



# **ALVERNO COLLEGE**

Doctor of Education (Ed.D)

<https://edd.alverno.edu/>

## **PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

Academic Year

**2022-23**

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# Introduction

Alverno College has a strong reputation in education nationally and internationally . The education division has been recognized by the George Lucas Educational Foundation as one of 10 best US education programs; Dr. Arthur Levine recognized the education division as one of four exemplars in “Educating School Teachers” (2006). In 2019, the Learning Policy Institute, led by Linda Darling-Hammond, recognized Alverno’s education division as a site of “deeper learning” in the preparation of educators. Internationally, the Catholic University of Argentina has adopted the framework of the education division in its innovative programs for preparing teachers, which have been recognized for their strength across South America. Until 2020, however, all of this had been directed at the preparation of undergraduate and graduate initially licensed teachers, graduate-level advanced licensure candidates for school leadership, and master’s degrees. The Alverno College Ed.D. programs in transformational educational leadership and higher education teaching extend this tradition of excellence into the doctoral level.

The program launched in Spring 2020 with two initial specializations: K-12 School leadership and superintendency, and higher education leadership and administration. In Fall 2020 two additional pathways were added, one in higher education teaching, and one designed particularly for the needs of students who had advanced to doctoral candidacy elsewhere but not completed their doctorates, considered “all but dissertation” or ABD.

The Ed.D. programs are open to students who have completed a Masters-level degree. The program is offered entirely online and largely asynchronous. The program requires two residencies, one in the first semester of the program and one in the last semester of the program.

This handbook sets forth the context, requirements, structure, coursework, dissertation, assessment expectations, and other key elements of the program. For further reading, please consult the Resources at the end of the handbook, many of which are the sources for some of the Handbook contents.

# Program Description

## Admissions Requirements

Students applying to the EdD programs must have completed a Masters degree previously. People seeking Superintendency licensure must already hold a principal's license in the state of Wisconsin and be eligible to pursue the Superintendent license under current state requirements.

## Program Timing

The EdD program requires students to enroll in 9 credits in each of three semesters (Fall, Spring, Summer). The program is six semesters long.

## Residencies

The residencies are intended to provide students with experiences that online modalities do not: physical proximity, connection to the campus, and extension to the larger Milwaukee community assets. One residency is held in the first semester of the doctoral program; one is held in the last semester of the program.

# Alverno's Culture of Assessment, Self Assessment, and Feedback

Alverno College has a global reputation as a pioneer in the innovative ability-based model first implemented in the 1970s and continually refined and developed ever since.

## Assessment

as • sess (<http://depts.alverno.edu/saal/images/e.gifses'>) v.t. [late ME < ML L assess (us) ptp. of *assidere* (ad + sedere)] **to sit down beside**

Assessment is a key component to the success of the Alverno Ability-Based Curriculum. Parameters of Alverno's assessment model include: individual performance, group interaction, self-assessment, assessor review, assessor consensus, and specific feedback for the student.

The assessment model that Alverno College developed in the early to mid 1970's was a result of intensive research on testing methods for academic and corporate institutions and an exploration into the nature of learning. It was realized that students should not just know things, but be able to do what they know.

AT&T, the telephone monopoly of the 1970's, was one corporation that Alverno collaborated with in researching assessment, assessment centers, and assessment instruments. Alverno found that AT&T was beginning to use situational simulations to evaluate prospective managerial candidates. Alverno realized that simulations or "academic performances" could be the basis for ongoing student learning when combined with self-assessment and faculty feedback. The groundwork was laid for Alverno assessment. Since 1976, people have traveled from all over the world to learn about Alverno's experiences with assessment-as-learning during summer workshops.

Alverno's method of evaluating student learning, called assessment, is integral to learning in the Alverno graduate programs. Unlike many forms of testing, assessment evaluates not just what students know, but how well they can apply what they know.

The system of student assessment at Alverno College does not include reference to letter grades. In fact, one tenet of the College's educational philosophy is that the faculty do not evaluate students comparatively using letter grades. Instead, we establish criteria for effective performance in each course. In the graduate programs, these criteria reflect standards for achievement within the discipline and professional areas, which guide all courses in the specific program. As part of professional programs, graduate course assessments are designed to engage students within their disciplinary and professional contexts. Examples include writing

business reports that address strategic and operating issues, preparing proposals for inquiry-based nursing projects, and developing mentoring handbooks for school districts. We then provide students with significant narrative feedback describing the quality of their performances relative to those standards. A student who does not meet these standards at the level defined in each course does not pass the course. As a continuous process in which the students themselves play an active role, assessment helps both the student and the faculty member judge the student's progress toward meeting criteria for a given course.

