

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
EDLE 620—Organizational Theory and Leadership Development
Fall 2005

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Steve was victim to a widespread misconception that leadership expresses itself through individual heroism—waging war, championing a great cause, or single-handedly changing the course of history. In this view leaders' success or failures are of their own making. They succeed if they have the right stuff—strength, courage, and vision. Failure is proof of their personal deficiencies. The archetypal image of this hero is the autonomous, lonely male wandering on the fringes of society—the Lone Ranger, Dirty Harry, or Rambo. This view taints our images of leadership. Would-be heroes, trying to emulate this image, often pay a heavy personal price: alienation, feelings of failure, stress-induced illness, and even early death. (Bolman and Deal, 1995, p. 56)

Schedule Information

Location: Enterprise, 173

Meeting Times: Wednesdays, August 31 – December 7. Classes will meet from 7:20 – 10:00 p.m. All students are expected to attend every class session. If you have a personal problem that will prevent you from attending class, please contact me by telephone or e-mail ahead of time.

Course Description

This course is intended to bring together much of the content students have learned previously in the Education Leadership Program with opportunities to make leadership applications to real-world situations. Students will explore both how organizations function and leadership choices within organizations.

Course Delivery

Students will engage in case study analysis, problem-based learning, and role-playing as they develop leadership skills. A feature of the class is that all students are required to take a leadership role in a school or school district context set up in the class. They will engage in self-assessments of their own role playing and they will assess the work of fellow students. Classes will also involve discussions, workshop activities, and brief lectures.

Course Goals

Content

In order to develop leadership savvy, students will deepen their understanding of how organizations function. Specific content includes:

1. Learning four major frameworks for analyzing organizational behavior and outcomes
2. Learning one major theoretical proposition for how effective leadership works
3. Using skills and knowledge to engage in leadership role-playing with mock constituencies
4. Gaining a clearer understanding of what is required in leadership roles in education and what kind of leadership role the individual student would like to take
5. Clarifying which frameworks or perspectives students find most useful for informing their own leadership styles and choices

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

Teaching and Learning:

1. Each class will mirror as much as possible the real world of a school administrator and will reflect good management. I expect that we will:
 - start and end on time;
 - maintain and follow a written agenda for each class;
 - listen first to understand, then seek to be understood; and
 - work toward common goals in a professional and cordial manner.
2. As they develop and refine oral presentation skills, students will
 - work in groups to develop strategies for addressing organizational problems or challenges;
 - engage in self-assessment of their oral performances based on a standard rubric; and
 - assess the oral effectiveness of peers.
3. Writing is an important skill for educational leaders and likewise receives substantial attention in this course. Students are expected to engage in high quality writing for their three major writing assignments and the self-assessments and peer assessments required in the course.

Classroom Climate:

Our classroom must be a place in which we can try out new ideas and take risks free from the fear of embarrassment. We must be able to look at each other's work critically so that we may all receive valuable feedback that will help us to do our jobs better in the future. Therefore, I expect a commitment from all of us to:

1. be fully prepared for each class session;
2. respect and care about one another as human beings;
3. work toward a common purpose;
4. persevere through common challenges; and
5. affirm one another's successes and help one another overcome weaknesses.

Professional Development:

I see this course in a context greater than the boundaries of its content. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind goals for each student's administrative career. This course is part of a larger picture of administrator training that seeks to develop the student to be:

1. a thoughtful, wise administrator;
2. a careful, decisive decision maker;
3. the kind of person who can understand detail and the big picture simultaneously;
4. a supervisor, an assistant principal, a principal, and/or a superintendent capable of visionary school leadership; and
5. a strong colleague who will be a valued member of any team.

Relationship of Course Goals to Program Goals

This course is the last in the licensure sequence in Education Leadership and is therefore intended to launch students into the leadership phase of their careers. All of the program goals are active, to a greater or lesser degree, in this course. Students will:

- refine their perspectives on education administration as they hone their leadership skills;
- further develop a personal philosophy of education and a personal vision;
- assess their leadership strengths and areas for development;
- understand leadership roles in schools and school districts in settings characterized by diversity;
- use various social science perspectives as the foundation for advocacy and change;
- learn how to work with the larger community; and
- develop oral and written communication skills.

