Executive Doctorate
IN HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION DEGREE
PENN GSE RIGHTLY CLAIMS that we lead the nation in the preparation of education professionals, and our School’s excellence in this regard is due in large part to the Executive Doctorate. The development and application of strategic management skills, evidence-based decision making, and a scholarly dissertation are distinguishing features of the program. Our alumni are practitioners and researchers who shape higher education with a clear focus on mission-centered, market-smart outcomes.

THE INVITATION

Peerless in our focus on the unique strengths and challenges of senior-level leaders in higher education, the Executive Doctorate reaches far beyond a standard doctoral program, as it brings together cohorts of current senior leaders and managers to challenge each other and engage with world-renown faculty—all without career interruption. Our loyal alumni form a growing and influential network of college presidents, vice presidents, deans, and other leaders who overwhelmingly report that the Executive Doctorate propelled their careers and increased their impact. I invite you to learn what makes our program effective, including our accelerated delivery model, distinctive cohorts of students, challenging curriculum and exceptional faculty.

Eric J. Kaplan
Senior Fellow, Graduate School of Education
Director, Executive Doctorate in Higher Education Management
The Distinction

The Executive Doctorate in Higher Education Management provides a rigorous curriculum designed especially for senior-level leaders through an innovative format. A committed faculty of scholars and practitioners lead a cohort of students who complete a Doctor of Education degree in just two intense years—without career interruption. The program provides all books, meals, and hotel accommodations during courses that meet on the Penn campus for approximately one week each summer and one weekend per month during two academic years.

The Philosophy

The Executive Doctorate trains an emerging generation of top higher education leaders—from campuses, government, and affiliated organizations—to manage resources strategically, leverage evidence-based decision-making, create entrepreneurial opportunities, challenge practices critically, and conquer the dynamics of complex organizations. The program redefines academic inquiry: we focus on using sound analytic principles to tackle relevant, practical questions of strategy for governing broad segments of the higher education enterprise.

The People

Our alumni universally identify our cohort-based pedagogical model as the program’s core strength. Each class of approximately two-dozen senior leaders represent higher education’s diversity in all its forms—demographic, professional, and institutional—and actively contribute to a community of learners. The cohort is led by a committed faculty of nationally renowned higher education scholars who dedicate themselves to both teaching and chairing dissertations, often reporting that their work with Executive Doctorate students is among the most rewarding professional experiences of their careers.

The Timeline

For many senior higher education leaders, professional and personal commitments and goals preclude stepping out of the workforce for three to five years to enroll in a traditional doctoral program. In addition, many part-time Ed.D. programs extend for years, with disappointing completion rates. The innovative format of the Executive Doctorate provides an alternative solution, allowing students (who must already hold a master’s degree) to maintain their current jobs while balancing a tightly structured two-year curriculum that includes the completion of a scholarly dissertation in addition to coursework. With the support of a dedicated faculty and staff and the encouragement of their classmates, approximately 90% of students complete the program on time.

The Reward

Most Executive Doctorate students are seeking career advancement that would be facilitated by a terminal degree or advanced study in the field of higher education management. Our alumni maintain that the program provided unparalleled preparation for senior leadership positions, supplying them with dynamic tools for surmounting campus-wide challenges. Search firms and professional networks routinely recruit our alumni. Moreover, while the educational experience is rewarding in and of itself, the community continues beyond the two years, through an engaged alumni network and access to professional associates in a variety of institutions across the country.
The Cohort

The cohort model is the Executive Doctorate’s core pedagogical strategy: students bring their past experiences and current dilemmas to the classroom and use new frameworks, innovative strategies, and emerging analytic skills to puzzle through contemporary issues together. These issues spark classroom dialogues that build during cohort meals and continue online and offline during time between classes.

Executive Doctorate students are established higher education professionals from campuses, associations, organizations, and government. They reflect the broad diversity of higher education, whether defined by race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, or religious affiliation. Students travel monthly to Penn from across the United States. We have welcomed students from across the United States, Europe, Latin America and Asia.

Our student cohorts are diverse in terms of their professional and institutional backgrounds as well. Each class brings together senior leaders of two- and four-year campuses, public and private, for-profit and faith-based, historically black and Hispanic-serving, elite and open enrollment institutions. Represented in the room are presidents, vice presidents, deans, and other senior managers in the areas of finance, advancement, planning, student affairs, enrollment management, and virtually every segment of the enterprise. While all students hold at least a master’s degree, some hold terminal degrees in law or other academic fields and are seeking a deeper understanding of issues in education.

