GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
EDLE 620—Organizational Theory and Leadership Development
AFA Cohort
Spring 2006

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4400 University Dr., MSN 4C2
Fairfax, VA 22030-4444

Schedule Information

Meeting Times: Wednesday 4:30-7:45 PM

All students are expected to attend every class session. Personal problems that prevent students from attending class should be reported ahead of time to the instructor via telephone or e-mail.

Office Hours: Monday 1-3 PM. and by appointment

Course Description

620 Organizational Theory and Leadership Development (3:3:0) Prerequisite: admission to the program. Corequisite: EDLE 791, EDRS 590. Studies basic organizational theories and models of leadership and management. Emphasizes shared leadership in professional environments, communication skills, systems thinking, and personal and organizational change. Bridges theory to practical applications in educational settings.

Course Goals

Organizational Theory and Leadership Development is intended to provide students with an opportunity to explore meanings of leadership in schools, leaders’ role in school change and restructuring; and ways school leaders make sense of school organization. Students will explore both how organizations function and leadership choices within organizations, and they will have an opportunity to begin to develop a vision of their leadership practice and situate this practice within a perspective of how school organizations work.
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. Identifying the 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. Learning four major frameworks for analyzing organizational behavior and outcomes;
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 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:

Teaching and Learning:

1. Each class will mirror as much as possible effective leadership practice and will reflect good management. 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 individually and in groups to develop strategies for addressing organizational problems or challenges;
   • engage in a variety of learning activities, including case studies and simulations, and present their analysis orally; and
   • assess the oral effectiveness of peers.

3. Students are expected to apply what they have learned previously to the writing assignments for this course and to their self-assessments and assessments of peers.

Classroom Climate:

We will endeavor to create a classroom climate that approximates what we know about effective leadership dispositions and the attributes of learning organization. As such, it is important that we create a space that allows participants to try out new ideas and voice opinions without fear of ridicule or embarrassment. The 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;
- Show an awareness of each other’s needs.
- Maintain the confidentiality of class discussions.

Relationship of Course Goals to Program Goals
This course is the first class in the licensure sequence in Education Leadership and is therefore intended to introduce students to theory and practice in school leadership. 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 relating to their leadership practice;
- 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
- further develop oral and written communication skills.

The course addresses a variety of the ELLC Standards, focusing primarily on the following:
Standards 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 6.1, 6.2

Student Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, successful students should be able to:
1. Articulate their core beliefs about teaching, learning, and leadership, and relate these to their vision of effective school leadership;
2. Analyze educational issues using four major frameworks for analyzing organizational behavior and outcomes;
3. Articulate the leadership role(s) they aspire to take at the conclusion of their program of study;
4. Articulate how they plan to develop their leadership capabilities in the near future.
Course Materials


Classroom Materials
Students are expected 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 Blackboard (http://blackboard.gmu.edu) as part of this course. This is an Internet site used to 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 closings because of the weather or other problems. There will also be assignments which must be posted on the course site. All students should have access to a personal computer that is linked to the Internet and the ability to use word processing software. All students are required to activate their GMU e-mail accounts.

Grading

Consistent with expectations of a master’s level course in the Educational Leadership program, grading is based on student performance on written assignments, as well as on participation in various class activities. The assignments constructed for this course reflect a mix of skills associated with the application of leadership and organizational theory to educational contexts. Overall, written work will be assessed using the following broad criteria:

- Application of concepts reflected in class discussion and readings;
- Creativity and imagination;
- Organization and writing. A clear, concise, and well-organized paper will earn a better grade. Papers should be prepared using the format specified in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association : Fifth Edition*.

Students’ grades are based on their proficiency with respect to the student outcomes stated above. 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 a judgment about your performance. Grades are designed to indicate your success in completing the course, not the level of effort you put into it. The overall weights of the various performances are as follows:

Class participation - 20 points

Participation is evident in three ways:
1) **Attendance:** Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions, in group activities, and in serving as critical friends to other students. Students are expected to attend every class for its entirety. Emergencies sometimes arise, however. If you need to be absent from class, you are expected 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. If you are absent for an oral activity or presentation, you will not receive credit for that activity.

2) **Learning activities and 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. Periodically, you will be asked to write a brief reflection using a format posted to the class blackboard site, and submit the reflection via e-mail. Each reflection should include the following:

- A brief description of the learning activity.
- A statement of what you learned by completing the activity, connecting the learning activity to the ELCC standards – how does what you learned help you develop as a leader?
- How you might change your behavior as a leader (now or into the future) as a result of what you learned.
- How you would change the activity to make it more useful to you as a learner.

