

EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY, MSED

Under the supervision and mentorship of a faculty advisor, master's students in the Education, Culture, and Society program undertake individualized and interdisciplinary programs of study in the social foundations of education. The program therefore provides students with a nuanced understanding of education as an historical, socio-cultural, political, and moral activity. EDCS students explore the role education plays in reproducing and potentially transforming racialized, classed, and gendered relations and structures of inequality – in the U.S. or around the world. Working in small cohorts, students explore and build a unique vision for the program through collaborative dialogue, intensive writing, and critical inquiry.

Students may be eligible to pursue a dual-degree with public policy, non-profit leadership, or social work. Interested students who do not wish to pursue a second degree of study, may also consider the concentration in Community Action and Social Change. Although many EDCS students are preparing for a path to doctoral study or academia, many others find the program helpful for establishing careers in schools, administration, educational non-profits, higher education, community advocacy work and/or educational consultancy.

For more information: <https://www.gse.upenn.edu/academics/programs/education-culture-society-masters> (<https://www.gse.upenn.edu/academics/programs/education-culture-society-masters/>)

Curriculum

Code	Title	Course Units
Required Core Courses		
EDUC 5490	School and Society in America	1
EDUC 6490	Master's Seminar in Education, Culture, and Society (Spring)	1
Disciplinary Foundation		
Select 1 from the following:		1
EDUC 5436	Philosophical Aspects of Education Policy	
EDUC 5453	History of American Education	
EDUC 5460	American Education Reform: History, Policy, Practice	
EDUC 5495	Anthropology and Education	
Other (with faculty advisor approval)		
Research Methods Course		
Research Methodology Course ^{1, 2}		1
Electives		
Select 5 electives ^{3, 4}		5
Distribution Elective ⁵		1
Total Course Units		10

CU limit per term:

Students enrolled in the M.S.Ed. in EDCS program may enroll in no more than 4.0 CUs in any semester.

Master's Capstone

EDCS students are required to write a Master's Capstone on a core content area in Education, Culture, and Society. The Master's Seminar in Education, Culture, and Society (EDUC6490) is a writing-intensive seminar that prepares students to cultivate a narrow area of educational expertise through the preparation of the capstone: an academic paper that demonstrates mastery through a close examination and original synthesis of previous research and argumentation. The course's instructional team and the students' faculty advisors coordinate in support of building a robust paper. The Master's Capstone is reviewed and approved by Program Faculty.

Community Action and Social Change Concentration

Code	Title	Course Units
Concentration Requirements ⁴		
Two Community Based Electives		2
One Academically Based Community Service (ABCS)		1

- ¹ Methods courses prepare students in both the practical and theoretical implications of collecting, interpreting, analyzing and presenting data on the human condition broadly (and education/learning in particular).
- ² Students with interest in qualitative traditions tend to enroll in EDUC 6460 Qualitative Methods: Principles and Techniques (offered Fall, Spring and Summer) while those interested in quantitative traditions enroll in EDUC 6667 Introductory Statistics for Educational Research (offered Fall, Spring and Summer). Students are encouraged to discuss other options with their faculty advisors.
- ³ Electives must be graduate level and taken for a letter grade. Students should determine elective courses in conference with their faculty advisors to ensure they align with the Planned Program of Study. With faculty advisor approval, electives may potentially be taken in Education, Culture, and Society (EDCS), other GSE programs, or from graduate programs across the university.
- ⁴ Students seeking the Community Action and Social Change Concentration must dedicate three CUs from the five electives, as described as follows: the student will complete 2 Community Concentration Electives selected with program approval; 1 Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) course; and an aligning topic for the master's capstone, and has thus meet all requirements of the Community Action and Social Change Concentration. A list of suggested electives is available in the program. ABCS courses are offered through the Netter Center and must be 5000 level or higher.
- ⁵ Candidates for the M.S.Ed. degree must demonstrate knowledge of the field of education beyond the area of specialization. Students must complete one approved graduate level (5000 and above) GSE course outside the student's area of specialization, earning a grade of "B" or better. In EDCS, the requirement must meet the additional following criteria/conditions: (1) it must not be a core/disciplinary foundation course as required in this Planned Program of Study; and (2) it must not be taught by a faculty member whose core appointment is in EDCS.

The degree and major requirements displayed are intended as a guide for students entering in the Fall of 2025 and later. Students should

consult with their academic program regarding final certifications and requirements for graduation.
