

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Graduate School of Education**  
**Educational Leadership Program**  
**EDRS 590-604: EDUCATION RESEARCH #CRN 76112**  
Course Syllabus  
Fall 2004

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**Meeting Times:** 4:30-8:00 p.m. Wednesdays September 1-November 17

**Textbook**

Action Research in Education (2004). Ernie Stringer. Prentice Hall. ISBN # 0130974250.  
Other readings as assigned

**Course Description**

This course helps candidates develop skills, insights, and understanding basic to performing research, with emphasis on interpretation and application of research results. The course critiques research and uses findings in educational settings.

**Candidate Outcomes**

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

1. search on-line databases for recent publications relevant to a specific topic;
2. understand measures of central tendency and dispersion and their application to important education outcomes;
3. use inferential statistics to understand the validity of education research;
4. use educational research to develop a policy position based on more than one's opinion;
5. apply quantitative and/or qualitative methods to study the quality of instruction at their school sites (action research design);
6. write more clearly and persuasively; and
7. lead and participate in group discussions focused on current research.

## COURSE TOPICS

Date	Topic for your preparation and discussion
9/1	Orientation to the library, online searching for education research Types of research
9/8	Frequency and measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) Standard deviation, other measures of variance, and correlation, Survey research
9/15	Descriptive data displays Independent and dependent variables,
9/ 22	Collecting qualitative data Finding patterns in qualitative data, coding,
9/. 29	Sampling, Normal distribution
10/ 6	Standard deviation, other measures of variance, and correlation, Survey research,
10/13	Sampling, Normal distribution, Standard deviation, other measures of variance, and correlation,
10/20	Survey research
10/27	Making inferences from qualitative data, checking validity
11/3	Hypothesis testing, measures of statistical significance, confidence levels
11/10	Designing action research
11/17	Learning Presentations

### Relationship of Course Goals to Educational Leadership Program Goals

This course serves as the only research methods-oriented course in the master's sequence in Education Leadership. The general intent of the course is to help candidates to become better consumers of education research. All of the program goals are active, to a greater or lesser degree, in this course. Candidates will begin to:

- develop an informed perspective on issues in education administration that is grounded in contemporary research;
- create a personal philosophy of education and a personal vision that are influenced by education research;

- understand how principals can use research to enhance their instructional leadership;
- use various social science perspectives as the foundation for advocacy and change; and
- be able to apply technology to the task of conducting education research.

### **CEHD Syllabus Statements of Expectations**

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://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/#TOCH12> 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](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

### **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 expects candidates to enjoy their learning opportunities *and* to take their graduate experiences seriously by thinking and behaving in a professional manner. This means that candidates are expected to attend each class for its entirety, except when there is a personal or family emergency. 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.

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).

### **Internship in Education Leadership—EDLE 791**

Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership Program has integrated internship activities into course work. In this course, candidates will focus on Strategic Leadership (Area I), item #2, "Information Management and Evaluation".

### **Nature of Course Delivery**

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

## ASSIGNMENTS

Specific assignment	Significance	Date
Literature review requirements to be discussed in class	20%	
Mid-term In order to begin to read, analyze conduct and understand research, one must possess and confidently use a body of research language, knowledge and application. The mid-term will focus on these key elements.	20 %	
Research design Assignment requirements to be discussed in class	20%	
Discussion leadership : A percentage of your course grade is earned through ongoing assessment of your discussion leadership during the study of Educational Research. Each student will apply learned leadership skills including, but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team building</li> <li>• Mentoring, coaching, supporting</li> <li>• Creating and promoting a healthy environment for change</li> <li>• Modeling</li> <li>• Presenting a knowledge base</li> <li>• Trail blazing</li> </ul>	20%	
Discussion participation : A percentage of your course grade is earned through ongoing assessment of your attendance, performance and communication. Punctual attendance and regular class participation are vital to the successful completion of this course. Participation includes, but is not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing experiences from work or from observation,</li> <li>• Professional appearance, behavior and presentation,</li> <li>• Willingness to volunteer for a class activity,</li> <li>• Thoughtful contribution to class discussion.</li> <li>• Communication, impromptu and planned presentations</li> <li>• Contributing in a meaningful manner,</li> <li>• Sticking to the topic at hand,</li> <li>• Respect for others' responses,</li> <li>• Use of appropriate problem solving techniques</li> <li>• Appropriate use of allotted time.</li> <li>• Coming to class prepared</li> </ul>	20%	
Sum of all learning, experiences, presentations and performance	100%	

## Course Procedures

### *Absence From Class*

Candidates are expected to attend every class for its entirety. Emergencies sometimes arise, however. Candidates who need to be absent from class are expected to notify the instructor in advance by telephone or e-mail. If you miss more than one class, you will lose participation points. Candidates who miss more than one class will lose participation points.

