

ORIENTATION SESSION

School Leaders PhD Program

Cohort Beginning Fall 2026

December 2, 2026

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Vision, Mission, and Values

- **Vision:** We strive for a transparent, caring, and ethical environment that cultivates educational leadership pioneers - who through integrity, fairness, and knowledge - shape a better world that promotes human dignity.
- **Mission:** The Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology is a community of scholars engaged in programs: Higher Education Leadership, School Leaders, and Research Methodology. We focus on the preparation and support of practitioners, leaders, and researchers in Florida, the nation, and the international community through courses, undergraduate and graduate programs, professional learning, and community service.
- **Values:** With our values, we align our words and actions as we strive to:
  - Act with honesty, transparency, and respect.
  - Be an evolving community of learners grounded in collegiality, collaboration and mentorship.
  - Promote a society where individuals and cultures are valued, where everyone is afforded opportunities that can fulfill their differing needs, and where all inhabit an environment that is safe physically, emotionally, and socially.
  - Engage continuously in discovery, reflection, and the creation and application of knowledge.
  - Excel with quality in everything we do individually and collectively.

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Faculty Introductions

Department Chair: Dr. Robert Shockley



Dr. Shockley has been apart of our owl community since 1989!

A full professor and committed faculty member, his current selected research interests are in the area of educational policy specifically:

- teacher preparation and leadership,
- teacher recruitment, motivation, retention, and induction

Dr. Maysaa Barakat



Dr. Barakat is a full professor and distinguished educator with a passion for academic and professional excellence, commitment to social justice and inclusion, community engagement, and international mindedness.

She received her doctorate from Auburn University and joined FAU in 2014.

Her selected research includes examining school leaders' cultural competency

Dr. Patricia Maslin-Ostrowski



Dr. Pat is a full professor in our department, and has earned degrees from Syracuse University, Columbia University, and Harvard University before joining the faculty at FAU.

Her research and practice center on the human dimensions of leadership and the quest for more effective policy and practice in support of leader learning and growth and that lets leaders approach their work holistically.

Dr. Meredith l. Mountford



After eight years as a teacher, one year as a principal, and three years as a superintendent, Dr. Mountford earned her Ph.D. in Educational Administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

An Associate Professor in the Department, her selected research interests include:

- The Superintendency
- School Boards
- Education Policy

Dr. Daniel Reyes-Guerra



Dr. Reyes-Guerra serves as the Coordinator of the School Leaders Program and Executive Director of the Office of Educational Leadership Learning (the professional learning arm of the Program).

A full professor in the Department, he is the Principal Investigator on various grants. Some selected research interests include:

- University-district partnerships
- School improvement/ effectiveness
- School Leadership Team Effectiveness

School Leaders Master's Program Faculty



Dr. John Hardman



Dr. Joyce Krzemienski



Dr. Taka Mays



Dr. John E. Critelli, Jr.

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School Leaders Support Administration



Kathleen
Dubois
Office Manager



Sunny Gross
Program Assistant

PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

FLORIDA ATLANTIC

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
Department of
Educational Leadership and
Research Methodology
College of Education

SCHOOL LEADERS PhD HOLDERS

Angela Fulton, PhD

- Deputy Superintendent Teaching & Learning in Broward County Public Schools (BCPS)



Paul Houchens, PhD

Director of Research, Evaluation, and State Assessment at The School District of Palm Beach County



