The Education Specialist Program Overview
The Ed.S. program is designed to provide a high level of professional proficiency based on the discipline: Counselor Education, Early Childhood Education, Educational Leadership, Instructional Technology, Middle Grades Education, Reading Education, School Psychology, Secondary Education, or Special Education. The Ed.S. curriculum is based on an inquiry approach that emphasizes problem-solving and research skills applicable to a multitude of education problems, pedagogy, and issues. Ed.S. programs require a minimum of 30 semester hours of planned course work that includes a research sequence which culminates in a field-based educational research study. The Ed.S. candidate works with a committee of at least 3 faculty members who guide the development, implementation, and defense of the field-based study. [Note: Candidates seeking a certificate upgrade must complete study on topic in their certification field.] The value of the field-based research study is evidenced in the ability of candidates to become capable researchers and critical consumers of educational research. As candidates conduct their field-based educational research studies, they are better equipped to inform their practice.

The Ed.S. Research Sequence
Three specific courses are required components of the Ed.S. research sequence. These courses must be taken in sequence and are not to be taken concurrently. Some programs may provide one or more courses prior to EDUR 8131 to assist in the identification of a research topic that is appropriate and feasible for an Ed.S. study and that is relevant to the candidate’s professional situation.

I. **EDUR 8131** (Educational Statistics I) is an introductory statistics courses which provides an orientation to both descriptive and inferential statistics. It is a prerequisite course for EDUR 8434 and may be taken at the master’s level.

II. **EDUR 8434** (Field-Based Educational Research) is the second course in the research sequence. This course is designed to assist Ed.S. candidates in developing a viable research proposal for the conduct of an independent field-based research study required as part of their Ed.S. program. EDUR 8434 is a permission-only course (see Ed.S. candidate responsibilities for information on how to enroll). **Note: EDUR 8434 is not offered during summer sessions.**

III. **XXXX 8838/8839**, the final course in the research sequence, is the culminating experience in the Ed.S. program. [As each course is program specific, the XXXX designation is used throughout document to represent the course prefix, e.g., ESED, EDLD, etc.] In this course, the candidate implements the field-based study using the proposal developed in EDUR 8434. The completed study is orally defended in a meeting with the candidate’s committee members; this defense serves as the exit assessment for the program. The purpose of the defense is to assess the candidate’s knowledge of the topic area, the adequacy of the candidate’s application of research principles, and the ability of the candidate to articulate the
results and implications of the study. The final paper associated with this study must adhere to the Field-Based Study Final Paper Format located in Appendix A. Notes: (1) XXXX 8838/8839 is not offered during summer sessions and (2) students are only allowed to register for XXXX 8838/8839 a total of two times during the course of their program.

The Ed.S. Committee
Ed.S. committees must consist of at least three faculty members: the Ed.S. Content Specialist, the EDUR 8434 instructor (or other recommended research specialist), and the XXXX 8838/8839 instructor. Additional members may be included on the committee as determined by the Ed.S. Content Specialist and the candidate.

The Ed.S. Content Specialist
The Ed.S. Content Specialist will carry out the following responsibilities:
- Serve as content specialist for field-based educational research study
- Support candidate during development and completion of research study and paper
- Sign Topic Approval Form (required for enrollment in EDUR 8434) (see Appendix B)
- Remind candidate (if applicable) of need for letter of cooperation, i.e., written permission, from administrator(s) of site where proposed research will be conducted
- Participate in Ed.S. field-based research study defense
- Sign Field-Based Research Defense Form (see Appendix C)

EDUR 8434 Instructor
The EDUR 8434 instructor will carry out the following responsibilities:
- Solicit and review approved Topic Approval Form (see Appendix B) to assess each candidate’s readiness for EDUR 8434 and feasibility of study completion within two-semester timeframe
- Remind candidates about Ed.S. forms and policies/procedures including required format for research proposal and final paper (see Appendix A)
- Guide candidates in proposal development process including statement of the problem, literature review, hypotheses or research questions, and research method (6th edition APA style required)
- Encourage candidates to keep Ed.S. Content Specialist informed about proposal progress
- Require completion of mandatory research compliance training as well as draft of Institutional Review Board (IRB) application by end of EDUR 8434 (draft IRB application will include proposal narrative (or appropriate exempt questionnaire) and any appendices applicable to study including consent forms, letter of cooperation (or written permission), participant recruitment materials, and instruments)
- Communicate with Ed.S. Content Specialist and 8838/8839 instructor (if known) regarding any issues with candidate progress.
- Provide detailed written feedback and assessment on final proposal and ask candidates to submit this information and revised proposal to 8838/8839 instructor and Ed.S. Content Specialist
- Assign EDUR 8434 course grade (Note: No course grade will be assigned until IRB paperwork noted above is submitted to 8434 instructor via Folio)
- Respond to candidate inquiries regarding data collection and analysis, and assist as needed, during completion of field-based educational research study
Serve as member of Ed.S. committee and participate in defense of study (except in extenuating circumstances)
Sign Field-Based Research Defense Form (see Appendix C)