Cohort Demographics, 2010–2014

- 52% Male
- 48% Female
- Average Age: 47
- 63% White
- 23% Black
- 8% Hispanic/Latino
- 5% Asian

Represents Two-year and Four Year Public, Private and For Profit Institutions, Nonprofit Organizations and Private Industry

Professional Experiences

Academic and Administrative Leadership (Presidents, Provosts, Deans), Vice Presidents of Advancement, Enrollment Management and Finance, Teaching Faculty, Private Sector Consultants and Entrepreneurs
The Structure

The Executive Doctorate is a full-time Ed.D. program delivered in an executive-style format that allows students to keep their current full-time jobs while in the program. Although various technologies are employed to facilitate collaborative learning and communication, this is not an online degree—coursework takes place on the Penn campus in Philadelphia. Each cohort of students is supported by a program coordinator who facilitates all logistics and hospitality arrangements, in addition to distributing course materials, sharing relevant information and serving as a one-stop liaison to other university offices and resources.

The program consists of six consecutive terms, starting with a late summer term and culminating in a spring-term Commencement two years later. Degrees are conferred in August. All students must transfer the equivalent of a year of graduate coursework from a previous master’s degree, first professional degree, or other doctoral degree. Students take a heavy load of coursework in The First Year, while also developing a dissertation proposal. The second summer is a study abroad experience, taking place in a one- or two-week overseas trip. Coursework continues in The Second Year, though at a lighter pace, to allow students time to complete their research and dissertation drafting, and culminates in a dissertation defense toward the end of the spring term.

Student accommodations are typically at the Hilton Inn at Penn, a AAA-rated Four Diamond hotel only a block from the Graduate School of Education. The hotel provides high-speed wireless Internet connections, a business center, meeting rooms and lounges, a fitness room, a restaurant, and other amenities. Executive Doctorate classes are usually held in the GSE Conference Center, with breakfast, lunch, breaks, and some dinners catered on site. Additional dinners, often with faculty or visiting lecturers, are provided at a wide range of Philadelphia restaurants. Students are responsible for travel to and from Philadelphia, but costs for lodging, meals, and local transportation during class sessions are included in the tuition and program fee.

Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE FIRST YEAR</th>
<th>THE SECOND YEAR</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Summer Opening Seminar</td>
<td>● Summer International Context Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort kicks off the program at Penn with a full week of classes.</td>
<td>One- to two-week study abroad experience, meeting with higher education leaders and researchers at partner campuses. Recent destinations include Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan and South Africa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Fall</td>
<td>● Fall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students have a heavy load of coursework and begin formulating a dissertation topic.</td>
<td>Coursework continues, but at a lighter pace. Students complete research and dissertation drafting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Spring</td>
<td>● Spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coursework continues. Students develop and defend a dissertation proposal by June.</td>
<td>Students wrap up coursework and final dissertation edits. Dissertation defenses and Commencement!</td>
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The Calendar

The Executive Doctorate is structured such that all members of a cohort take classes together. There are no electives. Coursework is a combination of classes that are year-long (meeting every month) and modular (meeting for one or two months). Course calendars are given to students in advance, and due to the fast pace of the program and material covered in each session, attendance at all course sessions is mandatory. In the weeks between class meetings, students can expect 15 or more hours of assigned or independent work per week—researching, reading and writing. Monthly class sessions generally require preparatory assignments (always readings and often papers), with post-class projects and papers due several weeks later.

The Executive Doctorate begins with a week-long orientation and course session in August of The First Year. For the subsequent 10 months from September through June, students come for monthly course sessions that take place from 10:00 a.m. on Thursday through noon on Saturday. The public policy seminar weekend, however, does not typically meet in Philadelphia. Instead, students engage in dialogue with national leaders off site in Boulder, CO or Washington D.C. Milestones in The First Year include performance review and promotion to Program Candidacy (February); submission of a Qualifying Paper and promotion to Doctoral Candidacy (April); and oral defense of the Dissertation Proposal (June).

The Second Year begins with an international course and study abroad experience, typically for one or two weeks in July. Recent cohorts have studied higher education systems in Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan and South Africa. Students then return to Penn for monthly course sessions from August through March, this time typically meeting from 9:00 a.m. on Friday through noon on Saturday. Simultaneously, students work in earnest on their dissertation data collection, analysis, and write-up. The final program milestone is the oral Dissertation Defense, typically held in April and followed, if successful, by final revisions and submission of the dissertation in June. Graduating students participate in Penn’s Commencement in mid-May and degrees are officially conferred in August.

