrated semester hours.

**Low Residency Blended Format:** Candidates complete the program in a blended format that includes both face-to-face and online learning. During fall, spring, and summer semesters, candidates attend three face-to-face weekends. In addition to the in-person sessions, coursework is completed online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.

## Career Outcomes

Upon successful completion of all program coursework, required evidences, and the Praxis Educational Leadership: Administration and Supervision (5411) assessment, candidates may be recommended for S-level North Carolina licensure as a Curriculum & Instructional Specialist. In South Carolina, candidates who already hold a master's degree may apply credit hours from this program toward Master's plus 30 (MA+30) certification.

## Prerequisites

Applicants must hold a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. A minimum of three years of professional experience is preferred. A valid teaching license is required. Applicants without a teaching license must submit a letter verifying equivalent teaching experience as part of the application.

## Degree Requirements

EDCI 730	Organizational Theory Needs Assessment	6
EDCI 732	Issues and Models in Curriculum	6
EDCI 734	Reform and Change Theory	6
EDCI 738	Curriculum Assessment and Evaluation	6
EDCI 740	Instructional Leadership	12
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

## Pathway to Doctoral Study

Graduates may also pursue a seamless pathway into doctoral study through Gardner-Webb University's Ed.D. program. The 36-credit hour Educational Specialist (ESEL) coursework in Educational Leadership and Curriculum & Instruction (ESCI) may serve as advanced standing toward the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership or Curriculum & Instruction only in cases where the candidate elects not to graduate with the Educational Specialist degree. This option is designed to support candidates who initially enroll in the Educational Specialist track at Gardner-Webb University but later determine that their academic and professional goals are best served through direct progression to doctoral study. Candidates must formally declare intent prior to graduation to pursue this option.



## For

Potential and practicing educational leaders who aspire to develop and refine their leadership skills in complex organizations especially at the district office level.

## What you Learn

The Doctor of Education Degree (Ed.D.) at Gardner-Webb University in Educational Leadership is a 63-semester-hour program designed for potential and practicing educational leaders who wish to develop and refine their leadership skills in complex organizations. Schools are dynamic institutions whose practice is shaped by powerful and influential interests. As a result, the economic, political, social, and technological environment of schools is always changing. The Doctor of Education Degree program is designed to equip candidates with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and beliefs that will enable them to function effectively in leadership roles in this fluctuating environment.

## How you Learn

An Ed.D. program with an integrated curriculum will be offered. Students will take modules consisting of 6, 9, and 12 credit hours. Students will also be enrolled in a 1-credit- hour seminar each semester focused on their clinical internship /clinical experience and their dissertation. Once these modules are complete, two semesters (6 hours and 3 hours) of dissertation conclude the program. The electronic portfolio, a requirement for the degree, will be created and stored online in a product called TaskStream.

**Low Residency Blended Format:** Candidates complete the program in a blended format that includes both face-to-face and online learning. During fall, spring, and summer semesters, candidates attend three face-to-face weekends. In addition to the in-person sessions, coursework is completed online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.

## Career Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, students will have earned a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership and will be subject to state licensure requirements in order to receive North Carolina state licensure as a Superintendent. At the writing of this document, the licensure requirement is the satisfactory completion of an electronic portfolio.

## Prerequisites

Applicants must hold a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. A minimum of three years of experience in administration or teacher leadership is required. A current School Administration – Principal license is also required for admission

## Degree Requirements

EDLS 730	Strategic Leadership and School Reform	6
EDLS 731	Seminar/Internship	1
EDLS 732	Instructional Leadership	9
EDLS 733	Seminar/Internship	1
EDLS 734	Human Resource Leadership	9
EDLS 735	Seminar/Internship	1
EDDS 760	Qualitative Methods	6
EDDS 762	Quantitative and Mixed Methods	6
EDLS 737	Seminar/Internship	1
EDLS 738	Cultural and Ethical Leadership	6
EDLS 739	Seminar/Internship	1
EDLS 740	Managerial Leadership	6
EDLS 741	Seminar/Internship	1
EDLS 742	Dissertation Module 1	6
EDLS 743	Dissertation Module 2	3
EDLS 744	Dissertation Module 3 ( <i>as needed</i> )	
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>63</b>

Note: Students will be enrolled in EDLS 744 Dissertation Continuation for 3 credit hours until dissertation is complete.



## For

Potential and practicing educational leaders who aspire to develop and refine their instructional leadership skills at the site or district level.

## What you Learn

The Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction will prepare learners to become instructional leaders, who will create and strategically manage processes related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Students will deepen their knowledge and understanding of educational practices and acquire tools needed to provide professional leadership in curriculum, teacher education, program evaluation, family and community engagement, and professional learning in the schools.

## How you Learn

An Ed.D. program with an integrated curriculum will be offered. Each semester (fall, spring, and summer) students will take one course consisting of six or twelve credit hours and a 1-credit-hour seminar focused on their dissertation. Once these courses are complete, two semesters (6 hours and 3 hours) of dissertation conclude the program. All degree evidences are evaluated and stored in an electronic portfolio.

**Low Residency Blended Format:** Candidates complete the program in a blended format that includes both face-to-face and online learning. During fall, spring, and summer semesters, candidates attend three face-to-face weekends. In addition to the in-person sessions, coursework is completed online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.

## Career Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, students will have earned a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Curriculum & Instruction. They will be eligible for D level licensure as an Instructional Specialist after attaining a passing score on the appropriate PRAXIS exam. Students completing the program typically work as Curriculum or Instructional Leaders within classrooms or districts, as mentors/coaches for colleagues, and/or as instructors at the collegiate level.

