

## An Emerging Framework for the EdD Activist

**Yasha J. Becton**  
University of South Carolina  
yyjones@mailbox.sc.edu

**Christopher Bogiages**  
University of South Carolina  
bogiages@mailbox.sc.edu

**Leigh D'Amico**  
University of South Carolina  
damico@mailbox.sc.edu

**Todd Lilly**  
University of South Carolina  
lillyt98@mailbox.sc.edu

**Elizabeth Currin**  
University of South Carolina  
ecurrin@mailbox.sc.edu

**Rhonda Jeffries**  
University of South Carolina  
rjeffries@sc.edu

**Suha Tamim**  
University of South Carolina  
tamims@mailbox.sc.edu

### ABSTRACT

Increasingly, Ed.D. programs are challenged to produce graduates with the skills and expertise needed to create and foster change in the various educational environments in which they serve. Promoting, and more importantly, preparing the Ed.D. Activist is a theme that was addressed during the October 2019 convening of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) hosted by the University of South Carolina. As part of the opening convening, the U of SC faculty assisted with surveying the more than 65 CPED-informed programs in an effort to construct a potential framework to guide both new and existing programs within the consortium. The resulting framework highlights two potential profiles for the Ed.D. Activist, 12 considerations that programs should examine, four primary outcomes, and five quality indicators. The framework is representative of the data collected from more than 200 participants and provides a broad, but foundational framework for engaging more deeply in the work of promoting activism amongst Ed.D. graduates.

**KEYWORDS:** activism, graduate students, social justice

The authors of this article are faculty members of an online Ed.D. program in Curriculum Studies at an R-1 state university in the Southeast United States. Aligned with the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate's (CPED) Program Design Principles, our program's website advertises that the Ed.D. "is designed to provide educators with an in-depth knowledge and understanding of social justice in diverse communities and how to... address problems of practice in various academic settings" ("Doctor of Education - Curriculum Studies: What will I study?", n.d.). While activism has not been an explicit goal of our program, we are interested in expanding our social justice framework to include a more deliberate and robust focus on activism. This directly relates to our current pursuit to develop a framework for the Ed.D. Activist.

Our 100% online program primarily attracts K-12 educators, with a smaller subset of higher education faculty, as well as medical and military personnel. Students come from across the country and abroad, readily identifying a host of problems confronting the schools in their respective locales. In South Carolina, for example, at least 10,000 teachers risked punitive actions from their school districts to attend a rally at the state Capitol to demand action on a wide array of problems they confront daily (Schechter, 2019). According to these

teachers' Facebook page, approximately 30,000 educators and supporters participate in an online forum to express their frustrations over myriad injustices levied at educators and their students. Meanwhile, over 40 Ed.D. candidates at our College of Education successfully defend their dissertations each year. They define a problem of practice, apply theory, and review the literature. They implement an intervention, collect and analyze data, and posit the implications. They are duly congratulated at the university's hooding ceremony. They smile and thank their professors for an engaging and eye-opening experience. And then... what? What is expected of them? What do they expect of themselves? In October 2019, the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) convened to discuss those very questions.

The convening centered on the critical topic of activism, which "is an ambiguous word. It can mean both radical, revolutionary action and nonrevolutionary, community action; action in the service of the nation-state and in opposition to it" (Yang, 2016, p. 1). The theme we developed as host for the convening, "Interaction & Activism in the Education Doctorate: Creating Lasting Impact," supported our efforts to examine how our students were actively serving as change agents



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within the world. In addition to delving deeper into the impact of our Ed.D. program, we also recognized an opportunity, in a much broader context, to stimulate discussion regarding a framework for Ed.D. Activists among CPED-informed degree programs, expanding the existing CPED profiles: The Disrupters, The Change Agents, The Leaders, The Innovators, The Teachers, and The Collaborators.