Though the reflections are not graded per se, as a whole your reflections represent an informal portfolio of learning activities that provide evidence of your engagement in class.

3) **Locating and Responding to On-Line Resources:** The internet provides a wealth of resources regarding current theories relating to Leadership and Leadership Theory. You are to locate and post to blackboard two links to resources which you feel provide significant information relating to leadership-in education or otherwise. In addition to posting the link you are to include:

- The reason you felt this link was credible.
- An explanation of why you felt it was important for classmates to read.
- Identify which of the three broad areas of Leadership Theory it represents – classical, transformational or distributive.

You are also to read and respond to at least five links posted by your classmates. In your response you are to indicate if you agree or disagree with the poster’s opinions and indicate your reasons.

These postings will not be graded individually but they are considered activities equivalent to 2 class sessions and will be weighted as such.
Written assignments - 80 points
For this class, you will be asked to do a variety of written work that involves developing your leadership capabilities and understanding of the application of organizational theory to schools. Papers are due as indicated on the course schedule that follows. **All papers must be submitted via an e-mail attachment. All assignments should be double-spaced in 10 or 12 point.** You will receive feedback on this work via e-mail. Descriptions of the assignments appear at the end of this syllabus.

**Late Work**

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

**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

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:
Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.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](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.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic and Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments Due</th>
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| 1/4      | History of Leadership Theories- Dr. Robert Smith, Arlington Superintendent              | **Arlington Superintendent**  
Review Course Syllabus  
Powerful Learning Exercise                                         |
| 1/11     | Answer syllabus questions  
Leadership theory - from *classical* to *transformational* to *distributive*  
What Is Leadership? What do Leaders Do?  
Leading v Managing                                               | Fullan, chapter 1 & 2  
Kotter Article (on blackboard)  
Drago-Severson, chapter 1, 2, 6  
Read syllabus and related assignments (on blackboard) |
| 2/1      | Personal Best Paper-  
Bring 2 copies of your Personal Best Paper and the rubric to class. Be prepared to share.  
What kind of leadership do we need for today’s schools? | (1) **Hard copy of Personal Best Paper Due in class – do not submit electronically until after class.**  
D-S chapter 7 and pages 163-177  
Post 2 Leadership links on blackboard  
Respond to at least one link on blackboard |
| 2/8      | The leader’s role in school change                                                   | Fullan, chapter 3                                                                       |
| **2/11** | Leadership Conference                                                                |                                                                                              |
| 2/15     | Organizational analysis: An introduction                                               | B&D, Part 1                                                                               |
| 2/22     | **Platform of Beliefs:**  
Present and video-tape Platforms                                                        | Prepare 2-3 minute (2) **Platform of Beliefs Presentation**  
Bring 2 copies of your written platform to class  
Complete reaction to Leadership Conference on blackboard |
<p>| 3/1      | Ways of seeing organization and leadership - Structural                                | Bolman and Deal: Part 2                                                                   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Exercise: Organizational design for shared decision-making</th>
<th>(3) Case Analysis: Gillian Broner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/8</td>
<td>Ways of seeing organization and leadership - Human Resource Frame Exercise: QWL Interviews</td>
<td>Bolman and Deal: Part 3 Fullan, chapter 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Take a break from reading: Reframing I Exercise: ITCOT</td>
<td>(4) Case analysis: Jeremiah Costanza</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>Ways of seeing organization and leadership - Political Frame Exercise: Environmental Scan</td>
<td>Bolman and Deal: Part 4 &amp; 5 Fullan, chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>Ways of seeing organization and leadership – Symbolic Frame Exercise: Martian Landing Video: FISH</td>
<td>Bolman and Deal: Part 6 Final 4 Leadership Link responses due</td>
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<td>5/3</td>
<td>Reframing II</td>
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**NOTE:** Your final paper #5 will be due when you present your project proposal to the Steering Committee. You will turn in your written report and include appropriate findings in your oral presentation. You should select findings that will strengthen your arguments that your project has been well thought out.
Paper Assignments

(1) Exploration of Leadership: Personal Best – 15 points

For your first assignment, we will borrow an exercise from James Kouzes and Barry Posner’s book, *The Leadership Challenge*. As a part of their studies of leaders and followers, they asked leaders to write a **personal best case**, which they then discussed to discover themes about leader behavior.

