Please note that all information in this document is subject to change and revision. You should view this document only as a starting point in your search for information about HPSE and TC. This document should NOT be treated as a final statement of policy. For updated information, please contact the relevant TC office, or finalized TC documents, many of which are posted on the TC website.
PROGRAM IN HIGHER AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Higher and Postsecondary Education Program at Teachers College, Columbia University strives to prepare knowledgeable scholars and scholar-practitioners in the field of higher education. We strive to develop the abilities to analyze and foster excellence in teaching and learning, scholarly and professional development, and student development. Additionally, we strive to develop, in students, the abilities to analyze, design, and integrate the structures, processes, policies, and technologies that comprise colleges, universities, and state and national systems of tertiary education. Further, we strive to develop understandings of social/cultural and civic perspectives, with attention to the connection between institutions of higher education and their external constituencies.

PROGRAM FOCUS

Master of Arts:

The 32-point Master of Arts (M.A.) degree develops knowledgeable practitioners in three domains of higher and postsecondary education: (1) its educational core (teaching and learning, student and professional development); (2) its organizational and institutional framework (institutional planning, organizational development, policymaking and implementation); and (3) its social positioning and comparative potential (e.g. civic engagement, philanthropy, benefits of higher education in a diverse society). Though students entering the M.A. Program will be exposed to each of these domains, they will specialize in one. Specialization occurs through the selection of one of three sequences: (1) Academic and Developmental Analysis, (2) Organizational and Institutional Analysis, or (3) Social/Cultural and Civic Analysis.

Students who pursue the M.A. degree will build on the program’s historic positioning in the study of student development through the college years and its current strengths in studies of academic learning and development. They will also build on the program's growing capacities in higher/postsecondary education policy, social thought, and comparative analysis, as well as on the department's offerings in organizational studies. As such, students earning the M.A. degree will be positioned to serve in a variety of academic and student support positions, as well as in various administrative roles.

Master of Education:

The 60-point Master of Education (Ed.M.) degree develops breadth of understanding of higher and postsecondary education, through emphasizing particular domains of study and practice, among them academic learning and development, organizational and institutional processes, and social/cultural and civic perspectives. Students who pursue the Ed.M. in Higher and Postsecondary Education typically bring to their studies well developed understandings of particular facets of the enterprise, often from their own participation in the professional practices that define it (teaching, administration, etc.). The Ed.M. Program helps them situate their practice-based knowledge and their emerging intellectual interests within the broader span of higher and postsecondary education, thereby providing expanded intellectual resources for their scholarly and professional efforts. The
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Program also introduces Ed.M. students to the field of higher education as a scholarly community and a body of developing knowledge. There are two tracks offered for the Ed.M.: (1) the Professional Practices in Higher Education track and (2) the Practices of Research in Higher Education track.

Professional Practices in Higher Education Track: The professional practices track is intended for early to mid-career higher education professionals who have worked in the field and are seeking theoretical and research-based tools to complement their professional experience. The coursework in this track allows mid-career professionals to place their experiences in the broader context of educational, institutional, and social/cultural forces that drive experiences in higher education while simultaneously deepening their knowledge of their primary subject matter interest pertaining to their professional development in higher education. Students conclude this program of study with an independent study that is a guided professional practice experience and by writing an integrative paper focused on a particular topic of professional and scholarly interest.

Practices of Research in Higher Education Track: The practices of research track is intended for students who are interested in learning about how knowledge in higher education is produced through research that complements practice. Students in this track often seek to learn the most current ideas in the field of higher education as well as an understanding of how to create new knowledge about higher education in preparation for a future doctorate. The coursework in this track allows students to learn the broader context of educational, institutional, and social/cultural forces that drive experiences in higher education while simultaneously understanding the theoretical, methodological, and epistemological tools used by scholars in the field of higher education. Students conclude this program of study with an independent study that is a guided research experience and by writing an integrative paper focused on a particular topic of scholarly and professional interest.

Doctor of Education:

The 90-point Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree develops breadth of understanding about higher and postsecondary education with a focus on an intellectual issue or professional activity (concentration or emphasis area). Breadth is assured through study within three curricular domains: (1) academic and developmental analysis, (2) organizational and institutional analysis, and (3) social/cultural and civic analysis of higher and postsecondary education. As they engage in study across these domains and beyond them (through related out-of-program courses), students will work with faculty advisors to develop emphasis areas, among them studies in teaching and learning, institutional assessment, administration and leadership, diversity and access, student learning and development, and scholarly learning and careers. The Ed.D. requires in-depth study in processes/methods of inquiry appropriate to the area of concentration or emphasis, as well as a substantial theoretical understanding of the area and approaches to inquiry within it.

