May 15, 2025

Sanjay Rai, Ph.D.
Secretary of Higher Education
Maryland Higher Education Commission
217 East Redwood Street, Suite 2100
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Secretary Rai:

Notre Dame of Maryland University is happy to submit a new program proposal for a Doctorate of Education in Policy and Practice for Changing Populations. The attached coversheet and program proposal indicate both the institutional support of the University's president, Dr. Marylou Yam, and the faculty and administration of the School of Education. We believe this program aligns with the State's educational goals for Marylanders and know it is consistent with Notre Dame's mission and strategic plan for the future.

We look forward to MHEC's response.

Yours sincerely,

Martha Walker, PhD
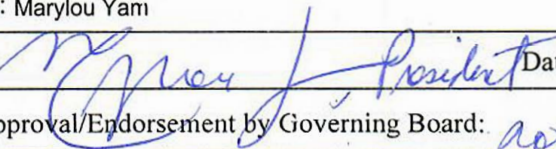Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Cover Sheet for In-State Institutions
New Program or Substantial Modification to Existing Program

Institution Submitting Proposal	Notre Dame of Maryland University

*Each **action** below requires a separate proposal and cover sheet.*

- ⦿ New Academic Program
- ○ New Area of Concentration
- ○ New Degree Level Approval
- ○ New Stand-Alone Certificate
- ○ Off Campus Program

- ○ Substantial Change to a Degree Program
- ○ Substantial Change to an Area of Concentration
- ○ Substantial Change to a Certificate Program
- ○ Cooperative Degree Program
- ○ Offer Program at Regional Higher Education Center

Payment Submitted: ⦿ Yes ○ No	Payment Type: ○ R*STARS # ⦿ Check #	Payment Amount: $850	Date Submitted: 5/15/25

Department Proposing Program	School of Education
Degree Level and Degree Type	Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)
Title of Proposed Program	Policy and Practice for Changing Populations
Total Number of Credits	48
Suggested Codes	HEGIS: 0827 CIP: 13.0406
Program Modality	○ On-campus ⦿ Distance Education (fully online) ○ Both
Program Resources	⦿ Using Existing Resources ○ Requiring New Resources
Projected Implementation Date (must be 60 days from proposal submission as per COMAR 13B.02.03.03)	⦿ Fall ○ Spring ○ Summer Year: 2025
Provide Link to Most Recent Academic Catalog	URL: https://catalog.ndm.edu/graduate-catalog

Preferred Contact for this Proposal	Name:	Juliann Dupuis
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President/Chief Executive	Type Name: Marylou Yam
	Signature: _____ President Date: 5/15/25
	Date of Approval/Endorsement by Governing Board: not applicable

Revised 1/2021

Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations

A. Centrality to Institutional Mission and Planning Priorities

1. Program Description and Alignment with Mission

The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations is a 60-credit, practitioner-focused doctoral program that prepares education leaders to address complex challenges in diverse and evolving educational contexts. Grounded in equity, data analysis, and policy innovation, the program combines rigorous coursework, hands-on practicum experiences, and a capstone project to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Students gain expertise in equitable based practices and policies, cultural and linguistic diversity, governance, and strategic planning in higher education and policy design for K12 and higher education settings. With specialization tracks in Higher Education Leadership and K12 Leadership, the program allows students to tailor their learning to specific career goals. The 12-credit practicum sequence immerses students in real-world policy design, implementation, and stakeholder engagement, culminating in a faculty-evaluated capstone project. The program also includes a 4-day on-campus residency focused on skill building in policy advocacy, advanced research methods, ethics, and professional networking. Delivered primarily online, the Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations offers working professionals the flexibility to pursue advanced leadership roles while balancing career commitments, equipping graduates to drive equitable and impactful change in educational systems at local, state, and global levels.

The proposed Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations reflects the institution's mission to advance academic excellence and community engagement. For example, the program aligns with institutional goals to promote equity by addressing educational disparities affecting marginalized populations. The university is nationally recognized by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation and is one of the top preparers of teachers in the state. The program focuses on preparing leaders to design and implement policies that close achievement gaps and promote equitable outcomes, reflecting the commitment to improving PK12 and higher education systems.

2. Support for Strategic Goals

The program supports institutional strategic initiatives to increase graduate program enrollments and improve student access to flexible learning. Its hybrid modality, with online courses complemented by an on-campus residency, expands access to working professionals who might otherwise be unable to pursue advanced degrees. The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations aligns directly with the goals and subgoals outlined in the NDMU Strategic Plan for 2020–2025, as detailed below:

Goal 1: Advance Inclusive Transformational Education and Student Engagement and Success
- Sub-Goal 1.1 (In demand Academic Programs): The program addresses critical shortages in education leadership by preparing professionals with expertise in policy design and equity-driven practices. This meets the demand for innovative, flexible doctoral programs catering to working educators.
- Sub-Goal 1.2 (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion): The program's core courses, such as Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and Equity in Policy Leadership, cultivate a culture of inclusion by equipping graduates to address systemic inequities in diverse educational settings.
- Sub-Goal 1.3 (Supportive Campus Community): The program includes a four-day residency focused on networking, leadership development, and collaboration, fostering strong connections among students, faculty, and peers.
- Sub-Goal 1.5 (Professional Success): The practicum sequence and capstone project enable students to apply theory to practice, preparing them for advanced roles in education policy and leadership.

Goal 2: Drive Enrollment, Philanthropic, and Financial Growth
- Sub-Goal 2.1 (Increase Enrollment): Delivered primarily online, the program is designed to attract local, regional, and national professionals seeking flexible doctoral education. Targeted marketing and cohort-based enrollment strategies align with enrollment growth objectives.
- Sub-Goal 2.3 (External Partnerships): The program emphasizes partnerships with local school systems and higher education institutions to create practicum opportunities and expand regional impact.
- Sub-Goal 2.4 (Revenue Growth): With competitive tuition rates and broad appeal to education professionals, the program is projected to generate consistent revenue, contributing to financial growth benchmarks.

Goal 3: Enhance Leadership Position and Visibility
- Sub-Goal 3.2 (Leadership in Education): By emphasizing equity and policy innovation, the program establishes NDMU as a leader in educational policy and leadership training, strengthening its position as a comprehensive regional university.
- Sub-Goal 3.4 (Domestic and Global Partnerships): The program supports the university's efforts to build national and international partnerships, particularly through its focus on policies that address global challenges in education.

