

Graduate Student Handbook



AUBURN
UNIVERSITY

College of Education
*Department of Educational Foundations,
Leadership, and Technology*

2026-2027

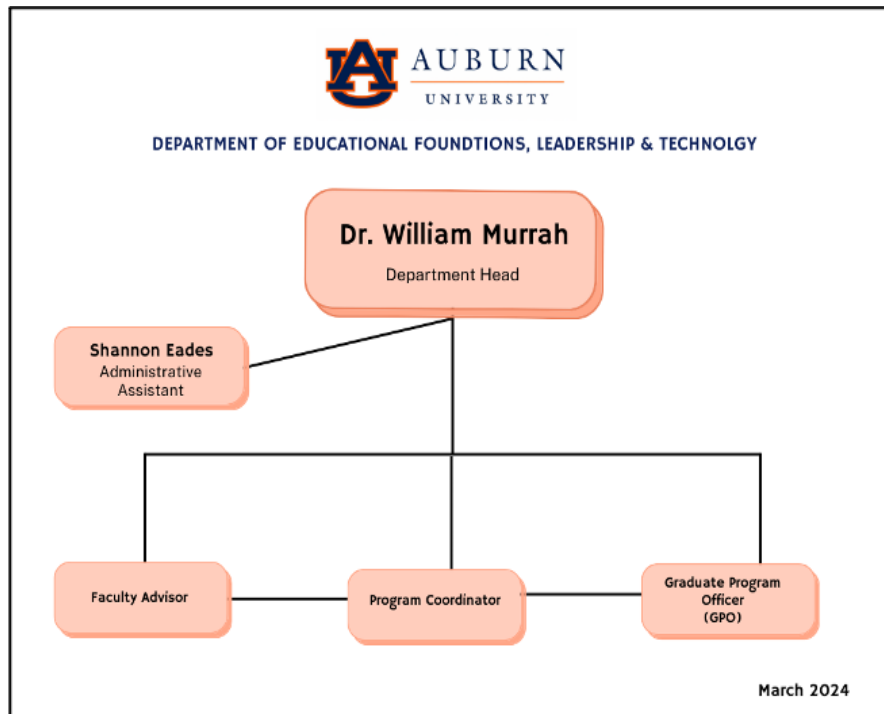
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Graduate Student Handbook 2026-2027

Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology (EFLT) Organizational Chart



Department Head: [Dr. William \(Hank\) Murrah](#)

Administrator, Academic Services: [Shannon Eades](#)

Program Coordinators:

- Administration of Higher Education - [Dr. Reggie Blockett](#)
- Adult Education - [Dr. Jane Teel](#)
- Educational Leadership - [Dr. Andrew Pendola](#)
- Educational Psychology - [Dr. Chih-hsuan Wang](#)

Graduate Program Officer: [Dr. David Marshall](#)

Academic Programs

The [Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology \(EFLT\)](#) is comprised of four main program areas: Administration of Higher Education, Adult Education, Educational Leadership, and Educational Psychology. This student handbook reflects department-level guidance for all graduate students. More specific guidelines regarding required courses, credit hours, etc. can be found for each program area.

Adult Education

[Adult Education](#) is a dynamic interdisciplinary program that equips students with the essential skills to excel in teaching and training adults. By delving into areas such as curriculum design and program management, students are well-prepared to cater to the diverse needs of adult learners across various educational and professional settings. Focusing on practical applications, this program ensures that graduates can effectively engage with adult populations in traditional educational institutions, corporate environments, or other training contexts.

Educational Leadership

There are two primary programs within our [Educational Leadership](#) program.

- The **Administration of Elementary and Secondary Education** program prepares engaged, collaborative, and effective administrators by integrating theory, reflection, and applied leadership. This program leads to Alabama Certification (Class A and AA).
- The **Administration of Supervision and Curriculum** program prepares students to serve in a variety of administrative roles in K-12 education, colleges, universities, and other organizations. Professional educator certification is not available through this program.