Developing such a framework could benefit various programs within the CPED consortium. For new programs, the framework might serve as a foundational tool to identify critical elements resident in Ed.D. programs that promote activism and social justice. For more experienced programs, the framework could ensure continuing organizational alignment as it relates to coursework, research practices, and extended learning opportunities. Additionally, a framework with input from more than 100 CPED-affiliated colleges and universities could serve as a comprehensive blueprint for program evaluation and program development. To this end, the University of South Carolina presentation at the convening, “The Emerging Framework of the Ed.D. Activist,” focused keenly on defining the construct of an Ed.D. Activist; exploring the coursework, research, and extended learning opportunities conducive to activism; and identifying methods for monitoring program success and outcomes. The purpose of this article is to continue that conversation.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As we give further consideration to the creation of a framework, our review of literature explores several critical components. We first examine the history of the education doctorate as well as its ongoing transformation. Juxtaposed with this history is a discussion of teacher activism with attention to implications for teacher educators. Lastly, we explore social justice and how it directly or indirectly relates to activism among scholarly practitioners. Building on the history of the education doctorate, as well as the longstanding phenomenon of teacher activism, Ed.D. Activism must inherently embody social justice aims.

### History of the Education Doctorate

Doctoral programs emerged in the U.S. in the last half of the nineteenth century. They aimed at transmitting and reproducing knowledge within the traditional disciplines of medicine, law, philosophy, and theology. Eventually, doctoral studies shifted focus toward critical thinking, creativity, and research. Simultaneously, industrial advancements, cultural diversity, and societal changes raised the interest in professional education to meet market needs. The education doctorate expanded access to research-based graduate study and offered new contexts for inquiry around professional practice (Archbald, 2011; Taysum, 2006). No longer catering to early-career, young adult learners only, professional doctorates opened the way for professional part-time students (Archbald, 2011). On the other hand, changes in American society led to increased high school enrollments, reinforcing the need for college educated teachers and giving rise to the education doctorate, the Ed.D. (Archbald, 2011).

Ed.D. students are driven by career/professional development or a love for learning (Hawkes, 2016), and the Ed.D. enables educators to address problems of practice through “research-based and research-driven” principles (Taysum, 2006, p. 330), using their expertise and linking theory to practice (Hawkes, 2016; Taysum,

2006; Tupling & Outhwaite, 2017). We view the ability of scholarly practitioners to effectively address problems of practice as directly related to the “work” of activism.

However, the growing popularity and the proliferation of Ed.D. programs (Archbald, 2011) come with criticism, bias, and vagueness in differentiation from Ph.D. programs. Shulman et al. (2006) argued that problems in Ed.D. programs are “chronic and crippling” (p. 25). Perceived lack of rigor, compacted formats to meet the needs of working students, absence of community of practice, lack of balance between research and practice, and program structure that mimics the Ph.D. with requirement subtractions confuse the purpose of the Ed.D. and expose it to shortcomings.

In an effort to reclaim the education doctorate, as coined by Shulman et al. (2006), The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) embarked on redesigning doctoral preparation to meet professional practitioners’ needs, naming the capstone project a Dissertation in Practice (DiP). Differentiating it from the traditional five-chapter dissertation, CPED proposes a process of fusing professional practice to academic theory by exploring work-based problems that continue beyond graduation through individual inquiry, collaborative inquiry, or a hybrid approach (Storey & Maughan, 2014).

Understandably, transformative changes such as those recommended by CPED are challenging to program structures (Reigeluth, 2019). Kennedy, Altman, and Pizano (2018) recommended a repetitious review process to align program policies and principles. Peterson (2017) suggested a tight timeline with a clear mission, identification of future roles for doctoral students, and the use of CPED principles for guidance. Ezzani and Paufler (2018) advised allocating time for faculty collaboration and engagement in the change process. As institutions continue to strive to improve Ed.D. programs (e.g. Buss, 2018; Creighton, 2008; Mertler & Henriksen, 2018; Normore & Issa Lahera, 2019; Peterson, 2017), scholarly practice will ultimately permeate the teaching profession. Such permeation is necessary to raise the profile of educators among the general public and, more importantly, among the policymakers who influence the working conditions that give rise to teachers’ problems of practice—as well as to their activism.

