Frequently Asked Questions, Higher Education Program

What can I do with a degree in Higher Education Administration?
A degree in higher education administration can lead to varied administrative roles in higher education institutions, or it can lead to faculty positions in higher education academic departments.

What information do I need to apply?
The Graduate School requires that you fill out an online application, and submit GRE scores and all transcripts from all previous institutions.

The Higher Education program requires that you submit:
- a résumé or curriculum vitae
- a letter of intent explaining your interest in the program, professional experiences and professional goals
- three letters of recommendation addressing your ability to conduct graduate work from individuals familiar with your academic ability

Please mail the Higher Education materials to:
Dr. Lilian Hill
Department of Educational Studies and Research
118 College Drive, #5093
Hattiesburg MS 39406-001

What if my undergraduate degree is not in higher education?
Students are not expected to have a prior degree in higher education to apply for the program, and a great variety of subject areas are accepted.

Is the GRE required for admissions?
The GRE is required for admission to Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programs.

Are applications due at a certain time of year?
There are no application deadlines. You may apply at any time of year and begin your program in fall, spring or summer semesters.

How long after I apply will I find out whether I'm admitted?
Once we have your information from the Graduate School and your application is complete in our department, your file will be reviewed for an admission decision. Students are notified within 2-3 weeks.

Are assistantships available?
A limited number of assistantships are available, and they are highly competitive. Assistantships are also available in other departments on campus; however, students would need to be resourceful to learn about them.

How many courses can I transfer in to this degree?
Students may be allowed to transfer in up to 6 credit hours, or two 3-credit courses. This decision will be made in consultation with your advisor.

How long does it take to complete the degree?
A doctoral degree, whether Ed.D. or Ph.D., may be completed in a minimum of 4 years, depending on the number of courses taken per semester and how rapidly a student progresses toward completion of the dissertation.

Is there a residency requirement?
The residency requirement for doctoral programs may be met through one of the following options:
- Two consecutive semesters of 12 hours each (12-12)
- Three consecutive semesters of 9 hours each (9-9-9)
- Four consecutive semesters of a minimum of 6 hours each, none arranged (6-6-6-6)
- Two semesters, one of which may be a summer semester, within a 3-year period in which a minimum of 12 hours is taken in each of the 2 semesters and a minimum of 3 hours in each of the intervening semesters (12-3-3-12)
Who is my advisor?
Your advisor will be assigned when you are admitted to the program and you will be informed of this by letter. You should meet with your advisor prior to each semester. Your advisor will assist you in developing a plan of study, selecting courses, and understanding program requirements.

How many of the courses are offered online?
Several courses are offered in alternative formats including fully online, hybrid (a mix of face-face and online), and Saturday classes.

Can I take classes outside the program and department?
Elective courses outside the program and department are allowed in the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programs. This decision needs to be made in consultation with your advisor.

When do I take the comprehensive exam?
Comprehensive exams are scheduled at or near the end of the student's coursework. The decision of when to schedule comprehensive examinations would be made in consultation with the student’s advisor.

Do I have to have a computer to complete the program?
A computer is not required but is highly advisable because the higher education administration program requires considerable written work. Computers are available in Cook Library on the Hattiesburg campus and at the Gulf Coast Service Center.