

PhD in Leadership – FAQ

Which doctoral degree

1. How do I know the PhD in Leadership is the degree program for me?

The School of Education at La Sierra University offers two doctoral degree programs, an EdD and a PhD. Both are rigorous and challenging but each one has a different focus. The PhD is a research degree and focuses on leadership and research as applied in a specific context, such as educational leadership in schools, colleges and universities, instructional leadership as demonstrated in the classroom, and education psychology as practiced in schools and communities. The EdD is professional degree designed for those who wish to focus on the application of knowledge and skills in the educational setting.

Application/admission

2. When can I start my program?

Admission generally occurs in February with the starting date of the following September. The program begins with an orientation which occurs only at the beginning of the fall quarter. After that, students following an approved academic plan move through the program at their own rates.

3. Do I have to finish my masters' degree before I can apply, or can I apply now?

The masters' degree must be completed prior to the starting the PhD program. So, if you plan to finish this year, before the end of the summer quarter, then you can apply now.

4. Can international students apply for the PhD in Leadership?

We welcome international students. Apply online and when the application and interview process is complete, you will work with specialized advisors at the Office of International Student Services to help you with the visa process.

5. Is the GRE required for admission to the program even if the other academic credentials, such as GPA, are excellent?

The Graduate Record Exam is required for admission into the PhD in Leadership program. The scores help build your case that you have the capability of developing into an excellent researcher. Since the enrollment is limited to a small number of students each year, it is important that you demonstrate your abilities with documented evidence which, in this case, includes the GRE scores. You may complete an application form without the GRE scores, but the scores need to be on hand before you begin your program in July. If your master's GPA is 3.5 or above, you may apply for a waiver to this requirement.

6. The deadline has passed for application in this year's admissions, and it is some time before the new intake next year. What do I do in the meantime?

To be considered for the next admission cohort, students should complete the application by February 1. Any application that is submitted after that date, may be considered if there is still room in the admission cohort. Or if that is complete, the application is put into the pool of applicants for the following year. You might want to look at your previous degrees and see if there are some areas you need to strengthen. You can take a class or two in research, for instance, that would be considered prerequisites for the courses in the PhD in Leadership program.

Curriculum/delivery

7. How long is the program?

The program is based on full-time study and consists of three years of course work and then the dissertation. Depending on the time to do the research and writing, that is estimated to be another 2 years or more. Total time allowed is seven years.

8. If I have started another degree, can I transfer my credits to this program?

Yes, there are possibilities for transferring credits to the PhD in Leadership program. The maximum number of credits that can be transferred into the doctoral degree is 18. The courses must be equivalent to the courses required for the PhD in Leadership program and must not have been used to complete another degree. There are a few PhD in Leadership courses that are required to be taken at La Sierra University and may not be transferred from another institution.

9. What is the delivery method of the program?

All the courses are face-to-face. During the Covid-19 restrictions, a few selected courses were made available online. There is a three-year sequence of classes, followed by the comprehensive examination and then dissertation.

10. What are the times and days that students would be meeting?

Aside from the summer classes that have a separate schedule, the doctoral courses are all offered at 4:00pm or later. Some classes are shared with other doctoral level degrees, which may meet at other times. Please look at the course schedule for details.

11. Does the PhD in Leadership focus on education, business or other careers?

The PhD in Leadership is housed in the School of Education, so it will have a leaning toward education. However, leadership has similarities across disciplines and contexts; it could be useful for persons whose career leads them in other directions.

Cost

12. How much does the program cost?

The estimated cost is based on the published graduate level set by the University. Presently, the tuition fee per credit is \$745 (as of May 2023) plus additional fees (see the financial page at <https://lasierra.edu/tuition-and-costs/>). There are 87 credits required for the degree. The estimated total, including additional required fees, it is estimated to cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$78,000 (assuming all prerequisites are cared for) plus research and dissertation expenses. Students able to transfer some credits may be able to reduce that amount.

13. Are there any scholarships available?

Many students are able to find family, friends or employers who will help fund the cost of doing the PhD degree. In the School of Education, there are a limited number of teaching and research fellowships available for PhD students. At the University level there may be some discounts and Federal grants available.