### The History of Activism in Education

Teacher activism has a long history and a vibrant present, encompassing resistance to unjust IQ tests in the early 20th century (Stoskopf, 1999), grassroots efforts that gave rise to Head Start in the 1960s (Hale, 2012), and far-reaching accountability-era protests (Brown & Stern, 2018). As teachers continue to engage in activism within and beyond the classroom (Dunn, 2018; Oyler, 2017; Picower, 2012), teacher educators have increasingly expressed a responsibility for their programs to foster teacher activists (Montaño, et al., 2002; Riley & Solic, 2017).

Activism requires “linking citizens together” (Stout, 2010, p. 13), yet the connections afforded by 21st-century technologies have also produced so-called slacktivism (Neumayer & Svensson, 2016). As teacher educators in an online program, we take this concern seriously, turning to Cabrera, Matias, and Montoya’s (2017) call for more forward-thinking scholarship on activism that defines what activism is and can be rather than dwelling on what activists have done. Their emphasis on *activism* rather than *activists* privileges concrete behavior over variable identity. Similarly, Kluttz and Walter (2018) defined activists as “all persons participating and learning



within a social movement” (p. 94), which necessitates specifying *which* movement.

Given how Ed.D. program participants inhabit dual roles as practitioners and students, establishing a clear and cross-cutting definition of activism is paramount. Likewise, we must heed the risks facing “scholar-activists in a neoliberal environment,” striving to model scholar-activism for our students (Dunn, 2016, p. 22). Cochran-Smith (2010), who envisioned teachers as “advocates and activists” (p. 457), insisted they cannot engage in such work alone. Thus, the Ed.D. Activism construct must be precisely defined, socioculturally situated, and intentionally scaffolded. In our view, social justice must comprise the core of that construct.

### Social Justice and its Relationship to Activism

Ed.D. Activists must understand the complexity of human rights education and heed the continuous call to calculate and calibrate transformative spaces where ideological explorations about constitutional rights occur. We expect scholarly practitioners to ultimately advance the rights and privileges of women, children, people of color, immigrants, and members of the LGBTQA community (Cianciarulo, 2015; Giroux, 2015; Spreen et al., 2018). This enduring fight for democratic education continues to emerge across the literature as demands for establishing, institutionalizing, and fully practicing justice and equity in schools in the United States are championed. Moreover, effective activist leadership guiding this fight might be realized through a greater reliance on and inclusion of the views, practices, and accomplishments of members of these marginalized groups via cooperative participation (Kezar, Acuña Avilez, Drivalas, & Wheaton, 2017; King, 2015; Ryan & Higginbottom, 2017).

We need Ed.D. activists as educational leaders to push public thinking beyond binary exchanges of right versus wrong, female versus male, other versus white, rich versus poor, other versus cis, along with a plethora of oppositional identities that indicate and reify political power. Educational institutions are prime spaces to broaden the narrative about democracy, social justice, and power; however, the primary challenges of changing educational institutions regarding human inequity remain at the forefront of classrooms with instructional leaders (Brooks, Normore, & Wilkinson, 2017; Jaquette, 2017; Theoharis, 2015). This dilemma is entrenched within the socio-economic agendas driving the multiple policies that work against a socially just society. Indeed, developing educational activists is especially timely with “many marginally democratic countries hav[ing] become increasingly authoritarian and authoritarian, xenophobic populist movements hav[ing] grown strong enough to threaten democracy’s long-term health in several rich, established democracies including . . . the United States” (Inglehart, 2018, p. 20). Acknowledging that our present path is diametrically opposed to democratic ideals, educators should rightfully be at the center of activist efforts, which is critical needs work in our current political times.

### POSITIONALITY

The University of South Carolina’s Ed.D. Curriculum Studies program was redesigned in 2002 to focus on diversity and again in 2014 to embody a 100% online format. The program emphasizes concerns for equity, social justice, self-knowledge, cultural issues, and human growth and development through a balanced approach

consisting of both theory and practice. Within the program, students gain an in-depth understanding of theory, history, concepts, techniques, strategies, and issues of diversity in K-12 schools, as well as other social institutions and community settings. The degree program is uniquely designed to facilitate self-reflection that in turn promotes engagement in social justice education.