Due to the rigor of our curriculum, we are able to confirm that a student who has successfully completed a course is held in "good standing." This means that any student in good standing at the College has demonstrated the requisite understanding and practice of the disciplines/profession for the courses s/he has completed. Faculty distinguish quality of performance by providing a written evaluation of the student's work that documents the specific way the student met or exceeded those standards. At the time of graduation, those evaluations are synthesized into a narrative statement that describes the quality of the student's graduate work. This narrative statement is an objective evaluation of the quality of the graduate's performance in her/his program of study and is an integral part of each student's official final transcript.

The record of courses taken and a detailed profile of the student's strengths and accomplishments become part of each student's permanent records. Because this method provides much more information than a grade and fosters continuous learning, it is approved by accrediting bodies and accepted by graduate schools and employers. In fact, educators from across the country and around the world regularly visit Alverno to learn about this innovative and effective approach to helping students learn.

## Self Assessment

Since 1973, Alverno faculty have been refining our understanding of self assessment from data in your research studies and thorough reflection on our practice.

One result of our study is a developmental framework that we have articulated to guide our students and ourselves in recognizing and seeking to develop increasingly refined self assessment. We have identified four components of skills inherent in self assessment:

- observing
- interpreting/analyzing
- judging
- planning

Within our framework, we have also distinguished beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of self assessment ability. We have learned that a student might show proficiency in some components at a beginning level, some at an intermediate, and some at an advanced one.



## Framework for Self Assessment Alverno College Council for Student Assessment

COMPONENTS		BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
OBSERVING		<i>In OBSERVING her performance a BEGINNING student uses specific behaviors and descriptive strategies to focus primarily on the development of her abilities. She uses concrete detail, articulates questions to show processes of thought, and systematically reviews parts to explain aspects of her processes or products. She develops ways to communicate what she intended to do, how she worked toward that goal, and what she achieved. She recognizes how her expectations, prior learning, thoughts, and emotions influenced her ability to focus on her performance.</i>	<i>In OBSERVING her performance an INTERMEDIATE student reflects on her explicit use of disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and/or ability frameworks in her performance. She shows, by meaningfully relating concepts to her performance, what aspects of the ability or discipline have influenced her.</i>	<i>In OBSERVING her performance an ADVANCED student applies disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and/or ability frameworks and shows creative judgment in their individual or combined use. She both attends to her current engagement in her learning and imagines her future practice as a professional.</i>
	DIMENSIONS OF COMPONENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports own behavior (actions, thoughts, and emotions) in performance and/or in the process of producing a performance</li> <li>Distinguishes actions from emotions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies examples of her use of disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and/or ability frameworks</li> <li>Communicates observations using language appropriate to the selected framework(s).</li> <li>Shows she was aware of her performance at appropriate times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applies disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and/or ability frameworks to the observation of performance</li> <li>Maintains balance between personal distance and personal engagement</li> </ul>
INTERPRETING/ ANALYZING		<i>In INTERPRETING/ANALYZING her performance a BEGINNING student goes beyond treating behaviors discretely. She articulates connections among them in relation to a criterion, an ability, or a series of performances.</i>	<i>In INTERPRETING/ANALYZING her performance an INTERMEDIATE student identifies patterns in her performance, expressing her awareness of how these patterns affect the whole.</i>	<i>In INTERPRETING/ANALYZING her performance an ADVANCED student articulates how it is uniquely her own in relationship to disciplinary, interdisciplinary and/or ability frameworks. She uses her imagination to project how she might extend and refine it.</i>
	DIMENSIONS OF COMPONENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies patterns of strengths and weaknesses in behavior</li> <li>Organizes details in relation to an identified focus</li> <li>Relates self assessment and feedback</li> <li>Articulates impact of emotions on her ability to plan for a performance and to perform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains the significance of patterns in performance</li> <li>Makes sense out of her performance in relation to disciplinary, interdisciplinary and/or ability frameworks</li> <li>Uses feedback to develop a larger picture of performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains components of performance that make it unique and distinctive and are part of a student's style or voice</li> <li>Uses disciplinary, interdisciplinary and/or ability frameworks in a way that reflects, extends, or recreates them</li> <li>Synthesizes patterns of behaviors and processes over time and in varied contexts</li> </ul>
JUDGING		<i>In JUDGING her performance a BEGINNING student uses her knowledge of the criteria to explain how her performance gives evidence of the behaviors inherent in the criteria. She explores meaning implied in the criteria.</i>	<i>In JUDGING her performance an INTERMEDIATE student understands that the set of criteria as a whole interact to create a picture of the ability(ies) in performance and that she needs to assess it in terms of the ability(ies) rather than each criterion.</i>	<i>In JUDGING her own performance an ADVANCED student uses a picture of an ideal performance that illustrates the abilities integrated with disciplines. Based on her judgments during performance, she may modify her ideal expectations and maintain or change behaviors. She evaluates her use of judgment and her modification of behavior during performance and over time.</i>
	DIMENSIONS OF COMPONENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes connections between criteria and behaviors</li> <li>Relates judgment of current performance to past experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes sense of a set of criteria as a whole in relation to her judgment of performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulates her use of criteria and knowledge of the integration of her actions, thoughts, and emotions to self monitor and to adjust ongoing actions or plans accordingly.</li> <li>Shows where intervention or modification has or should have taken place</li> </ul>
PLANNING		<i>In PLANNING for further development a BEGINNING student shows awareness that she is changing in her approach to learning and can use various strategies to learn. She sees implications for her future learning.</i>	<i>In PLANNING for further development an INTERMEDIATE student is aware of herself as a learner. In considering her future performances she effectively uses feedback, uses specific goals to set direction, and recognizes her prior strengths and weaknesses.</i>	<i>In PLANNING for future development an ADVANCED student is aware of herself as a lifelong learner. With attention to her style and creativity, she shapes her future performances by considering her past work, her intellectual processes, and a variety of discipline models and frameworks.</i>
	DIMENSIONS OF COMPONENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies aspects to maintain for performance and/or the process of producing a performance</li> <li>Identifies aspects to further develop her learning and suggests approaches for future performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relates goals for improvement to progress thus far and to possibilities for future development</li> <li>Uses feedback in planning for future performance</li> <li>Uses awareness of her emotional responses to plan for continuing development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses multiple models of performance to set and continue to refine goals for continuous development</li> <li>Considers her style and creativity in planning for future performances</li> </ul>