### Example Weekend Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 – 1:00</td>
<td>7:30 – 8:30 Breakfast</td>
<td>8:00 – 9:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proseminar</td>
<td>8:30 – 11:30</td>
<td>9:00 – 12:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:30</td>
<td>11:30 – 12:00 Lunch</td>
<td>Change and Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>12:00 – 3:00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 – 3:00</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>International Trip Prep</td>
<td>3:15 – 7:15 Change and Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15 – 6:15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative Methods</td>
<td>7:30 Catered Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dinner at Restaurant</td>
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The Curriculum

The Executive Doctorate curriculum is designed to provide a breadth of critical understanding and skills necessary to effectively lead institutions of higher education, as well as related organizations and government agencies. Our philosophy is that leaders of dynamic organizations must innovatively practice data-driven decision-making within a complex social, political, and economic environment. Students are admitted based on their accomplishments in one or more segments of the field (e.g., legal counsel, student services), but the program then builds an interdisciplinary understanding of and skill set for confronting the broader challenges facing higher education.

The curriculum is delivered through three means: courses with core Penn higher education faculty, courses with nationally recognized practitioner faculty, and supervised development of a scholarly dissertation. The First Year has a greater emphasis on coursework, providing a practical, theoretical, and methodological foundation for designing the dissertation. The Second Year continues that focus but scales back coursework, as students concentrate on independent investigations and analyses for their dissertations.

Coursework changes annually based on a continuous improvement plan that both explores faculty- and practitioner-identified emerging trends in the field and heeds the evaluations by our students and alumni. Three branches of the curriculum provide an ongoing structure to the student learning experience.

**Higher Education Contexts**

Successful higher education leaders must grapple with varying challenges and opportunities within the multi-layered contexts in which they operate. Executive Doctorate courses addressing these diverse perspectives and environments include:

- Contemporary Issues
- Equity and Diversity in Higher Education
- Why History Matters
- University and Community Partnerships
- Preventative Law

The Public Policy and International Context courses bring students face-to-face with leaders in these environments. The policy seminar meets with national leaders in places like the State Higher Education Policy Center in Boulder, Colorado or the National Center for Higher Education in Washington, D.C. The international seminar travels to meet with higher education leaders in countries such as Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan and South Africa.

"Being new to higher education, Exec Doc was a transformational experience. It gave me the breadth and depth of the industry and a very important credential. It was also a fantastic experience—the cohort; the faculty; the dissertation—structured in a way that was manageable while working full-time."

— Kevin Kirby, Ed.D., Vice President of Administration, Rice University
Institutional Leadership

The Executive Doctorate provides leaders with a toolkit of analytic strategies and skills for effectively managing institutions. Course readings and activities build on the experiences of instructors recognized nationally as being at the top of their field. Courses that develop institutional leadership competencies include:

- Change and Leadership
- Entrepreneurship in Higher Education
- Institutional Advancement
- Negotiating and Bargaining
- Strategic Enrollment Management
- Strategic Finance
- Student and Campus Services

Evidence-Based Management

Successful higher education leaders employ data and information effectively. The Executive Doctorate curriculum focuses on the strategic framing of questions and the use of data to puzzle through possible answers. Our coursework provides a systematic, embedded process for the dissertation, which facilitates on-time completion for nearly all students—an achievement that is remarkable among Ed.D. programs. The First Year includes a year-long Proseminar sequence supporting the development of the dissertation proposal, as well as Quantitative and Qualitative Methods and Strategic Management Research. Faculty mentors advise individual and full cohort dissertation workshops in The Second Year.

“Earning a Penn Ed. D. in less than two years while working full-time and living in Puerto Rico seemed an almost impossible task, but I did it. Overall, Penn GSE’s Executive Doctoral Program was an amazing experience. While the academic program was very demanding, the faculty members were really supportive and encouraging. Undoubtedly, the cohort structure was another key ingredient to success ... and to life-time friends.”

— Cuauhtemoc Godoy, Ed.D., Professor and Associate Dean, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico
The Dissertation

A cornerstone of a doctoral education is the development of an independent research project leading to a dissertation. The Executive Doctorate approach focuses on scholarly inquiry as a management tool. The entire degree culminates in the dissertation defense—an opportunity to present and debate the dissertation’s contribution to research and practice.

Executive Doctorate dissertations meet the same standards as all Penn GSE Ed.D. degrees. A committee chair and a reader are assigned in The First Year to provide guidance to students throughout the process. All full time faculty and several committed practitioner-faculty serve as readers and chairs, and are assigned to student committees based on their subject and methodological expertise. A third committee member is selected, often from outside of Penn, in consultation with the student.