As noted in the introduction, we served as the host institution for the CPED 2019 October convening. At this time, our program consisted of 12 full-time faculty members serving approximately 220 students. We took the opportunity to share our tentative ideas about the emerging framework for the Ed.D. Activist while also eliciting the perspectives of our CPED peers, including what specific programmatic frameworks and assessments were in place to ensure the desired outcome. After investigating the profiles provided on the CPED website—The Disrupters, The Change Agents, The Leaders, The Innovators, The Teachers, and The Collaborators, we saw a need to explicitly identify and articulate the tenets of what we termed the Ed.D. Activist.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Examinations of inequity, marginalization, and dissonance in educational settings are critical to the work of the Ed.D. Activist. Ed.D. Activists are then positioned to drive the direction of educational governance as they recognize the increasing importance of inclusivity and acknowledge the power they possess to impact equity through policy (Dulio, O’Brien, & Klemanski, 2008; Marginson, 2016).

Doctoral programs focused on activism are able to influence future leaders emerging from the ranks of Ed.D. educated instructional leaders. These leaders will ideally possess a working knowledge of structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) and apply it toward inclusive goals in instructional settings and through professional development opportunities (Burrige, Carpenter, Cherednichenko, & Kruger, 2010). Giddens (1979) described the concept of human action with the overt intent to change power dynamics in education and other political spaces as agency, which is elsewhere illustrated as “identities in motion” (Buchanan, 2015, p. 714). This concept of agency can be seen as complementary to the notion of an activist in that agents challenge established ways of thinking and behaving or what we think of as structure. The disruption of structure or the space for effective activism called agency is a temporal state enabling transformation to emerge. Tural (2017) noted the capacity of structuration theory to support community education agents to respond effectively to the demands of a changing and highly diverse human landscape.

Ed.D. Activists might sustain their work through the use of structuration theory, which further recommends employing a perception that established structure is transient and evolutionary. As such, structures are inevitably replaceable as new intellectual knowledge, practical experience, and personal needs demand change. The cycle of agency and structure is a roadmap to action and meaning construction that continually guides our search for a more socially just experience (Jeffries, 2019). As doctoral education continues to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusivity, this theoretical framework offers a roadmap to successfully establish fluid and flexible policies that support continuous explorations of efficacious commitment to social justice (Berila, 2015; Winkle-Wagner & Locks, 2013). Frameworks of this nature demand that we surpass simplistic ways of thinking about equity in education and

strive for including diverse perspectives at the multiple decision-making spaces where revolutionary change can expand educational opportunities.

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Without formal processes for documenting the outcomes associated with activism among our Ed.D. graduates, we recognized the need to develop a framework that could 1) describe the characteristics of an Ed.D. Activist, 2) suggest strategies that promote Ed.D. Activism, and 3) measure the impact of Ed.D. Activism among our students and graduates in their local communities. Given the emphasis on activism among the members of the CPED community (Becton et al., 2019), we felt the inclusion of diverse perspectives from the CPED community would lead to the development of a more broadly useful framework for Ed.D. Activism.

Because we aimed to generate a new understanding of Ed.D. Activism exclusively from the data collected in this study, we selected grounded theory as our methodological approach (Strauss & Glaser, 1967). Grounded theory, a qualitative research methodology with high regard in the education research community (Thomas & James, 2006), is a systematic, flexible, empirical, and creative process of knowledge generation from which the results can be shared, discussed, and in turn, direct future research efforts (Coe et al., 2017; Morse et al., 2009). We purposefully sampled a homogenous group (Patton, 2007) of CPED members who attended an interactive, general session presented at a recent convening (CPED, 2019).

Facilitators used the following prompts for breakout sessions, which serve as the research questions for this article:

1. Profile of the Activist: How would you describe The Activist? What attributes, characteristics, and actions reflect The Activist?
2. Ed.D. Program Strategies to Facilitate/Support The Activist (or Activism): Discuss current program strategies including, but not limited to, coursework, culminating work/product (dissertation, project), mentoring, conference attendance, publication opportunities, etc.
3. Measuring Progress Toward Ed.D. Development/Support of The Activist: Discuss potential outcomes and quality indicators to understand how components of the Ed.D. program and the overall Ed.D.

program are developing and supporting the Ed.D. Activist.

