STOCKTON
U N I V E R S I T Y

Ed. D. in Organizational Leadership Program & Course Descriptions
As of August 2023

Program Overview

The Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership is a 54-credit program, beyond the master's degree, designed for the leader practitioner. In this program, leadership development is viewed as an integrated and sustained process, not as a series of events. We take the view that 'doing' high quality leadership is an essential outcome of this program. Thus, all leadership concepts and experiences are connected to and expected to be practiced within the leader's work environment.

The program includes:
- an interdisciplinary core of eight leadership-related courses (24 credits),
- four zero-credit competency artifact-related courses that allow students to show evidence of their development as a leader and their leadership practice in the workplace,
- the research and dissertation-in-practice (DiP) component of the program, which is comprised of two research-related preparation courses, two DiP proposal development courses, and three DiP development/implementation/defense courses (30 credits).

The Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership program is uniquely diverse and innovative in its interdisciplinary structure and focus. All elements of the program include a wide variety of leadership curriculum and theories, giving you opportunities to engage and learn with renowned educators and leaders across industry sectors. The program welcomes leaders from all types of professional backgrounds, disciplines, and organizations, including business, P12 education, higher education, faith-based, government including military, healthcare, non-profit agencies, and others.

Thanks to the program's unique model, students will join a cohort of experienced and passionate leaders in an online community setting that will lead to establishing lasting friendships as the cohort works together to complete the program's three-year and a semester journey. With a uniquely collaborative cohort and the program's strong emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), students gain perspectives, insights, and skills to advance their thinking and prepare them to become the greatest leader possible.

With a primarily online class format, the program will be accessible no matter where life takes the student. The Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership program's faculty is highly skilled in online course instruction, and nearly all class sessions are held synchronously with a cohort on weekends. That means students will be learning dynamic leadership concepts and building relationships with other creative and passionate leaders across all backgrounds right from the comfort and convenience of their own location. We offer our single residential course in mid-July of your first year in the program, steps from the boardwalk at our Atlantic City campus.

The Ed.D. program admits students on an annual, cohort basis. We welcome leaders of all organizational backgrounds and educational contexts. The minimum requirement for entry into this phase of the program is a MA/MS Degree, or completion of a program leading to a professional degree, i.e. JD, MD, etc.

Leadership-Related Courses (24 Credits)

These eight courses are offered as 3-credit courses. Courses will be offered primarily in an online synchronous delivery format. Each course will meet online via Zoom during four weekend sessions (Friday night, 6pm to 9pm, and Saturday, 8am to 4pm) during the fall and spring semesters and in an intensive one-week (6-day) format (6pm-9pm Sunday, and 8am to 4pm Monday through Friday) during the first summer session. Additional online experiences and assignments complement the online synchronous delivery format. Courses are taught by Stockton full-time and adjunct faculty who are experts in their respective disciplines. Guest speakers representing various organization types, who are experts in their fields, are also engaged providing insight into innovative, leading-edge theories and practices.

Each course in Phase I of the program includes three 'primary learning themes' that are included to organize the core leadership understandings, essential habits and mindsets, and learning activities specific to that course. Each of the first three weekends of each course will be dedicated to one of the primary learning themes. The fourth weekend will be dedicated to interconnecting and reinforcing the relationships between and among the three primary learning themes.

Course Descriptions

LEAD 6010: Leading Your Organization (3 Credits)

This course is designed to provide a relevant framework for the participant to nurture and apply the understandings, skills, and dispositions required of leaders for 21st century organizations; to encourage the investigation of the participant's leadership assumptions, behaviors, and goals; and to begin personal planning to improve leadership effectiveness. The course focuses on concepts at three levels: the individual, groups and teams, and the organization. At the individual level, the participant synthesizes the interconnections of personality, leadership styles, beliefs, values, motivations, and ethics as part of leadership practice and their collective effect on decision making within their own organization. At the next level, the participant explores the effects of group/team dynamics, team decision-making, collective and participative leadership, mentoring and coaching, and power and conflict within their own work environment. Finally, the participant examines the organizational level, focusing on: leading people, establishing and communicating vision, understanding and spanning boundaries, organizational structure and culture, ever-accelerating change, strategic planning, and sustainable improvement. Participants will also analyze their own and others' paradigms and leadership styles, and determine best practices to promote sustained improvement in the organization.