Students who pursue the Ed.D. explore and question the range of perspectives for understanding the higher education enterprise, its educational and intellectual core, its institutional/organizational rubrics, and its social/cultural and civic contextualizations. Thus, through their own research (situated within an emphasis area), students participate in reshaping current understandings of postsecondary education. Ed.D. students conclude their programs by writing a dissertation that,
though focused on a particular research problem within higher and postsecondary education, reflects the tripartite aims of the curriculum, as well as deep understanding of knowledge structures underpinning their area of inquiry. They are positioned then to scrutinize prevailing views of what it means to engage in “higher learning,” and to improve and develop the settings in which that learning occurs.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

THE PROGRAM

What are the major requirements for the M.A., Ed.M, and Ed.D. programs?
Each degree program has its own set of requirements outlined in our program study guides, which are available on our website: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/organization-and-leadership/higher-and-postsecondary-education/. The study guides provide the frameworks for program planning, although students proceed with their courses requirements in consultation with their designated advisor. The coursework portion of each degree program consists of required courses (offered annually or in alternate years), within-Program electives, and extra-Program electives; other requirements, unique to a program or portion thereof, are indicated in the study guides.

What is the difference between the Master of Arts and the Master of Education degrees?
The Master of Arts degree requires a minimum of 32 points to complete the degree. The Master of Education is an advanced master's degree for applicants who have professional experience and would like to further their learning of and research into the field of higher education. The Master of Education requires a minimum of 60 points to complete the degree.

What projects or qualifying exams are required for M.A., Ed.M., Ed.D. students?
M.A. students complete a reflective essay, analyzing how their goals and perspectives have or have not changed in the course of the M.A. program. Ed.M. students complete an integrative paper. Ed.D. students complete a two-part certification exam, as well as a dissertation.

Are course syllabi available?
Yes. We have syllabi for current program courses available for viewing in the program office (206 Zankel Hall).

What is the relationship between Teachers College and Columbia University?
Teachers College is a comprehensive graduate and professional school. The College has its own administration, governing board, and finances, while having access to selected resources of Columbia University, such as the library, health services, recreational center, and so forth. It is defined as an affiliate of Columbia University.

ENROLLMENT

May I enroll as a part-time student?
Yes. In previous years approximately 75% of our M.A. students were enrolled as full-time and held a 20-hour a week internship; while the other 25% of the M.A. students were enrolled as part-time students with full-time careers. For Ed.M. and Ed.D. students, approximately 75% of the students enrolled in these degree levels worked full-time and took classes part-time, while the other 25% were
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full-time students. Many of our classes are offered from 5:10 pm-6:50 pm and 7:20 pm-9:00 pm to permit flexibility. Some classes are also offered during daytime hours. A few elective courses are also available during the weekends and via distance learning. In addition, we typically host networking events and colloquium speakers during the evenings to accommodate our part-time students.

Must I declare my enrollment status as either full-time or part-time?
No. You do not need to declare your enrollment status as either full-time or part-time because we do not differentiate between the two groups. The full-time and part-time students are provided equal services and support.

How long will it take me to complete the degree?
Students vary in length of time to degree, but in all cases, they are subject to College, Department, and Program guidelines toward degree completion. Typically, full-time M.A. students complete their program within one academic year, and our part-time students complete the program at varying speeds. Full-time Ed.M. students tend to complete their program within two academic years. Full-time Ed.D. students sometimes complete their program within five academic years. Part-time Ed.M. and Ed.D. students complete the program at varying speeds. These timeframes are approximate and depend on each person’s working situation, personal life, and financial situation; in all cases, they depend also on college policies. Part-time students usually take two to three classes per term and full-time students typically enroll in four to six classes per term.

May I receive credit for previous graduate work?
The Program adheres to College Policy working within this frame: Transfer credits are not awarded for Master of Arts students. For the Master of Education, a maximum of 30 points completed outside of Teachers College may be transferred. For the Doctor of Education, a maximum of 45 points may be transferred. However, we do not guarantee that any transfer credits will be accepted. Transfer credit is awarded at the discretion of the academic adviser upon review of the student’s file. As such, possible transfer credits are reviewed in conjunction with the academic advisor. The academic advisor will determine whether any credits will be accepted toward your degree program and makes the final decision. This process occurs only after an applicant has been accepted into the program. Oftentimes, the academic advisor will accept fewer credits than the maximum indicated above.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING
Where do students typically live?
Most students commute from around the Tri-State area. Students who relocate to New York City usually live near the university on the Upper West Side of Manhattan or in graduate housing on campus.

