Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology

Graduate Student Handbook

AUBURN

College of Education

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EFLT Graduate Student Handbook

EFLT Organization

The Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology prepares exemplary educational practitioners and develops cooperative partnerships with university departments, schools, community agencies, and industry to provide outstanding educators, trainers, and leaders. The department contacts are as follows:

- Department Head: Email William (Hank) Murrah, Ph.D.
- Administrator, Academic Services: Email Shannon Eades
- Program Coordinators:
  - Administration of Higher Education – Email Reggie Blockett, Ph.D.
  - Adult Education – Email Jonathan Taylor, Ph.D.
  - Educational Leadership – Email Amy Serafini, Ed.D.
  - Educational Psychology – Email Chih-hsuan Wang, Ph.D.
- Graduate Program Officer: Email Jung Won Hur, Ph.D.

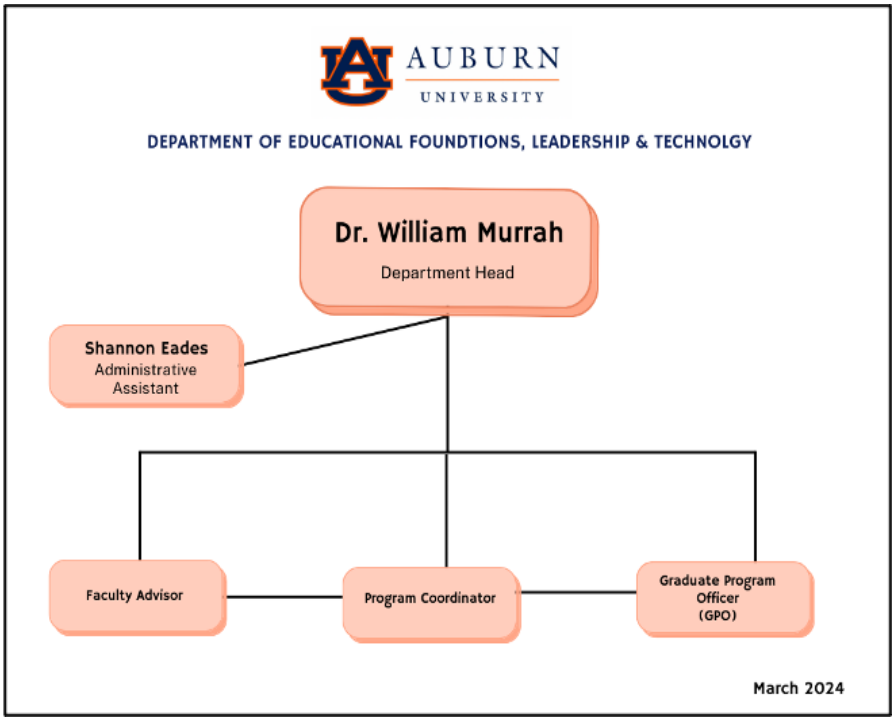

Figure 1. Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology Organization Chart

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. For more detailed information, please refer to the Adult Education Program Policies and Procedures Manual.

Educational Leadership

The Educational Leadership program has two primary programs:

- 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. For more detailed information, please refer to the Educational Leadership: Administration of Supervision and Curriculum Student Handbook.

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. The 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. For more detailed information, please refer to the Educational Psychology Doctoral Program Student Handbook.

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.

Graduate 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

Graduate 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 limit 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 or 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 or Concerns).

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 membership rates, which 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.

Professional Organizations List

While not an exhaustive list, the professional organizations listed include those EFLT faculty and students attend. The list includes links to the organization website and includes information about typical conference meeting month and typical proposal deadline month.

- American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)
  - Typical Conference Month: October
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: April
- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)
  - Typical Conference Month: February
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: September
- Alabama Association of Professors of Educational Leadership (AAPEL)
  - Typical Conference Month: February
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: January
- American Evaluation Association (AEA)
  - Typical Conference Month: November
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: March
- Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)
  - Typical Conference Month: October
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: February
- Association for Educational Finance & Policy (AEFP)
  - Typical Conference Month: March
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: October
- American Educational Research Association (AERA)
  - Typical Conference Month: April
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: July
- American Educational Studies Association (AESA)
  - Typical Conference Month: November
  - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: May

- American Psychological Association (APA)
    - Typical Conference Month: August
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: January
- Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM)
    - Typical Conference Month: November
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: April
- Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)
    - Typical Conference Month: November
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: April
- Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC)
    - Typical Conference Month: April
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: To be announced
- Eastern Educational Research Association (EERA)
    - Typical Conference Month: February
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: November
- Mid-South Educational Research Association (MSERA)
    - Typical Conference Month: November
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: June
- National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)
    - Typical Conference Month: November
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: July
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
    - Typical Conference Month: March
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: September
- Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE)
    - Typical Conference Month: March
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: October
- Special Interest Group Computer Science Education (SIGCSE)
    - Typical Conference Month: February or March
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: August

- Southern Regional Council of Educational Administrators (SRCEA)
    - Typical Conference Month: October
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: June
- University Council of Educational Administrators (UCEA)
    - Typical Conference Month: November
    - Typical Proposal Deadline Month: May

Funding Options for Attending a Professional Conference

1. Complete and submit the College of Education Graduate Travel Award Request form found on the Graduate Student Travel Awards Guidelines website.
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.