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SCHOOL LEADERS PhD HOLDERS

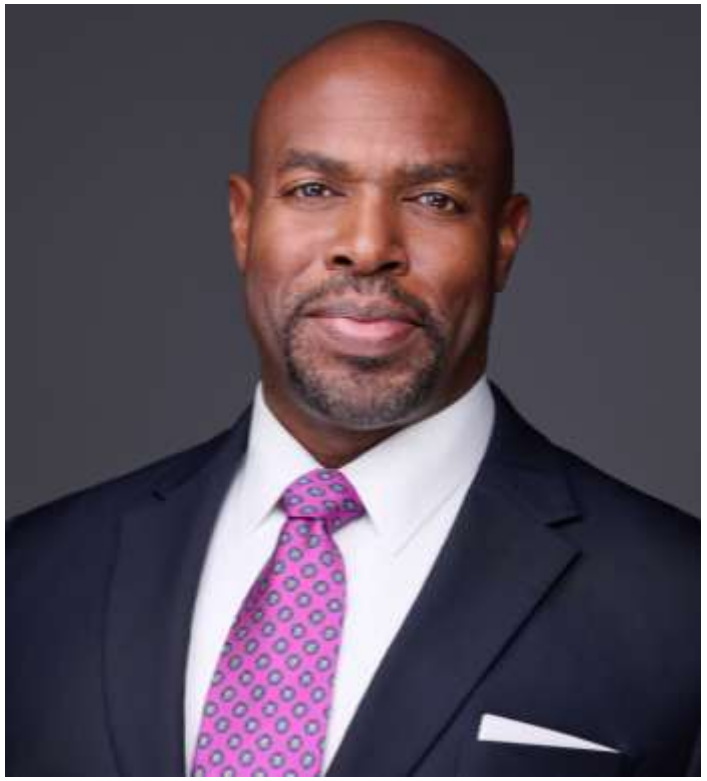
Helen Wild, PhD

Deputy Superintendent in St. Lucie Public Schools



Desmond Blackburn, PhD

President & CEO of Facing History & Ourselves



SCHOOL LEADERS PhD HOLDERS

Francine Baugh-Stewart, PhD

Director of Broward County Public School District



Cheryl Proctor, PhD

- Deputy Superintendent of Instruction and School Communities Portland Public Schools



SCHOOL LEADERS PhD HOLDERS

Leo Neosmith, PhD

Director of Broward County Public School District



Adam Miller, PhD

Director of Palm Beach County Public Schools



SCHOOL LEADERS PhD HOLDERS

Ginger Featherstone, PhD,

Business Development Manager at PBS Corp.
(Former Deputy Superintendent of Martin County Public Schools)



Vivian Green, PhD

Central Instructional Superintendent of School District of Palm Beach County



The Learning

- ***Enhance your professional knowledge*** through exposure to the most current research and literature
- ***Collaborate with your fellow PhD peers*** as you complete your course of study
- ***Improve your research skills*** as a writer and presenter



The Research

- Develop your skills by studying with ***nationally renowned scholars***
- Attend and/or present at ***national and international research conferences***
- With the advice and support of your dissertation chair and committee, ***conduct relevant independent research***



Professional Opportunities

- ***Network*** with fellow school leaders and researchers
- ***Advocate*** for student success and become a stronger transformational leader and
- ***Teach and serve*** as an adjunct or pursue a career in higher education



Program Requirements

- Leadership Foundation
  (6-15 Credits)
- Research Foundation
  (15 Credits)
- Professional Knowledge
  (18 Credits, including 9 Elective credits)
- Experiential Component
  (12 Credits)
- Dissertation
  (20 Credits)

Total of 80 Credits

Note:

- All courses are offered synchronously on-line via ZOOM and supported on FAU's Canvas platform.
- Courses that are offered by the School Leaders Program are held on Saturdays over 8-week periods and meet six times from 8:30am to 4:30pm
- Courses offered outside the program are offered in the same delivery format but may take place on weeknights.

Leadership Foundation Courses
(6 Credits)

- Prerequisites (do not count towards degree)
  - *ADE 6381 Leadership 1 - Adult Learning & Assessment*
  - *EDS 6100 Leadership 2 - Theory & Assessment*
  - *EDA 6103 Leadership 3 - Administrative Processes*

- Required Leadership Foundation Courses
  - *EDA 7106 Leadership 5 - Reframing Organizations*
  - *EDA 7931 Leadership 6 - Seminar in Executive Leadership*

Research Foundation Courses
(21 Credits)

- STA 7114 *Advanced Statistics*
- EDA 6415 *Introduction to Qualitative Inquiry*
- EDA 7421 *Introduction to Modes of Inquiry*
- EDA 7416 *Advanced Qualitative Inquiry*
- EDF 6432 *Measurement*
- EDA 7912 *Advanced Research (Literature Review)*
- EDF 7482 *Advanced Educational Research (Proposal)*

Professional Knowledge Courses
(21 Credits)

- EDA 7061 *Context of Educational Administration*
- EDA 6062 *School Improvement*
- EDA 7069 *Ethics and Policy Alternatives*
- EDA 7196 *Educational Leadership Foundations*
- EDA 7930 *Seminar in School Administration*

Plus six hours (two more courses) of electives

Experiential Component Coursework (12 Credits)

- Requirements
  - EDA 7948 *Adm. Externship # 1: Action Learning – 6 Credits*

- Research Conferences (can be substituted)
  - EDA 7905 *Directed Independent Study – American Educational Researchers Association (AERA) Conference*
  - EDA 7905 *Directed Independent Study –University Council of Education Administration (UCEA) Convention*

The Dissertation (minimum of 20 credits)



From Day 1 students begin to work on creating a Concept Paper that will be the backbone for their dissertation.