Who do I contact about Teachers College graduate student housing?
Please contact the Student Housing Office for information about housing. They can be reached by phone at 212-678-3235, by email at housing@tc.columbia.edu, or online at http://www.tc.columbia.edu/housing. We highly recommend that you return the housing application promptly if you would like to live in student housing. TC housing is very competitive.
Where are Higher and Postsecondary Education students from?
Higher and postsecondary education students come from all over the United States, as well as from many other countries. The majority of our students are from the metropolitan New York area.

What is the average age of new students?
On average, MA students from previous years were in their twenties. Our entering Ed.M. and Ed.D. students tend to be in their late twenties and early thirties when starting the program. However, the age range across all the degree levels is wide and it varies over time.

What is the racial/ethnic composition of new students?
The racial/ethnic composition of every incoming class varies from year to year, but we strive consistently for a broad range of diversity in our community: race and ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, religion, and many other features of background.

ADMISSIONS
How do I apply?
Applications are available from the Teachers College Office of Admissions. Information and forms can be found at: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/

For which terms may I apply for admission?
Applications are accepted for the fall term only. The deadline is January 2 for Ed.D. applicants. The priority deadline for M.A. and Ed.M. applicants is January 15 and the final deadline is April 15. Applicants who wish to be considered for financial aid, should apply by the priority deadline. Application deadlines are noted in the Teachers College Guide to Admissions available online at: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/areas-of-study/leadership-and-administration/

What is required for admission consideration?
Persons from a variety of academic backgrounds and work experiences may qualify for admission to the program. Primary consideration for admission is given to previous academic record, work experiences, letters of reference, and the personal statement. Specific requirements for each Higher and Postsecondary Education degree are provided in the Interactive Online Program Guide at: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/areas-of-study/leadership-and-administration/

What are the criteria for acceptance into the M.A., Ed.M., and Ed.D. program?
In determining qualifications for admission, we use a compensatory model whereby a weakness in one area can be compensated for by strength in another area. That is, we look at the entire profile of each applicant across a number of different areas. Typically, a strong applicant is one with a solid and consistent record of achievement across various domains. In general, we focus on intellectual capacity, fit with the offerings of the Higher and Postsecondary Education program, relevant background and experience, and dedication and commitment to obtaining the degree. In evaluating applications, we examine each of the required items for admission with a careful review. Our goal is to determine applicants’ individual merits and potential contributions to the field as well as to the entering class.
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Applicants to all degree levels should discuss past educational preparation and professional goals in their personal statements, including their anticipated work (e.g. professional and/or research interest) within the degree program to which they are applying. In addition to the general application documentation required, all applicants must submit an academic writing sample (e.g., a class paper) that shows how they handle scholarly materials: such as data, ideas, concepts, theoretical perspectives. Ed.M. and Ed.D. applicants should submit a paper written for a graduate level class. Ed.M. applicants should have relevant work experience. Doctoral applicants should have a master's degree in a relevant discipline or field and work experience in higher education. Please view our requirements online at the Teachers College Guide to Admission: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/areas-of-study/leadership-and-administration/

Will it help my chances of acceptance if I talk with faculty members before submitting my application? Speaking with or meeting with faculty members prior to applying will not promote the chances of acceptance for any applicant. However, we do recommend that you acquaint yourself with the work of the faculty, especially for Ed.M., and Ed.D. applicants. Faculty members and current students are available to discuss additional questions about the program during the program’s annual Open House information session. Please visit our program website for more information on this year’s Open House. Once acceptance decisions have been made, accepted applicants might be afforded opportunities to meet with faculty or students to discuss the program. To speak with a faculty member or current student, contact the program’s inquiries coordinators - Brian Allen, bka2112@tc.columbia.edu (for MA inquiries), and Abdul Abad, abad@tc.columbia.edu (Ed.M. and Ed.D. inquiries).

Are any standardized exams required? The GRE scores are not required for the Higher and Postsecondary Education program for any of the degree levels (M.A., Ed.M. and Ed.D.). The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required for all applicants who have received their undergraduate degree from an institution where the language of instruction is not English. Please visit the Teachers College Guide to Admission: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/areas-of-study/leadership-and-administration/

What is the time frame for admission decisions? When will I know if I have been accepted? Generally speaking, the Teachers College Admissions Office notifies students who applied by the priority TC deadline at some point around mid-March. Applicants who met the final deadline tend to hear from the TC Admissions Office around early to late May.