Educational Psychology

[Educational Psychology](#) is a field that spans a variety of areas, including human motivation, human development, learning theories, and teaching practices and pedagogy. Students' research areas include development, learning, individual learner differences, and more. Our program will prepare you for careers in research and

education. You can work for colleges and universities in faculty or research careers, school systems in evaluation or research roles, state and federal agencies, business and industry, private research and development organizations, as well as other educational and developmental settings. Most of our graduates work as researchers, faculty, or in institutional research and evaluation.

Higher Education

The [Higher Education](#) program is designed primarily for working professionals and researchers to provide a strong background in five domains: leadership, ethics, cultural pluralism, research, and policy. The Leadership domain includes the critical study of leadership and organizational theories and how they inform effective and ethical educational leadership, vision, and practices for the purpose of improving educational institutions and the communities they serve. The Ethics domain includes the legal and moral foundations for the purpose of informing and guiding the work of ethical leaders, researchers, and academics who serve educational institutions, agencies, and organizations. The Cultural Pluralism domain includes knowledge of various cultural groups and the historical and contemporary experiences and outcomes for the purpose of strengthening higher education institutions, organizations, and communities. The Research domain includes identifying, gathering, analyzing, and presenting data for the purpose of solving problems of practice and knowledge production. The Policy domain includes the identification and analysis of current and emerging trends and problems in educational institutions, organizations, and agencies for the purpose of policy improvements.

Graduate Certificates and Minors

The Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology offers several graduate certificates and minors that EFLT graduate students can consider adding to their academic program of study. Below is a list of graduate certificates and minors offered.

Certificates

- [Adult Education and English Language Teaching](#)

- [College and University Teaching](#)
- [Extension Educator](#)
- [Instructional Leadership](#)
- [Instructional Technology for Distance Education](#)
- [Program Evaluation](#)
- [Technology Educator](#)
- [Workforce Education, Training, and Development](#)

Minors

- [Critical Studies](#)
- [Psychology of Learning](#)

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Student Rights

1. Students have a right to information about degree requirements.
2. Students have a right to an advisor.
3. Students have the right to have their progress toward their degree objectively evaluated by appropriate faculty members.
4. Students have the right to expect reasonable training opportunities.
5. Students have the right to refuse to perform tasks that are not aligned with their academic or professional development, as well as those outside of the time frame of their assistantship.
6. Students have the right to reasonable confidentiality in their communications with faculty and staff.
7. Students have the right to due process in complaints and concerns (see Questions and Concerns).
8. Students have the right to professional interaction from faculty, staff, and peers.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students have the responsibility to read pertinent information on the [Auburn University Graduate School](#) website.

2. Students have the responsibility to meet regularly with their advisors. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate these meetings.
3. Students have the responsibility to fulfill the obligations of their assistantship or fellowship to the best of their ability (if applicable).
4. Students have the responsibility to attend required training.
5. Students have the responsibility to acknowledge contributions from faculty members and peers in their scholarly presentations and publications.
6. Students are expected to engage in scholarly reading, including materials assigned for class as well as those external to class assignments.
7. Students have the responsibility to familiarize themselves with the [Auburn University Code of Student Conduct](#).
8. Students have the responsibility to interact with faculty, staff, and peers in a professional and civil manner.
9. Students have the responsibility to file complaints and concerns using the appropriate chain of command (see Questions and Concerns on page).

Expectations for On-Campus Engagement

Students enrolled in campus-based programs are expected to periodically attend the various events and workshops provided to them for purposes of further student learning, professional development, and to build a sense of community. These forms of engagement include such things as workshops and lectures by guest presenters and faculty, or other events sponsored by the department or College of Education. Engaging in university-wide events is also important. Examples of this include the many workshops provided by the Biggio Center. Students who are not enrolled in campus-based programs are still expected to attend events, where they are able, and when made available online to students such as workshops on Zoom or university-based meetings that invite the input of students.