For this paper, think back over your own leadership experiences and choose one that you consider to be a “personal best” -- a time when you performed at your peak as a leader. Review the experience in your mind, and ask yourself:

- What characterized the situation? Who was involved, where and when did it take place, and who initiated the situation?
- What motivated you to get involved? How did you challenge yourselves and others?
- How did you build enthusiasm and excitement? How did you involve others and foster collaboration? How did you build trust and respect?
- What principles and values guided you and others? How did you set an example?

The above helps you describe your leadership best situation. To complete the paper, examine the leadership model Fullan presents in chapter 1 of his book. Using this model as an analytic tool, **in what ways did you excel as a leader in the situation you described above? What might you have done differently to enhance your performance? What lessons did you learn about leadership from the experience?**

This is a short paper (3-4 pages), which should be typewritten, double-spaced with ample margins. Come prepared to **share** your case!
# Personal Best Case

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction:</strong></td>
<td>The introduction briefly informs the reader about the topic of the paper and introduces the case.</td>
<td>The introduction is present, but does not adequately inform the reader.</td>
<td>The introduction is largely missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case description:</strong></td>
<td>The case is described fully and thoroughly, including an accounting of the “personal best” situation and a description of why it was selected as a “personal best.”</td>
<td>The case description lacks detail in certain respects, or the case is described but the rationale for selecting it as a “personal best” is missing.</td>
<td>Description of the case is largely missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case analysis:</strong></td>
<td>The analysis uses Fullan’s model to thoroughly assess ways the case exemplifies effective leadership. Alternative leader behaviors are touched upon, and lessons for the future are derived.</td>
<td>Though an analysis is presented, it superficially considers the Fullan model or lacks depth.</td>
<td>The analysis is abrupt, not obviously related to the case, is largely missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Paper is free from errors.</td>
<td>Paper has some errors.</td>
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**Note:**
- Excellent: Demonstrates superior understanding and application of the material.
- Fair: Demonstrates sufficient understanding and application of the material, with some areas for improvement.
- Poor: Demonstrates limited understanding and application of the material, with significant areas for improvement.
(2) Analyze your Platform of Beliefs – 15 points

For this assignment you are going to review, perhaps edit, and analyze the Platform of Beliefs that you prepared for your application packet.

You were asked to:

1. Identify 3 or 4 core beliefs that are important to you when you think about schools in terms of teaching, learning, and leadership.
2. For each of these, explain why it is a critically important belief to you, and
3. In summary, explain how your core beliefs about teaching, learning, and leadership inter-relate and support one another.

Review what you wrote and edit it in any way you want (or start from scratch). Then analyze your platform as it compares to your school and district mission statements.

Assume you were just hired as assistant principal at the AFA Best School, (AFABS), and the principal asked that you prepare a short presentation to introduce yourself to the faculty. Specifically, she asked that you describe your beliefs about teaching, learning, and leadership. You might also suggest some ways these beliefs will affect your leadership practice – given your beliefs, how will you lead? What kinds of behaviors will you exhibit as a leader? The principal runs a tight ship; keep the 3 minute limit. She will video tape the presentation so that the faculty members who are absent and PTA members can also get to know you.
# Platform of Beliefs

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<tr>
<td>Description of Beliefs: Core Beliefs about teaching, learning and leadership are given and explained. (4 points)</td>
<td>The Core Beliefs about teaching, learning and leading are described, their importance and inter-relatedness are explained clearly and logically.</td>
<td>The Core Beliefs are unclear or the explanation of their significance and inter-relatedness are unclear.</td>
<td>The Core Beliefs and the explanation of their significance and inter-relatedness are missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison of Core Beliefs; Core Beliefs are compared to school and district mission statements (4 points)</td>
<td>The Core Beliefs’ relationship to school and district mission plans is clear and understandable.</td>
<td>The relationship between the Core Beliefs and either the school or district mission plan is missing or unclear.</td>
<td>The relationship between the Core Beliefs and the school and district mission plans is missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Core Beliefs (4 points)</td>
<td>The presentation is delivered in a professional manner including appropriate dress, tone of voice, eye contact and preparation.</td>
<td>The presentation lacks at least one component of a professional presentation.</td>
<td>The presentation was given in a totally unprofessional manner.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Grammar and mechanics – use APA style and standard English (1 points)</td>
<td>Paper is free from errors.</td>
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(3) Case Analysis: Leadership & School Change I – 15 points

In this paper, you will read and analyze a case that involves a principal and two “respected teachers” in her school. The case involves the leaders’ role in school change. In analyzing the case, reflect on your own experiences, the kinds of things you have been learning about leadership in general and about school leadership, and your understanding of how leaders affect school improvement. In particular, be sure to touch on each of the following questions in your analysis:

1. How would you characterize the situation? Provide a very brief overview of what happened, in your words.

2. How would you characterize Gillian’s leadership in this scenario?

3. What lessons are there here about leadership and the leaders’ role in school change? If you were advising Gillian Broner, what would you recommend she do?

