

Tuition & Program Cost

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Sul Ross State University

Total Program Cost

The Ed.D. in Educational Leadership is designed to be among the most accessible doctoral programs of its kind in Texas and the region.

\$24,130

Total Program Tuition
60 credit hours | 3 years

\$402.17

Cost per Credit Hour
Among the lowest in Texas

The Ed.D. program operates under a special tuition rate established through the program's implementation agreement with the Texas State University System.

Semester-by-Semester Cost Breakdown

The program consists of nine semesters with varying credit loads. Below is the anticipated tuition cost for each semester:

| Semester | Credits | Tuition |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Semester 1 (Year 1, Fall) | 6 | \$2,413 |
| Semester 2 (Year 1, Spring) | 6 | \$2,413 |
| Semester 3 (Year 1, Summer) | 6 | \$2,413 |
| Semester 4 (Year 2, Fall) | 6 | \$2,413 |
| Semester 5 (Year 2, Spring) | 9 | \$3,620 |
| Semester 6 (Year 2, Summer) | 9 | \$3,620 |
| Semester 7 (Year 3, Fall) | 6 | \$2,413 |
| Semester 8 (Year 3, Spring) | 6 | \$2,413 |
| Semester 9 (Year 3, Summer) | 6 | \$2,413 |
| TOTAL | 60 | \$24,130 |

Note: Tuition rates are subject to change by the Texas State University System Board of Regents. Students will be notified of any tuition adjustments.

Payment Structure

Semester Billing

Tuition is billed each semester. Students pay for the credits they are taking that term before the semester begins. This structure allows you to spread the cost across nine semesters rather than requiring large upfront payments.

Payment Deadlines

Payment is due prior to the start of each semester according to the Sul Ross State University academic calendar. Specific payment deadlines will be communicated by the Cashier's Office.

Payment Methods

Sul Ross accepts payment via:

- Online payment through the student portal
- Check or money order
- Credit/debit card (processing fees may apply)

Payment Plans

Sul Ross State University offers payment plan options that allow students to divide semester costs into smaller monthly installments. Details about payment plan enrollment, fees, and schedules are available through the Cashier's Office.

Additional Costs

Beyond tuition, students should budget for the following. The program is designed to minimize these costs wherever possible.

Course Materials Below \$100/semester

The program philosophy is to limit student textbook expense by supplementing coursework with peer-reviewed journal manuscripts and open-access scholarly resources. To the greatest extent possible, materials fees are kept below \$100 per semester, resulting in a total materials cost below \$900 across the full program.

Technology \$0–500 one-time

If you do not already have them: a reliable computer with webcam and microphone, a headset for synchronous sessions, and adequate internet connectivity. Most students already possess these for their professional work.

Dissertation Costs \$200–500

Data collection tools or instruments, printing and binding of the final dissertation, and optional professional editing or formatting assistance.

**Professional
Development**
Optional

Conference registration fees if presenting your improvement work, and professional association memberships (ICPEL, etc.). These costs are optional but can enhance your professional growth and are often tax-deductible.

Total Estimated Additional Costs: Below \$1,500 over three years

Most additional costs are spread across the program duration and many qualify as tax-deductible professional development expenses.

Financial Aid

Federal Financial Aid

Ed.D. students are eligible for federal financial aid including:

Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans

- Graduate students may borrow up to \$20,500 per academic year
- Interest accrues during enrollment but payment can be deferred until after graduation
- Fixed interest rates set annually by the federal government

Federal Direct PLUS Loans (Grad PLUS)

- Graduate students may borrow up to the full cost of attendance minus other financial aid
- Credit check required
- Higher interest rate than Direct Unsubsidized Loans

How to Apply for Financial Aid

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at studentaid.gov
- List Sul Ross State University (Federal School Code: 003625)
- Submit FAFSA annually by priority deadlines
- Review your financial aid award letter from Sul Ross
- Accept, reduce, or decline offered aid

Priority FAFSA filing deadline: January 15 annually. Awards processed on a rolling basis after the priority deadline.

Financial Aid Office Contact

Sul Ross State University Financial Aid Office

Email: fa@sulross.edu | **Phone:** 432-837-8050

Employer Tuition Assistance

Many school districts, educational agencies, and organizations offer tuition reimbursement or assistance for employees pursuing doctoral degrees.

