

EDLEA Writing Sample Instructions

You must upload this information, together with other materials, into the online application. The submission should be typewritten, double-spaced, in 12-point font size, Times New Roman. Your writing sample must contain TWO parts: (A) a professional history and goal statement, and (B) a reflective essay based on a real-life scenario. The (A) part is mandatory, but you do have an option to submit an alternative to satisfy the (B) requirement. The alternative must meet the following conditions: (i) you are the sole author; (ii) it demonstrates your analytical and reflective ability; (iii) it can be a cohesive excerpt or a summary or synthesis of a thesis that has earned you a master's degree. Some examples for such an alternative would be a technical report, a professional/academic conference paper, or a journal article published.

Please note, as we no longer require GRE or MAT score as part of the application requirements, the writing sample, as a replacement, provides the department/program faculty the opportunity to get a sense of who you are and where you want to go personally, academically, and professionally, as well as where and how you could be supported if admitted.

(A) Professional History and Goal Statement (1-2 pages)

Write a concise professional history and goal statement, highlighting:

1. the key milestones in your leadership development,
2. your fundamental principles personally and professionally, in relation to enacting leadership, and
3. your anticipated career trajectory.

You may include a brief outline of your current research interests. When appropriate, you may also connect the highlighted aspects to your research interests. For example, how a principle you have discussed has contributed to your research interests.

(B) Reflective Essay (3-5 pages)

Write an essay analyzing an original real-life scenario from your own leadership experience or observation of others that includes the following components:

1. Description of the leadership dilemma
2. Discussion of the key issues involved in the dilemma that are critical for leadership and/or decision-making
3. Summary of resources drawn in understanding, analyzing and/or approaching the situation (e.g., professional connections, academic knowledge and training, organizational policies and data, etc.)
4. Discussion of the strategies and process that you used to address and/or resolve the issue
5. Discussion of the lessons learned as a leader (e.g., what could have been done differently, implications for the school community as a whole, etc.)

We hope you are selecting an impactful scenario that is meaningful to you. And, the scenario is *complex, ambiguous, relevant, and contextualized* (Fossey & Crow, 2011). In other words, different from management, one finds the presence of leadership in a circumstance where there are no easy solutions. The decision-making takes strategically balancing among alternatives taking into account pros and cons of each. Your essay reflects coherent analysis and reflection.

You may find reviewing the following articles helpful in approaching your writing:

- Fossey, R., & Crow, G. M (2011). The elements of a good case. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 14(3), 4-10.
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1555458911426467>
- Hines-Datiri, D. (2016). When police intervene: Race, gender, and discipline of black male students at an urban high school. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 18(2), 122-133.
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1555458915584676>

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the writing sample:

- (1) the thesis focus (originality and clarity);
- (2) the organization of each sub-section (that is, the essay and the statement) and thought process;
- (3) the rationale (coherence, cohesiveness, and precision);
- (4) documentation of other sources included;
- (5) leadership awareness (theoretical, empirical, practical)
- (6) sentence (sentence diction, syntax, tone, voice) and writing (grammar, spelling, usage, punctuation)

**Kansas State University
Educational Leadership
Doctoral Degree – Admission
Writing Sample Rubric**

Directions: Full time Educational Leadership faculty members will evaluate the writing sample of each applicant by completing a copy of this rubric. Faculty should bring this form along with the Admission Criteria worksheet to the Doctoral Program Admission meeting.

Quality Criteria	Not Graduate Level Writing 0 points	Acceptable Entry Writing 1 point	Exceptional Writing 2 points	(Rating)
Content Thesis Focus	Thesis is missing. Only completes 2 or less of the required elements.	Thesis is somewhat original. Missing no more than 3 of the required elements.	Develops original insight that challenges the reader's thinking. Addresses all the required elements: ·describe the leadership dilemma, ·identify the key issues, ·summarize resources for understanding and approaching the situation, ·discuss strategies and processes for addressing the issue, and ·discuss leadership lessons learned.	
Organization of thought	The writing lacks a real sense of direction. Connections between ideas are confusing or not even present. Sequencing needs lots of work. Problems with organization make it difficult for the reader to understand the essay.	The topic sequence is strong enough to move the reader through the essay. Weak transitions. Essay structure present.	The topic sequence is logical or creative. Combines material from other sources. The writing makes the reader think about and react to the author's point of view. Transitions smooth. Essay structure strong (introduction, flow of ideas, and conclusion).	

Quality Criteria	Not Graduate Level Writing 0 points	Acceptable Entry Writing 1 point	Exceptional Writing 2 points	(Rating)
Style: (Sentences, diction, syntax, tone, voice)	Superficial and stereotypical language. Oral rather than written language patterns predominate. Word choice is elementary.	Sentences show some variety and complexity. Diction is accurate and generally appropriate. Tone is usually appropriate.	Sentences are varied, complex, and employed for effect. Diction is precise, appropriate, using advanced vocabulary. Tone is consistent and suitable for topic and the audience.	
Writing Conventions: (Grammar, spelling, punctuation, citation format)	Grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors numerous and interfere with understanding the writer's message. Heavy use of quotes.	Few grammar, spelling or punctuation errors that do not interfere with meaning. Quotations may be too long.	Essentially error free. Demonstrates attention to details of writing. Doesn't over use quotations.	
			<i>TOTAL POINTS:</i>	

Additional Comments:

Faculty: _____

Date: _____