Goal 4: Ensure Institutional Culture of Leadership, Innovation, and Excellence
- Sub-Goal 4.2 (Inclusive Working Environment): The program emphasizes diversity and inclusion in its curriculum, fostering a culture of equity in student experiences and professional outcomes.
- Sub-Goal 4.4 (Technology Enhancements): As a primarily online program, it integrates cutting-edge instructional platforms and faculty trained in Quality Matters (professional

development in quality online learning), ensuring a technologically advanced and engaging student experience.

Goal 5: Enrich SSND Charism and Life-Long Community Engagement
- Sub-Goal 5.2 (Social Responsibility and Justice): The program's focus on equity-driven policy aligns with NDMU's commitment to social justice, empowering graduates to enact meaningful change in their communities.
- Sub-Goal 5.3 (Service and Responsibility): The residency's emphasis on ethical leadership and equity advocacy reflects the university's service and social responsibility values.

3. Funding for the First Five Years

Initial funding will leverage tuition revenue, which, based on enrollment targets, is projected to exceed $1.2M annually by year five. Startup costs will be offset by reallocating existing faculty resources. The program will operate sustainably through robust enrollment projections and consistent demand as well as existing faculty lines and a market-driven tuition structure. No new resources are required for program start up and continuation.

4. Commitment to Program Sustainability

The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program is designed with long-term sustainability as a key priority. The institution is committed to maintaining its quality, relevance, and financial viability through strategic planning, resource allocation, and continuous improvement efforts. The sustainability of the Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations is assured through robust administrative and financial planning, high-quality faculty engagement, advanced infrastructure, strategic recruitment, and an institutional commitment to continuous improvement. These measures collectively ensure the program's ability to serve students and fulfill its mission for years to come.
Below are the core components of this commitment:

a. Administrative and Financial Support

Dedicated Staffing: A program coordinator will ensure operational efficiency and student support. This role is funded through the program's revenue projections, ensuring no additional strain on institutional resources. An academic advisor will advise students in all doctoral programs. This is an existing position and will not require additional funding.

Initial Investments: Start-up funding for curriculum development will be supported by the program's revenue projections.

Faculty training will be supported by the Director of Faculty Development and Faculty Resource Coordinator supported by the university and will not require funding.
Long-Term Revenue Streams: Tuition and fees will generate consistent revenue, with enrollment projections ensuring financial stability by the third year. This revenue will be reinvested into program development and student support services.

b. Faculty Commitment

Experienced Faculty: Core and adjunct faculty will be selected based on expertise in education policy, diversity, and equity. Faculty expectations will include participation in professional development to ensure the delivery of cutting-edge, evidence-based instruction.

Ongoing Faculty Training: Regular workshops on evidence-based practices in online and hybrid teaching, data-driven assessment, and policy research methodologies will enhance instructional quality and maintain alignment with accreditation standards.

c. Infrastructure and Technology

Online Learning Platform: A state-of-the-art learning management system (LMS) will support the program's online delivery, ensuring reliability and accessibility for students and faculty.

Technical Support: Dedicated IT personnel will provide technical assistance for students and faculty, ensuring smooth operation and addressing issues promptly.

Facility Investment: The program's periodic on-campus residency requirement will leverage existing facilities, ensuring minimal additional costs while providing students with enriching in-person experiences.

d. Enrollment and Recruitment Strategies

- Targeted Marketing: Recruitment will focus on local, regional, and national markets, emphasizing the program's unique focus on changing populations and its flexible, online format.
- Diverse Cohorts: Efforts will target professionals from underserved communities, ensuring diverse and inclusive student cohorts aligned with the program's mission.
- Retention Initiatives: Personalized advising, cohort-based learning, and access to academic support services will contribute to high retention rates, ensuring stable enrollment across years.

e. Program Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Student Feedback: Regular surveys and focus groups will gather student input on course content, faculty performance, and program structure, enabling timely adjustments.
- Advisory Board: An external advisory board comprising education leaders, policymakers, and alumni will meet annually to review program outcomes and recommend improvements.
- Data-Driven Decisions: Enrollment trends, graduation rates, and employment outcomes will be tracked to guide program adjustments and maintain relevance to workforce demands.

f. Institutional Commitment to Continuation

- Completion Guarantee: The institution is committed to offering the program for a minimum of five years to ensure all enrolled students have the opportunity to graduate.

- Strategic Alignment: The program aligns with the institution's strategic goals to expand graduate education, support equity and diversity initiatives, and drive financial growth, reinforcing its prioritization for long-term support.

B. Critical and Compelling Regional or Statewide Need

The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program addresses statewide and regional needs for educational leaders equipped to serve diverse and evolving student populations.

1. Statewide and Regional Demand for Educational Leaders

Maryland faces significant challenges in its educational workforce, including high attrition rates among teachers and a pressing need for qualified educational leaders. In the 2023–2024 school year, 12% of teachers did not return to teach in the same Local Education Agency (LEA), with attrition rates varying from 7% to 18% across different LEAs. Notably, new teachers are the most likely to leave the profession, with about 1 in 7 exiting, highlighting the necessity for effective leadership to support and retain educators.

Regionally, the demand for educational administrators is projected to grow. The Maryland Department of Labor's Occupational and Industry Projections indicate a steady increase in educational leadership positions, underscoring the need for advanced training programs to prepare professionals for these roles.

2. Ed.D. as a Viable Alternative for Working Professionals

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) offers a practical pathway for educators seeking to advance their careers while maintaining professional commitments. Unlike the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), which is research-intensive and often geared toward academic and theoretical contributions, the Ed.D. focuses on applying research to solve real-world problems in educational settings. This distinction makes the Ed.D. particularly suitable for working professionals aiming to implement change within their organizations.

Moreover, Ed.D. programs are typically designed to accommodate the schedules of full-time educators and administrators. Many programs offer part-time enrollment and online coursework, providing flexibility that allows professionals to balance their studies with ongoing career responsibilities. This structure contrasts with Ph.D. programs, which often require full-time commitment and are less adaptable to the needs of working individuals.

The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program is strategically designed to meet the critical need for educational leaders in Maryland and the surrounding region. Its practitioner-oriented approach and flexible delivery model make it an ideal option for working professionals dedicated to advancing their expertise and effecting meaningful change in diverse educational environments.