LEAD 6020: Engaging Communities and Stakeholders (3 Credits)

This course will examine leadership as it applies to communication and stakeholder engagement, both internal and external to the organization. Participants will investigate the impact that communication has on creating an open and ethical organization; identify the opportunities and challenges of stakeholder engagement with internal, external and diverse audiences; examine the power of the news and social media on building and sustaining communities of engagement;

organize and design for social responsibility; and assess the roles of stakeholder groups in sustaining organizational effectiveness. Participants will also investigate the opportunities and challenges leaders face in a changing, complex environment, focusing on aspects of leading global and diverse workforces and cultures. Evaluation of case studies and the creation of scenarios specific to current organizational events will offer participants practical, as well as conceptual, perspectives of communication and stakeholder engagement. Participants will reflect on their own experiences concerning leadership and stakeholder engagement in their own work environment.

LEAD 6030: Adapting to Change and Complexity (3 Credits)

Confronted with ever-accelerating, global, technological, and transforming changes in the work environment, most leaders and organizations find that they are neither prepared nor equipped to cope effectively. Complexity and ambiguity have become a new normal. This course emphasizes the need for leaders to understand that organizations are constantly changing and the necessity for leaders to practice the skills considered important to lead people in the changing landscape. Participants will examine and practice the ability to lead transformational change effectively. Concepts and strategies analyzed and assessed for leading change in a world of increased turbulence and complexity include: social, global, and technological influences, multi- perspective thinking, decision making, organizational design, individual and organizational behavior, group dynamics, interpersonal communication, conflict management and negotiation, empowerment and coaching, ethical use of power, diversity and cultures, performance benchmarking and assessment, adaptive challenges, resilience and sustainability, work stress, and critical reflection.

LEAD 6040: Transforming an Organizational Culture (3 Credits)

Organizational culture is complex; each part of the organization is dependent upon the other parts and all parts react to changes in any other part. This course will examine the leader's role in the culture creation process and the interconnections that exist between leaders, the people within the organization, the structures and boundaries, the intended outcomes, and how they, collectively, support, sustain, and/or change the collective norms, values, and climate that shape a culture within the organization. Participants will analyze and measure the reality of the culture within their organization in a complex, interconnected, and changing environment through surveys, scenarios, case studies, and reflective thought. Participants will examine strategies designed to create and evaluate understanding of the dynamics of organizational culture, including the psychological basis for human action, individual and organizational learning, communicating across diverse and global cultures, and intellectual capital. This course will also examine such concepts as communication, motivation, diversity, understanding differences, stress, power, influence, trust, and organizational change.

LEAD 6050: Thinking Creatively, Innovatively, and Entrepreneurially (3 Credits)

Whether participants are aspiring entrepreneurial leaders bent on launching new programs, products, or initiatives or leaders focused on growing an effective organization, the course will encourage participants to think big, far-sighted, and outside the box. The central focus of the course is on two key successful, creative factors: the qualities and mindset of a creative,

innovative, and entrepreneurial leader; and the leader's ability to recognize opportunities, overcome constraints, and avoid pitfalls. The course will examine the concepts, skills, and attitudes that are reliable for leaders engaged in a complex, changing, and ambiguous environment. Key questions raised and answered in the course include: What are the key aspects of the creative process? In what ways do creativity, innovation, imagination, divergent thinking, and entrepreneurialism connect? How do we evaluate an opportunity? How are creative growth and innovation defined in the organization? How do new initiatives grow? What are the strategies for creating, cultivating, and sustaining new ideas? What are the unique qualities of entrepreneurial leaders and their organizations? Entrepreneurial leadership combines the energy, discipline, and innovativeness to solve pressing organizational problems. Through readings, discussion with class peers, reflection, simulation, and active practice in the work environment, participants will explore the upsides of and obstacles to creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial leadership as a catalyst for improving the organization.