Executive Doctorate dissertations explore a broad variety of research questions. While students do not need to have defined their specific research interest at the start of the program, most have identified several potential areas of inquiry. Topics are generally chosen by the end of the first Fall Term, then developed over the subsequent spring term, at the end of which an oral hearing is held with the committee to review the dissertation proposal. Data collection then takes place during the summer and early fall, followed by analysis and drafting. Oral defenses of the final dissertation are held toward the end of the spring term of The Second Year.

Dissertations from Executive Doctorate students are frequently recognized by professional associations for their outstanding contributions to the literature. Many dissertations have been published as books or articles in scholarly or professional journals.

RECENT DISSERTATION TITLES

Community College Student Retention: Determining the Effects of a Comprehensive Support and Access Intervention Program Targeting Low-Income and Working Poor at a Large Urban Minority-Serving Institution

Academic Cost Reduction at Liberal Arts Colleges: How Do the Corporate Models of Resource Dependency and Resistance to Change Apply?

Online 3.0: The Rise of the Gamer Education (The Potential Role of Gamification in Online Education)

The Roles of the President, Faculty, and Staff in Cultivating the Commitment and Engagement Necessary to Produce Revitalization at Faith-Based Colleges

Being Who I Am: Lesbian, Gay Male, Bisexual, and Queer (LGBQ) College and University Faculty Members Disclosing their Sexual Orientation in Their Classrooms


Presidential Responses to Crises at Public University Campuses: What Leaders Do and How Others Perceive Their Actions

Exploring the Relationship between Institutional Commitment to Diversity and Latino Alumni Giving

Central Banks and University Financial Governance: How Institutions Are Managing Institutional Resources and Creating Monetary Policy for Mission Attainment

The Launch of the Big Ten Network: How 11 Universities Created Their Own Television Network and Changed the Landscape of College Sports

Socialization Theory and the Transition to Graduate School: Experiences of African American Women in a Historically Black and a Historically White Institution
The Faculty

The Executive Doctorate faculty is comprised of a diverse and accomplished group of scholars and practitioners. Because learning among a cohort of senior leaders is truly interactive, these instructors report that teaching for the program is among the most rewarding experiences of their careers.

The Division Faculty

Distinctive among executive education programs, the Higher Education Division faculty is dedicated to their engagement in the Executive Doctorate—providing core teaching and dissertation advising to the program. This group of accomplished scholars is internationally recognized as one of the top higher education faculties in America and recognized as outstanding teachers and mentors.

Peter Eckel, Senior Fellow, Ph.D., University of Maryland
Diane Eynon, Senior Fellow, Ed.D., University of Pennsylvania
Joni Finney, Practice Professor, Ph.D., The Pennsylvania State University
Shaun R. Harper, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Indiana University
Matthew Hartley, Professor, Ed.D., Harvard University
Marybeth Gasman, Professor, Ph.D., Indiana University
Eric J. Kaplan, Senior Fellow, Ed.D., University of Pennsylvania
Laura W. Perna, Professor and Division Chair, Ph.D., University of Michigan
Robert Zemsky, Professor, Ph.D., Yale University

The Affiliated Faculty

Our affiliated faculty of notable practitioners, leaders of higher education associations, and international scholars bring extraordinary experience and knowledge to the classroom. As integral contributors to the Executive Doctorate curriculum, these instructors present modules with practical applications in management.

Mary-Linda Armacost, Ph.D., Former President, Wilson College and Moore College of Art & Design
Peter Cappelli, D.Phil., George W. Taylor Professor of Management, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
Peter Garland, Ph.D., Executive Vice Chancellor, Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education
Ira Harkavy, Ph.D., Founding Director and Associate Vice President, Netter Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania
Adrianna Kezar, Ph.D., Professor, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California
Marvin Lazerson, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, former Provost and Dean, University of Pennsylvania, and Professor, Central European University
Larry Moneta, Ed.D., Vice President for Student Affairs, Duke University
Frank Roth, J.D., General Counsel, Lehigh University
The Impact

The Executive Doctorate is designed not only to be a springboard for career advancement, but also an enthralling intellectual experience. It is not merely about credentialing a terminal degree; it is about challenging assumptions, illuminating alternative vantage points, and building new skill sets. Our alumni report that their time in the Executive Doctorate was the toughest but most rewarding academic or professional experience of their careers.