During the breakout sessions, 200+ participants sat at large round tables in groups of 4-8 people. A color-coded version of each prompt was provided, and groups were asked to identify one person to serve as the recorder to reflect the general discussion and ideas generated from the group for each prompt.

The questionnaires were collected at the end of the presentation, scanned, digitally transcribed, and organized into three subsets, each aligned with one aspect of our emerging framework. Two researchers concurrently but independently reviewed each data subset using a constant comparative method to identify open, axial, and core codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). For each subset, open codes were identified by each researcher individually. In accordance with constant comparative methods, the identification of new codes in subsequent pieces of data led to the reanalysis of previously reviewed pieces of data to ensure new codes were not missed in previously analyzed data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This process continued until the analysis of new pieces of data yielded no new codes, thus achieving saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Once individual coding was completed, the researchers discussed their codes to determine consensus. This process was then repeated for the determination of axial codes and themes in the data, as well as for the identification of core codes as needed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

## DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The findings from the grounded theory coding approach are presented for each prompt.

### Profile of The Activist

Researchers identified open codes related to attributes, actions, and characteristics of The Activist. Codes were developed through a constant comparison approach based on the written responses to Prompt 1) and its guiding questions: "How would you describe The Activist? What attributes, characteristics, and actions reflect The Activist?" Sentences, phrases, and words from the reporting templates were combined in open coding to ensure representativeness but avoid duplication. Table 1 includes the open codes and the axial codes that were developed based on the grouping of open codes.



Open Codes	Axial Codes
Inspirer, Empathetic, Invested/Committed Inclusive, Negotiation Skills Action Oriented, Open-Minded	Coalition Builder
Courage, Open to Risk Strong Voices, Disrupter	Vocal Risk-taker
Inquisitive, Inquiry Mindset Leader, Problem Identifier Change Oriented, Reflective, Integrity	Visionary Leader
Critical, Social Justice, Awareness of Inequity, Dissatisfaction with Current Situations, Integrity	Social Justice Champion

Table 1. Profile of the Activist

Rather than a clearly-defined profile of an Ed.D. Activist, what emerged from the responses of more than 65 CPED-informed colleges and universities were four themes, represented by the axial codes in Table 1. Echoing Buchanan’s (2015) definition of agency as “identities in motion” (p. 714), these themes transform the “attributes, characteristics, and actions” supplied by our participants into action-oriented nouns. While an Ed.D. Activist could conceivably exhibit aspects of all four identities, it is also possible to envision four unique Ed.D. Activists, each representative of one of the axial codes. It bears repeating that this is an emerging framework, and we do not wish to suggest a one-size-fits-all approach. Below, we elaborate on each theme.

A *Coalition Builder*, based on participant feedback, inspires and focuses on bringing people together for a common cause. This requires negotiation skills and the wherewithal to foster collaboration. Collaboration results in the forging of something new and stronger than what a single individual or agency can achieve in isolation (Kinsella-Meier & Gala, 2016). The Coalition Builder has the ability to galvanize forces and build consensus within an organization.

Another theme in the data suggested an activist is a *Vocal Risk-taker*, one who gives voice to critical issues and topics and also possesses the courage necessary for activism. Indeed, activism often leads to negative consequences experienced by those who stand up to voice concerns, such that “teachers fear the reactions of their principals, principals fear the reactions of their superintendents

and communities, and superintendents fear the responses of the school boards and communities” (Hoffman, 2009, p. 391). Vocal Risk-takers juggle competing political, social, and economic forces all while becoming “more confident in resisting the dominant discourses in order to advocate for those typically marginalised and powerless in Society” (Hoffman, 2009, p. 392).

An additional theme evident in the data suggested The Ed.D. Activist is a *Visionary Leader*, always thinking intuitively about how to cultivate a more progressive future. Visionary Leaders engage in critical reflection to solve authentic problems, exhibiting the kind of vision that is a necessary precursor for organizational change. As Mack (2015) argues, vision “serves as a bridge between the present and the future, and it is intentionally aspirational” (p. 10). Through inquiry, Ed.D. Activists exhibit this sort of forward-thinking.