LEAD 6061: Leaders Serving with Ethics, Evaluation, Assessment, and Planning (3 Credits)

Consistent with the ideal that leadership is not just an act but a sustained way of serving and being, the course will assist the learner/leader in exploring the values-based, moral, and ethical foundations that frame the leader's personal, organizational, and societal contexts. Specifically, learners/leaders, will have the opportunity and space to focus "on understanding ethical and responsible leadership, the leader's role as an ethical agent within and outside the organization, and the organization's role as an ethical agent, spanning diverse boundaries. Emphasis is on connecting course concepts to the [learner]'s work environment" (Stockton University Catalog, Fall 2018). Key elements of the course will focus on both theory and application and how values-based, ethical, and moral concepts interplay with legal issues and affect the organization's development, behaviors and outcomes. Applications will include case studies and scenarios as well as reflective self-assessments to understand and develop the leader's role as an ethical agent within and outside the organization, and the organization's role as an ethical agent in society. A focus will be placed on connecting the course concepts and activities to authentic, real-world experiences.

This course will also examine applied concepts, methods, and strategies in the field of policy, process, and program development, implementation, and evaluation. The comprehensive range of interconnected activities involved in developing, implementing, evaluating, and assessing organizational programs and processes will be the primary focus of the course. This course will also introduce participants to the concepts of quality and assessment that can be applied to organizations. Participants are encouraged to connect and apply the concepts they learn about leadership, planning, quality, standards, accountability and accreditation to their respective organizations and experiences. Attention will be given to systems alignment and connection of organization values, culture, programs and processes along with a focus on the utilization of different tools for evaluating and assessing quality. Some examples include: cause and effect diagrams, affinity diagrams, relations diagrams, idea creation tools, SWOT analysis, check sheets, control charts, scatter diagrams, stratification techniques, balanced scorecard, data collection and analysis tools, and strategic planning.

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LEAD 6071: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (3 Credits)

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion course will focus on an understanding of the impact of DEI in leadership as it pertains to self, team, organization, and societal perspectives; developing criteria for determining and analyzing exemplary ethical behaviors for an organization and its core values, mission, and culture as it pertains to DEI; using the ethical criteria for an organization, be able to critique a case study of an organization faced with an ethical or legal dilemma centered around a DEI issue; and collaborating with fellow learners/leaders to provide perspectives on the complexity of ethical practices for an organization as it pertains to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

LEAD 6080: Cultivating Organizational Talent & Innovation (3 Credits)

In this course, participants will examine concepts of motivation, communication, leadership, power and change, and through reflective practice, apply the learnings to relevant, current issues in the workplace. Participants will also examine key development and reward systems aimed at improved performance and organizational efficiency through the power of collective and participative leadership and cooperative decision making. This course emphasizes the strategic role of the leader in identifying, recruiting, and selecting new employees; mentoring, coaching, and developing employees during the career process; respecting the principles of adult learning and stage development; and understanding global boundaries and diverse cultures within the organizational setting. Through simulations and direct applications into the work environment, participants will independently, as well as cooperatively, make and apply human resource and development decisions, communicate the justification for these decisions, report on overcoming constraints and differences; and reflect upon the practice of application and the outcomes realized. This course is intended to reinforce real-world application as well as build a formal dialogue between the participant and his/her peers in class as well as in the workplace. Participants will draw on current literature, scenarios, case studies, relevant experience and applied practice in the workplace to explore the organizing, planning, entrepreneurialism,

Competency Artifacts (0 Credits across 4 Courses)

The LEAD program places high value on applied leadership growth and development. for learners to display their leadership growth throughout the program, there is a program-level requirement to complete competency artifacts that evidence and display a learner's leadership growth in their own context. These requirements are one way that the program assesses leadership growth. Each learner in a cohort must complete 20 competency artifacts and will be assigned to a preceptor. The preceptor will have the primary responsibility for acknowledging the completion of competencies in each of four zero-credit courses. The size of these sections will vary with the size of the cohort and the number of available preceptors. All competency artifacts will be submitted to the students' preceptor.