Student Outcomes

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

1. Identify and articulate instructional problems to be addressed through leadership
2. Analyze educational issues from two or more theoretical perspectives
3. Lead a constituency and engage in question-and-answer dialogue on important educational issues
4. Articulate their visions of themselves as educational leaders
5. Distinguish more effective communication strategies and devices as a result of assessing their own work and that of their peers
6. Engage in oral communication in a confident and persuasive manner

Internship in Education Leadership—EDLE 791

Many students will have completed their internship work by the time this course begins. Students for whom I am the University Supervisor should submit their Collective Records before the end of the semester. I will schedule 30-minute meetings with students who have completed their Collective Records to finalize internship submissions and grade.

Course Materials

Readings

Bolman, L. & Deal, T. (2003). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schlechty, P.C. (2001). *Shaking up the schoolhouse: How to support and sustain educational innovation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Classroom Materials

I expect all students to maintain a binder that contains all reading notes, class notes, student products, and class handouts.

Outside-of-Class Resources

All students are required to use <http://blackboard.gmu.edu> as part of this course. This is an Internet site at which I will post vital information for the course and through which we will communicate from time to time. This site will be particularly important if we experience school shutdowns because of the weather or other problems.

All students are now required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts. If you are uncertain about how to do this, please see me.

Grading

Students' grades are based on their proficiency with respect to the student outcomes stated above. Oral and written outcomes are weighted as described below with oral assessment points in parentheses:

OUTCOME	ORAL	WRITTEN	PTS.
1. Students will identify and articulate instructional problems to be addressed through leadership.	Students will explain an instructional problem to a specific constituency. (This is part of #2 below. Points are listed in that row.)	Using readings, class activities, and knowledge of their own work sites, students will write a paper that clearly articulates an instructional problem amenable to leadership.	15
2. Students will lead a constituency and engage in question-and-answer dialogue on an instructional issue of their choice.	Each student will lead a constituency such that a specific instructional problem is clearly articulated and a decision is made about how to approach and resolve that problem.		(25)
3. Students will analyze educational issues from two or more theoretical perspectives.		Students will write a paper that uses two or more theoretical perspectives to analyze and prescribe how instructional improvement should take place in their work sites.	25
4. Students will articulate their visions of themselves as educational leaders.		Based on a similar paper from EDLE 610, students will write papers that explain their personal visions.	15
5. Students will distinguish more effective communication strategies and devices as a result of assessing their own work and that of their peers.		1. Students will complete self-assessments of their oral presentations.	10
		2. Students will complete assessments of other students' oral presentations.	10

Below are the basic percentages for the various kinds of work required for the class, but students should always bear in mind that grading is primarily my judgment about your performance. Grades are designed to indicate your success in completing the course, not the level of effort you put into it.

Oral Performances	25 percent
Papers	55 percent
Reflective Practice (feedback)	20 percent

Participation occurs via class activities and through Blackboard. **If you are absent or late for an oral performance you have scheduled, you will not receive credit for that activity.**

Absence From Class

Students are expected to attend every class for its entirety. Emergencies sometimes arise, however. If you need to be absent from class, I expect you to notify me in advance by telephone or e-mail. If you miss more than one class, or you come to class more than 30 minutes late or leave more than 30 minutes early, your grade may be negatively affected.

Writing

There are three major writing assignments with specific due dates. Self-assessments and assessments of others' leadership via role-playing are due the Wednesday immediately following your receipt of a CD containing the relevant role playing activity. **All written work must be submitted via an e-mail attachment.** Detailed assignment sheets and assessment rubrics appear at the end of this syllabus and are available on Blackboard.

Late Work

I expect students to submit their work on time. **I will not accept any writing assignments later than 48 hours after the due date.**

Students may revise and re-submit their papers to improve their performance. Such revisions are due **not later than one week after** receiving my feedback on the previous draft. I may re-consider an assignment grade, but I will not negotiate grades with students.

