George Mason University

College of Education and Human Development

Graduate School of Education

Education Leadership Program

### Course Syllabus

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: EDLE 610 Leading Schools and Communities

Instructor information:

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Office Hours: by appointment

CLASS MEETING:

## Day: Monday

## Time: 4:30-7:30

Dates: August 25, 2008-December 17, 2008

Location: Rm 1008 West Building

Class Website: http://gmu.blackboard.com

https://gmu.blackboard.com/webct/logon/35869765001

http://www.taskstream.com

TEXTBOOKS AND RESOURCES:

1. Kowalski, Theodore. 2004. *Public Relations in Schools, 4th Edition*.
2. Kenneth A. Strike, Jonas F. Soltis, Emil J. Haller. 2005.[*Ethics of School Administration*](http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?z=y&isbn=0807745731&TXT=Y&itm=1). ISBN 0807745731. Paperback
3. A series of related case studies provided by the instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION: EDLE 610 Leading Schools and Communities

*Prerequisites: admission to the program and EDLE 620, 612, 614, 616, 618. Co-requisite: EDLE 791*

This course examines critical functions of leadership and organizational management, complex decision-making responsibilities of school executives, and constructive relationships between schools and communities. It incorporates historical, ethical, philosophical, and sociological foundations of American education and the impact of organizational structure on reform and student achievement. Practical and academic emphasis on leadership skill development and dispositions is interwoven throughout the course.

INTERNSHIP SEMINARS/EDLE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUIRED:

Attendance at scheduled internship seminars each semester is required of all candidates (a minimum of one seminar each term will be scheduled). During the spring term students are required to attend the annual EDLE Leadership Conference. There is a registration fee for the conference. University Internship Supervisors will determine if other seminars are needed during the spring term. This year the conference is on March 3, 2009.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:

A variety of instructional methods are used in this course including: large-and small-group instructions, cooperative learning activities, media use, Internet assignments, lectures, guest practitioner presentations, group presentation, individual research, case studies, simulation, and written and verbal assignments.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, successful students should be able to:

1. Exhibit knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources
2. Identify, assess and apply elements of a constructive relationship between a school and its community with emphasis on gaining insight into power structures and pressure groups
3. Identify leadership knowledge and skills that promote success of all students through integrity, fairness and ethical behavior.

#### CEHD STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

* The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:
* Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [http://www.CEHD.gmu.edu](http://www.cehd.gmu.edu/) for a listing of these dispositions.
* Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12> for the full honor code.
* Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [http://mail.gmu.edu](http://mail.gmu.edu/) and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
* Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The Education Leadership program faculty expects candidates to enjoy their learning opportunities and to take their graduate experiences seriously by thinking and behaving in a professional manner. This means that candidates are expected to attend each class for its entirety, except when there is a personal or family emergency; and adhere to the Leader Dispositions found at the website for the Graduate School of Education.

GRADING:

The grading scales and assigned percentages shown below are assessment guidelines only. Final grades for the semester will reflect the instructor’s judgment of the candidates’ performances as they attempt to demonstrate the leadership behaviors outlined above. In other words, candidates are expected to demonstrate, in observable behavior, written and oral communication skills and progress toward attaining the required knowledge, performances, and dispositions that are needed to accept the awesome responsibility and joy that comes with a leadership position in education.

GRADING

A+ = 100 points B = 80 - 84 points

A = 95 - 99 points B - = 75 - 79 points

A - = 90 - 94 points C = 70 - 74 points

B+ = 85 - 89 points F = 69 points or below

RELATIONSHIP TO PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS /PROGRAM GOALS:

Relevant ELCC Standards for Educational Leaders: 1.4 a b c, 1.5 a b, 2.1 a,3.2 b, 4.1 a-h, 4.3 a b c, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1 f g, 6.2 a

Candidate outcomes and activities are related to the following GMU/EDLE program goals:

* Service to communities,
* Improvement of communication skills,
* Reflective practice,
* Understanding of diverse communities,

Development of skills in bringing about change

COURSE CONTENT

In order to develop leadership savvy, students will deepen their understanding of how organizations function and how leaders influence school change and improvement. Specific content includes:

1. Reviewing meanings of leadership and the role leaders play in school change and improvement;
2. Articulating a vision for effective school leadership and your beliefs about leadership, teaching, and learning;
3. Applying four major frameworks for analyzing organizational behavior and outcomes;
4. Applying skills, knowledge, and dispositions gained through the Education Leadership Program to the analysis of case studies and in role-playing exercises involving leadership behavior and school change.

In addition to the content goals stated above, the following represent process goals for this course:

Learning Environment and Classroom Climate:

1. Each class will serve as a microcosm of education leadership by following these guidelines:

* Begin and conclude on time;
* Follow the syllabus agenda for each class;
* Listen first to understand, then seek to be understood; and
* Work toward common goals in a professional manner.
* Work individually and in groups to develop strategies for addressing organizational problems or challenges;
* Actively engage in a variety of learning activities, including case studies; simulations, and oral presentation of analyses and conclusions;
* Students are expected to apply previous learning in writing assignments and ongoing self-assessments of performance.