3. Demand and Alignment with the State Plan

The proposed Ed.D. program at NDMU closely aligns with the goals and objectives outlined in the 2022 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education, which emphasizes access, success, and innovation in higher education to meet the State's workforce needs and promote equity. The program's focus on Changing Populations aligns with state initiatives to support historically underserved communities and expand access to advanced educational opportunities.

NDMU's Ed.D. program supports Priorities 4 and 7[1] by committing to expand access to higher education for historically underserved students, including women, underrepresented minorities, and international students. Maryland is one of the most diverse states in the nation but has struggled to close a persistent achievement gap in K-12 and higher education. By offering an affordable graduate education in a high-demand field like educational leadership, NDMU contributes to the state's goal of increasing enrollment among traditionally underserved communities. The program's flexible, part-time structure ensures that non-traditional students, including working professionals, can pursue advanced education without disrupting their career or personal responsibilities.

The program's focus on developing leadership, analytical, and research skills aligns with Priority 5 and Maryland's workforce development initiatives.[2] Graduates of the Ed.D. program are well-prepared for positions in educational administration, policy analysis, and more in K-12 and higher education settings. Additionally, through academic advising, research opportunities, and mentorship, the program supports student retention and completion, which is consistent with the state plan's goal of promoting student success and degree attainment. The program will also partner with local LEAs, agencies, and education related organizations to offer students, as a part of their practicum courses, opportunities for internships, networking, and employment in Maryland's education and related sectors.

NDMU's program also supports Priority 8[3], specifically the call for institutions to "[c]onsider specializing as opposed to expanding academic programs". As the largest private producer of newly certified teachers in the State and with existing doctoral programs in K-12 and higher education, NDMU has long been a statewide leader in preparation of education professionals. The proposed Ed.D. program will complement NDMU's existing offerings in education, build upon our existing partnerships with LEAs throughout the State, and further NDMU's specialization in education leadership.

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[1] Priority 4 – Analyze systems that impact how specific student populations access affordable and high-quality postsecondary education. Priority 7 – Enhance the ways postsecondary education is a platform for ongoing lifelong learning.

[2] Priority 5 – Maintain the commitment to high-quality postsecondary education in Maryland.

[3] Priority 8 – Promote culture of risk-taking.

4. Support for Minority and Educationally Disadvantaged Students

The program's curriculum incorporates courses such as Cultural Relevant Pedagogy and Coaching for Equity to address systemic inequities affecting marginalized populations, including Black and Hispanic students, who are underrepresented in Maryland's advanced education workforce.

For example, while 35% of Maryland's PK-12 educators are minorities, only 15% hold leadership roles. This program addresses this leadership gap by preparing diverse candidates for senior positions.

C. Market Supply and Demand

The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program is designed to address the increasing demand for educational leaders and policy analysts both nationally and regionally.

1. National Employment Projections

- Education Administrators (SOC: 11-9032 & 11-9033): The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) under the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) projects that employment for education administrators will grow by 1% from 2023 to 2033 from 533,000 to 537,700 nationally, an increase of 4,700 jobs. Combined with 360,000 estimated occupational separations over ten years (36,000 annually), BLS projects 364,700 opens over ten years, or 36,470 annual openings.
- Policy Analysts: According to Zippia, the policy analyst job market is expected to grow by 11% between 2018 and 2028, adding about 108,400 new jobs in the United States.

2. Regional Employment Projections

In Maryland, the Maryland Department of Labor (MDOL) projects an increase in Education Administration jobs from 12,621 in 2022 to 14,131 in 2032, an increase of 1,510 jobs (12%). Combined with 8,781 estimated occupational separations over ten years (~878 annually), MDOL projects 10,291 openings over ten years, or 1,029 annual openings. Given Maryland's ongoing teacher shortage and ongoing implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's future, it is not surprising that Maryland has a higher demand than national projections.

Taken together, the national and regional trends indicate a widespread need for qualified professionals in these roles across various states, including those with rapidly expanding populations or significant investments in education.

3. Online Ed.D. Program Enrollment Trends

The growing demand for educational leaders has increased the number of online Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) programs, offering flexibility and accessibility to a broader range of students.

Institutions such as American University and Drexel University have developed online Ed.D. programs focusing on education policy and leadership, attracting professionals seeking to advance their careers without geographic constraints.

4. Implications for the Proposed Program

The alignment of the program's objectives with national employment trends and the increasing acceptance of online doctoral programs positions it as a strategic initiative to fulfill the current and future needs of the education sector. By offering this program online, the institution can attract diverse students from various regions, meeting the widespread demand for skilled educational leaders and policy analysts. Furthermore, the program's focus on changing populations addresses a critical need for leaders equipped to navigate and influence the evolving educational landscape, ensuring equitable and effective policy development and implementation across diverse communities. The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program is well-positioned to meet the growing demand for educational leaders and policy analysts nationally and regionally through its online format and specialized curriculum.

a. Employment Opportunities

Graduates will be positioned for roles such as policy advisors, education directors, and equity officers, which are in high demand within Maryland's public and private sectors. Maryland's Department of Education anticipates a 10% increase in demand for school administrators through 2030, particularly those skilled in equity-focused leadership.

b. Graduate Supply and Demand Analysis

A review of Maryland's existing doctoral programs revealed limited offerings focusing on changing populations and policy advocacy, underscoring the need for this unique program. According to MHEC's Academic Program Inventory and *Trends in Degrees and Certificates by Program Report* (2024), Maryland currently has five colleges or universities approved to offer six education related Ed.D. programs. In 2024, degree production is estimated at 120 degrees annually (3-YR rolling average of graduates). The closest comparable programs at Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland focus broadly on education leadership but lack this program's emphasis on equity and practical policymaking for marginalized groups.

Available Market

Category	Data	Source
Total Master's Degrees (All Fields)	880,200 master's degrees awarded in the U.S. in 2021–2022	NCES
Master's Degrees in Education	151,700 master's degrees awarded in education in the U.S. in 2021–2022	NCES
Education Administrators (Total)	50,690 education administrators in the U.S.	Zippia
Education Administrators with Master's	19% of education administrators hold a master's degree as their highest education (~9,631 individuals)	Zippia
Median Salary with Master's (All Fields)	$86,372	Indeed
Median Salary with Doctorate (All Fields)	$108,160	Indeed
Educational Leadership (M.Ed. vs. Ed.D.)	$64,000 (Master's) vs. $77,000 (Doctorate)	Best College Reviews
School Principals (Median Salary)	$98,500 (Requires advanced degree)	Noodle
Geographic Variations (Education Admin)	$150,000+ for education administrators in high-paying states like New York and New Jersey	Best Colleges

The financial planning for the Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program encompasses projected tuition revenue, startup costs, and strategies for sustainable funding.

c. Enrollment Projections

A projection of five-year enrollment for the proposed Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations, based on the data in the last table and the assumption that the program will attract a percentage of master's degree holders in education and education administrators.