Leadership Development Competencies and Habits of Mind

The Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership is styled as a leadership development program. The following leadership understandings, habits, and mindsets have been identified in the research on

leadership development and are considered overarching. Thus, they are not limited to a single course in the proposed program. Instead, they are integrated throughout the program and embedded as an interconnecting framework between and among the courses to provide richer, fuller, and reinforcing leadership experiences. These core understandings and habits of mind are not intended to be specific to any style of leadership, nor do they affect one type of organization more than another; they transcend all organization types. Instead, they represent the understandings, actions, and mindsets that all leaders will need to navigate the perpetual whitewater of leadership in the current and future environment.

Integrated leadership understandings, competencies, and actions are embedded throughout the program and are designed to connect leadership development with the real-world work environment. The core leadership understandings building the foundation for in the courses in the program follow:

- U1. Knowing yourself
- U2. Leading with ethical behavior and integrity
- U3. Thinking and planning strategically and systemically
- U4. Thinking and planning adaptively
- U5. Thinking creatively, innovatively, and entrepreneurially
- U6. Making decisions in a complex, chaotic, and interconnected environment
- U7. Leading and engaging others
- U8. Communicating verbally and in writing
- U9. Communicating strategically
- U10. Engaging stakeholders and embracing responsiveness, diversity, and inclusion
- U11. Helping people in the organization develop and grow
- U12. Coaching, mentoring, and developing new leaders in the organization
- U13. Facilitating and managing change
- U14. Creating and sustaining an organizational culture
- U15. Creating and sustaining an interdependent, participative leadership culture
- U16. Creating strong team and collaborative networks at the work environment
- U17. Establishing and communicating a vision that conveys direction, alignment, and commitment
- U18. Embedding social and moral responsibility into the organization's processes and procedures
- U19. Working comfortably with ambiguity and unpredictability
- U20. Understanding global boundaries and diverse cultures and how to span them

In addition to the core leadership understandings, leadership habits and mindsets are embedded throughout the program and are designed to foster reflective thought and inquiry about leadership as a developmental process. The essential habits and mindsets included in all of the courses in the program follow:

- H1. Thinking reflectively
- H2. Listening and connecting
- H3. Building trust and respect

- H4. Building and sustaining relationships
- H5. Inspiring and influencing employees
- H6. Building confidence, initiative, and accountability
- H7. Growing and improving from risk taking

Course Descriptions (All courses are 0 Credits)

LEAD 6001 Competency Artifact Completion I (First Summer Term for each cohort)

Satisfactory submission of five competency artifacts is required for the completion of this course. Each submission will be based on the Competency Artifact Submission Guidelines. For a competency artifact to be deemed as satisfactory, the artifact submission must be deemed skilled or competent according to the Competency Artifact Rubric.

LEAD 6002 Competency Artifact Completion II (Second Fall Term for each cohort)

Satisfactory submission of five competency artifacts is required for the completion of this course. Each submission will be based on the Competency Artifact Submission Guidelines. For a competency artifact to be deemed as satisfactory, the artifact submission must be deemed skilled or competent according to the Competency Artifact Rubric.

LEAD 6003 Competency Artifact Completion III (Second Spring Term for each cohort)

Satisfactory submission of five competency artifacts is required for the completion of this course. Each submission will be based on the Competency Artifact Submission Guidelines. For a competency artifact to be deemed as satisfactory, the artifact submission must be deemed skilled or competent according to the Competency Artifact Rubric.

LEAD 6004 Competency Artifact Completion IV (Second Summer Term for each cohort)

Satisfactory submission of five competency artifacts is required for the completion of this course. Each submission will be based on the Competency Artifact Submission Guidelines. For a competency artifact to be deemed as satisfactory, the artifact submission must be deemed skilled or competent according to the Competency Artifact Rubric.

Research and Dissertation-Related Courses (30 Credits)

The minimum requirement for entry into this phase of the program is completion of Phase I of the program or use of a Competency-Based / Experiential Portfolio Assessment to determine if the applicant has completed the core understandings and essential habits integrated throughout Phase I of the program.