Executive search firms and institutional boards have recognized our alumni as well prepared to lead and reinvent colleges and universities. Our graduates are currently serving as college and university presidents, vice presidents, and deans, state and federal policy leaders and nationally recognized academic entrepreneurs.

The Alumni

The Executive Doctorate plays a pivotal role in the professional lives of our alumni well beyond the end of our two-year program. The strong network built within and across cohorts provides a constant resource for exploring ideas, finding solutions, and enabling career changes. From an annual Alumni Conference at Penn that addresses key issues in the field to receptions, seminars, and continued virtual interactions, the connection to The Executive Doctorate continues to reward our students long after they’ve graduated.

“My education at Penn provided me with a solid framework for higher education administration that inspired me to take on some new challenges. The program helped me identify the core competencies that administrators need so I felt confident as I transitioned from a private, four-year institution to my current role as vice president of academic and student affairs at Cayuga Community College.”

— Anne Herron, Ed.D., Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs/Dean of Faculty, Cayuga Community College

FROM THE ALUMNI BOARD CHAIR

While many doctoral programs boast of the “transformative” impact they have on their students, the Penn Executive Doctorate program actually delivers on that promise. Within a year of graduation, most alumni are recognized with broader portfolios, promotions, and even new positions. With its focus on higher education leadership, the program has already produced 25 college presidents and countless senior-level administrators. And, in the Penn tradition, Exec Doc students are surrounded by the finest faculty and the most talented classmates. Put all this in a cohort model and the result is nothing short of amazing.

The Alumni Advisory Board remains committed to keeping Penn’s Executive Doctorate program an industry leader and its alumni on the cutting edge of higher education policy and practice. Our Board maintains representation from each cohort—professionals who come from wide variety of educational institutions and roles, reflecting the diversity of our entire alumni body. We work with faculty, administration, and current students to add value to the program and to help create opportunities for continuing education, networking, and camaraderie.

Doug Clark, Ed.D. ‘11
Vice President for Enrollment Services
Assistant to the President for Government Relations
Ferrum College
Ferrum, VA
The Application

Admission to the Executive Doctorate is highly selective. Ideal candidates are senior-level executives in colleges, universities, government, or related associations and organizations. We admit a cohort, with careful attention to balance a diversity of experiences and roles represented in each group.

The Penn GSE application process is entirely online. Completed applications to the Executive Doctorate are due by March 1. A complete application includes an application form, a two-part statement of purpose, two letters of recommendation, and all academic transcripts. No standardized test scores are required and a master’s degree must be conferred. We review the entirety of the admission file, looking for evidence of professional and academic accomplishment, as well as substantiation of what the applicant will contribute to and garner from the program.

The Investment

The Executive Doctorate is an efficient pathway to a doctoral degree—structured for completion in two years but without the sacrifice of taking leave from a job. Students are charged a combined tuition and program fee, which includes books, other course materials, meals, and hotel accommodations. It does not include travel expenses to the program from the student’s home location.

The combined tuition and program fee is billed each term for six consecutive terms: The First Year – Summer, Fall, Spring and The Second Year – Summer, Fall, Spring. Students are considered full-time graduate students through all six terms, but earn variable course units each term.

The Executive Doctorate does not offer any scholarships or fellowships at this time. Students finance their degrees through a combination of 1) support from the home institution, 2) personal finances, 3) university payment plans, 4) federal student loans, 5) private student loans, and 6) private scholarships or fellowships. If necessary, the entire cost of the program may be borrowed through federal student loans, with commensurate subsidies and benefits such as income-based repayment and public service loan forgiveness for educators.

Students must also make a significant investment in time to complete full-time doctoral study in a condensed, two-year timeframe, while maintaining their full-time positions. Successful students have the support of family and employers. Many employers provide supplemental leave time for coursework, research, and dissertation writing.
The University of Pennsylvania is America’s first university and one of the world’s premier research universities. The Penn Graduate School of Education—one of only three located in an Ivy League institution—is recognized as one of the best in the United States.

Established in 1740 by Benjamin Franklin, Penn has a legacy of educational innovation and a foundational commitment to combining academic theory with professional practice. Ensuring that research is always relevant to practice, Penn GSE provides students with the chance to work closely with faculty to formulate questions and analyze solutions to some of today’s most pressing educational issues.

Nondiscrimination Statement
The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class status in the administration of its admissions, financial aid, educational or athletic programs, or other University-administered programs or in its employment practices. Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to the Executive Director of the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, Sansom Place East, 3600 Chestnut Street, Suite 228, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6106; or (215) 898-6993 (Voice) or (215) 898-7803 (TDD).