

HIGHER EDUCATION AND STUDENT DEVELOPMENT, MA

Banner Code: LA-MA-HESD

Academic Advising

316 Enterprise Hall
Fairfax Campus

Email: hepadmin@gmu.edu

Website: highered.gmu.edu/programs/la-ma-hesd

The program prepares students for positions in higher education administration, student development, non-profit higher education associations, and government organizations. Today's higher education professionals are required to address both the needs of incoming traditionally aged students, as well as those of older students returning for a degree and special populations. The wide range of student backgrounds in the current complex context requires a holistic approach to college student development.

The Master of Arts degree in Higher Education and Student Development will prepare future higher education leaders who understand higher education in the digital age, student development, multicultural and diverse populations, program development, professionalism, and learning assessment. This multidisciplinary program offers both thesis and project capstone options and is full and part-time student friendly. Alumni hold positions in areas such as career development, academic advising, assessment, facilities management, admissions, and residence life.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions (<http://catalog.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate-policies/>). For specific information, see Application Requirements and Deadlines on the departmental website.

Policies

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies (<http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/>).

Transfer Credit

Courses applied to the degree are subject to the following restrictions: a maximum of 6 credits may be taken through the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area; a maximum of 9 credits may be transfer credits; a maximum of 6 of the transfer credits may be from other accredited institutions.

Transfer credits include credits taken before first enrolling as an admitted degree-seeking student (at another institution, in another Mason graduate program, or in Mason non-degree status) or credits taken at another institution after admission to the degree program through study abroad or study elsewhere (which requires prior written approval of the director and the dean). Additional information may be found in AP.6.5.3 Transfer of Credit (<http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-5-3>).

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 36

The program offers two distinct tracks: (a) Student Affairs Administration and (b) Higher Education Leadership. The Students Affairs Administration track is built on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education's (CAS) standards and guidelines for Master's Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs. The Higher Education Leadership track takes an interdisciplinary approach to offer the flexibility for students to select courses that meet their professional needs.

Students Affairs Administration track

The Students Affairs Administration track is built on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education's (CAS) standards and guidelines for Master's Level Student Affairs Professional Preparation Programs. Graduates will have the knowledge, perspectives, and skills to serve in a wide variety of capacities within higher education.

Required Courses

Code	Title	Credits
HE 606	Cultural Pluralism in Higher Education	3
HE 610	Research Methods in Higher Education	3
HE 624	Finance and Fiscal Management in Higher Education	3
HE 644	Organization and Administration of Student Affairs	3
HE 645	The Contemporary College Student	3
HE 646	Student Development Theory	3
HE 685	Practicum ¹	6
HE 703	Higher Education in the Digital Age	3
HE 721	History of Higher Education	3
Total Credits		30

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CAS standard requires students to complete two practicums that provide distinct experiences. Students who are working full-time in higher education may substitute the 2nd practicum with an elective course.

Capstone Requirement

Students may choose the capstone course option or thesis option as described below.

Code	Title	Credits
Capstone Course Option		
Students who select the capstone course option will complete one elective course (3 credits) approved by the advisor in addition to the HE 797 Higher Education Capstone. Electives can be taken outside of the Higher Education Program and should be selected in consultation with the advisor.		
One elective course		3

HE 797	Higher Education Capstone	3
Total Credits		6

Code	Title	Credits
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Thesis Option

A thesis is a rigorous scholarly inquiry that requires the collection of original data and is presented in a traditional, formal, written format. It is informed by experience gained from the research apprenticeship. The guideline and deadlines for thesis submission are set by the University and administered by the University Dissertation and Thesis Service. Students selecting the thesis option must complete an extra research course approved by the student's thesis advisor in addition to HE 799 Higher Education Thesis.

One elective research course		3
HE 799	Higher Education Thesis (3 credits required) ¹	3
Total Credits		6

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Students are required to enroll in a minimum of 3 credit hours of HE 799. If the thesis is not completed within the timeframe of a 3-credit-hour course, the student must continue to register and enroll in HE 799 until the thesis is completed.

Higher Education Leadership track

The Higher Education Leadership track takes an interdisciplinary approach to offer the flexibility for students to select courses that meet their professional needs.

Required Courses

Code	Title	Credits
HE 606	Cultural Pluralism in Higher Education	3
HE 610	Research Methods in Higher Education	3
HE 624	Finance and Fiscal Management in Higher Education	3
HE 645	The Contemporary College Student	3
HE 685	Practicum	3
HE 703	Higher Education in the Digital Age	3
HE 721	History of Higher Education	3
Total Credits		21

Specialization Courses

Code	Title	Credits
Students should work with their advisor to select three courses (9 credit hours) either in the Higher Education Program or in another discipline that fits the students' career goals.		9

Capstone Requirement

Students may choose the capstone course option or these option as described below.

Code	Title	Credits
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Capstone Course Option

Students who select the capstone course option will complete one elective course (3 credits) approved by the advisor in addition to the HE 797 Higher Education Capstone. Electives can be taken outside of the Higher Education Program and should be selected in consultation with the advisor.

One elective course		3
HE 797	Higher Education Capstone	3
Total Credits		6

Code	Title	Credits
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Thesis Option

A thesis is a rigorous scholarly inquiry that requires the collection of original data and is presented in a traditional, formal, written format. It is informed by experience gained from the research apprenticeship. The guideline and deadlines for thesis submission are set by the University and administered by the University Dissertation and Thesis Service. Students selecting the thesis option must complete an extra research course approved by the student's thesis advisor in addition to HE 799 Higher Education Thesis.

One elective research course		3
HE 799	Higher Education Thesis	3
Total Credits		6

Program Outcomes**Program Outcomes**

- Understand and apply concepts of leadership, teaching, administration, and assessment through an interdisciplinary lens within the context of the complex higher education enterprise.
- Become socialized members of a community of higher education professionals to contribute to and lead scholarly conversations by consuming, critiquing, and creating scholarship.
- Understand and employ effective pedagogical approaches.
- Examine current issues related to existing and emerging technologies in theory and practice.
- Value assessment, understand its role, and be skilled in enacting analytical processes.
- Reflect on themselves as cultural beings and analyze how culture and history influence their work in higher education.
- Value diversity, equity, and inclusion and meet multicultural competencies.
- Use theory as a base from which to ground the practice of effective and ethical leadership, teaching, and administration.
- Be prepared to implement programs and services that support institutional mission while adhering to oversight and accountability requirements.