How many students begin the program each year? The number of students we admit varies from year to year. In recent years, we have had about 40-50 M.A. students, 5-10 Ed.M. students, and 0-4 Ed.D. students enter the program in September. The numbers vary year to year however.

How can I increase my chances of being accepted?
• Applicants should review their application thoroughly before submitting it to ensure that all requested information has been provided and any typos and errors have been corrected.
• Applicants should ensure that their applications are complete and submitted by the deadline.
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- Applicants should ask individuals, who are familiar with their academic, research, and/or work experience and can provide detailed information, to write letters of recommendation. At least one of these letters should comment on the applicant's scholarly strengths and weaknesses. It would be best if this letter came from an academic advisor or someone with whom the applicant took a course.
- It is recommended that applicants clarify their career goals before applying. Consider the rationale behind obtaining a degree in Higher and Postsecondary Education and relationship to career goals.
- It is recommended that applicants demonstrate an understanding of the field of higher and postsecondary education and understand the particular interests of the Program faculty within the larger field.
- Applicants should gain relevant work experience, which can include part-time work or volunteer activities.

Why was I accepted to a different degree level than I applied to?
At times, the program accepts students to a degree level below the one for which they applied. For example, a student may apply to the Ed.D. program, may not be accepted to it, but may be accepted to the Ed.M. program. This may occur when an applicant shows promise but does not qualify for the Ed.D. program. Typically, students in this situation do one of two things. Either they decline admission to the lower degree program or they enroll at the lower degree level and then reapply to the higher degree level at a later time. If after reapplying the student is accepted to the higher degree level, the student may be permitted to transfer a good portion of their Higher and Postsecondary Education credits, earned at TC, to the new TC degree program; however that decision is the academic advisor's. It is critical to understand that entry into a lower-level program in no way assures admission to a higher level program. For example, admissions to the Ed.M. in no way assures admission to the Ed.D.; the two programs require separate admissions applications and separate processes of consideration.

Who should I contact for further discussion about not getting into the degree program that I want?
Please contact the TC Admissions Office at (212) 678-3710.

Can I defer my admission to the college?
Yes, admission to the college can be deferred for up to one year. Doctoral admits must have written permission from the Program faculty for such deferral. To defer admission, please contact TC Admissions Office at (212) 678-3710.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

How much does it cost to study at Teachers College?
The 2016-2017 tuition rate is $1,512 per credit/point. In addition, the college fee per term is $438 per semester. These amounts do not include any additional services students may need such as health insurance. Up to date information on tuition and fees is available at the TC Student Accounts website: [http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/tuition-and-fees/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/tuition-and-fees/).
Who do I contact about financial aid?
Please contact the Office of Financial Aid: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/financial-aid/. We recommend that admitted students inform their academic advisor about special financial need in case the program becomes aware of new support.

Who do I contact about scholarships?
Please contact the Office of Financial Aid: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admissions/financial-aid/. We also recommend that admitted students inform their academic advisor of their interest in being considered for scholarships.

Who do I contact regarding assistantships, work-study programs, or various employment opportunities at Teachers College?
Contact one of the following offices:
   Human Resources: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/human-resources/
   Career Services: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/career-services/

Are there teaching assistantships, research assistantships, or administrative assistantships available in the Higher and Postsecondary Education program?
A very limited number of assistantships may be available, on a year by year basis, through the program. Remuneration for these positions varies and selected positions may at times include tuition points, but a number of positions do not include support for tuition. Please inform your academic advisor or a course professor that you are interested in a teaching, research, or administrative assistantships. The choice of students receiving assistantships is up to the faculty.

What other part-time work options are available to Higher and Postsecondary Education students to give students practical experience in the field?
Many students, particularly those in the M.A. program, work in internship positions in higher and postsecondary education. These internships are arranged by our internship coordinator. Interviews are conducted at our internship fairs, held twice each spring semester. Our students have served as interns in various positions within student development, academic affairs, admissions, residence life, and multicultural affairs across the Columbia community. In addition, research and policy positions within in the greater New York area are offered to participants. Please refer to Internship Program information located on the program website: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/organization-and-leadership/higher-and-postsecondary-education/internship-program/

Some students work part-time outside of Teachers College to supplement their income. To help students with this process, the TC Office of Career Services hosts workshops, posts employment opportunities, and links mentors with current students. The Career Services website is: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/career-services/