Revised 2004

Alverno College Faculty, *Self Assessment at Alverno College*  
(Ed. G. Loacker), 2000

There are many ways of approaching self assessment, and each way has its own strengths and limitations. For that reason and because of the varied nature of students' learning styles, students should experience multiple approaches. Types of self assessment include those that focus on a

- single performance
- single ability
- single outcome
- specific disciplinary framework or theory
- component of the self assessment framework (observation, interpretation/analysis, judgment, planning)
- process
- integrate several performances, abilities, outcomes, or content/ability
- focus on the student's development over several semesters

## Feedback

Feedback is a process that supports learning — learning of students and learning of faculty. Feedback functions in three ways to support improvement of outcomes. First, feedback

improves student learning within a course because it not only provides students with clear expectations and information on how well their performance measures up to those expectations, but it also suggests strategies to address areas that need further development. Second, feedback improves teaching because the careful attention to performance required to give good feedback also deepens faculty members' awareness of student understanding or misconception, thinking and application, and expression of thinking in writing or speaking. Third, patterns of performance captured in feedback can assist a department or program to look across courses to uncover issues or problems and determine appropriate changes to improve programs.

## Student Perspectives

A case study conducted by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (Allen 2016) identified benefits of this model as experienced by students.

“Alverno students identified four components of Alverno’s assessment model as having the most positive impact on their learning: explicitly stated learning outcomes; meaningful, useful feedback tied to these outcomes; self assessments; and faculty who see the value and purpose of assessment as integral to student learning. These components, combined with ample campus resources to improve learning, hands-on experience in the major, and a student- and learning-centered campus culture, provide a meaningful and positive... experience for Alverno students (3)”

## Program Outcomes and Conceptual Framework

There are five advanced program outcomes that are infused into every course outcome and each module objective. Together, they connote an educational practitioner able to perform at the highest and most scholarly levels. Alverno College uses an “ability-based” model of teaching, learning, assessing, and self assessing. The doctoral program in education is founded on the strengths of this model. The advanced outcomes in education framework identifies five key “abilities” that educators should demonstrate: Conceptualization, Diagnosis, Communication, Coordination, and Inclusive Interaction. This framework sets forth a developmental continuum of abilities, beginning with initially licensed teachers at the start of their teaching careers. By the doctoral level, we expect students to demonstrate the highest level of these abilities. These abilities will be holistically assessed throughout the EdD coursework. Each set of course outcomes is designed to generate evidence of program outcomes.