Course Descriptions

LEAD 6100: Quantitative and Qualitative Research (3 credits)

This course covers all aspects of writing a major applied research paper. Discussion of relevant theories and methodologies, including: qualitative research methods; surveys, focus groups, and

interview-based research; quantitative research methods and descriptive statistics; and software for research. The course also covers skills and techniques to be completed as a research project in phases. Assignments will help prepare the student for undertaking the required applied research project as the capstone experience. This course is an intermediate research course allowing students to apply research concepts to specific student-identified research projects. The course will focus on both qualitative and quantitative designs and the importance of linking problem identification, methodology, data gathering, and interpretation of results as an integral process when conducting research projects at the graduate quality level.

LEAD 6500: Research Seminar (3 credits)

This course is an in-class research seminar for doctoral students who are entering the dissertation phase of the program. It covers all aspects of completing a dissertation: selecting a topic, conducting a literature review, designing the correct research method(s), drafting a dissertation proposal, defending the proposal, writing sections/chapters, and practicing for an oral defense. The course will also cover the college's requirements for completing the dissertation, including the APA, style guide, IRB, etc.

Dissertation topics of interest could reflect an issue, concern, program, or practice in the organization that the student would like to explore in more detail, seeking an advanced degree of understanding and possible resolution; or the topic of interest could be designed to expand current knowledge, understanding, and improvement within a specific competency area of leadership. Significant effort is made towards the development of Chapter 1 of the dissertation.

LEAD 6800 & LEAD 6801: Dissertation Proposal Development I & II (3 credits each; 6 Total Credits)

For the *LEAD 6800* course, each doctoral student in a cohort is assigned a Dissertation-in-Practice (DiP) Chair. The DiP Chair will work with the student for this and the next four courses through the dissertation defense. Students continue the efforts they began in *LEAD 6500* towards dissertation proposal development by updating Chapter 1 and making significant progress towards development of Chapter 2 – Literature Review.

For the *LEAD 6801* course, students continue the efforts from *LEAD 6500 & 6800* towards dissertation proposal development by updating Chapters 1 & 2 and making significant progress towards development of Chapter 3 – Research Methods. During this course, students begin to think about what is needed to apply for IRB. They also complete the Citi Training necessary for IRB approval.

In these and subsequent courses, DiP Chairs and student pairs meet as they deem necessary, usually virtually. Communication can take place with individual students or in small connected and collaborative groups of students (students that the DiP Chair supervises or students across the cohort). The professor will be involved in some of the communication but does not have to be involved in all these communications. The degree of, method, and need for the professor to be involved will be determined by the student and professor. Student-to-student communication, especially on related topics of interest, is strongly encouraged.

LEAD 7100 (6 credits), 7101 (6 credits), and 7102 (6 credits): Dissertation-in-Practice (18 Total Credits)

Participants will continue to pursue independent action research and write a dissertation-in-practice under the supervision of DiP chair (and committee if applicable). The DiP is an authentic undertaking that identifies a complex issue, concern, or practice in the organizational setting; develops and applies meaningful solutions through disciplined, reflective inquiry; and measures and analyzes the actions and results for the impact made.

- In *LEAD 7100*, students must submit an application to IRB to pass the course
- In *LEAD 7101*, students must collect data for their study and start/complete a draft of Chapter 4 to pass the course.
- In *LEAD 7102*, students must complete Chapter 5 and defend their dissertation to pass the course.

Successful completion of ALL the following will result in the participant receiving a Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership:
- **8 Leadership-related courses**
- **4 Competency Artifact courses**
- **7 Research/Dissertation-related courses**

Dissertation in Practice (Action Research) Overview

Purpose

The action research dissertation in practice is the culminating, or capstone, experience of the Stockton University Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership. The experience begins in LEAD 6501 (Research Seminar II) with exploration of possible problems of practice within the organization that could be developed into a project and continues in LEAD 7100 (Dissertation in Practice) as a year-long independent research and evaluative undertaking. We believe the action research dissertation in practice experience, rather than the traditional dissertation, integrates the analytic abilities, professional understanding, contextual knowledge, and teamwork skills that are accrued throughout the Ed.D. program, and more closely mirrors the challenges that organizational leaders face in today's environment. Like the doctoral program itself, the action research dissertation in practice is innovative and different.

