The Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree is a unique professional degree for educators that is designed to provide the opportunity to develop a high level of proficiency in the field of study as well as develop research and leadership skills. Ed.S. degree programs are offered in eight areas of study. Programs of study leading to the Ed.S. degree enable students to meet certification requirements for the Georgia Professional Standards Commission as specified in Georgia Southern's “approved programs.” Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are eligible for the appropriate Level Six Certificate.

The Ed.S. degree requires a program of study to include a research sequence of nine (9) to twelve (12) credits, including Educational Statistics I (EDUR 8131), Field-Based Educational Research (EDUR 8434), and a directed field-based research course. Upon admission into the Ed.S. program, the student is responsible for meeting with the assigned graduate advisor. Collaboratively an individualized Program of Study should be developed that meets degree requirements and also reflects the student’s career goals, educational background, interests, and needs. Each program requires a culminating experience that is connected with the field-based research course, serves as the comprehensive exit assessment, and must be satisfactorily completed in order for the Ed.S. degree to be awarded. Upon completion of the Ed.S. degree, graduates are eligible to apply for the Georgia Level Six Certificate if they possess the Level Five Certificate in the field.

Admission to Ed.S. Programs

Georgia Southern University admits persons who display an educational development and achievement level that are better than average. To this end, admission requirements reflect previous educational orientation, and a judgment of admission or rejection is made by the College. For admission to the College of Graduate Studies to pursue the Education Specialist degree, the applicant should refer to the program page for specific information on admission, program of study, and other requirements.

A Georgia Southern University graduate student who is within six (6) credits of completing a Master’s program may, with the approval of the Master’s degree program advisor, enroll for a maximum of three (3) credits toward an Ed.S. program provided all College of Graduate Studies admission requirements for “Regular” Ed.S. admission have been satisfied except for completion of the Master’s degree. The total number of credit hours for the semester in which the Ed.S. enrollment is approved may not exceed nine (9) credits. Under no circumstances may a course be used for credit in both a student’s Master’s and Education Specialist programs of study.

Ed.S. Provisional Admission

If program policy allows, applicants may be approved for provisional admission based on the quality of the admission material presented. Provisional students must earn grades of “B” or higher in their first nine (9) credits of course work after admission and meet any other stipulations outlined by the department to be converted to regular status.

Ed.S. Comprehensive Exit Assessment

To complete degree requirements for the Ed.S. degree, each candidate must demonstrate the ability to conduct and present a field-based research project. The candidate and the graduate advisor should consider possible research topics that complement the candidate’s career objectives and Program of Study. Prior to enrollment in Field-Based Educational Research (EDUR 8434), the candidate is expected to have formulated a research topic and will select graduate faculty members to serve on the candidate’s Ed.S. Committee. The Ed.S. Committee will be comprised of at least 3 faculty members who guide the development, implementation, and defense of the field study. The research proposal developed in EDUR 8434 will include the statement of the problem, a literature review, hypotheses or research questions, and research methodology. In the directed field-based research course specific to the field of study, the candidate implements the field study using the proposal developed in EDUR 8434. The instructor guides the candidate in the implementation process and is responsible for evaluating the research project and assigning the final course grade. The project is then orally defended in a meeting with the candidate’s Ed.S. Committee members. This defense serves as the exit assessment for the program. The purpose of the defense is to assess the candidate’s knowledge of the topic area, the adequacy of the candidate’s application of research principles, and the ability of the candidate to articulate the results and implications of the study. The defense consists of a formal presentation by the candidate, followed by questions from the Ed.S. Committee.