- **Conceptualization:** integrating disciplinary knowledge with educational frameworks and a broad understanding of human development in order to plan and implement learning processes
  - Showing a commitment to teaching within one’s discipline

- Showing high ability to pick the right strategy for the right situation
- Modeling an adult learning process for others
- Acting as a professional, using leadership roles to impact others
- **Diagnosis:** interpreting observations of behavior and situations using frameworks in order to foster learning
  - Demonstrating flexibility and actively seeking information or frameworks with which to probe information
  - Showing commitment to diagnosis as an ongoing process
  - Using effective interpersonal skills that have been honed to gather information
- **Coordination:** managing resources effectively to support learning goals
  - Practicing as an educator within an institutional framework
  - Demonstrating highly-skilled adaptation to changing situations
  - Emerging elements of a Tonna me and collaboration in working in an effective, productive style
  - Actively continuing one's own ongoing experiential learning
  - Acting with developed professional values
  - Articulating a philosophy of teaching, learning, and assessment
- **Communication:** Using oral, written, and media modes of communication to structure and reinforce learning processes
  - Structuring the physical/interpersonal environment as a means of communicating content
  - Demonstrating versatility in the creative preparation and use of varied media
  - Demonstrating understanding of content area/discipline in both theoretical and experiential ways
  - Modeling effective communication and diverse environments
- **Inclusive Interaction:** demonstrating professional responsibility in diverse learning environments
  - Believing as an advocate of learning in motivating, in relating to learners, in sharing judgment
  - Demonstrating sophisticated awareness of the complex of variables present in interaction, their mutual impact, and their ongoing negotiation by the interactants
  - Assisting learners and colleagues in the habit of taking multiple perspectives
  - Taking responsibility for and to the state of education
  - Integrating the other abilities

# Program Characteristics

## Credits

The doctoral degree pathway requires 54 credits at the post-masters level. For candidates pursuing a Wisconsin Superintendent license, an additional three credit practicum will be required.

## Normative time

The EdD is designed to be completed in 24 to 27 months. Students may begin the program in fall and spring semesters. If a student needs to shift to an alternate timeline for whatever reason, they should work with the EdD director to identify what implications their change may have for program completion.

## Low residency blended design

The program will include regular brief residencies on the Alverno campus in Milwaukee Wisconsin. The majority of coursework and dissertation development will be completed in online seminars and courses.

## Continual development of dissertation

Students in this program will begin the development of their dissertation the very first semester. Each fall and spring semester will include extensive development, revision, and defense of the student dissertation.

## Admissions requirements

Candidates seeking admission will be required to submit evidence of the following:

- A master's degree in a field related to the student's preferred area of concentration from a regionally accredited institution with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above.
- Official graduate and undergraduate transcripts.
- A resume showing professional experience. A minimum of three years' relevant experience is recommended.

- Three letters of reference from persons in leadership roles in the applicant's chosen area of concentration attesting that the applicant has the ability to engage in studies at the doctoral level and to conduct research.
- A personal interview with a member of the graduate faculty representing the applicant's preferred area of concentration. For applicants where distance is a factor, an electronic medium may be utilized for the interview.
- A written statement of professional goals and topic of research interest.
- A 750-1500-word sample of the applicant's writing abilities.
- Evidence that non-U.S. applicants have received a minimum score of 550 (written), 213 (computer), or 79 (internet) on the TOEFL examination.

## Structure and timing of coursework

Each content course is offered in eight-week modules during the fall and spring semesters. During the summer semester, three courses run in parallel over 10 weeks. Dissertation courses, that run only in fall and spring semesters, is highly personalized to each student's dissertation interests. Those courses meet biweekly over a 16-week time frame. Each 16 week semester students will be enrolled in nine credits: two 3-credit content courses, one offered in the first eight weeks and one offered in the second eight weeks, and one 16-week dissertation seminar.

### Program Pathway for Fall Start Students

### Program Pathway for Spring Start Students

## Core Courses and Methods Courses

### EDD 801 Principles of Responsive & Transformational Leadership

In this course, students will show relationships between his/her professional practice and context to appropriate conceptual frameworks, demonstrate deep understandings of one's current practice within the context of responsive and transformational leadership, analyze principles of responsive and transformational leadership as they relate to K-12 and higher

education and use principles of responsive and transformational leadership to begin to define themselves as leaders.

## EDD 802 Research in Educational & Organizational Contexts

In this course, students will read broadly and deeply from a variety of scholarly research. They will create an annotated bibliography structure to which they will add on throughout the program. They will engage in discussion about research and situate their interests and contexts in relationship to existing and needed research, identifying potential sources of scholarly contribution. They will develop comfort and fluency with APA style and formatting.

## EDD 803 Ethical organizational leadership

In this course, students will analyze educational situations and issues to determine ethically appropriate responses, articulate their professional values and how they inform responses to case studies and current educational events, and appropriately apply frameworks of ethical organizational leadership to K-12 and higher education settings

## EDD 804 Research Methods

In this course, students will explore and evaluate diverse research methods and design. They will consider the benefits and constraints of various research paradigms and methods. They will identify an initial plan for a research method. They will explore the possibility of co-authorship and collaboration in their scholarly projects.