Gardner-Webb University offers an EdS degree program for candidates who complete all EDCI coursework, and wish to graduate from Gardner-Webb without completing a dissertation. This degree may support candidates who have determined the dissertation is no longer a necessary step in pursuing their professional goals and allows for recognition of the advanced coursework completed in the program.

## Prerequisites

Applicants must hold a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. A minimum of three years of professional experience is preferred. A valid teaching license is required. Applicants without a teaching license must submit a letter verifying equivalent teaching experience as part of the application.

## Degree Requirements

First Semester	EDCI 730	Theory Development	6
	EDDS 731	Executive Leadership Internship	1
Second Semester	EDCI 732	Issues and Models in Curriculum	6
	EDDS 733	Dissertation Seminar	1
Third Semester	EDCI 734	Reform and Change	6
	EDDS 735	Dissertation Seminar	1
Fourth Semester	EDDS 760	Qualitative Methods	6
	EDDS 762	Quantitative and Mixed Methods	6
	EDDS 737	Dissertation Seminar	1
Fifth Semester	EDCI 738	Curriculum Assessment and Evaluation	6
	EDDS 739	Dissertation Seminar	1
Sixth Semester	EDCI 740	Instructional Leadership	12
	EDDS 741	Dissertation Seminar	1
Seventh Semester	EDDS 742	Dissertation	6
Eighth Semester	EDDS 743	Dissertation (until complete)	3
<b>Total Credit Hours:</b>			<b>63</b>

Note: Students will be enrolled in EDUC 743 Dissertation Module Continuing for 3 credit hours until dissertation is complete.

## Thank you for your interest in Gardner-Webb University!

### Admissions Information

To apply for admission to the program, applicants must submit the following: (1.) A completed application (online at <https://admissions.gardner-webb.edu/apply/>); (2.) Graduate Cohort Registration Form (if applicable); (3.) \$40 non-refundable application fee (4.) An official transcript from the institution where the master's degree was conferred, showing a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. Additional official graduate transcripts may be requested only if transfer credit is being considered or prerequisite verification is required.; (5.) Three professional references on Gardner-Webb Graduate School reference forms, including one from a central office administrator. References from friends or family members will not be accepted.; (6.) Evidence of appropriate licensure: •North Carolina Principal's License or equivalent (for Ed.D. in Educational Leadership) •Teaching License or equivalent (for Ed.D. in Curriculum & Instruction) ; (7.) A personal statement explaining goals in earning your degree.

**A complete application file must be submitted by Wednesday, December 10th. Remaining materials may be accepted after the deadline on a case-by-case basis.**

### Transferring Credits

Because of the modular curriculum and cohort nature of this program, transfer credit may not be possible in this. Our programs are designed and delivered in modules carrying six credit hours that do not match traditional three-hour courses. A candidate may request a conference with the department chair to evaluate transcripts for possible credit. Credit will not be given for courses taken more than six (6) calendar years before acceptance to graduate study nor for courses taken towards another completed master's degree. Students currently enrolled in a graduate degree program at Gardner-Webb must have prior written approval to take courses from another institution for transfer credit. Transfer credit will not be accepted for any course in which students earned below a grade of B. No transfer credits will be accepted for the Ed.D. program.

### Financial Responsibility

Students may not select classes, receive transcripts, graduate, or register until all account balances have been satisfied with the University. These payment policies are strictly followed. Failure to meet financial obligations to the University may result in the delinquent account being placed with a collection agency. Students are responsible for all attorney fees and other collection costs incurred by the University in such cases.

### Refund Policy

Registration in the University is considered a contract binding the student for charges for the entire semester. However, it is the policy of Gardner-Webb University to give pro-rata charge reductions through 60% of the enrollment period in the event a student OFFICIALLY WITHDRAWS FROM SCHOOL. Graduate program students may withdraw from class(es) by accessing MYGWU. Click on the Registration link on the left side of the screen. Click on Withdrawal Information, and The Office of the Registrar Withdrawal page will open in a new tab or window. Select the option for Graduate Students and complete the withdrawal form provided. An e-mail confirmation will be sent to the student's GWU e-mail address when the withdrawal has been processed. Please retain this email for your records. The withdrawal date is the date this process begins. Reductions will be computed on total charges for tuition, but not on fees. Students leaving school for disciplinary reasons will not be eligible for any reduction and will be liable for the entire semester's charges. Students who withdraw from individual classes after the drop/add period will receive no charge reduction. For purposes of interpreting this policy the pro-rata charge reduction percentage is equal to the number of calendar days (includes weekends) remaining in the semester divided by the number of calendar days in the semester. No charge reduction will be given after the 60% period of enrollment for the semester. When a student's charges are reduced, Federal, State, Institutional and Noninstitutional Aid will be adjusted in accordance with the regulations governing the respective programs. Please contact the Student Accounts Office for current regulations concerning these programs at **(704) 406-4287**. Leaving the University without officially withdrawing may result in a student forfeiting all financial aid and, thus, becoming responsible for the entire balance.

### Tuition Information

The anticipated cost per credit hour is \$665 per credit hour for these cohort doctoral and educational specialist degree programs. Students will be responsible for a \$85 digital learning fee, a \$115 seminar coaching fee attached to each doctoral dissertation seminar, a \$139 TaskStream fee, and \$300 doctoral thesis/ dissertation fee.

### Important Contact Information

Graduate Information Office	Kristie Creamer	704-325-2527	<a href="mailto:kcreamer@graduateprogram.org">kcreamer@graduateprogram.org</a>
Financial Planning Office	Abbey Smith	704-406-2226	<a href="mailto:financialplanning@gardner-webb.edu">financialplanning@gardner-webb.edu</a>
Student Accounts Office	Becky Toney	704-406-4287	<a href="mailto:rtoney@gardner-webb.edu">rtoney@gardner-webb.edu</a>