### *Late Work*

Candidates are expected to submit their work on time. No work will be accepted later than one week after it is due. Any attempt to submit work past the one-week deadline will result in no credit for the assignment.

### *Re-submitting Written Work*

Candidates may revise and re-submit graded work to improve their performance. Such revisions are due not later than one week after receiving my feedback on the previous draft. Candidates may not re-take the mid-term examination.

The grading scale, assigned percentages and criteria for evaluation shown in this syllabus are assessment guidelines only. Your final grade for the semester will reflect this instructor's judgment of your classroom performance as you attempt to demonstrate the leadership behaviors as outlined in this syllabus. In other words, you are to demonstrate, in observable behavior, your readiness for the awesome responsibility and reward that comes with a leadership position in schools. Meeting the basic requirements is not "A" work, just as in the world of leadership, doing what is expected/assigned is not exemplary. Exemplary academic work, just as professional work, exceeds expectations, sets the pace for thought and action, is used as a model for all others to use and follow and joins the "cutting edge" of Leadership.

Consider the following criteria for evaluation as you review your work:

Quality: Graduate level work is of the highest caliber. All written assignments are to be typed, double-space 12 font, with logical clarity and flow of thought. Refer to APA format (or another of your choosing) for

reporting references and creating a bibliography. Particular attention should be placed on editing for errors in spelling and grammar. Assignments with multiple errors will be returned with a grade of “C” or lower.

**Originality:** Work demonstrates motivation to communicate by solving a problem or providing needed/requested information. Work reflects creative thought, a unique approach and sound personal commitment.

**Creditability:** Work is based on sound judgment based on valid documentation and logical thought. Sources and resources are well grounded. Work withstands scrutiny.

**Achievement:** Goals and expectations of the assignment are accomplished and the product is able to stand on its own without additional explanation.

**Value** Will this product solve the problem, strengthen the cause, and clarify the confusion for which it was intended? Does the final product address the intent of the task?

As with professional work that you create, prior to submitting any assignment, your academic work should be read by one or two people who are skilled at proofreading.

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITTEN WORK:**

Use appropriate grammar.

Writing should be the caliber of a graduate student.

Double-space your writing.

No binders, plastic covers, etc.

Refrain from using “I” in your writing

Spell correctly.

Type all work.

Use Times Roman or Arial 12-font. .

Each piece of writing has a cover page

Find a good proofreader!