## EDD 811 Statistics and Data Analysis

In this course, students will deepen their understanding of statistical and quantitative data, as well as tools to support effective analysis of data. They will critically question how statistics are used to support arguments and claims. They will use and evaluate diverse tools for quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. They will identify appropriate tools and approaches for their own research design.

## EDD 812 Equity in Diverse Educational and Organizational Settings

In this course, students will propose strategies to address issues of disproportionality and inequity in educational settings, analyze patterns of bias within their current setting and design meaningful interventions, and identify diversity/equity issues and their impact in educational settings.

## EDD 813 Advanced Research Methods and Data Analysis

In this course, students will explore advanced topics in students' chosen methodology, including mixed-methodology projects. They will engage in critical research instruments selection (e.g. specific survey, focus group protocol, etc.), and select appropriate research methods, providing a defense and rationale. They will produce a final draft of the methodology section of their proposal.

## EDD 814 Scholarly Communication

In this course, students will refine their power as writers and communicators, receiving substantive feedback on their dissertation as it nears completion. They will evaluate possible ways to communicate their research findings in diverse publications: books, articles, podcasts, presentations, roundtables. They will gain experience in writing conference proposals, book prospecti, and peer-reviewed journal articles.

## EDD 850 Transformational Leadership: Practice and Impact

In this course, students will assess their current practice within the context of responsive and transformational leadership and describe how they will develop new leaders within their educational setting. They will apply principles of responsive and transformational leadership to define themselves as leaders, and describe how their leadership was informed by their research

## Specializations

The following sets of 3-credit courses will involve each student in deepening their understanding of their area of specialization: K-12 school and district leadership for prospective superintendents; K-12 educator preparation and teacher education; higher education college and university leadership and administration; or higher education teaching and learning. Students pursuing the superintendent license will complete one additional three-credit practicum course. Students who have advanced to candidacy previously in other programs will complete the higher education teaching and learning specialization.



# Specializations in Transformational Educational Leadership

## Transformational Educational Leadership in K-12 Settings

### EDD 821 Leadership, Educational Law and Policy

In this course, students will understand the authority, liability, and legal responsibility of school personnel in public and private institutions. The course explores the impact of local, state and national constitutions, statutes, and court decisions on education. Topics will include but are not limited to employee rights and discipline, curriculum, student rights and discipline, special education, contracts and contemporary education issues. Students will explore policy development as a political process and develop an understanding of power structure, the role of leadership in impacting policy, dealing with influential groups and lobbies, and the process of policy development at all levels.

### EDD 822 LEA Governance, Management and Finance

The course will explore the organizational structure and administrative relationships in school settings through the lens of systems thinking and the study of administrative behavior. Students will explore organizational theory, the collection and distribution of local, state and federal revenue, problems and issues in funding education, and resource allocation. Management of financial, personnel and physical plant resources will be explored. Students will develop the ability to work within governance, political and social forces affecting schools.

### EDD 823 Assessment, Technology and Data for School Improvement

This course explores the use of evaluative information for administrative decision making and the administration and evaluation of educational projects and programs. Students will develop the ability to assess needs, plan projects and programs, use technology for efficiency and effectiveness, and evaluate the impact of educational programs and decisions.

### EDD 825 The Superintendency: Climate, Personnel, and Supervision

This course explores the personal commitment required in the role of the school superintendent, the study of systematic leadership theory and practice, the development of professional competencies and the ability to create the climate and capacity for learning across the organization. Research, theory, and best practices of instructional leadership will be explored as a means to build capacity and equity for student learning. The relationship between staff supervision, professional development, and student achievement will be stressed.

## EDD 826 Superintendency Practicum (solely required of students qualified to pursue licensure)

The field experience and course support allows the aspiring administrator the opportunity to practice administrative leadership in a setting beyond an individual school site. A practicum plan will document leadership exposure and practice in the administrative leadership standards for licensure. Students will examine a range of problems in school administration, develop projects to meet the needs of the field experience, and provide evidence and artifacts of learning through the completion of a final portfolio. The practicum will be supervised by a site administrator and Alverno faculty collectively.

## Superintendency Licensure

Once requirements are met, candidates will be endorsed for Superintendent licensure in the state of Wisconsin.

## Transformational Educational Leadership in Higher Education Settings

### EDD 831 Higher Education Legal Issues and Accreditation

In this course, students will compare and contrast regional accrediting body expectations, with an emphasis on the one that accredits IHEs in their region. They will apply what they learned about accreditation to write a proposal for a new degree program and prepare for a mock annual review.

### EDD 832 Higher education curriculum and assessment leadership

In this course, students will demonstrate their ability to work effectively and collaboratively with key higher education stakeholders with faculty. They will engage in examination and oversight of curricula, board and trustee engagement, and effective addressing of student and faculty concerns and grievances.