Assumptions for Enrollment Projection
- Initial Enrollment: 20 students in Year 1, based on demand from working professionals.
- Annual Growth Rate: A steady 15% increase in new enrollees annually, driven by marketing and word-of-mouth.
- Retention: An 85% yearly retention rate reflects high program engagement and student support.
- Graduation: Students graduate at the end of Year 3, starting the graduation cycle.

Timeline
- Year 1: The program launches with an initial cohort of 20 students.
- Year 2: The 85% (17 students) retention from Year 1 combined with 23 new enrollees, bringing the total to 40.
- Year 3: Retention and new enrollees boost enrollment to 62, with the first cohort of 17 students graduating.
- Year 4: Enrollment reaches 75, as 36 students graduate, ensuring a sustainable pipeline of continuing and new students.
- Year 5: Enrollment stabilizes at 83, as 45 students graduate, balancing program growth with student output.
- Five-Year Enrollment Summary: Total New Enrollees: 133 students over five years. Graduates: 98 students completing the program by the end of Year 5.

Enrollment and Graduation Projection

Year	New Enrollees	Continuing Students	Total Enrolled	Graduates
Year 1	20	0	20	0
Year 2	23	17	40	0
Year 3	26	36	62	17
Year 4	30	45	75	36
Year 5	34	49	83	45

This projection assumes a steady interest in the program, supported by its online flexibility, focus on equity, and appeal to mid-career professionals. Adjustments can be made if new factors arise (e.g., increased marketing or changes in demand).

d. Tuition Revenue Projections

Projection of Tuition Revenue for Five Years
- The tuition revenue is calculated based on the following assumptions:
- Tuition per Credit: $600/credit
- Credits per Year: Students take an average of 18 credits annually.
- Semester Registration Fee: $195/Semester
- Semesters per Year: 3 (Fall, Spring, Summer)
- Residency Fees and Expenses: Excluded from this calculation.

Enrollment and Revenue Projection

Year	New Enrollees	Continuing Students	Total Enrolled	Tuition Revenue	Registration Fees	Total Revenue
Year 1	20	0	20	$216,000	$11,500	$227,500
Year 2	23	17	40	$432,000	$24,400	$456,400
Year 3	26	36	62	$669,600	$36,270	$705,870
Year 4	30	45	75	$810,000	43,875	$853,875
Year 5	34	49	83	$896,400	$48,555	$944,955

Five-Year Revenue Summary
- Total Tuition Revenue: $3,024,000
- Total Registration Fees: $126,000
- Total Combined Revenue: $3,150,000

Additional startup expenses
- Course Development: Compensate faculty for developing courses.

To offset these costs, existing resources will be leveraged by utilizing current faculty and administrative support.

D. Reasonableness of Program Duplication

1. Reasonableness of Program Duplication

While Maryland hosts several doctoral programs in education, the Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations distinguishes itself by emphasizing equity, policy design, and practical application tailored to working professionals. The following table provides a detailed comparison of similar programs, with the last column detailing the differentiating factors for the proposed program:

Ed.D. Program Comparison

Institution	Program	Focus/Emphasis	Delivery Format	Key Features	Differentiating Factor of Proposed Program
Johns Hopkins University	Ed.D. in Entrepreneurial Leadership in Education	Leadership, innovation in education	Fully online	Practitioner focus, personalized advising	Focus on changing populations and equity in policy
University of Maryland	Ph.D. in Education	Research intensive, academic career focus	On-campus	Heavy emphasis on research, dissertation focus	Practitioner oriented, online delivery, suited for professionals
Morgan State University	Ed.D. in Community College Leadership	Leadership in community colleges	Hybrid (online and in-person)	Specialization in community college settings	Broader applicability to PK-12, higher education, and beyond
	Ed.D. In Urban Educational Leadership	Urban education, leadership development	Hybrid	Targeted at urban educational issues	Broader focus on equity in diverse demographic settings
Bowie State University	Ed.D. in Educational Leadership	PK-12 educational leadership	On campus	Focused on local school district leadership	Policy design and analysis applicable across educational systems
Frostburg	Ed.D. in Educational Leadership	PK-12 educational leadership	Fully online	Focused on Adult and Professional Learning Facilitation, PK12 Leadership, Higher Education Leadership or Leadership in Health Professions Education.	Focus on changing populations and equity in policy
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	Ed.D. in Educational Leadership	PK-12 educational leadership	On campus	Focused on equity, leadership skills and ethical and legal standards	Online offering with a focus on policy and practice.

2. Analysis and Justification

a. Delivery Format:

The fully online asynchronous delivery of the Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations by faculty trained in design and delivery of high-quality online coursework uniquely caters to working professionals seeking flexibility. Most comparable programs in Maryland are offered either on campus or in a hybrid format, which may not accommodate the schedules of mid-career professionals. Frostburg State offers a fully online EdD in Educational Leadership, but the curriculum does not have the specific focus of NDMU's program. See the next section.

b. Curricular Focus:

Johns Hopkins University and Morgan State University emphasize innovation and urban education. Frostburg offers a case study-based approach that centers on problem-based learning. None of the programs specifically focuses on policy design for changing populations, informed by policy theory and organizational theory, the distinctive hallmark of NDMU's proposed program.

c. Target Audience:

The program appeals to a broader audience, including PK-12 educators, PK-12 administrators, higher education leaders, and aspiring policy professionals. Other programs, such as Bowie State University's and Morgan State University's, are narrower in scope, targeting specific sectors like PK12 leadership or community colleges.

d. Practicum and Capstone Experience:

Unlike research-intensive Ph.D. programs, this Ed.D. program emphasizes practical application through a 12-credit practicum sequence and a capstone project directly addressing real-world policy challenges as well as a summer 4-day leadership residency. This hands-on approach is absent in most comparable programs.

e. Equity and Changing Populations:

The program's explicit focus on equity and addressing changing demographics in educational contexts fills a critical gap in Maryland's higher education landscape, responding directly to state and national needs.