Grading Scale

A	=	95 – 100 percent
A-	=	90 – 94 percent
B+	=	86 – 89 percent
B	=	83 – 85 percent
B-	=	80 – 82 percent
C	=	75 – 79 percent
F	=	74 percent and below

CEHD/GSE Expectations for All Students

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) and the Graduate School of Education (GSE) expect that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://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> 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 or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Weekly Schedule

Session	Topic	Reading Assignment	Writing Assignment	Oral Assignment
Aug. 31	Introduction			
Sep. 7	Problem Articulation	Schlechty, Part One (Preface is strongly recommended) Bolman & Deal, Part One		
Sep. 14	Rational responses to problems	Schlechty, chs. 3 – 4 B & D, ch. 3		
Sep. 21	Differentiating and approaching instructional problems	Schlechty, chs. 5 – 7	Instructional problem paper	
Sep. 28	Leadership—A first cut	Schlechty, Part 3 B & D, ch. 4		
Oct. 5	Human relations responses to problems	B & D, chs. 5- 7		
Oct. 12	Data driven/Vision inspired decision-making—Sue Ross, Guest Speaker			
Oct. 19	What is the Fullan model? Approaching politics	B & D, chs. 8- 10 Fullan, Preface – ch. 3		Middle school constituencies
Oct. 26	Making politics work for me	B and D, chs. 11 – 12 Fullan, ch. 4		
Nov. 2	Managing symbols Building organizational strength	B & D, chs. 13 and 15 Fullan, ch. 5		Central office constituencies
Nov. 9	Sensemaking— Ready, fire, aim?	B and D, chs. 16 – 17 Fullan, ch. 6		High school constituencies
Nov. 16	What theory grabs you? Why? What is the role of theory in leadership? Leadership—A second cut	B and D, ch. 18 Fullan, ch. 7		
Nov. 23	No class meeting		Theoretical perspectives paper	
Nov. 30	Picking up dropped pieces	B and D, ch. 20		Elementary constituencies
Dec. 7	Wrap up		Vision paper	

Assignment #1
Articulating an Instructional Problem
Due Wednesday, September 21

Rationale

Too often, educational leaders strike out on a path toward a solution without fully understanding or articulating the problem they wish to solve. This often leads to misunderstandings, poor implementation of a strategy disconnected from a specific instructional problem, and cynicism on the part of many members of the school community. (Could this describe the implementation of a Professional Learning Community at your school site?) Effective leadership begins with an ability to articulate problems clearly and the patience to avoid fads or pre-conceived solutions. This paper is an exercise in the discipline required for problem articulation.

Product

1. Identify an instructional problem that you believe to be crucial to your school or work site. By instructional, I mean having to do specifically and explicitly with teaching and learning. Be certain of two things: 1) you are genuinely interested in this problem because you will need it for your second paper also; and 2) that you are specific in your articulation of the problem (citing low test scores is not specific enough).
2. Write a paper (not to exceed seven pages) that explains your problem in all of its nuances and necessary detail. The problem you identify should be vivid in the mind of a reader unfamiliar with your school or work site.
3. You will need a thesis that clearly explains what your problem is and why it is worth addressing. You are laying out a position that this is the most important instructional problem to address at your site. At the beginning of your paper you must give the reader a sense of why you believe this to be so.
4. Even though this paper will be written from your unique perspective, it still requires that you be analytical. Your thesis must be supported by a coherent set of arguments in which you use evidence from your site to explain both the nature and significance of your problem. You may also use readings to support your arguments, but you are not required to do so in this assignment.

ARTICULATING AN INSTRUCTIONAL PROBLEM ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

