George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education  
Education Leadership Program  

Course Syllabus  
Spring 2006

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:  
EDLE 610: Leading Schools and Communities (3 credits)

INSTRUCTOR:  
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TEXTBOOKS:  
1. Materials and readings determined by the teacher.  

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
Examines critical functions of leadership and management, complex decision-making responsibilities of school executives, and constructive relationships between schools and communities. Studies historical, foundations of American education and the impact of organizational structure on reform and student achievement. Emphasizes leadership skill development.

CANDIDATE OUTCOMES: Candidates in the course will  
1. Comprehend the foundations of education in the United States as a basis for understanding and appreciating the challenges and impact of diversity in American schools and examine personal values and beliefs about the education of youth in the United States and the responsibilities of schools, school leaders and the broader school community
   Demonstration of competency:  
   Candidates reflect on and list personal values and beliefs about education and then write opinions on the educational responsibilities of schools, school leaders, and the community. During class session, discuss personal opinions, rationale, and underlying assumptions with classmates

2. Synthesize information and ideas gleaned from leadership assessments and self-reflection to identify personal leadership strengths, challenges, and preferred work habits  
Demonstration of competency:
Candidates develop a comprehensive internship plan that addresses personal leadership needs, professional interests, and related professional growth activities. Collaboratively develop the plan with university and site-based internship supervisors who will guide EDLE candidates in appropriate school and district experiences, over an extended period of time in diverse settings. Internship experiences are derived from candidates’ analysis and synthesis of the following data sources: self-reflection, personal assessment of VA DOE competencies, ISLLC standards, NCATE guidelines, results of formal and informal leadership assessments, and the EDLE Internship Manual. Candidates attach a statement to the Internship Plan that describes how stress, resulting from the demand of university and work requirements, will be met. (The reflective journal, a component of the internship’s “Collective Record”, will be used to describe conflicts and the processes used to resolve them.)

3. Identify the critical functions of leadership and management and determine how these functions interact in educational organizations.

   Demonstration of competency:
   - Candidates shadow a building administrator for half a day, categorize leadership and management behaviors on a leader/manager matrix. (The matrix is based on Kotter’s model, that was presented in class.) Candidates also discuss with their school administrator what s/he considers the major leadership and management functions of school administrators and the average degree of daily time spent on each.
   - Candidates review their school’s School Crisis Plan, and compare and contrast their school’s plan with the sample crisis plan suggested by the VA Department of Education. Discusses effective crisis plan components during class session.

4. Increase understanding of the importance of school and community collaboration, and gain insight into community pressure groups.

   Demonstration of competency:
   - Candidates attend local school board meetings and track, over the course of the semester, a controversial school and/or community issue. Collects, examines, analyzes, and interprets data related to the selected issue and writes a succinct report that includes the following components as subtitles in the report: (a) statement of the issue; (b) relevant background information regarding the issue; (c) major players (no correct names), their various perspectives on the issue, and their desired outcomes, if known; (d) resources needed to address the issue and the availability of these resources; (e) results of the issue controversy; and (f) a minimum of two possible suggestions for addressing the issue. Include the impact(s) that each suggestion will have for student learning and for school change. These suggestions need to show evidence that the candidate uses skill in systems thinking and understands pressure groups within the community.
   - Candidates are given a template to develop a collaborative school/community project. The project, approved by the candidate's administrator and the EDLE 610 instructor may be implemented within the semester or take longer.

5. Develops an initial understanding of how to facilitate the development and implementation of a shared vision and plan that focuses on teaching and learning.

   Demonstration of competency:
   Participants, in a group, develop a shared vision for a school that focuses on teaching and learning. Once developed, group members collaboratively construct a plan to implement the vision and list ways to communicate that vision to a diverse community. Each group presents its ideas to the total class.

6. Comprehend elements of constructive communication between a school and its community

   Demonstration of competency:
   Candidates provide examples of positive public relations materials and participate in peer Reviews of classmates’ School/Community projects.
7. Develop an initial understanding of the change process, how individuals and groups react to change, and how to influence it 
   **Demonstration of competency:**
   Candidates participate in a change simulation and identify, in writing, the learning they gleaned from the simulated activity.

8. Practice skills in problem solving and decision-making based on data. 
   **Demonstration of competency:**
   Candidates participate in simulated decision-making activities, such as case study analyses. Candidates state the desired outcomes and the ethics involved in their decisions.

9. Begins to have knowledge and understanding of the complexities of leading in schools and communities. 
   **Demonstration of competency (Can be combined with #4a above.)**
   Candidates interview a minimum of one school leader about (a) how to build and maintain positive school learning cultures; (b) suggestions for maintaining positive relations with families and the larger community; (c) public relations techniques; (d) ideas for interactive communication with students, teachers, support staff, and parent groups; (e) how to manage school programs such as counseling and guidance, athletics and extra-curricular activities, student clubs and activities; (f) how to work and communicate with district office administrators and school boards; (g) an example of when he/she experienced success on the job; (h) and example of experiencing failure and what was learned; and (i) other areas of personal interest. Next, candidates reflect on and synthesize information from the interview, class discussions, and readings to construct a list of ideas, to share with class colleagues, on how to build a positive school learning community. Then, construct, and share with classmates, a list of appropriate things to learn and do during the first 90 days as an administrator.