Overall, the proposed Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations avoids duplication by targeting a unique niche in the Maryland and regional higher education market. Its practitioner-oriented focus, online delivery model, and emphasis on policy design for diverse populations position it as a valuable addition to the state's graduate offerings, addressing unmet educational and professional development needs.

E. Relevance to High Demand Programs at HBIs

Based on the current degree offerings at HBIs in Maryland, it appears that Morgan State University (MSU), Bowie State University (BSU), and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) offer Ed.D. programs. However, NDMU's proposed program does not duplicate the existing Ed.D. programs offered by HBIs in Maryland as, in designing the program, a special emphasis was placed on ensuring NDMU's program complements rather than competes with current offerings. As the EdD Program Comparison table above indicates, NDMU's proposed broad policy emphasis sets it apart from EdD programs at the state's HBIs. There are other key differentiating factors in terms of curriculum and delivery method among the programs. MSU's EdD has a unique focus on urban education and thus on specific relevant policies in that domain. NDMU is not proposing to concentrate its approach on policies relevant to urban education, preferring to differentiate itself by looking more broadly at the education of changing student populations in various school contexts.

Our broad focus on understanding and application of educational policy models is one distinguishing feature in comparison with another Maryland HBI, UMES. In this case, though, delivery method and distance (140 miles) also sets the two apart. While UMES offers an EdD in Educational Leadership, learning occurs primarily through face to face, weekend sessions for working professionals and is distinct from NDMU's proposed fully online modality. UMES is uniquely well positioned to serve educators in that region of the state while NDMU can reach students elsewhere in Maryland (and beyond).

BSU's EdD in Educational Leadership has a focus on leadership skills development including financial resource management and optimization of enterprise systems. NDMU's program is not positioned to rival that specific approach for educators who want to earn the terminal degree as part of their professional development plan to career success.

Coppin State University offers an MS in Contemporary Educational Leadership but not the doctorate. Since degrees at the master's and doctoral levels respectively attract different students for different reasons, NDMU's proposed new program should not impact Coppin's program.

As a general matter, NDMU is a small, private, Catholic university, while MSU, BSU, and UMES are all larger, public, secular institutions. These characteristics result in unique student applications with few overlaps. Importantly, the job market data indicates an increasing need for more education administrator professionals to work in schools, LEAs, agencies, and beyond.

Through this EdD in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations NDMU does not seek to compete with students attracted to the rich EdD offerings at the state's HBIs but rather to offer another option for those seeking to grow in their careers. This terminal degree will afford educators the opportunity to do significant work in advancing policies that will contribute to educational equity.

F. Relevance to Identity of HBIs

Because of this policy-focused program's distinct difference from EdDs offered at Maryland HBIs, NDMU does not see this program as challenging what makes those institutions valuable to the state and its educational landscape. The proposed program is not anticipated to directly affect the uniqueness, identity, or mission of the state's HBIs.

G. Curriculum Design, Modality, and Learning Outcomes

1. Curriculum Overview

The program includes:
- Core Courses (36 credits): Introduction to Data Based Decision Making, Linguistics, Culture, and Equity, and History of Marginalized Populations
- Specialization Tracks (9): Specialization in Higher Education Leadership or PK-12 Instructional Leadership
- Practicum Sequence (12 credits): Real-world policy application through projects in schools and agencies
- Electives (9 credits)
- Residency Requirement (3 credits): A 4day workshop on policy advocacy, ethics, and equity

The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program consists of 48 credits and is designed to provide a comprehensive education in data analysis, leadership, policy development, and advocacy. The curriculum integrates core courses, specialization tracks, a practicum sequence, electives, and a residency requirement to prepare graduates for leadership roles in diverse educational settings.

a. Core Courses (18 Credits)

The core curriculum focuses on foundational knowledge and skills in education policy, cultural diversity, and leadership:
- EDU 702E: Introduction to Data-Based Decision-Making for Doctoral Students: Teaches critical data analysis skills and professional writing techniques for effective educational decision-making.
- EDU 624: Dialects in American Schools: Explores the role of dialect diversity in education and strategies for inclusive instruction.
- EDU 698: Linguistic and Cultural Diversity: Examines the interplay between language, culture, and learning to address equity in educational settings.
- EDUC 511: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Challenges candidates to evaluate curriculum, pedagogy, and the school environment to determine how curricular and pedagogical choices can reproduce inequalities or promote success for all students.
- EDUC 515: Coaching for Equity Supporting Change: Focuses on principles of effective coaching to actualize equitable access for students in PK-12 schools.

- EDU 772: Changing School Populations in Historical Perspectives: Provides a historical view of shifting demographics in education and their impact on policy and practice.

b. Specialization Tracks (9 Credits)

Higher Education Leadership:

- EDU 802: Organization and Governance in Higher Education: Examines structures and governance in colleges and universities.
- EDU 803: Assessment, Accreditation, and the Strategic Planning Process: Develop institutional planning and outcomes assessment skills.
- EDU 722: Education and Policy Analysis for Changing Populations: Focuses on policy analysis and development for evolving student demographics.

K12 Leadership:

- EDU 715: Educator as a Change Leader: Builds leadership skills to drive school innovation and change.
- EDU 760: Legislative and Legal Decisions Affecting Changing School Populations: Explores the legal frameworks influencing school policies.
- EDU 722: Education and Policy Analysis for Changing Populations: This track also includes demographic shifts in K12 education.

c. Practicum Sequence (12 Credits)

- Practicum I: Field Analysis of Policy Contexts: Introduces students to policy dynamics and data collection in diverse educational settings.
- Practicum II: Policy Design and Proposal Development: Guides students in creating actionable policy proposals informed by empirical data.
- Practicum III: Policy Implementation and Stakeholder Engagement: This course focuses on executing policy initiatives and engaging with stakeholders to drive change.
- Capstone Practicum IV: Final Written Project: Culminates in a comprehensive written analysis and implementation plan, evaluated by a faculty panel.

d. Electives (6 Credits)

- EDU 815: Innovations in Educational Technology: Explores the role of technology and AI in transforming education systems as well as the role of AI in perpetuating inequities in the education system.
- EDU 830: Policy and Finance in Educational Systems provides an in-depth understanding of financial and policy decisions in education.
- EDU 845: Advanced Data Analytics for Educational Leaders: Develop advanced analytical skills for educational decision-making.

e. Residency Requirement (3 Credits)

A four-day, on-campus leadership residency equips students with practical skills and networking opportunities.