Advising and Mentoring

Once accepted into a program, a student is assigned an advisor who volunteers in this role. Students are obligated to meet with their advisors at least once per fall and spring term to plan their coursework and monitor progress. The student must initiate these

meetings with their advisor in a timely manner. Each year, students must complete a Graduate Student Evaluation Form with their advisor, who will submit it to the Graduate School (required for all doctoral students and all students with an assistantship). This makes a student's progress clear to the advisor and advisee and notes any concerns regarding problems in coursework or dissertation progress. These meetings are also an excellent time to discuss goals for the upcoming year.

Faculty mentoring of graduate students may be conducted in different contexts. These include research and writing collaborations, presenting at conferences, or working on other projects. Additionally, some faculty might serve in helping a GTA prepare or develop their course or in providing teaching observations with evaluation feedback to be of help with improvement of GTA teaching. There are many avenues for how faculty can mentor graduate students.

Students' needs sometimes change during the course of their graduate work, and sometimes these changes necessitate changing advisors. For example, a student may initially work with one faculty member but realize that they require different expertise to guide them through the dissertation process. Students maintain the right to change advisors, if another faculty member is willing to advise them. Ideally, this conversation should begin with the student's initial advisor.

Professional Organizations and Conferences

An important part of your socialization into Graduate School is to attend and participate in conferences organized by professional academic organizations. There are several academic organizations to which a graduate student could belong (per field/academic community). Which organizations you should join will depend a great deal on the specific academic communities with which you want to interact.

Take your time and explore the organizations and conferences available before investing your money in memberships. Be sure to ask about student rates - they are usually at a considerable discount from faculty rates.

Joining professional organizations is an important part of learning about your academic discipline. It also helps you to expand your network with established scholars in the discipline beyond Auburn University. Networking is important for two reasons. It can

enhance your name recognition, which can be helpful in a job search, and also positions you to stay on top of the latest research.

Funding Options for Attending a Professional Conference

1. Complete and submit the College of Education [Graduate Travel Award Request](#) form.
2. Completed application form must be received at least two weeks before your trip.

Funding Considerations

1. All graduate students presenting conference papers are encouraged to apply for travel funds.
2. Individual travel awards range from a minimum of \$50 to a maximum of \$500 for the fiscal year. Criteria considered include priority designation of the meeting, extent of the student's contribution to the paper, and availability of funds from other sources. Students who have already received an award for travel during a fiscal year will be considered for further travel funds but will be lower priority than students who have not received travel funds in that year.
3. Awards are made in the form of reimbursement for travel and related expenses. Awards cannot be distributed in advance of travel. Those who receive awards will be sent instructions regarding reimbursement at the time of award notification
4. For more information, read the [Graduate Student Travel Awards Guidelines](#).

Professional Organizations Table

The following table lists professional organizations, typical dates for their annual conference, and the. While not an exhaustive list, the professional organizations listed includes those EFLT faculty and students attend.

Professional Organization	Conference Date	Proposal Due (Approximate)
<u>American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)</u>	October	April
<u>AACTE: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education</u>	February	September
<u>Alabama Association of Professors of Educational Leadership (AAPEL)</u>	February	January
<u>American Evaluation Association (AEA)</u>	November	March
<u>Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)</u>	October	February
<u>Association for Educational Finance & Policy (AEFP)</u>	March	October
<u>American Education Research Association (AERA)</u>	April	July
<u>American Educational Studies Association (AESA)</u>	November	May
<u>American Psychological Association (APA)</u>	August	January
<u>Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM)</u>	November	April
<u>Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)</u>	November	April
<u>Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC)</u>	April	TBA

Professional Organization	Conference Date	Proposal Due (Approximate)
<u>Eastern Educational Research Association (EERA)</u>	February	November
<u>MSERA: Mid-South Educational Research Association (MSERA)</u>	November	July
<u>National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)</u>	November	July
<u>National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)</u>	March	September
<u>Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE)</u>	March	October
<u>Special Interest Group Computer Science Education (SIGCSE)</u>	February or March	August
<u>Southern Regional Council of Educational Administrators (SRCEA)</u>	October	June
<u>University Council of Educational Administrators (UCEA)</u>	November	May

Dissertation Expectations for Doctoral Students

During the process of writing a dissertation, a doctoral candidate will submit drafts of their work for their major professor and their committee to review and offer feedback. Reviewing a dissertation and providing sound feedback is a process that takes time. Students should allow committee members a minimum of two weeks to provide feedback on their drafts. A faculty member may choose to provide feedback with a quicker turnaround time; however, students should not expect them to do so.