The fourth theme in the data characterized The Ed.D. Activist as a *Social Justice Champion*, one who can quickly and readily identify the inequities and injustices that may go unnoticed in a particular work environment. Continually focused on equity and fairness, Social Justice Champions truly desire to make a difference and recognize how “operationalizations of social justice are constantly evolving and shifting in the same proportion as cultural groups act on their emerging sense of agency” (Rodriguez & Morrison, 2019, p. 262).

	OPEN CODES	AXIAL CODES
<b>Coursework/Focus in Coursework</b>	Social Justice, Race, Reality, Poverty, Activism for Professionals, Leadership, Multicultural Education	<b>Coursework Specific to Social Justice, Multicultural Education and/or Leadership</b>
	Community Leadership, School Community Policy (Education, Health)	<b>Coursework Related to or Involving the Community</b>
<b>Coursework/Focus in Coursework (continued)</b>	Critical Literature Review, Credibility of Evidence, Problem of Practice, Action Research, Practitioner Inquiry, Ethnography, Scholarly Narrative, Critical Participatory Action Research	<b>Coursework Related to Research and/or the Dissertation in Practice</b>
	Course Sequencing Evidence-based Program Design, Needs Assessment	<b>Overall Course Design</b>
<b>Dissertation or Final Project</b>	Require Focus in Social Justice/Community	<b>Social Justice Related Focus for the Dissertation</b>
	Student Professional/Personal Goals, Action Plan Required	<b>Inclusion of Student's Career and Professional Goals</b>
<b>Dissertation or Final Project (Continued)</b>	Scholarly Narrative, Participatory Approach, Action Research, Include Indigenous Sources	<b>Considerations Relative to the Research and Writing of Dissertation</b>
	Promote Innovation, Symposia to Present, Approach/Findings	<b>Considerations for Dissertation Defense or Final Presentation</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	Institutional Inequities Ed.D. Admission Inequities	<b>Addressing Inequity in Institutions, Policies, Methodological Approaches, Ed.D. Programs (faculty and students)</b>
<b>OTHER (CONTINUED)</b>	Dissertation Requirements (social justice focus) Alignment/Repetition in Course Sequence	<b>Defined and Supported Dissertation Process</b>
	Mentorship Leadership Opportunities Diverse Staff and Faculty	<b>Mentoring/Supporting Students and Graduates</b>
	Writing Articles/Co-Authorship, Methodological Philosophies, Community Study/Study Abroad	<b>Scholarly and Practitioner Inquiry Activities</b>

Table 2. Strategies to Facilitate/Support The Activist

After the discussion related to the Profile of The Activist, facilitators asked small groups to discuss how Ed.D. programs

facilitate or support activism, using Prompt 2 and its guiding statement: "Discuss current program strategies including, but not limited to, coursework, culminating work/product (dissertation, project), mentoring, conference attendance, publication



opportunities, etc.” The same process was used to analyze the written responses related to Prompt 2, outlined in Table 2.

One of the primary findings from this study is that through the feedback of the participants of the October CPED convening, we are able to now clearly identify several basic and fundamental strategies that CPED-informed Ed.D. programs could employ when cultivating an activism focus. Beyond providing students with a profile of an Activist, colleges and universities must commit to having certain structures and supports in place. The institutions participating in this research identified 12 key areas of consideration noted in Table 3.

Although several of the 12 identified considerations would not be considered unique to Ed.D. programs, consideration number 2 is an exception. Participants cited a need for potential graduates to have or experience a level of engagement within their community. While the other 11 considerations reflect an academic focus, number 2 speaks more to the Ed.D. graduates’ need to connect with people, echoing Noddings’s (2004) recommendation to “take on the other’s reality as possibility and begin to feel its reality,” to the point of being “impelled to act as though on [one’s] own behalf, but in reality on behalf of the other” (p. 46).

