

# PhD – Education

DIVISION OF EDUCATION | SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY



**NATIONALLY RANKED** — Seattle Pacific continues to be recognized as a “Best National University” by *U.S. News & World Report*.

## Program Description

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in education degree at Seattle Pacific University is a research-based, 90-credit low-residency online program designed to educate and prepare students to serve as college- and university-level educators who can conduct publishable research and other scholarly work. In fact, there is a need for quality teacher education training programs in our state, region, and nation. SPU's program addresses this need in its PhD program by emphasizing teaching and learning theory, research, teacher preparation, and university teaching.

Designed for working professionals, the PhD in Education program offers most classes online. In summer, classes are offered during the day in person. Students who have already completed coursework at the graduate or doctoral level may request to transfer previous coursework to SPU in partial fulfillment of the requirements of their degree.

## Program Completion Requirements

In addition to the program's course curriculum, PhD students must fulfill the following requirements to complete the degree:

- Completing coursework with 3.2 GPA or better
- Passing mark on a publishable colloquium paper
- Passing mark on two comprehensive examinations (research, foundations)
- Demonstrate instructional competency (teach or co-teach courses) and/or supervision competency (supervision of practicum and internship education students) evaluated in SPU's University Teaching Practicum.
- Passing mark on written dissertation
- Passing grade on oral defense of dissertation

## AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION/COURSES

The program encourages students to develop an area of expertise appropriate to their professional and academic goals. For a complete listing of doctoral courses, and a suggested four-year course sequence, go to [spu.edu/soe-doctoral](http://spu.edu/soe-doctoral).

## Program Distinctives

A PhD in education is the preferred degree for teaching in higher education. SPU's program is designed to provide the appropriate blend of rigor, best practice, and original research to prepare students for careers in higher education. Distinctives of the program include:

- Flexible learning provides the benefits of both online learning and face-to-face courses
- Programs with small classes and personalized instruction
- A comprehensive research component that prepares students to explore and understand both quantitative and qualitative research designs
- A sense of community that helps students develop helpful and supportive relationships
- An excellent faculty with proven expertise and a strong desire to help students succeed in the program
- Opportunities for involvement in undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programming at SPU via teaching and intern supervision



**“**The superior teachers required of the complex, multi-cultural, fast-paced 21st century do not enter a classroom as a blank slate and learn on the job. They are schooled in their subjects and how students learn them; they are nurtured, tutored, practiced, observed, critiqued, corrected, and — in some cases — dissuaded from taking on the teaching challenge. Those who will become the outstanding teachers our nation needs must be prepared for the profession of teaching.”

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Preparation



## Entrance Requirements

The following items are required for application to the PhD program in education:

- Graduate application form, available online at [spu.edu/applynow](http://spu.edu/applynow)
- Application and fee
- Official transcripts documenting excellent undergraduate and graduate GPAs
- Master's degree in education or related field
- Minimum of three years' successful experience as an educator in K–12 schools (public or private)
- Three (3) letters of recommendation (one must be an academic recommendation)
- A writing sample demonstrating graduate-level writing skills
- Personal statement — including goals and proposed area of study (no more than 500 words)

## Doctor of Education (EdD)

The College of Humanities, Education, and the Arts at Seattle Pacific University also offers the Doctor of Education (EdD) degree. This program serves a wide range of educators drawn from a variety of public and private school settings. The degree is designed for active professionals whose primary career goals include work in a variety of leadership positions in PK–12 education. Although both EdD and PhD students overlap in core doctoral courses, there are key differences between the programs, including:

- **Curricular focus:** EdD students are typically school leaders who focus on effective teaching and administrative practices within PK–12 school contexts. PhD students strive to develop as scholar-teachers with an ability to conduct research and teach at the university level.

- **Research component:** EdD students are trained to be evaluators of research for practitioner purposes. PhD students are required to conduct and understand empirical research that leads to publishable scholarly work.
- **Dissertation:** EdD students complete a dissertation that explores an educational issue related to curriculum, administrative models, field testing of a diagnostic tool, or another practical application relevant to their field. PhD students are required to complete an empirical, research-based dissertation.

## STUDENT AND ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

College of Humanities, Education, and the Arts doctoral students and alumni have published in peer-reviewed journals, presented in national, regional and international conferences, and received competitive awards including the Fulbright fellowship and dissertation awards.

## QUESTIONS?

For complete information about the PhD in Education program, go to [spu.edu/soe-doctoral](http://spu.edu/soe-doctoral). If you have questions about either doctoral program or your candidacy, contact Dr. Kris Gritter via email at [grittk@spu.edu](mailto:grittk@spu.edu) or 206-281-2323.

For questions regarding admission requirements, contact Graduate Admissions at 206-281-2091, 800-601-0603, toll free; or via email at [gradadmissions@spu.edu](mailto:gradadmissions@spu.edu).

## GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Seattle Pacific University  
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[spu.edu/graduate](http://spu.edu/graduate)