## Guideline for Grading

<u>Grades &amp; Points</u>	<u>Quality, Originality and Value of All Class Work, Written Work and Presentations</u>	<u>Achievement</u>	<u>Credibility in All Written Work and Presentations</u>	<u>Presentation Oral/Written</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Participation</u>
<b>A 96-100</b>	Work serves as a model and/or landmark piece among GMU Graduate students; Work or thought is a valuable, timely contribution to Educational Leadership. Knowledge gained from ancillary sources beyond the syllabus is consistently shared.	Exemplary quality and insight; unique, rare and valued contribution to Ed. Leadership; Newfound learning is evident; Each assignment is produced in excess of expectations; Leader-as-learner is demonstrated. Exceeds expectations for assignments set in syllabus.	Exceptional, grammar and spelling are error-free; writing exemplifies a complete product exceeding Graduate standards; Work serves as a model.	100% on time	100% 0% Tardy	Exemplary; promotes and facilitates discussion on topic; thought and learning reflected in structure of question and response; team player/leader; A model for graduate level. Always demonstrates respect.
<b>A- 90-95</b>	Work or thought is competent and provides evidence of unique thought, understanding, and application of concept. Knowledge gained from ancillary and shared exceeds syllabus expectations.	Evidence of understanding to apply knowledge; Academically on target. Works exceeds at least 50% of expectations for course. "A cut above" other graduate work.	Grammar and spelling are error-free; writing is virtually complete to expectations. All components are included, clear and concise.	100% on time	Absent one session & 0% Tardy.	Outstanding; actively promotes discussion; demonstrates in depth learning through mature questions and responses; always demonstrates respect.
<b>B+ 85-89</b>	Consistent, credible evidence of competence and understanding. On target with application of concepts to Educational Leadership. Knowledge gained from ancillary sources rarely shared.	Evidence that work is "strong, consistent average" in relation to expectations set in the syllabus. Accomplishes basic assignments but not much more.	A couple of minor grammar and/or spelling errors; Writing shortcomings distract instructor's ability to review without interruption of flow of thought; some gaps in thought.	No more than one late assignment	Absent one session and/or Tardy 1-2 times	Participates consistently; questions and responses reflect some thought and reflection on learning; always demonstrates respect.
<b>B 80-84</b>	Evidence of general understanding is consistent; occasional gaps in logic and ability to draw conclusions and solve problems. Learning is solely limited to syllabus expectations.	Evidence that basic assignment expectations set forth in the syllabus are met.	Some minor grammar and/or spelling errors; Writing shortcomings distract instructor's ability to review Significant elements are vague or missing. Work meets the bare minimum standards for GMU Graduate work. Just enough to "get by."			Reveals some thought and learning through occasional, meaningful contributions; little evidence of participation; always demonstrates respect.
<b>C 75-79</b>	Occasional misunderstanding of basic concepts; absence of consistent logical thought; Learning does not meet expectations set by syllabus.	Basic syllabus assignments are not met (or appear to not be met) on a regularly basis	Grammar and/or spelling errors; Significant elements missing and/or misinterpreted; Works is substandard to GMU Graduate work expectations.	Two assignments late or not done correctly	Absent no more than two sessions and/or Tardy 1-2 times	Weak participation; off task or passive; always demonstrates respect.
<b>F 74 and below</b>	Misunderstanding of basic concepts; absence of consistent, logical thought; learning fails expectations of graduate work and of course syllabus.	Basic syllabus assignments are not met	Unacceptable	Two or more assignments late or not done correctly	Absent three times and/or Tardy 2+ times	Weak participation; off task or passive; lack consistent respect

## Grading

Candidates' grades are based on their proficiency with respect to the student outcomes stated above. The list below describes major classroom activities and their point values

A+	100 points	B+	85-89 points	C	70-74 points
A	95-99 points	B	80-84 points	F	69 points or below
A -	90-94 points	B -	75-79 points		

## Standards Addressed by Course

The table below shows which Virginia Department of Education (VADOE), Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards are addressed by this course. Specific course topics follow the standards descriptions.

VADOE COMPETENCIES	ISLLC STANDARDS	NCATE STANDARDS
1. Knowledge and understanding of human growth and development b. Curriculum design, implementation, evaluation and refinement; c. principles of effective instruction, measurement, evaluation and assessment strategies <b>Course topics 3 - 10</b>	1. Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies</li> <li>Effective communication</li> </ul> <b>All course topics</b>	2. Information management and evaluation 2.1 Conducts needs assessment 2.2 Use qualitative and quantitative data to form decisions 2.4 analyze and interpret educational data, issues, and trends for boards, committees, and other groups <b>All course topics</b>
2. Knowledge and understanding of systems and organizations c. Information sources and processing, including data collection and data analysis strategies <b>All course topics</b>	2. School culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student growth and development</li> <li>Applied learning theories</li> <li>Curriculum design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement</li> </ul> <b>Course topics 3 – 10</b>	3. Curriculum, instruction, supervision, and the learning environment 3.2 Develop collaboratively a learning organization 3.3 Base curricular decisions on research, applied theory, informed practice, etc. <b>Course topics 3 – 10</b>
		5. Student personnel services 5.1 Apply the principles of student growth and development to the learning environment and educational program <b>Course topics 3, 5, 9, 10, and 15</b>

Preparation for next class:

For September 8

- Read and be prepared to discuss contents of the following site:  
<http://www.ascd.org/cms/index.cfm?TheViewID=1472> Online research resources: Methodology, ethical issues, policy issues, etc. Pay particular attention to at least three of the articles on ethical issues.
- Bring to class one example of research being conducted in your school or division

For September 15

- Read and be prepared to discuss contents of the following site:  
<http://www.ascd.org/cms/objectlib/ascdframeset/index.cfm?publication=http://www.ascd.org/publications/ctq/1997summer/davis.html>

For September 22

For September 29

For October 6

For October 13

For October 20

For October 27

For November 3

For November 10

For November 17

September 2004