This is a short paper (3+/- pages). It should be typewritten, double-spaced with ample margins. Please come prepared to share your analysis.

(4) Case Analysis: Leadership & School Change II– 15 points

In this paper, you are asked to analyze a case that involves a principal and his administrative team. The case involves the leaders’ role in school change, teamwork, and management practice. In analyzing the case, reflect on your own experiences, the kinds of things you have been learning about leadership in general and about school leadership, and your understanding of how leaders affect school improvement. In particular, touch on each of the following questions in your discussion:

1. How would you characterize the situation? Discuss what happened, in your words.

2. How would you characterize Costanza’s leadership in this scenario? What do you think his definition of “leadership” might be?

3. What lessons are there here about leadership and the leaders’ role in school change? What do you think is going to happen next at this school?

This is a short paper (3+/- pages). It should be typewritten, double-spaced with ample margins. Please come prepared to share your analysis.
# Case Analyses

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<td><strong>Case description:</strong> Describe the case succinctly (4 points)</td>
<td>The case is briefly described, informing the reader of the salient points.</td>
<td>The case description is too brief of lacks detail that is important to understanding the analysis</td>
<td>Description of the case is largely missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case analysis:</strong> Use the case to analyze components of effective leadership and the leader’s role in school change (8 points)</td>
<td>The case is thoroughly analyzed, including consideration of each of the guide questions posed in the assignment.</td>
<td>Though an analysis is presented, it superficially considers some elements of the assignment.</td>
<td>The analysis is abrupt, not obviously related to the case, is largely missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
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(5) Reframing – 20 points

Bolman and Deal say that the essence of reframing is examining the same situation from different perspectives to develop a more holistic picture. You will use your capstone project proposal for this paper. In this paper, you are going to analyze your proposal using multiple frames to see what you can learn to improve your proposal. The information you gain from this exercise should be incorporated into your final project proposal. The written paper should include an analysis of all four frames. As part of the presentation of your proposal to the grant committee you should include any information from this analysis which will help to show the strength of your plan.

Briefly describe:

- The problem you selected and why you selected this problem? What change you hope to achieve through your proposal? Who will be involved, where and when will it take place, and who initiated the situation?
- What are the goals?
- How will you know whether or not your proposal is successful?

1. Step back and consider the basis for your description – what frame are you using when you describe and analyze the change you want to see? Discuss your conclusions explicitly in terms of the use of the frame. What does the use of this conceptual lens help you understand about your proposal?

2. Then, use the other frames to examine your proposal. What else can you learn by analyzing your proposal through the lens of this frame? Do you see different opportunities, challenges, or outcomes from an alternative perspective?

HINT: Use the resources provided by Dr. Bauer in EDRS 590 to assist in your analysis.

In your paper, be sure to be very clear about which frames you are using, what you believe to be the primary features of the frame (be brief, but let me know that you know what’s unique and valuable about the frame as a way of seeing), and what you learn about your proposal by using the frame.

This is a short paper (5 +/- pages). It should be typewritten, double-spaced with ample margins. This assignment will be due when you present your grant proposal to the steering committee.
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<td>Proposal description: Briefly describe the proposal (4 points)</td>
<td>The proposal is described fully and thoroughly, including a clear description or who will be involved; goals that are to be met; and how success will be judged.</td>
<td>The proposal description lacks certain details or fails to consider how the change will be deemed successful (or not).</td>
<td>Description of the proposal is largely missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal analysis: Consider which frame you used to describe the proposal (6 points)</td>
<td>The frame used to initially describe the proposal is clearly identified; characteristics of the frame are clearly spelled out; how the frame helps you understand about the proposal is clearly discussed.</td>
<td>The frame used to initially discuss the proposal is identified, but only briefly discussed and/or applied in terms of its utility as a conceptual lens for understanding this proposal.</td>
<td>The analysis is abrupt, not obviously related to the proposal, is largely missing or wholly inadequate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal re-analysis: Consider another frame and use it to improve the proposal (6 points)</td>
<td>Another frame is used to analyze the proposal; characteristics of the frame are clearly spelled out; how the frame helps you improve the proposal is clearly discussed.</td>
<td>The frame used to re-analyze the proposal is identified, but only briefly discussed and/or applied in terms of its utility as a conceptual lens for improving the proposal</td>
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