

HIGHER EDUCATION, MSED

The M.S.Ed. in Higher Education will prepare students to take on leadership roles in institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies involved in constructing higher education nationally and worldwide. The program explores a wide range of topics including access to and equity within higher education, student development and student affairs, postsecondary administration and management, organizational change, curriculum and pedagogy, economics and financing, and postsecondary policies at federal, state, and global levels. The program offers a variety of courses that enable students to shape a plan of study that will prepare them for their area of interest. The curriculum is based on interactive case studies, discussion-oriented seminars, individual and group projects, and hands-on, work-based applications of learning. The program offers practical higher education administrative experiences through graduate assistantships for full-time students.

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

Curriculum

Code	Title	Course Units
Higher Education Required Course ^{1, 2}		
One of the following:		1
EDUC 5894	Diversity in Higher Education	
EDUC 6845	Geography of Opportunity	
EDUC 7844	Building Inclusive Communities in Higher Education	
Select 4 Higher Education Courses		4
Higher Education Recommended Course ^{1, 2}		
EDUC 5892	Professional Development in Higher Education	1
Distribution Requirement		
Select 1 Distribution Requirement Course ³		1
Elective Courses		
Select 3 Electives ⁴		3
Total Course Units		10

¹ Students must complete SIX total Higher Education courses, including EDUC 5894 or another course (e.g., EDUC 6845, EDUC 7844). Students may petition their advisor to take another course that meets the EDUC 5894 requirement. EDUC 5892 is recommended for full-time students with fewer than 3 years of professional work experience. Students with more than 3 years of work experience may be exempted from EDUC 5892 and a substitute HE course would fulfill this sixth HE CU requirement in such cases.

² Any substitutions for required courses must be approved by your advisor and/or the Faculty Program Director or Division Chair.

³ Candidates for the MSED must demonstrate knowledge of the field of education beyond their area of specialization, which is met by satisfying the distribution requirement. Students must complete one approved graduate level GSE course outside the Higher Education division, earning a grade of "B" or better (i.e., any non-HE "EDUC" course, 5000-level or above).

⁴ Electives may be taken at any school at Penn; however, the majority of Higher Ed MSED students fulfill their electives within the division. Courses must be at the 5000-level or above and students should consult their academic advisor before enrolling in any course outside of GSE. Students may not register for more than 2 independent study courses over the course of their program of study.

Comprehensive Examination

Higher Ed MSED candidates must pass a comprehensive exam (known in HE as the "comps paper") in order to graduate. To qualify to take the examination, students must have completed at least 5 HE CU's, or be enrolled in at least the sixth course unit. The exam is given in both the Fall and Spring terms. Under this planned program of study, full-time students typically take the exam in the spring semester.

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.