10. Is aware of the knowledge, performance competencies, and dispositions of successful educational leaders, as identified by the Virginia Department of Education (VA DOE), the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), NCATE, and ELCC Guidelines. 
    **Demonstration of competency:**
    Candidates review a list of VA DOE competencies, ISLLC, NCATE, and ELCC standards and guidelines; identify their personally perceived areas of strengths and challenges; and incorporate their professional growth needs into their Internship plan.

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:**
A variety of instructional methods are used in this course to cover the course content and create a dynamic, interactive learning environment. These methods include 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.

**RELATIONSHIP TO PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAM GOALS:**
Because EDLE 610 is the introductory course in the Education Leadership master’s degree and in the licensure component of the program, the major purposes of this course are to help candidates
- develop an initial understanding of the expected knowledge, performances, and dispositions of instructional leaders and managers,
- identify theories on which effective educational practices and change processes are built, and
- provide opportunities for candidates to assess their leadership abilities and formulate their philosophy of education and leadership.

Specific competencies identified by the Virginia Department of Education, Standards for School Leaders identified by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and relevant NCATE and ELCC guidelines included in this course are:
VA DOE: 1d, 2a, 2b, 2d, 2e, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 4c, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 6a, 6c, 6d, and 6f.
Candidate outcomes and activities are related to the following GMU/EDLE program goals:

- service to communities,
- reflective practice,
- improvement of communication skills,
- understanding of diverse communities,
- development of skills in bringing about change, and
- self-assessment and planning for personal growth.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS:**

On-going access to a computer, the Internet, and email are essential for candidates enrolled in this course. When candidates are accepted into the EDLE Program and registered in a course, they are expected to activate and use their GMU account. Candidates are expected to competently use standard computer office tools, such as word processing, spreadsheets, database, and presentation software.

The Education Leadership program faculty expect 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. Those who must be absent from class are expected to:

(a) notify the instructor in advance by telephone or email;
(b) check with classmates before the next class period to obtain notes, handouts, and assignments missed;
(c) make up the activities from the missed course by the following week; and
(d) provide required assignments on the deadline date, even if absent from class on that day. Because it is not possible to make-up the actual class discussions, candidates who miss more than one class, or who arrive late or leave early, will lose participation points that have an effect on final grades.

Assignments will be completed by the due date outlined in the syllabus or decided upon by class consensus. Assignments submitted late will have points deducted. Assignments submitted more than one week late will not receive credit. All written assignments are to be completed using standard word processing or presentation tools unless otherwise stated by the instructor.

Because written and verbal communications are required competencies of educational leaders, candidates’ products will reflect, as closely as possible, what is expected of school leaders. Therefore, course assignments will include opportunities for candidates to:

- write short analyses of experiences, sometimes in memo form;
- present written information in a clear, readable format;
- present verbal information in a clear, easy-to-follow way that reflects 3 major learning styles;
- run meetings and discussion group;
- participate in interactive activities and reflect on and communicate about the experiences;
- strengthen their ability to write expository, analytical and persuasive prose;
- learn to review their own work and the work of others to eliminate errors and maximize clarity of thought; and
- submit original work or use appropriate references to the proper author (refer to the APA Manual for research references in written language and the plagiarism handout).
INTERNSHIP REQUIRED EXPERIENCES FOR EDLE 610:

Although the Internship (EDLE 791) is a separate course, the Education Leadership Program integrates internship activities into the program of study. EDLE 610 is designated as the course in which candidates will determine internship sites, complete an internship plan, and design and begin to work on a school-community project. Therefore, the following internship requirements are integrated into this course:

1. Complete an Internship Application Form (see Appendix D of EDLE 791 Internship Manual)
2. Develop an Internship Plan (see Appendix E of EDLE 791 Internship Manual)
   (Note: Internship plans must be completed and approved by the EDLE 610 instructor for entrance into the next course. The EDLE 610 instructor also will serve as the university internship supervisor for the duration of the internship experiences.
3. Identify a school and community problem. Design and begin to implement a plan that addresses the problem. Select at least one of the following activities
   a. Conduct an in-depth, reflective analysis of an issue of importance in the community. Include information about the history of the issue, identify the stakeholders and their positions on the issue, analyze the political interactions that occur as the issue evolves, and develop a plan to address the issue. In the plan include a description of the project, what the project will accomplished, the evaluation criteria for determining the degree to which the project was accomplished, a list of individuals involved in the project and their responsibilities, a timeline of events, and a detailed written summary and assessment of the completed project.

Additional internship activity, if instructor and candidate agree: Develop and nurture a relationship with one or more community agencies to promote better understanding between the school and its community. Work with a school administrator to identify and select a civic, cultural, governmental, patriotic, or professional group or organization with which to work. Use the same components identified in section 3a above to construct the plan. At the conclusion of the project, provide a written summary of agency contacts made and the results of the project, including the major learning gleaned from the activities.

