GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
EDLE 620—Organizational Theory and Leadership Development
Spring 2004

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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: George Washington Carver-Piedmont Education Center

Meeting Times: Wednesdays, January 7 – April 7 with the exceptions of January 28 and March 24. Classes will meet from 4:30 – 8:00 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. Using skills and knowledge to engage in leadership role-playing with mock constituencies
3. 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
4. Clarifying which framework(s) students find most useful for informing their own leadership styles and choices
5. Applying skills, knowledge, and dispositions gained through the Education Leadership Program to a mock panel interview for an administrative position

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;
   - choose from a variety of situations and constituencies to make two oral presentations;
   - engage in self-assessment of their oral performances based on a standard rubric; and
   - assess the oral effectiveness of peers.

3. Writing is somewhat de-emphasized in this course because it has had a heavy emphasis in at least some of the previous courses. Students are expected to
apply what they have learned previously to the two major writing assignments for this course and to their self-assessments and assessments of peers.

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 larger 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 should be able to:

1. Analyze educational issues from four general organizational perspectives
2. Lead a constituency and engage in question-and-answer dialogue on important educational issues
3. Articulate the leadership role(s) they aspire to take at the conclusion of the Education Leadership Program
4. Distinguish more effective communication strategies and devices as a result of assessing their own work and that of their peers
5. Engage in oral communication in a confident and persuasive manner

Internship in Education Leadership—EDLE 791

Most students will have completed their internship work by the time this course begins. Students are expected to submit their Collective Records soon after the first class meeting. Each student will schedule a 30-minute meeting prior to one of the class sessions. The purpose of this meeting is to review the Collective Record and conclude the internship. Any student unable to schedule a concluding meeting prior to one of the class sessions will be required to conduct that meeting on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University at a later date.

Course Materials

Readings


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. Consequently, I expect all students to have access to a personal computer that is linked to the Internet and the ability to use word processing software.
All students are now required to activate their GMU e-mail accounts. Instructions for doing this will be distributed in class.

Grading

Students’ grades are based on their proficiency with respect to the student outcomes stated above. Each outcome will have an oral (class participation and/or assessment) and/or a written component. The outcomes are weighted as described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>ORAL</th>
<th>WRITTEN</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will analyze educational issues from four general organizational perspectives.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students will write a paper that uses two or more organizational frames to analyze how k – 12 students react to their school settings.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will lead a constituency and engage in question-and-answer dialogue on important educational issues.</td>
<td>Students will make one oral presentations using an organizational frame. (Choose from lighter gray boxes below.)</td>
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<td>(15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will articulate the leadership role(s) they aspire to take at the conclusion of the EDLE Program.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students will write a paper that explains the role they anticipate taking, the reasons for doing so, their aptitude for the role, and skill areas that remain to be developed.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will distinguish more effective communication strategies and devices as a result of assessing their own work and that of their peers.</td>
<td>1. Students will complete self-assessments of their oral presentations.</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Students will complete assessments of all other students’ oral presentations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOME</td>
<td>ORAL</td>
<td>WRITTEN</td>
<td>POINTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will engage in oral communication in a confident and engaging manner.</td>
<td>1. All class discussions, Blackboard discussions, workshops, and role-playing.</td>
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<td>(10)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Students will be interviewed for an administrative position by a panel of their peers.</td>
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<td>(10)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Students will deliver a five-minute graduation speech appropriate to their school level.</td>
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<td>(10)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Everyone does all three. See darker gray boxes below for 2 and 3.)</td>
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</table>

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.

- Class participation: 10 percent
- Writing assignments: 55 percent
- Role Playing: (gray boxes below) 35 percent

**Participation**

Participation occurs via class activities and through Blackboard. If you are absent or miss part of a class session, you may lose participation points. **If you are absent for an oral activity listed above, 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, you will lose participation points. If you come to class more than 30 minutes late or leave more than 30 minutes early, you will lose participation points.
Writing

There are two major writing assignments with specific due dates. Self-assessments and assessments of others’ leadership via role-playing are due the Wednesday immediately following the 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 after the due date.** This change in my usual late work policy is the result of increased teaching responsibilities and other commitment this semester.

Students may revise and re-submit the 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86 – 89 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 85 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75 – 79 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>74 percent and below</td>
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GMU Honor Code

Students are expected to abide by the George Mason University Honor Code. Violations (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](http://www.gmu.edu) for the full Honor Code. Ignorance of the code is not a defense.

Learning Disabilities

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 a 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).
## Weekly Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
<th>Writing Assignment</th>
<th>Oral Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 7</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 14</td>
<td>How students perceive school</td>
<td>Adolescents’ Worlds, ch. 1 and assigned case study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>The school as complex organization</td>
<td>Reframing, chs. 1 – 2</td>
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<td>Student Shadowing</td>
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<td>(6:30 – 8:00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Reframing, chs. 3 - 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Role Playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Leadership and Management—Human Relations I</td>
<td>Man’s Search for Meaning, all</td>
<td></td>
<td>Role Playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Managing Group Dynamics—Human Relations II</td>
<td>Reframing, chs. 6 – 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Role Playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Human Relations—III</td>
<td>Reframing, ch. 8</td>
<td>Reflections on Leadership and Your Role in It</td>
<td>Role Playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 3</td>
<td>The Role of the Leader in the Lives of Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Role Playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 10</td>
<td>Politics in Educational Organizations</td>
<td>Reframing, chs. 9 – 11 (skim most of 11, but pay attention to portions about environments)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Role Playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 17</td>
<td>The Symbolic Frame</td>
<td>Reframing, chs. 12 – 14</td>
<td>Using Frames Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 31</td>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
<td>Reframing, chs. 15 – 17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Panel Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 7</td>
<td>Leadership Development II</td>
<td>Reframing, chs. 18 – 19</td>
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<td>Graduation Speeches</td>
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</tbody>
</table>