GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

EDLE 690, Section 602, Summer 2011
Using Research to Lead School Improvement

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Schedule Information

Location:	Eagle Ridge Middle School Library
Meeting times:	Monday and Wednesday, May 9-June 15
	4:30-7:30 p.m.

Course Description: EDLE 690 Using Research to Lead School Improvement (3:3:0)
Develops skills, insights, and understanding of how leaders use research to improve schools, with emphasis on the use of assessment and research data to identify school improvement needs and to design school improvement projects.

Nature of Course Delivery
Using Research to Lead School Improvement helps students to identify opportunities for school improvement and focus their efforts toward improved student learning. Through readings, lectures, workshops, discussions, case studies, and presentations, students will learn how to conduct library and field-based research, how to connect theory and research to practice, and how to design, implement and evaluate school improvement based on sound theory and research.

Content
The two primary purposes of the course are to help students to become better consumers of research and to learn how to use that research to lead school improvement focused on instruction. All of the EDLE program goals are active, to a greater or lesser extent, in this course. Candidates will begin to:
1. develop the capacity to examine and summarize student performance data and use these data to identify school needs;
2. develop an informed perspective on issues in education administration grounded in contemporary research;
3. understand how principals can use research to enhance instructional leadership; and
4. apply technology to the task of reviewing, conducting, and/or presenting education research.

Teaching and Learning
Each class will include a variety of activities and exercises. Out-of-class work will rely in part on the use of TaskStream and web-based resources created to complement the primary text. Specific process goals for the class are as follows:
1. Classes will reflect a balance of activities that encourage the exploration of the use of research in instructional leadership. To promote an atmosphere that allows us to accomplish this end, we will:
a. start and end on time;
b. maintain (flexibly) a written agenda reflecting objectives for each class;
c. agree to disagree respectfully during class discussions;
d. strive to be open to new ideas and perspectives; and
e. listen actively to one another.

2. Student work will reflect what is expected from leaders. As such, students are expected to:
a. write papers that are well researched, proofread, submitted in a timely fashion, and conform to APA guidelines;
b. participate actively in class discussions in a manner that challenges the best thinking of the class; and
c. provide constructive feedback to others both on their ideas and on their written work, striving to learn from each other and to test each other's ideas.

3. We will work to maintain a classroom climate that approximates what we know about learning organizations. As such, it is important that we create conditions that allow 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:
a. come fully prepared to each class;
b. demonstrate appropriate respect for one another;
c. voice concerns and opinions about class process openly;
d. engage in genuine inquiry;
e. recognize and celebrate each other's ideas and accomplishments; and
f. show an awareness of each other's needs.

Learner Outcomes
Successful students will emerge from the course able to:
1. search online databases for recent publications relevant to a specific topic, and prepare a brief summary of applied research on a topic relevant to the improvement of instruction at their school site;
2. use education research to develop a position based on more than one's opinion;
3. understand basic statistics (e.g., measures of central tendency & dispersion; basic inferential statistics) and their application in educational research;
4. understand and be able to evaluate basic research designs, and apply a research design to the study of a problem related to instruction and/or improvement at their school site; and
5. prepare and defend a proposal for a School Improvement Project (SIP) that becomes the blueprint for the capstone project required in the EDLE program internship.

Professional Standards
National Standards and Virginia Competencies

The course addresses Virginia Department of Education (VADOE) Competencies, The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards, and Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) (NCATE) Standards dealing with information management; use of data to inform decisions;
principles of research and evaluation; use of information resources/data collection and analysis; and effective communication.

The following ELCC standards are addressed in this course:

ELCC Standard 1.0: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning supported by the school community.

    1.2 Articulate a Vision
    1.3 Implement a Vision
    1.4 Steward a Vision

ELCC Standard 2.0: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.