As described by the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate, this culminating, or capstone, experience creates: "'Laboratories of Practice' as settings where theory and practice inform and enrich each other. They address complex problems of practice where ideas—formed by the intersection of theory, inquiry, and practice—can be implemented, measured, and analyzed for the impact made in the organization. Laboratories of Practice facilitate transformative and generative learning that is measured by the development of scholarly expertise and implementation of practice." (http://cpedinitiative.org/design-concept-definitions)

In the proposed dissertation in practice process, there is less concern for universality, or

generalization, of findings as more value is placed on the relevance of the findings to the researcher and his/her local collaborators, as well as the benefits to and improvement of the organization. Thus, our action research dissertation in practice experience is designed to be specific to an organization. The action research dissertation in practice experience is distinctive because of its interrelated purposes:

- The purpose of a doctoral candidate's action research dissertation in practice implementation is to make a positive difference in an organizational setting in which the candidate currently is serving. If a candidate is not presently working in an organization, we will assist the candidate in seeking an organization in which to conduct the dissertation in practice, or offer the candidate an authentic problem, issue, or concern submitted to the Ed.D. program by an organization.
- The purpose of a candidate's action research dissertation in practice is to investigate a problem, issue, or concern as well as implement an action systematically and methodically through a form of disciplined reflective inquiry.
- The action research dissertation in practice experience stresses research literacy, a set of skills and knowledge that leaders need to understand and use in making practice and policy decisions. Throughout the Ed.D. program, candidates will focus on issues of research literacy, methods of systematic inquiry, and the identification and analysis of data and information, with the primary goal of building the skills leaders need for effective decision making. In order to base action upon research, leaders must be able to judge the quality, applicability, and limitations of the research.
- One purpose of a candidate's action research dissertation in practice is to report the investigation and results of the action to an external audience. Thus, the project will be framed in local organizational terms, that is, the overall project will address a pressing organizational need, such as programmatic innovation, design, evaluation, policy, or political initiative. In the action research dissertation in practice project, the external audience must be identified.
- Action research can be thought of as a process of deep inquiry into one's practices in service of moving towards an envisioned future, aligned with values.
- Action research can be seen as a systematic, reflective study of one's actions, and the effects of these actions, in a workplace or organizational context. As such, it involves deep inquiry into one's professional practice and the benefit of that practice to the organization.
- Critical reflection is at the heart of action research, and when this reflection is based on careful examination of evidence from multiple perspectives, it can provide an effective strategy for improving the organization's ways of working and the whole organizational climate. It can be the process through which an organization learns, improves, and grows.

In general, the purpose of the action research dissertation in practice in the Stockton University Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership is to report the consequences of a particular organizational change effort. The purpose is not to fill gaps in, or add to, the knowledge base of a scholarly discipline.

Features

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The following are key features of an Action Research Dissertation in Practice:
- The scale of the action is small enough to be completed in conjunction with the participant's full-time work as a leader in an organization; yet, it should be substantial enough to potentially demonstrate positive benefits for the participants in the study. It ought to be small enough to do well and large enough to matter.
- The action is influenced by the best scholarship available. The review of scholarship in the dissertation in practice / action research project results in the selection of strategies that support the change effort(s) to be implemented. The review is targeted, selective, practical, and highly relevant to the change effort. A traditional, comprehensive literature review is not appropriate for an action research dissertation of practice.
- The research design features are based on action research and mixed-methods methodologies. Random assignment to treatments, control groups, and inferential statistics generally are not appropriate for an action research dissertation in practice because it is not concerned with generalizability, universal principles, or hypothesis testing.
- The resources needed to complete the action research dissertation in practice are typically modest. Resource demands should not exceed what is normally available in the candidate's organizational work setting.

