EDUCATIONAL STUDIES MA PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The MA program provides a structure where students can select a particular program thread, or specialization area for their studies, and a professional role, which provides a way for students and their advisors to work together to choose courses and practical experiences (e.g., internship, practica, professional seminars, etc.) that optimizes progress toward that career role. All students will specify a thread and a role at the beginning of the program as they work with their advisors to make appropriate course and internship selections within the guidelines for that thread.

The MA program begins with four threads (or sub-plans):
- Educational Leadership & Policy
- Educational Leadership & Policy with Administrator Certification
- New Media & New Literacies
- Teaching & Learning

Each thread in the MA program has the following features:
- A 30 credit hour (minimum) program that can be completed within ten months of full-time study (though students can elect to complete their program in more than one year).
- A program that balances an academic core with student-specific customization. This allows students and advisors to tailor the program of study in ways that closely address the academic and professional goals of each student. In particular, students will be encouraged to choose advanced (i.e., doctoral) courses in a specific disciplinary domain in order to afford the deep thinking necessary to fully capitalize on the concepts and skills offered in the basic thread courses.
- A blended program integrating coursework and practical experience (e.g., internships, practica, professional seminars, etc.).

Each student in the MA program will take the following types of courses:
- Core courses are taken by all students in the MA program. (2-3 courses)
- Thread courses are a subset of courses in the MA program based on each student's chosen thread (sub-plan). Note that some thread courses are required by the program. (3 courses)
- Elective courses are courses students choose from within the School of Education. (2-3 courses)
- Cognate courses are elective courses taken outside of Educational Studies. (2 courses)
- Internship course is a seminar that students take concurrently with their field placement (1 course)

Master’s students must earn at least a B- in any course in order to apply that course credit to a master’s degree, as per the Educational Studies Grading Policy (adopted March 2014).

PROFESSIONAL ROLES

The University of Michigan takes strong pride in producing "the leaders and best" in all professions who are adaptive, transformational, and informed about contemporary issues in practice, policy, and research. This is no different for students in education. Therefore, all MA students are asked to declare an intended professional role for their program as a piece of information about their career goals. The roles selected are not a formal programmatic designation, but they are intended to help students and advisors determine relevant electives, cognate courses, and practical experiences to round out the full degree plan. It is important to note that many students change their selected role as part of their development in this program.

Designer

Students who select a designer role are interested in creating learning environments and their components. As a designer, the courses and practical experiences selected should help students learn about the range of conceptual, analytical, and methodological "design thinking" practices and how they can be applied to different formal and informal educational contexts (e.g., classrooms, museums, etc.). Students should learn how to apply these practices to observe, describe, and understand learners, educators, content areas, and educational contexts in order to create different aspects of a learning environment, including new curricula and instructional approaches, student materials, learner-centered digital technologies and media, etc.
Educator
Students who select an educator role are interested in educating others and are committed to active student learning that values diverse talents and ways of understanding. As potential educators, the experiences students select should help them improve their understanding of the challenges of learning in classrooms and other settings (e.g., museums, school, corporations, etc.). Students should select experiences that help them enhance their skills to prepare and teach coherent, cohesive lessons; integrate current ideas from research, technology, or practice into their work; communicate effectively with parents, students, and other educators; and continue to reflect on and refine their educational practice. Students should also learn how to create and maintain an exciting, engaging learning environment. Note: this role does not lead to teaching certification, but students may pursue teaching certification concurrently through our Teacher Education program.

Entrepreneur
Students who select an entrepreneur role are interested in being the creator and leader of new enterprises that bring educational products and services to the public at large. As potential entrepreneurs, the experiences that students select should help them understand the work involved in developing educational products and services and the issues involved in educationally oriented enterprises. Students should understand issues of fundraising and fiscal models and the development of school-community partnerships.

Policy Maker
Students who select a policy maker role are interested in influencing or writing district, state, and/or federal educational policy or policy initiatives. Policy makers can include those who work with school boards, state or federal departments of education, professional organizations, non-profit foundations, etc. As potential policy makers, the experiences that students select should help them understand how educational policies are created, implemented, and evaluated. Students should also understand the evolution and history of educational policy, and the impacts that different policies can have on national and international educational systems.

Building Leader/Instructional Leader
Students who select a building/instructional leader role are interested in either becoming or enhancing their skills as experts who assume a facilitative or advisory role (e.g., school principals, literacy coaches, consultants, staff developers, curriculum developers, assessment specialists, technology coordinators, museum directors, etc.). Building and/or instructional leaders see themselves as supporting or leading other educators or professionals in a variety of educative contexts. Students should select experiences that will help to improve the performance of entire schools, which includes supporting educators in becoming more thoughtful and knowledgeable about their practice. Students should also select experiences that help them translate theory into practice, enhance their knowledge in a given area, and develop mentoring and communication skills.

Researcher
Students who select a researcher role are interested in exploring educational problems and questions, and creating new knowledge through research that could lead to the development and implementation of innovative solutions to educational problems. As potential researchers, the experiences that students select should help them explore the type of work involved in academic research and give them a more detailed understanding of the issues involved in conducting and consuming educational research. Additionally, taking a researcher role can give students a taste of research work to help them decide whether they would like to pursue doctoral work or other research activities in the future.