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 semester will be scheduled). University Internship Supervisors will determine if other seminars are needed during the spring term.

During each spring term, all EDLE students are required to attend the annual EDLE Leadership Conference. There is a registration fee. The 2006 conference, is scheduled on the GMU Fairfax campus, from 8:30 – 12:30 on Saturday, February 11, 2006.

GMU HONOR CODE:
Candidates are expected to abide by the George Mason University Honor Code. Violations of the Code (such as cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarizing, lying, stealing) will be reported to the Honor Committee. Please refer to the University Catalog or www.gmu.edu for the full Honor Code. Ignorance of the code is not a defense.

DISABILITIES RESOURCE CENTER:
This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all State and local Governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2474).
**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation (including learning assessments)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written analysis of School Board issue</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written School Community Project</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of School Crisis Plan</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator shadowing matrix and interview</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship Plan</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Values and Beliefs About Education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Summary of Learning</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total points</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**GRADING SCALE:**
- A+ = 100 points
- A  = 95 – 99 points
- A- = 90 – 94 points
- B+ = 85 – 89 points
- B  = 80 – 84 points
- C  = 75 – 79 points
- F  = 0 – 74 points
COURSE TOPICS (EDLE 610)

Note: This syllabus may be modified, based on the immediacy of emerging needs of the group. Guest presenters will be invited to some classes, if available. **Mark dates** for required EDLE Annual Leadership Conference (February 11), GMU Spring Break (week of March 13), and school districts’ spring breaks (week of April 10).

Session 1 1/23/06
- Get acquainted, learn course and program expectations
- Begin building the foundation for leadership and leadership development
- Questions and answers, plus discussion

Session 2 1/30/06
- Homework discussion
- Continuation of building a foundation for leadership and leadership development
- Historical and current structure and responsibilities for education in the U.S.
- Relationship of leadership and management and the functions of each in the context of schooling
- Case study discussion
- **Performance Expectation Form due**
- **Learning Information Sheet due**

Session 3 2.6/06
- Leading Schools and Communities
- Safety first. **School Crisis Plans assignment is due.**
- Educational images of schools
- Discussion of School Board Issue assignment (Attend your district’s School Board meeting this week and the EDLE leadership conference on 2/11)

Session 4 2/13/06
- No class meeting. Independent work is assigned to complete assignments due on 2/27. Also plan/work on other required performance outcomes for EDLE 610.

Session 5 2/20/06
- No class. Holiday

Session 6 2/27/06
- Discussion
- **Administrator interview is due. Also due is the assignment to shadow an administrator and chart leadership/management activities.**
- Summarization and review of class sessions 1 through 6

Session 7 3/6/06
- Leadership and change
- Change simulation and discussion

Session 8 3/13/06
- No class. GMU spring break

Session 9 3/20/06
- Leadership and change continued
- Stages of concern for teachers during times of change
- Stages of transition
- **Assignment of personal beliefs and values statements is due**
Session 10  3/27/06
• Collaborative construction of school visions and related plans (Personal beliefs and values statement is used for this activity.)
• Decision-making models
• Summarization and review of concepts and other learning from sessions 1 – 10

Session 11  4/3/06
• Development of personal internship plans begins.

Session 12  4/10/06
• No class. School districts’ spring breaks

Session 13  4/17/06
• Continuation of internship plan development
• School/Community Project, including matrix, due

Session 14  4/24/06
• Some political aspects of leading schools and communities
• Draft of internship plan completed (Final internship plan, with stress statement, due 5/1/06)
• School Board issue assignment due

Session 15  5/1/06
• Internship Plans and stress statement due
• Course review (sessions 1 – 15)

Session 16  5/8/06
• Summary of Learning letters due
• Culminating activities, assessments, and evaluation
• Celebration of completion

*Monday, May 15, is a make-up day, if needed. Kindly keep this date open for class until a final decision is made later in the semester.
Performance Expectation Form

I have read and understand the expectations required in EDLE 610. I also understand that I am expected to attend the annual EDLE Leadership conference and the scheduled internship seminars for the duration of my Master’s degree program and/or licensure coursework.

Name
Printed_____________________________________ Date____________

Signature__________________________________________________________

Student I.D. #____________________________________
EDLE 610 Learning Information Sheet

for

____________________________________________________

1. What is your personal learning objective for this course? (must be possible to achieve while in this course)

2. Describe how you will know when you have accomplished this objective.

3. How do you know when you are doing a good job in your class work? (What do you have to see, hear, and/or experience to know?)
4. How do you determine if someone else is doing a good job in this course?

5. How do you learn best in the context of academic work?

6. How do you know when a professor is doing a good job? (What do you have to see, hear, and/or experience to know?)

7. On a separate sheet of paper, tell one of the times that you were successful on your job. Kindly identify the position first. Then, write your response.