Along with community connections, the social justice commitments of Ed.D. Activists can manifest in civic engagement (Krings et al., 2015). Additionally, it has positive effects on academic, personal, social, and citizenship outcomes (Conway et al., 2009). Thinking critically about social issues through service learning sparks students’ motivation to act toward social change (Kajner, et al., 2013). Moreover, reflecting on complex problems, goals, and strategies inspires them to move from problem identification to problem solving in their activism (Jacoby, 2017). Particularly for teachers, community involvement empowers them to make decisions, lead, learn about community needs, and collaborate toward finding solutions (Jarrett & Stenhouse, 2011). Therefore, community involvement (Consideration 2) coupled with coursework specific to social justice, multicultural education, and/or leadership (Consideration 1) combine to provide a more distinct and unique picture of an Ed.D. Activist.

### Measuring Progress Toward Ed.D. Development/Support of the Activist

For the final breakout discussion, facilitators moved to Prompt 3 and its guiding statement: “Discuss potential outcomes and quality indicators to understand how components of the Ed.D. program and the overall Ed.D. program are developing and supporting the Ed.D. Activist” is detailed in Table 4.

12 Considerations to Support the Ed.D. Activist (not listed in order of priority)
1. Coursework Specific to Social Justice, Multicultural Education and/or Leadership
2. Coursework Related to or Involving the Community
3. Coursework Related to Research and/or Dissertation in Practice
4. Overall Course Design
5. Social Justice Related Focus for the Dissertation
6. Inclusion of Student’s Career and Professional Goals
7. Considerations Relative to the Research and Writing of Dissertation
8. Considerations for Dissertation Defense or Final Presentation
9. Addressing Inequity in Institutions, Policies, Methodological Approaches, Ed.D. Programs (faculty and students)
10. Defined and Supported Dissertation Process
11. Mentoring/Supporting Students and Graduates
12. Scholarly and Practitioner Inquiry Activities

Table 3. 12 Considerations to Support the Ed.D. Activist

	OPEN CODES	AXIAL CODES
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	Dissertation must focus on Problem of Practice Dissertation ideas developed by end up 1st yr with committee members identified Develop a dissertation mentoring 1, 2, 3 step process- to complete dissertation. As a content analysis of dissertations, to see if they are focused on change, social justice.	<b>Progress related to Dissertation</b>
	Organizational Change Socially Just Policies Inclusivity Improvement Continuous Quality Improvement Cycles Interventions	<b>Graduates Promoting Change within Organizations</b>
	Being able to articulate concerning Social Justice issues Growth over time	<b>Students Exemplifying Certain Characteristics</b>
	Contribute to Public Discourse in Education Action Orientation Graduates' Orientation toward Practice Identify and Address Problems of Practice in their workplace Graduates' Roles in Organizations/Community A postdoctoral network of EdD graduates so they continue to apply activist principles	<b>Graduates Demonstrate Leadership after program</b>
<b>QUALITY INDICATORS</b>	Publications Policy Briefs by Students/Alumni Review of Alumni Work Presentations Student's Dispositions External Dissertation Review	<b>Analysis of Students' Dissertations, Publications &amp; Other Professional Writings</b>
	Surveys Exit Interviews Artifacts	<b>Analysis of Student Feedback</b>
	Review of Ed.D. Applications - Equity	<b>Ensuring Equity within the Program</b>

Table 4. Outcomes and Quality Indicators to Measure Progress Toward the Developing Activist



## IMPLICATIONS

The Profile of an Ed.D. Activist will likely vary from program to program. Among the researchers engaged in this study, a lively debate about whether we have uncovered a single profile or multiple profiles impressed upon us the importance of recognizing our conceptualization may differ significantly from faculty in other programs. If so, the implications of this emerging profile likewise differ. With this in mind, we decided to share both a single-profile model of a multi-faceted Ed.D. Activist and a multi-profile model proposing four distinct kinds of Ed.D. Activists



Figure 1. The Single Profile Model

### The Single-Profile Model

Based on the themes uncovered by Prompt 1, this model incorporates all four themes into one, cohesive profile. This tentative model suggests that each graduate of an Ed.D. program may embody all four aspects but to varying degrees. For example, one graduate might see themselves as a skilled coalition builder but a bit reluctant to take large risks. Another graduate might feel a deep sense of commitment to others and thus be motivated to contribute to the work of rectifying issues of social justice yet remain somewhat hesitant to take on a leadership role. In other words, each graduate will demonstrate the four aspects to varying degrees based on their unique abilities. Programs that desire to have graduates embody this comprehensive model of an Ed.D. Activist should think critically and strategically about how their Ed.D. program will provide the necessary foundation for students to emerge with the complete skill set representative of this model.