- Workshop 1: Policy Advocacy and Persuasive Communication: Covers effective communication and advocacy techniques.
- Workshop 2: Advanced Research Skills for Policy Analysis: Teaches advanced research methodologies for rigorous policy analysis.
- Workshop 3: Ethics and Equity in Policy Leadership: Examines ethical considerations and equity in policymaking.
- Workshop 4: Networking and Professional Development: Offers guidance on career advancement and professional connections.

This comprehensive curriculum equips students with the knowledge, skills, and experience to address pressing educational challenges, advocate for equity, and implement meaningful policy changes across diverse educational contexts.

2. Assessment and Accreditation

The program aligns with Maryland and Middle States Commission on Higher Education accreditation requirements, with robust assessments to track student progress and outcomes. The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program will incorporate a robust, multilayered assessment framework to measure student achievement, program effectiveness, and alignment with institutional and accreditation standards.

1. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

The program's SLOs focus on critical policy analysis, effective leadership, and the practical application of equity-focused policies. Assessment methods for these outcomes include:

- Course-level Assessments: Each course will have clearly defined objectives, which will be evaluated through assignments, case studies, and examinations.
- Practicum Sequence Evaluations: During each practicum phase, students will submit reflective journals, policy proposals, and stakeholder feedback, demonstrating their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios.
- Capstone Project: The final written project will synthesize knowledge and skills gained throughout the program. It will be evaluated by a faculty panel using a standardized rubric that measures analytical rigor, feasibility, and impact on educational equity.

2. Program-Level Assessment

Program effectiveness will be evaluated using direct and indirect measures:

- Graduation and Retention Rates: These metrics will be monitored annually to ensure student progress aligns with benchmarks.
- Employer and Alumni Surveys: Surveys will assess how well graduates are prepared for leadership roles and their impact on their respective fields.

- Advisory Board Feedback: An advisory board comprising educators, policymakers, and alums will provide regular input on curriculum relevance and effectiveness.

3. Accreditation Standards

The program is designed to meet the standards of relevant accrediting bodies, such as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and regional accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Key components include:

- Alignment with CAEP Standards: The curriculum emphasizes equity, data-informed decision-making, and professional leadership development, which directly align with CAEP's core competencies.
- Periodic External Reviews: Accreditation will be maintained through regular external reviews, which include site visits, faculty evaluations, and student interviews to ensure compliance with accreditation requirements.

4. Implementation of the Assessment Plan

- Data Collection: Data will be collected from multiple sources, including course evaluations, practicum reports, capstone assessments, faculty, and student feedback, and postgraduation employment data.
- Continuous Improvement Cycle: An annual review of collected data will inform adjustments to curriculum design, instructional methods, and program policies. Faculty will participate in workshops to interpret data and implement improvements.
- Technology Integration: A learning management system (LMS) will track student performance and compile analytics for continuous program monitoring.

5. Evidence-based Practices

The assessment plan is grounded in evidence-based practices, ensuring:

- Consistency: Standardized rubrics and clear benchmarks ensure uniform assessment across courses and practices.
- Transparency: Students can access grading rubrics and feedback to guide their development.
- Accountability: Faculty will receive regular training in assessment practices to ensure alignment with program goals and accreditation standards.

This comprehensive assessment and accreditation framework will ensure that the program meets and exceeds expectations for academic quality and prepares graduates for meaningful contributions to educational policy and leadership. Key points are summarized in the table below:

Assessment Framework

Assessment Level	Activity	Methodology	Purpose
Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)	Course-Level Assignments	Rubric-based grading for essays, projects, and case studies	Evaluate mastery of course-specific learning objectives.
	Practicum Evaluations	Reflective journals, stakeholder feedback	Assess practical application of skills in policy design and leadership.
	Capstone Project	Panel evaluation of written project	Synthesize knowledge and skills in addressing a real-world policy issue.
Program-Level Outcomes	Graduation and Retention Rates	Tracking student progression	Monitor student success and identify barriers to completion.
	Alumni and Employer Surveys	Structured surveys	Gather feedback on the program's effectiveness in preparing students for leadership roles.
	Advisory Board Feedback	Annual reviews by advisory board members	Align program goals with industry needs and regional challenges.
Accreditation Compliance	Alignment with Accreditation Standards (CAEP, MSCHE)	Review of curriculum and assessment processes	Ensure program meets regional and national standards for quality and relevance.
	External Program Reviews	Independent evaluations every five years	Maintain accreditation and identify areas for improvement.

6. *General Education Requirements*

The proposed Ed.D. program does not include undergraduate general education courses but ensures all students meet foundational competencies through prior master's-level coursework. Graduate foundational courses such as EDU-702E: Introduction to Data-Based Decision-Making address essential skills, including quantitative analysis, professional communication, and applied research methods, provide a robust foundation for advanced study. COMAR regulations

emphasize that graduate programs must be built upon prior degrees to ensure academic readiness for doctoral-level work (COMAR 13B.02.03.10).

7. *Specialized Accreditation or Graduate Certification Requirements*

Specialized accreditation or graduate certification requirements do not apply to the proposed Ed.D. Program.

8. Contracts with Other Institutions or Organizations

Currently, the proposed program does not rely on formal contracts with external institutions. However, partnerships with local school districts are being explored to enhance practicum opportunities and faculty collaboration. Written contracts for any external collaborations, as required under COMAR 13B.02.03.10(E), will outline resource sharing, teaching arrangements, and quality assurance

9. Student Support and Information

a. Curriculum and Degree Requirements

A detailed student handbook will include course descriptions, degree timelines, grading policies, and expectations for faculty-student interaction.

b. Technology Competence

Students will complete a technology orientation upon enrollment to familiarize them with the LMS and required tools.

c. Support Services:

Academic advising, library access, and technical support will be available remotely. The institution's IT Helpdesk operates 24/7 for online learners.

d. Financial Aid and Costs:

Clear communication on tuition fees, residency costs, and payment options will be provided on the program's website and marketing materials.

H. Articulation Agreements

The program will develop articulation agreements with Maryland state and regional four-year institutions, to create seamless pathways for graduate students pursuing advanced leadership roles. Similar agreements in Maryland have shown success in increasing graduate program participation among underrepresented groups, aligning with the state's equity goals (Maryland Higher Education Commission, 2023).

