**Educational Leadership & Policy Online EdD GRE Waiver Request**

The Educational and Leadership and Policy (ELP) program requests a waiver of the GRE as an admission criterion for outstanding applicants to the Online EdD program. This program is designed to prepare mid-career professionals as scholar-practitioners who will solve problems of practice in their specific organizational context through a Dissertation in Practice completed in three years. The following criteria apply *only* to the ELP Online EdD program. They do not apply to the master’s, specialist, face-to-face EdD, or PhD programs.

**Criteria**

The GRE requirement will be waived for outstanding applicants meeting ONE of the following criteria:

* 10 years of professional experience in an educational setting with at least 5 years in a leadership role.
* A completed EdS, JD, or MD degree with a 3.0 (or better) GPA from a North American accredited institution.
* A completed master’s degree with a 3.75 (or better) GPA from a North American accredited institution.

Applicants must provide evidence to satisfy the criteria being applied. Note: Applicants with a competitive GRE score will still be able to apply to the program and will not be held to these additional criteria.

**Rationale**

A growing body of research has demonstrated that the GRE, at best, may predict student success in the first year of graduate study and, at worst, may severely limit the number of highly capable women and underrepresented racial/ethnic candidates into certain fields.[[1]](#footnote-1) Our EdD program is designed for mid-career professionals with a master’s degree—our incoming students are not in their first year of graduate study. In addition, our program has attracted a number of highly capable underrepresented racial/ethnic students who have excelled and graduated. Further, we have found no evidence that students with GRE sores below the current minimum required score (and requiring an exception) perform any differently than other students, based on their GPA in the program, graduation rate in 3 years, and the quality of their Dissertation-in-Practice (DiP). *As we have no evidence to suggest that GRE scores are predictive of student success in our EdD program, we see no reason not to provide highly qualified applicants the option to waive the GRE requirement.*

Several highly ranked and well-respected graduate schools of education—our aspirational peers—either do not require the GRE at all or permit applicants to waive the GRE requirement in lieu of other criteria. These institutions include the University of Pennsylvania[[2]](#footnote-2), the University of Pittsburgh[[3]](#footnote-3), the University of Southern California[[4]](#footnote-4), and Johns Hopkins University[[5]](#footnote-5). *Given the reputation and rankings of these elite institutions that already waive the GRE, we see no threat to the prestige or perceived rigor of FSU should we be permitted to do the same.*

At the same time, other public institutions in Florida with whom we compete for students even in the online environment, *do* require the GRE for admission to their online EdD programs in Educational Leadership, namely the University of Florida[[6]](#footnote-6) and the University of West Florida.[[7]](#footnote-7) *By being innovative and waiving the GRE, we stand to have a competitive edge in the market and attract highly qualified Florida-based students to our online EdD program. This will allow the department to increase the enrollment of self-pay graduate students and generate more graduate credit hours.*

**Criteria Rationale**

* **10 years of professional experience in an educational setting with at least 5 years in a leadership role.** *We currently require a minimum of 5 years of experience in an educational setting. In waiving the GRE in lieu of additional years of experience and a specific length of time in a leadership role, we can admit applicants who have already demonstrated their ability to be a successful professional educational leader and are likely to be successful in a professional doctorate program.*
* **A completed EdS, JD, or MD degree with a 3.0 (or higher) GPA from a North American accredited institution.** *The EdD is a professional doctorate. In waiving the GRE in lieu of an applicant’s attainment of another professional degree, we will be able to admit applicants who have already demonstrated their success in professional schools and are likely to continue their success in another professional doctorate program.*
* **A completed master’s degree with a 3.75 (or higher) GPA from a North American accredited institution.** *We currently require a master’s degree with at least a 3.5 GPA. By increasing the master’s GPA minimum, we can admit applicants who have already demonstrated a high level of success in graduate school and are likely to continue their success in another graduate program.*

1. For a summary, see: Miller, C., & Stassun, K. (2014). A test that fails. *Nature*, *510*(7504), 303-304. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.gse.upenn.edu/admissions_financial/test-scores> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.education.pitt.edu/FutureStudents/EdDPrograms/AdmissionRequirements.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://rossieronline.usc.edu/academics/edd-online/admissions/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://education.jhu.edu/academics/online-programs/doctor-of-education-edd/edd-admissions-requirements/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. https://education.ufl.edu/educational-leadership/admissions/application-procedure/ [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://uwf.edu/ceps/support-resources/eddeds-program-office/program-details/edd-program-application/> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)