Figure 2. The Multi-Profile Model

### The Multi-Profile Model

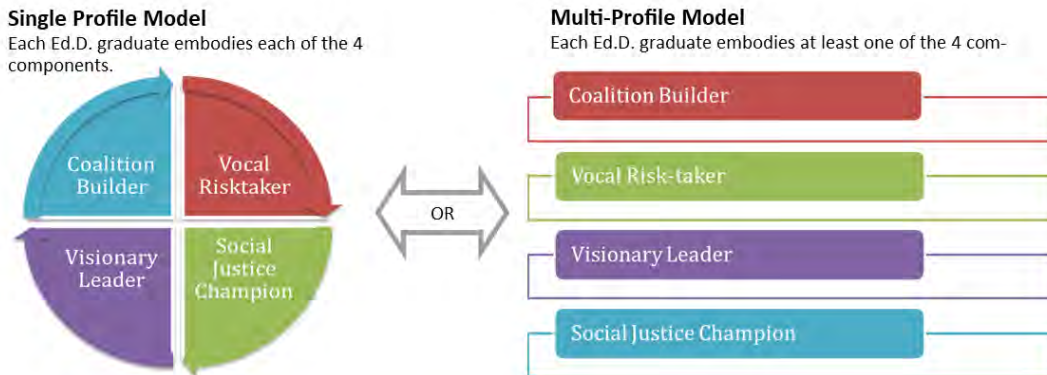
Some individuals and programs might prefer the multi-profile model, wherein each individual student is afforded the opportunity to identify each distinct profile as an option or a type of leadership that can be embraced within the work of activism. For example, a more introverted leader may aspire to serve as a Coalition Builder or a Visionary Leader, drawing on their ability to create harmony and productivity within a group. Conversely, this individual may never aspire to serve in the capacity of a Vocal Risk-taker. From a programmatic standpoint, we further recognize that programs can have a more centralized focus. For example, our program focuses more on the development of a Social Justice Champion, although this model could guide us to reevaluate our program and our intended outcomes to determine whether or not we should focus more attention on the other three profiles.

## CONCLUSION

As Ed.D. programs expand and refine their visions and missions around the notion of activism, this framework can and should evolve. The enduring question for programs committed to educational equity and access is whether we focus on developing emerging activists, growing our burgeoning activists, or strengthening our functioning activists. One thing is clear: Ed.D. graduates who influence positive and impactful change will use their activist lenses to rightfully justify our next-generation decisions.

Professional development opportunities with enduring impact, such as Ed.D. programs, increase their imprint on the field through their effectual alignment with the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). This influential collaborative will continue to provide the space to revise and fine-tune the conceptual knowledge that shapes and defines the Ed.D. Activist, and the concept of structuration theory can aptly guide the progression of these educator identities and this revolutionary model. This early iteration of the Ed.D. Activist model (Figure 3) should be seen as fluid and evolving in response to the needs of our doctoral scholars, and more importantly, the students whom they serve.

## CPED-INFORMED FRAMEWORK FOR THE Ed.D. ACTIVIST



12 Considerations to Support the Ed.D. Activist					
Coursework Specific to Social Justice, Multicultural Education and/or Leadership	Coursework Related to or Involving the Community	Coursework Related to Research and/or the Dissertation in Practice	Overall Course Design	Social Justice Related Focus for the Dissertation	Inclusion of Student's Career and Professional Goals
Considerations Relative to the Research and Writing of Dissertation	Considerations for Dissertation Defense or Final Presentation	Attention to Inequity in Institutions, Policies, Methodological Approaches, Ed.D. Programs (faculty and students)	Defined and Supported Dissertation Processes	Mentorship Support for Students and Graduates	Scholarly and Practitioner Inquiry Activities

### OUTCOMES



### 5 Quality Indicators

Figure 3. CPED-Informed Framework for the Ed.D. Activist

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