I. Faculty Resources

1. *Faculty Qualifications*

Core faculty will hold terminal degrees (Ph.D. or Ed.D.) in a field related to Education Policy, Leadership, and/or Equity. The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program is supported by a diverse and accomplished faculty team, combining extensive academic credentials, practical expertise, and leadership experience. Faculty members are committed to delivering a rigorous and research-informed curriculum that aligns with program goals and student outcomes.
related fields. They will bring expertise in research, equity, and practical application of policy design. Faculty qualification summaries are provided below.

2. *Core Faculty Profiles*

a. Dr. Juliann Dupuis, Ph.D.

- Education: Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction and Teacher Education in Science Education, University of New Hampshire.
- Roles: Dean, Professor, School of Education; Developer of the Leadership in Teaching STEM program.
- Expertise: STEM education, environmental education, and teacher development, Leadership.
- Key Contributions: STEM framework development and community partnerships for STEM events and programs.
- Courses Taught: EDU 702E, EDU 715, Practicum IV
- NDMU Employment Status: Full Time

b. Dr. Christa de Kleine, Ph.D.

- Education: Ph.D. in Linguistics, Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY).
- Roles: Professor and Coordinator for M.A. in TESOL, Notre Dame of Maryland University.
- Expertise: Language acquisition, linguistic diversity, and World Englishers.
- Key Contributions: Development of the TESOL program and research on linguistically diverse students in education.
- Courses Taught: EDU 624, EDU 698
- NDMU Employment Status: Full Time

c. Dr. Stephanie Savick, Ph.D.

- Education: Ph.D. in Instructional Leadership for Changing Populations, Notre Dame of Maryland University.
- Roles: Professor in graduate and Ph.D. programs and Coordinator for Culturally Proficient Leadership programs

- Expertise: Cultural competence, educational equity, and culturally relevant pedagogy.
- Key Contributions: Development of the Culturally Proficient Leadership Master's and Certificate Programs and research on equity-focused instructional leadership.
- Courses Taught: EDUC 511, EDUC 515, EDU 715, EDU 805, Practicum III
- NDMU Employment Status: Full Time

d. Dr. Angelo Letizia, Ph.D.

- Education: Ph.D. in Educational Policy Planning and Leadership, College of William and Mary.
- Roles: Associate Professor, Notre Dame of Maryland University.
- Expertise: Curriculum development, educational philosophy, and civic education.
- Key Contributions: Development of educational programs emphasizing democracy and social studies pedagogy.
- Courses Taught: EDU 760, EDU 772, EDU 775, EDU 805, EDU 830, Practicum I
- NDMU Employment Status: Full Time

e. Dr. Kathryn Doherty, Ed.D.

- Education: Ed.D. in Education Policy, Research, and Administration, University of Massachusetts.
- Roles: Associate Faculty, School of Education, Notre Dame of Maryland University; Federal Contract Evaluator.
- Expertise: Institutional research, assessment, program evaluation, and policy advocacy.
- Key Contributions: Leadership in higher education, extensive grant evaluation experience, and publications on accreditation and institutional effectiveness.
- Courses Taught: EDU 722, EDU 802, EDU 803, EDU 845, Practicum II
- NDMU Employment Status: Part Time

f. Dr. Ryan Schaaf, Ph.D.

- Education: Ph.D. in Instructional Leadership for Changing Populations, Notre Dame of Maryland University; M.S. in Educational Technology, Johns Hopkins University.
- Roles: Faculty lead for the Digital Technology Leadership program.
- Expertise: Digital tools in education, learning design, technology integration, and emerging technologies.
- Key Contributions: Innovative approaches to digital learning and instructional leadership.
- Courses Taught: EDU 815
- NDMU Employment Status: Full Time

3. Faculty Strengths

- Diverse Expertise: Faculty bring interdisciplinary perspectives from linguistics, STEM, cultural competence, technology, and education policy.
- Leadership Experience: Faculty members have held senior leadership roles, including deanships, program directors, and evaluators for federal and state grants.
- Research and Grants: Faculty have secured significant grant funding for projects in education policy, equity, and STEM initiatives and published in their respective teaching content.
- Practical Application: Faculty members integrate real-world experience into the curriculum, emphasizing applied research and leadership development.

4. Commitment to Faculty Development

Faculty participate in ongoing professional development, including workshops on evidence-based pedagogy, distance learning best practices, and LMS training.
The institution supports faculty research and encourages active participation in professional organizations, such as the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the Association for Institutional Research (AIR).

5. Training and Development:

Faculty will participate in workshops on evidence-based pedagogy, LMS tools, and best practices for distance education, ensuring alignment with COMAR 13B.02.03.11 requirements.

J. Library Resources

The Loyola Notre Dame Library (LNDL) serves as a vital resource for Notre Dame of Maryland University, offering comprehensive support for research, teaching, and learning. The library provides students and faculty in the Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations program with access to a vast array of digital and physical materials, including books, scholarly journals, academic databases, and streaming video, all accessible through an intuitive online platform. Additionally, the library's partnerships with the University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions (USMAI) consortium and the Eastern Academic Libraries Trust (EAST) significantly enhance its offerings by providing access to over 15 million additional volumes through interlibrary loan systems. These resources ensure that students and faculty have the materials necessary to conduct high-quality, evidence-based research.

LNDL is deeply committed to supporting the academic needs of its community through a wide range of services. Research assistance is available in multiple formats, including in-person consultations, email, telephone, instant messaging, and a 24/7 online chat reference system. To ensure ethical and effective use of materials, the library also houses a dedicated Copyright Information Center, offering workshops, resource guides, and individual consultations. This

commitment to personalized support ensures that all users, regardless of their research needs, have access to expert guidance.

The library offers state-of-the-art facilities that support collaborative and individual learning. With 693 individual study seats, group study rooms, seminar spaces, and specialized areas such as a 100-seat auditorium and a 24-seat screening room, the library accommodates a variety of learning and teaching needs. Technology is seamlessly integrated throughout, with 91 computers equipped with Microsoft Office and internet access, as well as two instructional computer labs. The Makerspace provides cutting-edge tools to foster creativity and innovation, while adaptive technology ensures accessibility for all users, including those with disabilities. These spaces collectively create a dynamic environment where students can work independently or engage in collaborative activities.