Common Employer Benefits

- **Tuition reimbursement programs:** Employers pay a portion or all of tuition costs, often requiring continued employment for a specified period
- **Professional development funds:** Districts may allocate annual funds for leadership development that can be applied to doctoral study
- **Salary increases:** Some districts provide salary increases for employees completing doctoral degrees
- **Schedule flexibility:** Employers may offer adjusted schedules or protected time for coursework

Questions to Ask Your Employer

- Does the district or organization offer tuition reimbursement for doctoral study?
- What is the maximum annual or total benefit?
- Are there service commitments or employment requirements?
- Can professional development funds be applied to tuition costs?
- Is there a process for requesting support for doctoral education?

Students are encouraged to explore employer support options early in the application process. Some employers require advance approval before beginning coursework.

Tax Benefits

Lifetime Learning Credit

Graduate students may qualify for the Lifetime Learning Credit, worth up to \$2,000 per year. This tax credit can be claimed for tuition and required fees.

- Modified adjusted gross income below specified thresholds
- Enrolled in eligible educational institution
- Taking courses to acquire or improve job skills

Tuition and Fees Deduction

Some students may qualify to deduct tuition and fees as a business expense if the education maintains or improves skills required in your current job.

Consult a Tax Professional

Tax benefits vary based on individual circumstances. Consult a qualified tax professional to determine which benefits you are eligible to claim.

Cost Comparison

The Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at Sul Ross is significantly more affordable than comparable programs in Texas:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Typical Ed.D. programs in Texas | \$35,000 – \$70,000+ |
| Sul Ross Ed.D. in Educational Leadership | \$24,130 |
| Savings compared to typical programs | \$10,000 – \$45,000+ |

Value Beyond Cost

- Small cohort size (15 students) ensuring individualized attention
- Faculty with extensive experience in rural and borderland educational leadership
- CPED-aligned curriculum grounded in improvement science
- Fully online delivery eliminating relocation or commuting costs
- Employment-integrated design allowing full-time work during the program
- Degree from a regionally accredited Hispanic-Serving Institution with deep roots in West Texas

Financial Planning Strategies

Year 1: Lower-Cost Semesters

Year 1 consists of three 6-credit semesters (\$2,413 each), making the initial financial commitment more manageable as you adjust to doctoral study.

Year 2: Highest-Cost Year

Year 2 includes two 9-credit semesters (\$3,620 each) in Spring and Summer, making this the highest-cost year. Plan accordingly and explore employer reimbursement or increased financial aid borrowing.

Year 3: Reduced Course Load

Year 3 returns to 6-credit semesters (\$2,413 each) as you focus on dissertation implementation and completion.

Creating a Financial Plan

- Calculate total program cost: \$24,130
- Identify employer support: amount per year
- Determine financial aid borrowing: amount per year
- Calculate out-of-pocket costs: Tuition + additional costs – employer support – financial aid
- Plan for semester-by-semester payments
- Build in contingency for unexpected costs
- Explore tax benefits to offset costs

Frequently Asked Questions About Cost

What if I can't afford a semester's tuition?

Contact the Financial Aid Office immediately to discuss federal loan options, payment plans, or other resources. Do not let financial concerns prevent you from enrolling.

Are there scholarships specifically for Ed.D. students?

Information about scholarships and funding opportunities specific to doctoral students will be provided to admitted students.

What if tuition increases during my time in the program?

Sul Ross State University strives to minimize tuition increases. Any changes are determined by the Texas State University System Board of Regents and would be communicated well in advance.

Can I take a semester off if I have financial difficulties?

The program requires continuous enrollment for cohort progression. However, students facing financial hardship should consult with the Program Director and Financial Aid Office to explore options before making decisions about enrollment.

Questions About Tuition and Financial Aid?

Financial Aid Office

finaid@sulross.edu
432-837-8050
sulross.edu/financial-aid

Cashier's Office

cashiers@sulross.edu
432-837-8053
sulross.edu/admissions/cashiers-office

Program Director

Dr. John Decman
john.decman@sulross.edu
educationdoctorate@sulross.edu

Your Investment in Leadership

At \$24,130 for a fully online, CPED-aligned doctoral program, the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership represents one of the most accessible pathways to advanced educational leadership preparation in Texas.

This investment prepares you to lead at the highest levels: as superintendent, college dean, executive director, or other senior leadership roles, while developing the capacity to drive meaningful, sustainable improvement in organizations and communities that need effective leadership.

The return on this investment extends far beyond salary increases or career advancement. It is measured in organizations improved through your leadership, students and communities better served, problems solved through disciplined inquiry, capacity built for continuous improvement, and networks formed with fellow scholar-practitioners.

We are committed to making doctoral education accessible to the leaders who need it most.