General Dimensions of the Action Research Dissertation in Practice

- An Action Research Dissertation of Practice is a scholarly product that demonstrates a candidate's ability to frame and critically inquire into a significant problem of practice and to develop defensible recommendations to solve the problem of practice.
- Action researchers use the literature as a foundation for inquiry at key points: framing the problem, synthesizing what is known about the problem, investigating the problem and informing the solutions and implications of the dissertation of practice
- Action researchers emphasize the creation/development of a transformative change in an organizational setting through continual learning, progressive problem solving, and by taking purposeful action
- Action researchers use practices to generate theories beginning with values, needs, and knowledge of human interaction.
- Action researchers are empowered to locate problems of practice within their organization and develop methods to improve them. The dissertation in practice work should contribute to an improvement in organizational practice.
- Action researchers define the questions to be investigated. The questions asked by action researchers guide their process. A good question will inspire one to look closely and collect evidence that will help find possible answers.
- Action researchers locate problems, issues, or concerns and engage in progressive and participatory research and problem solving.
- Action researchers communicate and share what they have learned, thus helping to improve the organization in which one's practice is embedded.
- The dissertation in practice experience demonstrates an action researcher's ability to present ideas, arguments and evidence in a logical, systematic, and coherent fashion in

both written and oral formats.

- The required product of the action research dissertation in practice process is a reader-friendly written report that describes the needs addressed, the action taken and reasons why, the consequences for participants, and lessons learned by the author(s).

Specific Components of the Action Research Dissertation in Practice Experience

Authentic problems of practice can typically be identified from within the organization. However, authentic problems of practice could also be submitted to the Ed.D. program from various organizations as problems, issues, or concerns that exist in various types of organizations. Preferably, candidates will work on a problem of practice specific to the organization in which he/she works. If necessary, we will assist a candidate in seeking an organization in which to conduct the action research dissertation in practice, or offer the candidate an authentic problem, issue, or concern submitted to the Ed.D. program by an organization. Candidates will work individually, or as part of a small team (referred to as a collaborative, or companion, dissertation in practice team) on an authentic problem of practice that requires them to understand the problem as posed, analyze the issue from multiple perspectives, and respond with practice and/or policy.

Candidates primarily work with a three-person advisory team, comprised of a Primary Faculty Dissertation in Practice Advisor, as well as a Second Faculty Reader and an External Reader, or Community Reader. Two of the three members of the advisory team must be members of the Stockton University faculty. The third member of the advisory team is external to Stockton University and is usually selected by the candidate. While the candidate will work closely with all three members of the Dissertation in Practice committee, he/she will work closest with the Primary Faculty Dissertation in Practice Advisor. The Dissertation in Practice experience culminates in an oral presentation followed by questions from the candidate's Doctoral Dissertation in Practice Committee. In addition, selected representatives from the external audience identified in the project by the author will be invited to attend the oral presentation.

The dissertation in practice represents a sophisticated and complete recapitulation of a process that is a year-long quest to discover local knowledge, create local change, study the effects, and implement more informed change. The following dissertation-in-practice designs are applicable:

Action research is a reflective process of progressive problem solving led by individuals or by teams as part of a collaborative practice to improve the way they address issues and solve problems. Action research involves the process of actively participating in an organization change situation while conducting research.

Inquiry is the process of posing significant questions that focus on complex problems of practice. By using research, theories, and professional knowledge, practitioners design innovative solutions to address the problems of practice. As such, inquiry of practice requires the ability to gather, organize, judge, aggregate, and analyze situations, literature, and data through a critical and reflective lens.

The completed Action Research Dissertation in Practice will:

- Describe the organization,
- Develop primary and supporting questions that define, describe, and justify the existence of the problem, issue, or concern in the organization,
- Conduct a targeted review and synthesis of relevant literature,
- Design a plan for implementation, based in research, that is intended to offer an effective response to the identified problem; implement a research design that includes the collection of data and information, plans for analysis, and provides a framework for assessing the effects of the proposed action project,
- Describe the analysis of the data and information collected,
- Present the results and conclusions, and
- Discuss the implications of the findings for practice, policy, and research specific to the organization, as well as reflect on the leadership lessons learned as a result of leading the action research dissertation in practice experience.