The library's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is reflected in its recent equity audit of hiring practices, with ongoing efforts to implement recommendations from this review. This initiative underscores the LNDL's dedication to fostering a welcoming and inclusive academic environment. Moreover, the library actively monitors its contributions to research and education through its Library Impact Dashboard, a tool that tracks key metrics to illustrate the value of its services.

K. Physical Facilities and Technology

The fully online program leverages existing classrooms and office spaces for its periodic residency requirements. These facilities are equipped with high-speed internet, projectors, and conference tools. A robust LMS (Canvas) supports asynchronous online learning, meeting COMAR 13B.02.03.13 standards for instructional technology infrastructure.

L. Financial Resources (add tables)

Table 1: Resources:
Table 2: Expenditures:
Expenditures include faculty salaries, LMS licensing, marketing, and student support services. Financial sustainability is ensured through enrollment growth and cost management.

Table 1: RESOURCES					
Resource Categories	**2025-2026**	**2026-2027**	**2027-2028**	**2028-2029**	**2029-2030**
1. Reallocated Funds	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
2. Tuition/Fee Revenue (c+g below)	$227,500	$456,400	$705,870	$853,875	$944,955
a) # F/T Students	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
b) F/T Annual Tuition/ Fee Rate	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00

c) Total F/T Revenue (a x b)	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
d) # P/T Students	20	40	62	75	83
e) Credit Hr. Rate	$600	$600	$600	$600	$600
f) Annual Credit Hr.	18	18	18	18	18
g) Total P/T Revenue (d x e x f)	$216,000	$432,000	$669,600	$810,000	$896,400
3. Grants, contacts, & other external sources	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
4. Other Sources (fees)	$11,500	$24,400	$36,270	$43,875	$48,555
TOTAL (add 1-4)	$227,500	$456,400	$705,870	$853,875	$944,955

Budget Narrative
1. No reallocated funds. Faculty in the program tach as part of their regular assigned load.
2. No full-time students in the program. Part time tuition is calculated as cost per credit hour x number of credits x number of students enrolled. Registration fee is indicated as other and calculated per semester.
3. No funding from external sources or other sources (fees included on this line item).
4. Tuition rates remain stable for five years.

TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES					
Expenditure Categories	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	**2024-25**
1. Faculty (b + c below)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
a) # FTE	.2	1	.2	.2	.2
b) Total Salary	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
c) Total Benefits	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2. Admin. Staff (b + c below)	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000
a) # FTE	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
b) Total Salary	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
c) Total Benefits	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
3. Support staff	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
4. Equipment	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
5. Library	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
6. New or Renovated Space	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
7.Other Expenses course development	$0	$24,500	$0	$0	$0
8. TOTAL (add 1-7)	$1,000	$25,500	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000

1. Full time faculty will teach courses as part of their regular teaching load.
2. Program coordinator will be paid $1,000 per year.

3. Faculty are paid a course stipend of $3,500 per course to develop new courses. Only seven courses need to be developed and will be developed in year 2 of the program.

M. Evaluation Provisions

1. Course and Faculty Evaluation

Course evaluations will be conducted at the end of each term using standardized instruments to gather student feedback.

2. Program Effectiveness

Metrics include graduation rates, employment outcomes, and alumni surveys, ensuring continuous improvement.

N. Minority Student Achievement Goals

The program aligns with Maryland's goals to increase access for minority and will support diversity in student enrollment and graduate outcomes with recruitment and retention efforts.

O. Relationship to Low Productivity Programs Identified by the Commission:

If the proposed program is directly related to an identified low productivity program, discuss how the fiscal resources (including faculty, administration, library resources and general operating expenses) may be redistributed to this program.

The proposed program is not related to an identified low productivity program.

P. Distance Education Compliance

The Ed.D. in Education Policy and Practice for Changing Populations aligns with the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) guidelines and COMAR 13B.02.03.22 standards, ensuring the program maintains high-quality distance education practices. Below is a detailed explanation of the program's alignment with these standards:

1. C-RAC Guidelines Alignment

The C-RAC guidelines outline best practices for ensuring the quality and integrity of online education programs. The proposed program adheres to these principles through the following:

a. Institutional Context and Commitment:

The institution has established policies for the administration, governance, and support of online programs, ensuring consistent quality.
A dedicated Distance Education Office provides oversight of technical and academic support systems.

b. Curriculum and Instruction:

Courses are designed with measurable learning outcomes, aligned with program goals.
The learning management system (LMS) supports synchronous and asynchronous interactions, including discussion boards, live lectures, and collaborative assignments.

c. Student Support:

Comprehensive onboarding ensures students are proficient in using the LMS and other required technologies. Students are monitored by advisors throughout the program and offered support on an as needed basis, including support with academic writing.
Technical support is available 24/7, complemented by access to virtual advising, career counseling, and library resources.

d. Evaluation and Assessment:

Regular assessments of student learning outcomes are conducted through quizzes, assignments, and reflective journals. Faculty performance in online teaching is evaluated annually using C-RAC standards, emphasizing effective student engagement.

2. COMAR 13B.02.03.22 Standards Alignment

The program meets the COMAR standards for distance education, addressing all necessary components:

a. Access to Technology and Support:

Students and faculty are provided with institutional email accounts, ensuring secure communication.
The LMS (e.g., Canvas or Blackboard) is integrated with tools for video conferencing, assignment submission, and real-time feedback, meeting COMAR's requirements for technological infrastructure.

b. Faculty Interaction

Faculty hold regular virtual office hours and host weekly live discussions to foster interaction and community among students. Discussion boards and group projects ensure ongoing collaboration and engagement.

c. Program Integrity

Identity verification systems, such as secure login credentials and proctored exams, prevent fraud and ensure academic integrity. All course materials comply with accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG 2.1) to support students with disabilities.

d. Continuous Improvement

The program undergoes annual reviews to assess the effectiveness of online delivery and ensure compliance with COMAR standards. Feedback from students and faculty is used to refine course content, technology usage, and support services.

e. Key Features Supporting Distance Education Success

- Interactive Tools: Integrated LMS features include video conferencing (e.g., Zoom), collaborative document sharing (e.g., Google Workspace), and adaptive learning technologies.
- Accessibility Compliance: All course materials meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, ensuring equity in access for all students.
- Academic Integrity: Secure login systems, plagiarism detection tools (e.g., Turnitin), and remote proctoring services safeguard the integrity of online assessments.
- Comprehensive Training: Faculty receive ongoing training in online teaching methodologies and emerging technologies to maintain high standards in virtual learning environments.

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