

**A Commitment to Quality:**

**Guidelines for Higher Education  
Administration and Leadership  
Preparation Programs  
at the Masters Degree Level**

Proposed by

The Executive Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on Guidelines  
of the Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Programs  
(CAHEP)

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As early as 1893, G. Stanley Hall called for the study of higher education to be equal to that of other disciplines, and went on to outline the purposes of Higher Education programs as a degree to train administrators and faculty for the field. Dressel and Mayhew (1974) and Fife and Goodchild (1991) have since echoed these sentiments in seminal writings, such as, *Higher Education as a Field of Study: The Emergence of a Profession* and *Administration as a Profession*, respectively. The espoused purposes of such programs, along with the assessment of student learning, provide a foundational basis for this document.

### **Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this CAHEP Self-Assessment Guide is to broadly promote principles of good practice in higher education administration and leadership preparation programs at the master's degree level while also respecting institutional and program mission differences. Unlike student affairs and community college specializations, these proposed guidelines are designed to:

- Promote “principles of effective practice” in higher education administration and leadership.
- Place student learning central to their purpose as aspiring higher education administrators and leaders.
- Incorporate contemporary theory, research, and praxis from major international academic and professional associations in the field of higher education administration and leadership.

There are currently over 200 higher education programs in the United States, Canada, and Europe. While there are a range of higher education programs across the globe, higher education administration and leadership programs represent a unique and specific nexus between practice and theory.

### **Guidelines for the Higher Education Administration and Leadership Programs at the Master’s Degree Level**

Guidelines for higher education administration and leadership programs are organized under program, content, and outcome domains.

#### **Program Domain**

This domain addresses general program operations. As such, this domain and the following guidelines seek to provide guidance for program structure and functioning.

**Guideline 1:** There is a distinctive mission and vision for the higher education administration and leadership program. A comprehensive mission statement has been developed that centers the program in the field of higher education administration and leadership.

**Guideline 2:** While higher education administration and leadership programs range up to 10 faculty members, at a minimum the academic unit that oversees the entry-level program

has two (2) full-time, tenure track faculty members academically prepared in higher education administration and leadership and hold a degree in higher education administration, leadership or related field. One of the two members should be designated as the academic program leader.

**Guideline 3:** Leadership at the university, school, college, and department levels is committed to providing the higher education administration and leadership program with sufficient support and resources to ensure continuity, quality, and effectiveness in all of the its service delivery. This includes, but is not limited to: academic freedom, program faculty control over admissions, the hiring of personnel, support for the higher education administration and leadership program faculty to participate in professional organizations and activities (e.g., professional travel, research, and leadership positions).

**Guideline 4:** The higher education administration and leadership program advocates for a culture and climate that is inclusive and supportive.

**Guideline 5:** The higher education administration and leadership program is characterized by integrity, fairness, and ethical behavior.

### **Content Domain**

This domain addresses issues pertinent to the Higher Education Administration preparation program curriculum. As such, this domain, and the following guidelines, seek to provide guidance for how content is determined.

**Guideline 6:** The program provides core knowledge and content that bridges practice to theory. Topics should include but are not limited to:

- History and Philosophy of Higher Education
- Administration and Leadership in Higher Education Context
- Economics and Finance of Higher Education
- Higher Education Law
- Organizational Development and Change Theories

Other content areas appropriate to a well-rounded higher education administration and leadership include: Research, Assessment and Evaluation, Global Perspectives and Internationalization of Higher Education, Multiculturalism, Practical experience in a supervised context through Assistantships, Practicum and/or Internship, Technological Competence and Computer Literacy, Academic Ethics, Student Development Theories, and Issues in Higher Education.

**Guideline 7:** The higher education administration and leadership program provides students with opportunities to demonstrate the integration of practice and theory. Examples can be from courses, a capstone experience, or summative project where students demonstrate theory to practice knowledge to resolve an administrative higher education problem.

### **Outcome Domain**

This domain addresses general program outcomes. As such, this domain and the following guidelines seek to provide guidance for program outcome expectations and communication.

**Guideline 8:** The higher education administration and leadership program develops and clearly articulates student outcomes that are consistent with the program vision, mission, and content.

**Guideline 9:** The higher education administration and leadership program provides clear outcome expectations to students at the time of application to the program, with any revisions provided immediately upon acceptance to the program. It is recommended that programs develop a student handbook as a program resource.

**Guideline 10:** The program outcomes are consistent with the forms and standards of quality in the field of higher education leadership and administration. The five general forms of outcomes are: capstone/fieldwork project, comprehensive exam, thesis research, manuscript thesis, or coursework based master's. The standards of quality in the field should be consistent with the guidelines from the Council of Graduate Schools, peer reviewed publications, or appropriately developed quality standards to the specified outcome.

*Note: These draft "program guidelines" are based, in large part, on a combination of Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), Council for Accreditation and Counseling Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) program guidelines and standards as adapted for purposes of this initial draft. The draft program guidelines were presented to the ASHE Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Programs (CAHEP) during its 2008 annual business meeting.*

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