### EDD 833 Assessment, Technology and Data in Higher Education Settings

In this course, students will analyze data used in program evaluation, including retention, graduation and attrition data, evaluations of faculty, enrollment trends and patterns and use the analysis to design a program evaluation process for a higher education setting. They will analyze technological tools for mining and examining data from higher education settings and determine what tools are appropriate for what purposes. Applying what they have learned about transformational leadership, students will design a data “retreat” that uses data for program review and goal setting.

### EDD 835 Higher Education Roles, Responsibilities and Leadership

This course explores the personal commitment required in the role of the IHE leader, the study of systematic leadership theory and practice, the development of professional competencies and the ability to create the climate and capacity for learning across the organization. Research, theory, and best practices of system leadership will be explored as a means to build capacity and equity for learning. The relationship between faculty performance and academic innovation, professional development, and student achievement will be stressed.

# Specialization in Higher Education Teaching and Learning

## EDD 832 Higher education curriculum and assessment leadership

In this course, students will demonstrate their ability to work effectively and collaboratively with key higher education stakeholders with faculty. They will engage in examination and oversight of curricula, board and trustee engagement, and effective addressing of student and faculty concerns and grievances.

## EDD 833 Assessment, Technology and Data in Higher Education Settings

In this course, students will analyze data used in program evaluation, including retention, graduation and attrition data, evaluations of faculty, enrollment trends and patterns and use the analysis to design a program evaluation process for a higher education setting. They will analyze technological tools for mining and examining data from higher education settings and determine what tools are appropriate for what purposes. Applying what they have learned about transformational leadership, students will design a data “retreat” that uses data for program review and goal setting.

## EDD 838 Instructional Design Fundamentals

In this course, students will develop deep understandings of theories and practices of instructional design and assessment-as-learning related to their disciplinary/ content contexts in higher education institutions.

## EDD 839 Teaching, Learning, and Assessing in Diverse Educational Contexts

In this course, students will develop deep understandings of the lived experiences, cultural knowledges, and prior learning of the students in their higher education contexts. They will incorporate these understandings into engaging, inspiring, and authentic learning experiences in their content area(s) and related to higher education academic programs.

## All But Dissertation (ABD) Pathway

A student who can demonstrate that they have previously been advanced to candidacy in another doctoral program may be admitted to the ABD pathway. In this case, a student's required courses will be reduced based on their prior coursework. They will complete some core courses, a specialization set of courses, and the dissertation courses.

## Ed.S. to Ed.D. Pathway

# Dissertation Process

## Dissertation Advisor

The Dissertation Advisor is assigned at the beginning of the program and will be the main point of contact for the student as they move through the dissertation advisory courses. Advisors will meet with students, usually biweekly in the fall and spring semesters, and will provide oral and written feedback and guidance to the student. Students are responsible to meet expectations for communication, professionalism in meetings, and timely completion of work.

## Advisor Changes

If a student or advisor has concerns about their dynamic, they should contact the EdD program director. Advisor changes are only to be initiated after the student and advisor have first attempted to articulate and address points of tension. Students requesting an advisor change should do so recognizing that their request may imply delays in their program completion. Students may not request an advisor change more than once unless there are significant extenuating circumstances. The program director may initiate an advisor change if there is a program or faculty concern.

## Access to Scholarly Sources and Professional Literature

The Alverno College Library provides access to academic and scholarly resources. Below are several links that are designed to support doctoral students' work in their courses and on their dissertations.

1. Refining a Research Question  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/01-refining-a-research-question/story.html>)
2. EBSCO Databases  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/02-ebSCO-databases/story.html>)
3. Creating an EBSCO Account  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/03-creating-an-ebSCO-account/story.html>)
4. Searching EBSCO Databases – Part 1  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/04-searching-ebSCO-databases-pt-1/story.html>)
5. Searching EBSCO Databases – Part 2  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/05-searching-ebSCO-databases-pt-2/story.html>)
6. Organizing Your EBSCO Folder  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/06-organizing-your-ebSCO-folder/story.html>)

7. JSTOR (<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/07-jstor/story.html>)
8. Google Scholar  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/08-google-scholar/story.html>)
9. InterLibrary Loan  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/09-interlibrary-loan/story.html>)
10. Ebooks (<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/10-ebooks/story.html>)
11. NoodleBib (<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/11-noodlebib/story.html>)
12. Getting Assistance from Librarians  
(<http://media.alverno.edu/EDD800/library-tutorials/12-getting-assistance-from-librarians/story.html>)

## Dissertation Timing

Students will enroll in a Dissertation Advisory course each Fall or Spring semester that they are in the program. They will be expected to continue developing their dissertations during summer semesters, though there is not a formal Advisory course during the summer semester.