15 points

	PROFICIENT	COMPETENT	EMERGING
<p><u>Thesis (3 points)</u> The thesis establishes the burden of proof for the paper. It provides structure for the paper by telling the reader what the author intends to prove.</p>	<p>The thesis is clear and analytical. It names your problem and explains why it is important.</p>	<p>The thesis is apparent, though not entirely clear. It may contain the descriptive (what the problem is) component and lack the analytical component (significance).</p>	<p>The paper lacks a clear thesis, or the thesis is not entirely relevant to the body.</p>
<p><u>Developing Arguments (7 points)</u> The author must develop arguments in support of the thesis. These should be both logical and supported by evidence from the author's work site.</p>	<p>The author presents arguments that are clear, logical, and easy to follow. Each argument relates directly to the thesis. Any debatable assertions are supported with evidence.</p>	<p>Arguments are presented, but they may be unrelated to one another and/or to the thesis. Assertions and opinions are left largely unsupported.</p>	<p>Clear arguments in support of or related to the thesis are not made.</p>
<p><u>Conclusions (3 points)</u> It is important to conclude your paper in a manner that is persuasive to the reader and that leads to broader thinking on the topic.</p>	<p>The conclusions drawn at the end follow logically from the body of the paper, and begin with a re-worded statement of the thesis. The reader understands the author's instructional problem and is persuaded that it is important.</p>	<p>Conclusions are related to the thesis but are not compelling. The conclusions may not consistently follow from the body of the paper. The links between arguments and the author's position may not be entirely clear.</p>	<p>The conclusions drawn do not appear to be related to the thesis or supported by logical arguments.</p>
<p><u>Grammar and Mechanics (2 points)</u> Students use standard English, appropriate paragraphing, and accurate spelling.</p>	<p>The paper is free of errors.</p>	<p>The paper has some errors.</p>	<p>The paper has numerous errors.</p>

Assignment #2
Using Theoretical Perspectives
Due Wednesday, November 16

Rationale

The main purpose behind reading a book such as *Reframing Organizations* is for you to gain multiple perspectives to help you understand what happens in your schools and school divisions. I believe that thoughtful leaders make choices (decisions) based, at least in part, on the organizational theory that they carry around in their heads. Consequently, this assignment asks you to take a stand on how different pieces of organizational theory might be used.

Product

1. Using the instructional problem you identified and discussed in your first paper, take the perspective of a school principal and explain how you would work with your school community to improve the quality of teaching and learning in your school.
2. Write a paper (not to exceed ten pages) that uses two or more theoretical perspectives from your readings to explain and predict how your change will take place.
3. You will need a thesis that clearly lays out your position with regard to which theoretical perspectives you are using and how you will use them.
4. Although your point of view is critical to this paper, it still requires that you be analytical. Your position must be based on specific material from the readings in this class. To support your arguments you may also use personal experience and/or material from other reading you have done. (It is not necessary for you to use citations when referring to books assigned in this class, but if you choose to paraphrase or quote material from outside of class, be certain to use appropriate citations.)
5. Your final product should be a coherent set of arguments that explain how you would apply organizational analysis to a school setting to bring about improvements in teaching and learning.

USING THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

25 points

	PROFICIENT	COMPETENT	EMERGING
<p><u>Thesis (3 points)</u> The thesis establishes the burden of proof for the paper. It provides structure for the paper by telling the reader what the author intends to prove.</p>	<p>The thesis is clear and analytical. It lays out which theoretical perspectives the author intends to use and how, and it requires demonstration through coherent arguments and support based on class readings and the author's experience.</p>	<p>The thesis is apparent, though not entirely clear. It may be more descriptive than analytical.</p>	<p>The paper lacks a clear thesis, or the thesis is not entirely relevant to the body.</p>
<p><u>Developing Arguments (7 points)</u> The author must develop arguments in support of the thesis. These should be both logical and supported by evidence from published material, class sessions, or personal experience.</p>	<p>The author presents arguments that are clear, logical, and easy to follow. Each argument relates directly to the thesis. Any debatable assertions are supported with evidence. Quotations may be used judiciously to make especially difficult or powerful points.</p>	<p>Arguments are presented, but they may be unrelated to one another and/or to the thesis. Assertions and opinions are left largely unsupported.</p>	<p>Clear arguments in support of or related to the thesis are not made.</p>

USING THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (Cont.)