General Oral Examination Timeline for Doctoral Students

Students must successfully complete their General Oral Exam within one year (three semesters) of finishing all coursework for their degree program. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the program. Exceptions can be made with the approval of the advisor, the Graduate Program Officer, and the Department Head. For students who are currently active and have completed their coursework, the three semesters begin with Fall 2025.

Continuous Enrollment

Per the Auburn University Graduate School, graduate students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment throughout their time in their program of study. The Graduate School defines continuous enrollment as *registration for a minimum of one credit hour in at least two semesters in a given academic year (fall, spring, summer) until their degree is awarded or status as a degree-seeking student is terminated through an official university withdrawal.*

Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment must complete a re-admission form. To be considered for re-admission, a student must first arrange a meeting with their advisor, the Graduate Program Officer, and the Department Head to formulate a plan for success if re-admitted. Per the Graduate School, *re-activation is not guaranteed*. Review the Graduate School's [Continuous Enrollment Policy](#).

Graduate Teaching Opportunities

The Graduate School at Auburn University determines the requirements for [Graduate Assistantships](#).

The following GTA opportunities are currently being offered in EFLT. See below for the individual requirements and prerequisites to be considered for these opportunities.

Strong communication skills are required. Must also be dedicated to working with students and dependable.

Graduate Assistantship Application Guidelines

- **Adult Education (ADED) Courses:** At this time, the Adult Education (ADED) program is not accepting applications for graduate assistantships. The ADED

faculty are developing guidelines for future use with Ph.D. students interested in assisting or teaching undergraduate courses. Students who have questions about future teaching assistantship opportunities should contact [Dr. Jonathan Taylor](#).

- **Educational Media (EDMD 2100/EDMD 3300) Courses:**

- 1) Current graduate student in the EFLT department.
- 2) Completion of a minimum of 18 credit hours of graduate-level courses in the field of EDMD or equivalent.
- 3) Strong recommendations from faculty members or appropriate supervisors who are familiar with the candidate's ability to teach the course content being considered.
- 4) Demonstrated knowledge and skills in the content being considered within K-12 classroom settings.
- 5) Preferred qualification includes prior K-12 teaching experience.

Students who are interested in EDMD course assistantship opportunities should contact [Dr. Jung Won Hur](#) or [Dr. Sara Wolf](#).

- **Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation (ERMA) Design & Analysis Courses TA and Data Analysis Consultant GA**

- 1) Current EPSY Ph.D. Program student (focuses on ERMA track).
- 2) Completed at least 18 credit hours of EPSY and ERMA graduate level courses.
- 3) Completed at least ERMA 7300 Design I, ERMA 7310 Design II, and ERMA 8320 Design III courses and have earned an exemplary grade (A) in all of them.
- 4) Completed EPSY 8640 Educational Psychology Learning and Instruction Apprenticeship.
- 5) Experience and competence with statistical analysis software and programs, such as SPSS, AMOS, R, *Mplus*, SAS, STATA, etc.
- 6) Recommendations from ERMA Quantitative faculty.

Students who are interested in ERMA graduate assistantship opportunities should contact [Dr. Chih-hsuan Wang](#) by January 31 each year.

- **Foundation of Education (FOUN) 3000 TA**

- 1) Current Ph.D. student at the Department of EFLT.
- 2) Completed at least 18 credit hours of EPSY and FOUN graduate level courses to include at least 6 credit hours of FOUN graduate level courses.
- 3) Completed FOUN 7930 Independent Study: Teaching Apprenticeship. This course is repeatable - you can earn up to 6 hours.
- 4) Recommendations from Foundations of Education faculty.
- 5) Preferred qualification: K-12 or community-based teaching experience.

Students who are interested in a FOUN 3000 graduate assistantship opportunities should contact [Dr. Ivan Watts](#).