**XXXX 8838/8839 Instructor**
The XXXX 8838/8839 instructor will carry out the following responsibilities:
- Read, approve, and sign IRB paperwork for all candidates enrolled in 8838/8839; ensure candidate has included (if applicable) a letter of cooperation, i.e., written permission, from administrator(s) of site where proposed research will be conducted
- Supervise each candidate in the completion of the research study as designed in EDUR 8434 (data collection, data analysis, writing of the research paper, and preparing for the oral defense)
- Keep committee members informed regarding any major issues with candidate progress
- Facilitate communication between Ed.S. candidates and Ed.S. committee members
- Work with candidates to coordinate an oral defense
- Chair oral defense of candidates enrolled in 8838/8839
- Sign Field-Based Research Defense Form (see Appendix C)
- Evaluate the final research paper, assign course grade, and complete key assessment rubrics in Folio

**The Ed.S. Candidate**
The Ed.S. candidate is expected to read the Georgia Southern University catalog and the College of Graduate Studies website, and complete all the responsibilities identified for graduate students. Regularly check the Georgia Southern University email account, or have it forwarded to a personal email account, so all important information from the College of Graduate Studies, College of Education, and instructors will be received.

As related specifically to the Ed.S. field-based research study, Ed.S. candidates will carry out the following responsibilities:
- Obtain, read, and follow Ed.S. policies and procedures (document available under Current Students section on COE website)
- Keep abreast of and adhere to all deadlines, including those for registration, IRB application, application for graduation, and Ed.S. defense
- Identify faculty member willing to serve as Ed.S. Content Specialist by the beginning of the semester prior to 8434, not including summer
- Consult with Ed.S. Content Specialist about possible research topics that complement the candidate’s professional objectives, course of study and chosen certification field [Note: Candidates seeking a certificate upgrade must complete study on topic in their certification field.]
- Secure approval and signature of Ed.S. Content Specialist on Topic Approval Form (see Appendix B) no later than final two weeks of the semester prior to EDUR 8434, not including summer
- Submit signed Topic Approval Form to Graduate Academic Services Center (GASC) (gasc@georgiasouthern.edu) when ready to register for EDUR 8434 (signed Topic Approval Form and successful completion (minimum grade of C) of EDUR 8131 or equivalent course are required for enrollment in this permission-only course)
- Review information on Georgia Southern University’s Research Integrity/Institutional Review Board (IRB) webpage
- Complete IRB training, and submit training certificate to EDUR 8434 instructor
- Solicit (if applicable) letter of cooperation, i.e., written permission, from administrator(s) of site where proposed research will be conducted
- Complete draft of IRB application by end of EDUR 8434
- Review any specific program requirements regarding IRB application process
- Submit IRB application to 8838/8839 instructor for review and signature [Note: IRB approval must be obtained prior to any data collection and analysis; failure to receive IRB approval in a timely manner will have consequences for completing 8838/8839 – see program policies for details]
- Consult with 8838/8839 instructor regarding scheduling of Ed.S. defense
- Submit final copy of Ed.S. field-based research paper to all committee members at least two weeks in advance of defense (candidate must have access to research paper, hard copy or electronic, during defense)
- Complete candidate information at top of Field-Based Research Defense Form (see Appendix C), and submit form to 8838/8839 instructor prior to defense
- Defend Ed.S. field-based research study orally before committee and make subsequent revisions to research paper as requested by committee; defense format is determined by program
- Submit final copy of Field-Based Research paper to 8838/8839 instructor
- Send copy of signed Field-Based Research Defense Form to GASC