ADVISING
Who will be my advisor? When do I find out who is my advisor?
Admitted students are assigned a faculty or staff advisor. Admitted students will receive an email or letter informing them of their advisor in late-summer or learn who their advisor is at Fall Orientation.
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The Office of Doctoral Studies
The Office of Doctoral Studies (324 Thorndike Hall, 212-678-4060) is a service for doctoral students. The office and website have a number of informational packets for doctoral students, including program plan requirements, certification exam information, proposal and dissertation style manuals and so on. We encourage newly admitted doctorate students to visit the Office of Doctoral Studies and/or website in order to get these informational packets. The website is: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admin/doctoral/  

CAREER OBJECTIVES & PROSPECTS
What kind of jobs do students get after obtaining their M.A., Ed.M., or Ed.D. in Higher and Postsecondary education?
Students earning M.A. or Ed.M. degrees may be positioned to serve in a variety of academic and student support positions, as well as in various policy-development, policy-support, and administrative roles. Through the full course of their careers, graduates of the Ed.D. program may become policymakers, analysts, and evaluation specialists in higher and postsecondary education; they may assume substantial leadership responsibilities, as through presidencies or other key administrative posts in colleges and universities or state systems; they may lead university- or college-wide instructional development centers and activities; some may become academic scholars and researchers.

Are career/placement services available to students?
Teachers College’s Office of Career Services offers consultation and placement services, as well as workshops on job search strategies and skills. In addition, Career Services works with student interest groups to organize job fairs and provide other career- related networking opportunities. For more information, please visit the Career Services website at http://www.tc.columbia.edu/career-services/

The Higher and Postsecondary Education Program also offers informational and networking opportunities with alumni employed in the higher and postsecondary education sector, as well as several career development programs, such as workshops on careers in higher and postsecondary education. Additional career development programs offered in Teachers College at large are announced through a program and department listserv.

What kind of recognition has Teachers College and the Higher and Postsecondary Education program received?
Teachers College has consistently ranked on U.S. News & World Report’s list of top graduate schools in education. A number of the Higher and Postsecondary Education faculty have received national awards and recognition for their contributions to research and practice; over the years Program faculty have served as President, or in other high-ranking posts, for key professional associations in higher education. Faculty have published articles in the leading higher education research journals and they have written books published by leading university presses. The HPSE Program is also proud of the number of doctoral students who have in past years been awarded outstanding dissertation awards and other grants or awards indicating merit and promise.
**STUDENT LIFE**

**What kinds of activities are available outside the classroom?**
The program in Higher and Postsecondary Education hosts a number of events for students to promote learning outside the classroom and foster a sense of community within the program. Every semester, we offer professional development and social opportunities. Programming and professional development events are announced via our program website ([http://www.tc.columbia.edu/organization-and-leadership/higher-and-postsecondary-education/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/organization-and-leadership/higher-and-postsecondary-education/)) and through our program listserv. All admitted students are added to our program listserv.

Students are encouraged to join student chapters of professional associations as well as enroll under national memberships for organizations, such as The Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), American Educational Research Association (AERA), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE). In addition, students are encouraged to attend and participate in professional conferences as well as take advantage of opportunities within Columbia University and the New York City area.

**What is the atmosphere like within the program?**
The atmosphere within the Higher and Postsecondary Education program can be described as collaborative, friendly, and relatively informal. Oftentimes, students work in groups on assignments and projects or get together socially.

**What kinds of student activities/organizations are there?**
There are about 28 student organizations at Teachers College, representing various aspects of the school’s diverse student body. In addition, the Office of Student Activities and Programs organizes a range of activities on a regular basis, including workshops, social events, and networking opportunities. For more information, please visit the Student Activities website: [http://www.tc.columbia.edu/studentactivities/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/studentactivities/)

**What facilities and services help support my academic success and personal experience?**

**Computing services**
Information on the computing services workshops, locations, and services are available online: [http://www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/)

**Fitness Center**
Teachers College students have access to the gym at Columbia University. Information is located at: [http://perec.columbia.edu/](http://perec.columbia.edu/)

**International Student Services**
Information is located at: [http://www.tc.columbia.edu/international/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/international/)

**Library**
Informational workshops on library structure, library renovations, research skills, and technology is available via the library’s website: [http://library.tc.columbia.edu/](http://library.tc.columbia.edu/). Teacher College students also have full access to the Columbia University and Barnard College library system.
Program in Higher and Postsecondary Education

Office of Access and Services for Individuals with Disabilities
Information is available via the website: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/oasid/

Office of the Vice President for Diversity and Community Affairs
Information is available at: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/diversity/

Office of the Registrar
Information is available at: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/administration/registrar/

Student Handbook
Information for new and current students about TC and its policies is available at: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/student-handbook/

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