1. We will endeavor to create a classroom climate that approximates what we know about effective leadership dispositions and the attributes of learning organization. Therefore, we are committed to creating a space that allows candidates to express new ideas and opinions without fear of ridicule or embarrassment. A hallmark of a learning organization is a balance between openness and constructive feedback; hence, everyone is expected to:

* Come fully prepared to each class;
* Demonstrate appropriate respect for one another;
* Voice concerns and opinions about class process openly;
* Recognize and celebrate each other’s ideas and accomplishments;

Candidates will strengthen their understanding of how organizations function within many communities and how leaders influence school change and instructional improvement. Specific content includes:

1. Reviewing and expanding on the meanings of leadership and the role leaders play in change within the school community;
2. Applying Reframing skills to address, assess, develop solutions and make appropriate decisions regarding critical instructional, personnel, community and financial issues at the local school level.
3. Investigating political, financial, legal and instructional implications of an instructional issue as it relates to the needs, strengths and opinions of the local school community and school division.
4. Exploring educators’ codes of ethics to identify, embrace and incorporate one into a personal code.
5. Clarifying which framework(s) students find most useful for informing their own leadership styles and choices;
6. Applying skills, knowledge, and dispositions gained through the Education Leadership Program to the analysis of case studies and in role-playing exercises involving leadership behavior and school change.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Major assignments for this course will be submitted through the student’s Task Stream account. Rubrics for each assignment are posted on Task Stream. In order to earn a grade of at least “B” all of the following must be accomplished satisfactorily:

I. Participation (Class Involvement/Reflection) (15% of Course Grade)

* Review Dispositions for Leadership at <http://www.gse.gmu.edu>
* Review The Honor Code of George Mason University
* Review Expectations of the instructor

1. Class Involvement/Reflection An important component of any leader’s learning involves balancing action and reflection. As such, we will engage in a variety of learning activities in class, including exercises, debates, oral presentations, and analyses of cases. We will be using 2 cases from ETIPS. While your work on these cases will not be graded they are an important part of the work of the course and will count as one class session.
2. You are expected to attend at least one school board meeting and one city/county council meeting. Your focus will be to observe the interactions between and among the board members as well as staff and community members.

II. Building an Educators Code of Ethics and applying it to Two Case Studies

(30 % of Course Grade)

This assignment has two parts:

A. Build an Educators Code of Ethics (10 points)

* Identify, read and analyze at least five well-written, existing Educators Codes of Ethics.
* After reading and analyzing the five existing Codes of Ethics for Educators, then identify one that bests complements and enhances his/her ethical base. He/She will explain the reasoning behind the choice and incorporate additions/deletions of content that will strengthen that ethical base.
* The candidate will rewrite and personalize the Educators Code of Ethics as his/her own. The conclusion will focus on the personalized code of ethics, emphasizing characteristics of the code that strengthen the leadership performance and effectiveness of the candidate.

B. Reflecting and Reframing - Applying you Educators Code of Ethics as you analyze two case studies (10 points each)

* <http://www.tcnj.edu/~set/mw-steps.htm> Procedures for Analyzing Ethical Dilemmas, **The College of New Jersey. This site may be of assistance in analyzing the problems presented in the cases.**
* Each candidate will incorporate reframing skills with two cases that involve leaders’ role in school and school community change. The instructor will provide these cases. In analyzing the cases, reflect on personal learning experiences, apply understandings gained through the internship and coursework and demonstrate the ability to apply those understandings and experiences in addressing the conflicts presented in each case study. Use reframing to strengthen your chosen course of action. In particular:
  1. Identify the players and their political agendas
  2. Identify and analyze the profit each player has to gain/lose through action you may take.
  3. Where is the power base?
  4. Describe the education leadership in the case. What leadership is occurring? What leadership is needed? What is not?
  5. While writing your response to each case study by reflecting on the above questions, include statements in response to the following two questions:

1. Did my code of ethics help me; guide me in addressing the ethical dilemma?
2. Did I break, alter or question the Code?
3. After being put to the test is this a strong, dependable code? Doe it need to be changed? If so, how?
   1. The conclusion draws together responses to case studies and the resilience of the Educators Code of Ethics when put to the test.

III. Interview with School/Community Leaders to Assess the Implementation of the School Vision (25 % of course grade)

A. Interviews (15 points)

1. Have your intern supervisor/principal identify three leaders in the school community, community at large or business community who have a stake in this issue.
2. Your class study group will develop a series of questions to be used in interviewing the identified leaders, with the major question being “How well is our school implementing its mission statement? “ You will make an appointment with each leader. Provide a clear, concise summary of the purpose of the interview, the nature of questions, how data will be used, the right to confidentiality of responses and the time needed for the interview meeting.
3. When you interview you will use the same questions with each individual. The individual may want to have a copy of the questions ahead of time.
4. After interviewing the three leaders, build a matrix with questions and significant responses. Look for common responses, contrasting points of view, lack of clarity of the issue, and other significant concerns.
5. Your paper will be no more than seven pages in length:
6. Page One will emphasize the issue and its importance to the school and to the three individuals selected to interview.
7. Page Two and Three will summarize the results of the three interviews. Make sure to describe the role the interviewee has in the issue.
8. Page Four will be the matrix.
9. Page Five will reflect significant findings
10. Page Six is your plan of action based on the data collected.
11. Your summary will be on Page Seven.

B. Presentation to the Community (10 points)

Using the interview information gathered, build a five-minute presentation about “*How Well we Are Implementing Our School Mission”.* The presentation will be presented in class with the audience beingparents, teachers and community members of your school. In the speech you will emphasize how the school is implementing its mission and how it can do a better job. Be sure you address your presentation to the specified audience-not to your professor and classmates.

IV. Reframing Your Capstone Project. (30% of course grade)

You will use Bohman and Deal’s 4 frames as a basis for analyzing your capstone project. Your paper should have 3 parts.

1. Executive Summary of your project – this should include
   1. The research question you were seeking to answer. What was the purpose of your project?
   2. The outcomes you expected.
   3. A brief description of what you did.
2. A BRIEF summary of your data – If you have not completed your project, this summary can be a progress report. A reflection of your experiences and personal learnings as a result of this project. Use the four frames to structure your discussion.