- **Foundation of Education (FOUN) 3500 TA**

- 1) Current EPSY Ph.D. program student.
- 2) Completed at least 18 credit hours of EPSY graduate level courses.
- 3) Completed EPSY 7400 Educational Psychology and Educational Implications and EPSY 8640 Educational Psychology Learning and Instruction Apprenticeship and earned an exemplary grade (A).
- 4) Completed one of the following: EPSY 7420 Learning Theory & Educational Practice, EPSY 7410 The Individual in the Teaching-Learning Process, or EPSY 8440 Ed Psych Apprenticeship Seminar and earned an exemplary grade (A).
- 5) Recommendations from Educational Psychology faculty are needed and a student must have support from his/her advisor as making good progress in coursework or dissertation.
- 6) Preferred qualification: K-12 or community-based teaching experience.

Students who are interested in a FOUN 3500 graduate assistantship opportunities should contact [Dr. Sean Forbes](#) by January 31 each year.

Artificial Intelligence Use

Students should use generative artificial intelligence in accordance with guidance from the [Office of the Provost](#) and [Graduate School](#), as well as in line with their instructor's syllabus and class policies. Overall, students should adhere to the following principles when using these emerging tools:

1. Responsibility: You are responsible for the work you submit and for meeting learning goals.
2. Transparency: You should be explicit about whether, how, and why AI was used.
3. Documentation: You should document prompts, decisions, and verification steps proportionate to the assignment. Talk with your instructor for assignment or course-specific guidance.

Graduate Student Life

Policies

- [Auburn University Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Due Process for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate School General Policies](#)
- [Graduate Student Handbook](#)
- [Student Academic Grievance Policy](#)

Resources

- [Academic Resources](#) available from The Graduate School
- [Health and Wellness](#)
- [Health Insurance Program](#)
- [College of Education Resources for Students](#)
- Graduate School [Forms Directory](#) (includes admission forms, assistantship forms, awards forms, graduation forms, dissertation and thesis forms, and international students forms)

Graduation and Commencement

- [Graduation Associated Dates/Deadlines](#)
- [Getting Through and Getting Out Videos](#)
- [On Track for Graduation](#)
- [Auburn University Commencement Information](#)

Academic Calendar

The academic calendars for Fall 2026 and Spring 2027 semesters are in the following tables. You can find the approved [online academic calendar](#).

2026 Fall Semester

DATE	CALENDAR EVENT	DAY
Aug 17	Classes Begin	Mon
Aug 17 - Sep 4	Resignation Fee • <i>Dropping all courses during this period will result in a \$100 resignation fee.</i>	Mon - Fri
Aug 21	Last Day to Add Course	Fri
Aug 22 - Sep 4	Drop Course Penalty Days • <i>Dropping a course during these days will result in a \$100 Drop Fee per course dropped.</i>	Sat - Fri
Aug 28	10th Class Day • <i>Last day to request a meal plan change.</i>	Fri
Sep 4	15th Class Day • <i>Last day to drop from course with no grade assignment.</i>	Fri

DATE	CALENDAR EVENT	DAY
	• <i>Last day for potential tuition refund for dropped classes.</i>	
Sep 7	Labor Day – No Classes	Mon
Sep 29	Early Alert Deadline	Tue
Oct 6	Mid-Semester - 36th Class Day	Tue
Oct 8 – Oct 9	Fall Break	Thu - Fri
Oct 15	41st Class Day • <i>Student deadline for request to move finals to Associate Deans</i>	Thu
Nov 20	Last Day to Withdraw • <i>Last day to withdraw from course with no grade penalty. "W" assigned.</i> • <i>Students who need to submit forms to lift holds on their accounts must submit the forms several business days ahead of the deadline to allow for processing.</i>	Fri
Nov 23 – Nov 27	Thanksgiving Break - No Classes	Mon - Fri
Dec 4	Classes End	Fri
Dec 5-6	Study/Reading Days	Sat - Sun
Dec 7 – Dec 11	Final Exam Period	Mon - Fri

