Declaration of Commitment
Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership (PhD)
Central Michigan University

A doctoral degree is the highest professional degree given in higher education. Potential students should be aware that the course work, reading assignments, and research expectations in a doctoral program are extremely demanding. For every three-credit class, six-to-eight hours of out-of-class study a week may be expected. Thus, a typical semester of doctoral work would require 18 to 20 hours a week of your time.

The PhD in Educational Leadership is designed for working professionals. The program faculty work hard to schedule coursework in ways that respect students’ working lives. At the same time, it is important for students to be able to fully participate in all coursework. The PhD is a year-round program, which means you will take classes during the fall, spring, and summer sessions. Applicants for the PhD in Educational Leadership must make appropriate arrangements to ensure full class attendance and participation. Classes will be offered on weeknights or weekends (early evening Friday and all day on Saturday). During the summer sessions, some classes may be offered in a weeklong schedule.

Research and policy analysis are the core strengths of the PhD program. Dissertation research makes a substantial, original contribution to knowledge in the discipline being studied. Students will be expected to engage in research studies that have theoretical, policy, and practice implications. Students will engage with a dissertation advisor early in the program and use their coursework to further their research agenda. Once coursework is finished, students must successfully write a research prospectus and defend it before a committee. After passing this oral and written comprehensive exam, students will complete their dissertation work.

Please do not take these questions lightly. The program will be academically rigorous.

The PhD provides a unique opportunity to develop policy and research expertise. However, there are important questions you should ask yourself before pursuing this degree.

1. Am I committed to developing research competency?
2. Is perseverance one of my core strengths?
3. Can I develop and complete projects in a reasonable length of time without procrastinating?
4. Can I wholeheartedly commit the time necessary to be successful in this program?
5. Will I be able to balance the demands of my professional position and family responsibilities with those of the doctoral program?
6. Is there a high probability that I can complete the scheduled program? The PhD is a lockstep cohort program with a set sequence of courses.

I declare that I have read the above information, reflected on all the questions, and I would like to apply to the PhD program with full knowledge of the commitment I am making.

Name __________________________ Signature __________________________ Date __________
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