	PROFICIENT	COMPETENT	EMERGING
<p><u>Using Perspectives (9 points)</u> Demonstrating an understanding of at least two theoretical perspectives and applying them appropriately is central to this assignment.</p>	<p>The perspectives are accurately characterized and are used effectively to support the author's arguments.</p>	<p>The perspectives are presented inconsistently— with some accuracy and some inaccuracy. The perspectives may not be used entirely effectively to support the author's arguments.</p>	<p>The perspectives are either presented inaccurately or are not applied to the problem or issue.</p>
<p><u>Conclusions (4 points)</u> It is important to conclude your paper in a manner that is persuasive to the reader and that leads to broader thinking on the topic.</p>	<p>The conclusions drawn at the end follow logically from the body of the paper, and begin with a re-worded statement of the thesis. The reader is persuaded that the author's use of theoretical perspectives makes sense and would likely be effective.</p>	<p>Conclusions are related to the thesis but are not compelling. The conclusions may not consistently follow from the body of the paper. The links between arguments and what the author advocates may not be entirely clear.</p>	<p>The conclusions drawn do not appear to be related to the thesis or supported by logical arguments.</p>
<p><u>Grammar and Mechanics (2 points)</u> Students use standard English, appropriate paragraphing, and accurate spelling.</p>	<p>The paper is free of errors.</p>	<p>The paper has some errors.</p>	<p>The paper has numerous errors.</p>

Assignment #3
Leadership Vision
Due Wednesday, November 30

Rationale

The Education Leadership Program strives to help students discover the kinds of educational leaders they wish to be. We do not have one magic formula for leadership. Rather, we introduce students to numerous ways of thinking about leadership from both theoretical and practical perspectives. This paper helps me to understand how you have developed your thinking about yourself as a leader since EDLE 610 and it gives me the opportunity to give you feedback on your view of yourself as a leader.

Product

1. Write a paper (not to exceed seven pages) that explains at least three major components of your vision of yourself as an educational leader. Components could be how you wish to behave, what you wish to accomplish, how you wish to be perceived, something else that you generate, or some combination.
2. Be certain that your paper has a clear and explicit thesis stating your vision in summary form and containing the vital components. Remember, the thesis establishes your burden of proof for the paper.
3. The body of your paper will support the thesis by explaining why the components you have chosen are important to you and how they fit together. You may use readings, class experiences, and your own professional experiences to support the points you make in the body of your paper.
4. Be sure to conclude your paper in a manner similar to the first two—i.e., re-state your thesis and explain where the thoughts from this paper lead from here.
5. **Epilogue:** Write a brief (one or two paragraphs) epilogue for your paper that explains how your thinking may have changed since you wrote about your educational philosophy (or vision) in EDLE 610.

LEADERSHIP VISION ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

15 points

	PROFICIENT	COMPETENT	EMERGING
<p><u>Thesis (3 points)</u> The thesis establishes the burden of proof for the paper. It provides structure for the paper by telling the reader what the author intends to prove.</p>	<p>The thesis is clear and analytical. It describes your vision and names the components vital to it.</p>	<p>The thesis is apparent, though not entirely clear. It may contain elements of a vision and one or two important components, but it is incomplete.</p>	<p>The paper lacks a clear thesis, or the thesis is not entirely relevant to the body.</p>
<p><u>Developing Arguments (5 points)</u> The author must develop arguments in support of the thesis. Arguments should be based on readings, class experiences, and/or work experiences.</p>	<p>The author presents arguments that are clear, logical, and easy to follow. Each argument relates directly to the thesis. Any debatable assertions are supported with evidence.</p>	<p>Arguments are presented, but they may be unrelated to one another and/or to the thesis. Assertions and opinions are left largely unsupported.</p>	<p>Clear arguments in support of or related to the thesis are not made.</p>
<p><u>Conclusions and Epilogue (5 points)</u> It is important to conclude your paper in a manner that is persuasive to the reader and that leads to broader thinking on the topic.</p>	<p>The conclusions drawn at the end follow logically from the body of the paper, and begin with a re-worded statement of the thesis. The reader understands the author's vision and is persuaded that the components support it. The epilogue explains if/how the author's leadership perspective has changed.</p>	<p>Conclusions are related to the thesis but are not compelling. The conclusions may not consistently follow from the body of the paper. The epilogue may be missing or unclear.</p>	<p>The conclusions drawn do not appear to be related to the thesis or supported by logical arguments. The epilogue may be missing or unclear.</p>
<p><u>Grammar and Mechanics (2 points)</u> Students use standard English, appropriate paragraphing, and accurate spelling.</p>	<p>The paper is free of errors.</p>	<p>The paper has some errors.</p>	<p>The paper has numerous errors.</p>