DATE	CALENDAR EVENT	DAY
Dec 12	Commencement	Sat

2027 Spring Semester

DATE	CALENDAR EVENT	DAY
Jan 6	Classes Begin	Wed
Jan 6 – Jan 27	Resignation Fee • <i>Dropping all courses during this period will result in a \$100 resignation fee.</i>	Wed - Wed
Jan 12	Last Day to Add Course	Tue
Jan 13 – Jan 27	Drop Course Penalty Days • <i>Dropping a course during these days will result in a \$100 Drop Fee per course dropped.</i>	Wed - Wed
Jan 18	M.L. King, Jr. Day – No Classes	Mon
Jan 20	10th Class Day • <i>Last day to request a meal plan change.</i>	Wed
Jan 27	15th Class Day • <i>Last day to drop from course with no grade assignment.</i> • <i>Last day for potential tuition refund for dropped classes.</i>	Wed

DATE	CALENDAR EVENT	DAY
Feb 25	Mid-Semester - 36th Class Day Early Alert/Mid-Term Grade Deadline	Thu
Mar 4	41 st Class Day – Student Deadline for Request to Move Final to Associate Deans	Thu
Mar 8 – Mar 12	Spring Break	Mon - Fri
Apr 16	Last Day to Withdraw • <i>Last day to withdraw from course with no grade penalty. "W" assigned.</i> • <i>Students who need to submit forms to lift holds on their accounts must submit the forms several business days ahead of the deadline to allow for processing.</i>	Fri
Apr 23	Classes End	Fri
Apr 24 – Apr 25	Study/Reading Days	Sat - Sun
Apr 26 – Apr 30	Final Exam Period	Mon - Fri
May 1 – May 4	Degree Conferral and Last Day for Students to Request Graduation Applications for Summer 2027	Sat - Tue

Questions or Concerns

When graduate students encounter a problem or concern related to their academic or research activities, navigating the appropriate channels for resolution is crucial. The following step-by-step guide is designed to assist graduate students in understanding the

proper sequence of contacts to make within their academic department or college, ensuring that issues are addressed efficiently and effectively.

1. **Faculty Advisor:** The first point of contact should be your faculty advisor. Faculty advisors are closely aligned with your academic progress and research endeavors. They can offer personalized advice, guidance, and solutions based on their understanding of your work and your academic goals. If the concern is directly related to your research or coursework, your advisor is often best positioned to help you resolve it.
2. **Program Coordinator:** If your advisor is unable to resolve the issue or if the problem is related to administrative aspects of your program (such as enrollment, course registration, or program requirements), the next step is to consult with your program coordinator. Program coordinators have a broad understanding of departmental processes and policies and can often provide immediate assistance or direct you to the appropriate resources. Within programs, there may be several faculty members that each take the lead on a given degree program or area; the program coordinators listed here serve as a single point of contact.
3. **Graduate Program Officer (GPO):** Should the issue remain unresolved or if it pertains to more complex academic or policy matters, the Graduate Program Officer is your next contact. This individual oversees the administration of the graduate programs. They can address concerns related to academic policies or issues affecting your progress towards your degree. The Graduate Program Officer acts as a liaison between students, the department's administration, the College's Certification Officer, and the Graduate School.
4. **Department Head:** If all previous steps fail to resolve the concern, or if the problem is of a very serious nature that impacts the broader departmental environment or policies, the Department Head should be approached. The Department Head has overarching responsibility for the academic and administrative functions of the department. They have the authority to make wide-reaching decisions and can address high-level concerns related to program administration and departmental policies.

At each level document your concerns and the steps you've taken to resolve them. Keep records of communications and meetings, as these can be helpful if the issue needs to be escalated. Remember, each of these individuals plays a distinct role in supporting your academic journey. They are there to ensure that you have a productive, enriching, and successful graduate experience. Except in rare cases, students should follow the appropriate chain of command. For example, it is generally not advisable to contact the department head or dean with a question without first attempting to consult the advisor.

Handbook Revision and Renewal Process

This handbook is required to be reviewed, amended as necessary, and approved by the EFLT faculty each spring semester before April 1. The current version of this handbook was approved by the EFLT faculty on April 24, 2026.