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 graduate teaching assistantship (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, and GTAs must also be dedicated to working with students and be dependable.

Graduate Assistantship Application Guidelines

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 email Jonathan Taylor, Ph.D.

EDMD 2100/EDMD 3300 Courses

- Current graduate student in the EFLT department.
- Completion of a minimum of 18 credit hours of graduate-level courses in the field of EDMD or equivalent.
- Strong recommendations from faculty members or appropriate supervisors who are familiar with the candidate's ability to teach the course content being considered.
- Demonstrated knowledge and skills in the content being considered within K-12 classroom settings.
- Preferred qualification includes prior K-12 teaching experience.
- Students who are interested in EDMD course assistantship opportunities should email Jung Won Hur, Ph.D. or Sara Wolf, Ph.D.

ERMA Design & Analysis Courses TA and Data Analysis Consultant GA

- Current EPSY Ph.D. Program student (focuses on ERMA track).
- Completed at least 18 credit hours of EPSY and ERMA graduate level courses.
- 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.
- Completed EPSY 8640 Educational Psychology Learning and Instruction Apprenticeship.
- Experience and competence with statistical analysis software and programs, such as SPSS, AMOS, R, M*plus*, SAS, STATA, etc.
- Recommendations from ERMA Quantitative faculty.
- Students who are interested in ERMA graduate assistantship opportunities should email Chih-hsuan Wang, Ph.D., by January 31 each year.

FOUN 3000 TA

- Current Ph.D. student at the Department of EFLT.
- 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.

- Completed FOUN 7930 Independent Study: Teaching Apprenticeship. This course is repeatable - you can earn up to 6 hours.
- Recommendations from Foundations of Education faculty.
- Preferred qualification: K-12 or community-based teaching experience.
- Students who are interested in a FOUN 3000 graduate assistantship opportunity should email Ivan Watts, Ph.D.

FOUN 3500 TA

- Current EPSY Ph.D. program student.
- Completed at least 18 credit hours of EPSY graduate level courses.
- Completed EPSY 7400 Educational Psychology and Educational Implications and EPSY 8640 Educational Psychology Learning and Instruction Apprenticeship and earned an exemplary grade (A).
- 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).
- 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.
- Preferred qualification: K-12 or community-based teaching experience.
- Students who are interested in a FOUN 3500 graduate assistantship opportunity should email Sean Forbes, Ph.D., by January 31 each year.

Artificial Intelligence Use

Students should use generative artificial intelligence in accordance with guidance from the Office of the Provost AI Guidelines and Graduate School AI Usage, 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

- Graduate School Academic Resources
- Health and Wellness Resources
- 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
- Graduate School's Getting Through and Getting Out Videos
- Graduate School's On Track for Graduation
- Auburn University Commencement Information

Auburn University Academic Calendar

Auburn University publishes its Academic Calendar online. You can also find the Calendar of Events, the Graduate School Calendar, the Final Exam Calendar, and the Registration Schedule

Questions or Concerns

When graduate students encounter a problem or have questions or concerns related to their academic or research activities, navigating the appropriate channels for resolution is crucial. For most academic or research questions or concerns, begin with your faculty advisor and move to the next level only if the question or concern remains unresolved. If the concern involves the person listed at a step creates a conflict of interest or requires urgent attention, contact the next appropriate person or relevant office.

1. **Faculty Advisor – academic or research concerns.** Contact your advisor first about coursework, research, dissertation progress, or academic advising. They can offer personalized advice, guidance, and solutions based on their understanding of your work and your academic goals.
2. **Program Coordinator** – **program administration**. Contact the program coordinator if the concern remains unresolved or involves enrollment, registration, degree requirements, or other program processes. 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)** – policy or degree-progress concerns. The GPO oversees the administration of the graduate programs. Contact the GPO for unresolved concerns involving graduate policies, degree progress, or coordination with the department, College of Education, or Graduate School. The GPO acts as a liaison between students, the department's administration, the College's Certification Officer, and the Graduate School.
4. **Department Head – serious or unresolved departmental concerns.** Contact the Department Head when previous steps have not resolved the concern or when the matter affects departmental policies or the broader departmental environment. The Department Head has overarching responsibility for the academic and administrative functions of the department and has 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.

International Students

International students are responsible for maintaining lawful immigration status and complying with applicable federal regulations and Auburn University policies. Because immigration requirements may change, students should consult Auburn University's International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) website for the most current information. Students should contact an ISSS advisor before making decisions that may affect their immigration status, including changes to enrollment, course modality, employment, assistantships, internships, leaves of absence, or program completion.

Handbook Revision and Renewal Process

This handbook is required to be reviewed, amended as necessary, and approved by the EFLT faculty. The current version of this handbook was approved unanimously by the EFLT faculty on October 6, 2026.