### EDD 800 Dissertation Advisory 1

In this course, students will identify a potential area for study, will identify members of the dissertation committee, and will develop the initial research question and complete a draft literature review.

### EDD 810 Advisory 2

In this course, students will complete the introduction and literature review, and (if taken concurrently with Research Methods 1) begin development of the methodology section or (if taken concurrently with Advanced Research Methods) complete their methodology section.

### Committee

Each student's dissertation committee will be comprised of no fewer than three and no more than five members. At least two must be members of the Alverno College faculty. "Outside" committee members must be proposed to the dissertation advisor and approved by program leadership.

### EDD 815 Proposal Defense

Once a student has completed her or his dissertation proposal in Dissertation Advisory 2 and Advanced Research Methods, which are taken concurrently for Spring start students and consecutively for Fall start students, they will participate in a proposal defense with their dissertation committee. In this defense, the student must succinctly and clearly set forth their research question, grounded in the literature, and describe their methodological proposal. They may also elect to describe their planned means of data analysis.

Prior to the defense, the student should have completed chapters 1, 2, and 3 of their dissertations (Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology.) The defense will be scheduled with the Dissertation Advisor and at least two other members of the student's committee (the program director may stand in for one member of the committee if schedule constraints require).

Elements of the Proposal Defense:

- Short introduction to the context, purpose, and research questions of the dissertation.
- Proposal Defense presentation (following provided template: Appendix A)
- Questions/ clarifications

## IRB

Students must submit required forms for exempt or non-exempt research to the Alverno College Institutional Review Board, either to the Education Division representative or the full board. They may also be required to submit IRB or other means of approval and consent to their own institution or school/district. If a student is studying Alverno College, they must also apply to the College for participant consent. The student is responsible for identifying these requirements and fulfilling them before they are permitted to gather data for their research. The Alverno College IRB web page on the College website has more guidance related to these processes and requirements.

## EDD 820 Dissertation Advisory 3

In this course, students will gather and analyze the data for their dissertation, and create the structure for their Findings section.

### Communication with Committee Members

As students gather and analyze their data, they must update members of their committee of their progress and process no less frequently than monthly. They must communicate with their Dissertation Advisor at minimum biweekly.

## EDD 830 Dissertation Advisory 4

In this final dissertation course, students will write up and defend their dissertation, receive feedback, and make any needed revisions.

## EDD 837 Dissertation Defense

The Dissertation Defense is a formal presentation of the entire dissertation project. Students must convey their entire finished dissertation to the committee members at least two weeks prior to the defense so that the committee members have the opportunity to raise any significant concerns prior to the defense. If significant concerns are raised, the defense may be rescheduled to provide additional time to address the concerns. If the defense itself yields



concerns or required revisions, the student must complete those revisions by at least two weeks before commencement and submit the revised dissertation to their Advisor. If they require more time to address or complete revisions, their program completion may be delayed.

#### Library Archive of Dissertation

Students must submit a copy of their completed dissertation to the Alverno College library, following the requirements of the Head Librarian.

# Student Success

## Course Engagement and Demonstration of Outcomes

### Time Commitment

Each week students will be expected to engage thoughtfully with course readings and resources, complete required assignments and demonstration of outcomes, and to identify growth areas for development. Only the student themselves can know how much time that will take. To strategize around ways to organize time successfully, please contact your faculty member.

### Email

Your Alverno email is an official way the college uses to communicate with you. This includes all instructor communication. Students are expected to read Alverno email at least every other day.

### Attendance and Engagement

Timely arrival and attendance at every synchronous class session is required, as well as active engagement in asynchronous collaborative assignments. If a student is absent or otherwise disengaged during more than two course modules, they may be unable to demonstrate outcomes for the course.

### Evidence of Outcomes

Each course syllabus lists required outcomes. These outcomes inform the design of course assessments and learning experiences. Faculty may alert students early on in the course if they have concerns about lack of evidence of outcomes. Evidence may be found in assignments, classroom engagement, peer group collaboration, course experiences, summative presentations, or other means designed by the faculty.

### Summative Assessments

Many courses incorporate a summative demonstration of outcomes. Guidance for summative assessments may be found in the syllabus, in the course learning management system (e.g. Moodle) or in the portfolio system (e.g. Livetext). Commonly a summative demonstration of course outcomes will be accompanied by a required summative self assessment.

## Progress Codes

### Alverno College Philosophy of Assessment: Why we don't use grades

Alverno's method of evaluating student learning, called assessment, is integral to learning in the Alverno graduate programs. Unlike many forms of testing, assessment evaluates not just what students know, but how well they can apply what they know.