By the end of their required coursework, they submit the Concept Paper which serves as the Qualifying Exam.



Upon passing the Qualifying Exam, students then become candidates and work with their Dissertation Chair and Dissertation Committee members to create their Proposal.



Once the Proposal is accepted by the Committee, the candidate then conducts the study outlined in the Proposal.



Once the research is completed, the student submits and defends their Dissertation.



General Admission Requirements

- Minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 (Master's or Specialist Degree)
- Demonstration of scholarship skills and practices through writing and references
- If invited after first review, strong interaction during the interview process

- **Note**: Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the program

Application Process – Part 1

- **Prepare and submit online:**
  - Personal objective essay that:
    - identifies your career goals
    - demonstrates graduate level writing
    - makes evident your area of interest: what is my leadership research goal?
    - discusses how the School Leaders PhD will enable you to meet these goals
  - Professional résumé
  - Names and emails of three references (especially from scholars and people who can evaluate your work as a researcher/writer/professional)
  - Your email address (must have one upon entering the program)



Application Process – Part 2

- Complete the graduate admissions application online at: https://www.fau.edu/graduate/apply/

- Official transcripts sent to:
  - Florida Atlantic University
  - Graduate College
  - SU 80, RM. 101
  - 777 Glades Road, P.O. Box 3091
  - Boca Raton, FL 33431-0991

Admission Process

- March 1st is the deadline for Fall admission. However, understand that cohorts fill on a first come and first admit basis.
  - Online application completed
  - Application fee paid
  - Official transcripts received by Graduate College
- Upon receipt of completed application:
  - Committee reviews completed applications that meet the minimum requirements
  - Individuals whose applications received a favorable review are invited to an interview
  - Prompt for writing sample is sent via email the day before your interview

Need help?

Name	Contact	Role
Kathy DuBois	561-297-6551 kdubois4@fau.edu	Program Assistant
General Office	561-297-3550 Leadership.fau.edu	Department

Financial Aid

- FAFSA
- FAU's Financial Aid Website: http://www.fau.edu/finaid
- Florida Financial Aid for Teachers: http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/osfahomepg.htm
- FAU Fellowships and Awards: http://www.fau.edu/graduate/current-students/fellowships-and-awards.php

Estimated Current Costs

- Currently, a total of 60 credit hours will cost approximately $22,309.20.
- The average number of credit hours per semester is six, so on average you will be paying (not counting other fees and textbooks) $2,230.92.
- The estimated cost of 20 credit hours for dissertation is $7436.40.

https://www.fau.edu/controllers-office/student-services/tuition-breakdown/

Note: *Administrators or teachers who have served as teacher-mentors for student teachers or principal-mentors for aspiring assistant principals in FAU's Student Teaching or Internship collect certificates for 6 credit hours that can be used in one semester for every two semesters of service.*

School Leaders Faculty

Name	Campus	Specialty	Contact info
Dr. Maysaa Barakat	Boca	School Leaders	barakatm@fau.edu
Dr. John E. Critelli, Jr.	Davie	School Leaders	jcritelli2014@fau.edu
Dr. Taka Mays	Jupiter	School Leaders	mayst@fau.edu
Dr. John Hardman	Jupiter/Boca	School Leaders	whardma1@fau.edu
Dr. Joyce Krzemienski	Boca	School Leaders	jkrzemie@fau.edu
Dr. Pat Maslin-Ostrowski	Davie/Boca	School Leaders	pmaslin@fau.edu
Dr. Meredith Mountford	Boca	School Leaders	mmountfo@fau.edu
Dr. Daniel Reyes-Guerra	Boca/Davie	School Leaders	dreyes@fau.edu
Dr. Robert Shockley (Chair)	Boca	School Leaders	shockley@fau.edu

For Further Information



Educational Leadership Department Website: www.leadership.fau.edu



Phone: 561.297.3550



PhD Site: http://www.fau.edu/education/academicdepartments/el/school-leaders/doctorate/