The system of student assessment at Alverno College does not include reference to letter grades. In fact, one tenet of the College's educational philosophy is that the faculty do not evaluate students comparatively using letter grades. Instead, we establish criteria for effective performance in each course. In the graduate programs, these criteria reflect standards for achievement within the discipline and professional areas, which guide all courses in the specific program. As part of professional programs, graduate course assessments are designed to engage students within their disciplinary and professional contexts. Examples include writing business reports that address strategic and operating issues, preparing proposals for inquiry-based nursing projects, and developing mentoring handbooks for school districts. We then provide students with significant narrative feedback describing the quality of their performances relative to those standards. A student who does not meet these standards at the level defined in each course does not pass the course. As a continuous process in which the students themselves play an active role, assessment helps both the student and the faculty member judge the student's progress toward meeting criteria for a given course.

Due to the rigor of our curriculum, we are able to confirm that a student who has successfully completed a course is held in "good standing." This means that any student in good standing at the College has demonstrated the requisite understanding and practice of the disciplines/profession for the courses s/he has completed. Faculty distinguish quality of performance by providing a written evaluation of the student's work that documents the specific way the student met or exceeded those standards. At the time of graduation, those evaluations are synthesized into a narrative statement that describes the quality of the student's graduate work. This narrative statement is an objective evaluation of the quality of the graduate's performance in her/his program of study and is an integral part of each student's official final transcript.

The record of courses taken and a detailed profile of the student's strengths and accomplishments become part of each student's permanent records. Because this method provides much more information than a grade and fosters continuous learning, it is approved by accrediting bodies and accepted by graduate schools and employers. In fact, educators from across the country and around the world regularly visit Alverno to learn about this innovative and effective approach to helping students learn.

## Progress Report/ Academic Evaluation

A student's progress report is available on Interactive Online (IOL) approximately one week after the close of the semester. Contact the Registrar's Office for access information.

### Satisfactory Progress Code

Progress in courses is reported as Satisfactory (S) when all requirements of the course — mastery of subject matter and development of abilities — have been met.

### Unsatisfactory Progress Code

An Unsatisfactory (U) indicates insufficient evidence for meeting the standards of the course.

### Incomplete (I) Progress Code

An Incomplete (I) is reported when only a minimal amount of work remains to be completed. An Incomplete must be removed by the date stipulated by faculty. An Incomplete in a prerequisite course must be satisfactorily removed and reported to the Registrar's Office before the student can begin the subsequent course(s). If the Incomplete is not removed, an Unsatisfactory is awarded.

### Grade Equivalencies

When a faculty member enters a progress code, they also enter a "grade equivalent." For a graduate student who has been successful in a course, that number will be either a 3.0, 3.5, or 4.0. Students may request their grade point equivalent from the Registrar. Faculty advisors do not have access to students' GPE.

### Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

If a student believes that they have evidence from their professional expertise that aligns to and demonstrates alternative sources of evidence of outcomes for a course, they may contact the EdD Program Director to learn more about Alverno's processes for evaluating and assessing evidence related to awarding Credit for Prior Learning. If the program director approves the request to demonstrate evidence of prior learning, the student will create an evidence portfolio and a self assessment narrative following Alverno CPL processes. If the review of materials is determined to be sufficient evidence of outcomes, the student will be awarded credit for the course. Students may not receive more than 6 credits (two courses) via CPL.

## Repeating Courses

Students who have not demonstrated outcomes for a course may be required to repeat it or demonstrate equivalent outcomes attained elsewhere. If a student wishes to apply coursework

completed elsewhere as evidence, this must be approved by the program director or the student's advisor.

## Academic Status

Students with a concerning pattern of lack of successful attainment of outcomes may be placed on probation, probation with warning, or in extreme circumstances, recommended for dismissal from the College.

## Appeals Process

Students wishing to appeal a progress code or academic status decision must complete the official College appeals process, available on the Alverno College website.

# Commencement

In the final semester of the program, students will receive guidance from the Alverno College Registrar and Student Services related to the Commencement celebration, process, requirements, and travel arrangements.

# References

Allen, Carrie (2016). Alverno College: Lessons from an Assessment Pioneer. National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Retrieved 10/2/20 from <https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/AlvernoCaseStudy.pdf>

“Unfolding Understandings: A History of the Alverno Learning Process.” Retrieved 10/2/20 from <http://lampout1.alverno.edu/archives/alphistory/assessment.html>

Alverno College Faculty (2015). Feedback is Teaching. Milwaukee, WI: Alverno College Institute.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Dissertation Proposal Defense Template

The dissertation proposal presentation should include the following elements.

- Welcome and Introduction
- Acknowledgement of Committee
- Problem Statement
- Background of Problem
- Significance
- Research Question(s)
- (Optional) Key Terms
- Limitations of the Study
- Methodology
- Ethics and Participant Consent
- Closure
- Questions

[A replicable presentation deck that may be used for students' dissertation defense presentations is available online.](#)