    2.3 Apply Best Practice to Student Learning

ELCC Standard 3.0: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by managing the organization, operations, and resources in a way that promotes a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

    3.1 Manage the Organization
    3.2 Manage Operations
    3.3 Manage Resources

ELCC Standard 4.0: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

    4.2 Respond to Community Interests and Needs

ELCC Standard 6.0: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

    6.1. Understand the Larger Context

This course addresses the following **VDOE Competencies**:

    a. Knowledge understanding, and application of planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity, including:

        (2) Collaborative leadership in gathering and analyzing data to identify needs to develop and implement a school improvement plan that results in increased student learning;

        (7) Identification, analysis, and resolution of problems using effective problem-solving techniques; and

        (8) Communication of a clear vision of excellence, linked to mission and core beliefs that promotes continuous improvement consistent with the goals of the school division.

    b. Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including:

(1) Systems theory and the change process of systems, organizations and individuals, using appropriate and effective adult learning models;

(2) Aligning organizational practice, division mission, and core beliefs for developing and implementing strategic plans;

(3) Information sources and processing, including data collection and data analysis strategies;

(4) Using data as a part of ongoing program evaluation to inform and lead change;

(5) Developing a change management strategy for improved student outcomes; and

(6) Developing empowerment strategies to create personalized learning environments for diverse schools.

c. Knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations, including:

(8) Application of data-driven decision making to initiate and continue improvement in school and classroom practices and student achievement.

f. Knowledge understanding and application of basic leadership theories and influences that impact schools including:

(1) Concepts of leadership including systems theory, change theory, learning organizations and current leadership theory.

Relationship of Course to Internship
Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership program has integrated "embedded experiences" into course work. This means that some of the work for this class is related to your internship. You may write about embedded experiences in your internship journal and Collective Record, but they can only count over and above the minimum 320 hours required for the internship

During this course, students will prepare and present a proposal for a school improvement project that they will implement and evaluate as a part of their internship activities over the remainder of the program.

Course Materials

Required Text:
Bauer, S.C. & Brazer, S.D. (2012). *Using research to lead school improvement*. Thousand Oaks, C: Sage.

Research Articles: May be found on TaskStream

Recommended Texts:
American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th edition). Washington, D.C. Author.

Outside-of-Class Resources
Online access is vital for the distance learning aspects of the course and is 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. It is my expectation that you will be fully competent to send and receive e-mail messages **with attachments**. If your computer at school or home has spam blocking that will prevent you from seeing messages with attachments, you are responsible for addressing this problem immediately.

All students are required to use http://www.taskstream.com 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. Samples of student work will be archived on this site for purposes of course, program, and college assessment.

It is my expectation that all students have access to standard word processing software that can be read by Microsoft Office 2007.

Course Requirements, Performance-based Assessment, and Evaluation Criteria

Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class for its entirety. Maximum class participation points will be earned by students who attend all classes, are on time and do not leave early.

General Expectations

Consistent with expectations of a master's level course in the Education Leadership program, grading is based heavily on student performance on written assignments. The assignments constructed for this course reflect a mix of skills associated with the application of research to education leadership contexts. Overall, written work will be assessed using the following broad criteria:

1. Application of concepts reflected in class discussion and readings
2. Creativity and imagination
3. The ability to write in a clear, concise, and organized fashion

Additionally, a portion of the class grade will be based on participation and the contribution you make to class discussions. The overall weights of the various performances are as follows:

Class Participation (20 points)

> Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions, in group activities, and in serving as critical friends to other students. Attendance is expected for all classes. **If you must be absent, please notify me by e-mail or phone.** More than one absence may result in a reduction in participation points. Arriving at class more than 30 minutes late or leaving more than 30 minutes before the end of class may result in loss of points.

Written assignments (80 points)

> Several different types of performance-based assignments will be completed during the semester. Each assignment relates to the application of educational research in your school setting. Each assignment and a rubric for grading each assignment are described at the end of this syllabus.

> The assignments are designed sequentially to help you define and plan the school improvement project **you will be conducting as your capstone project for the internship**. Thus, in the first assignment, you examine school performance data and define a research topic. In the second, you review the available research literature on that topic, and begin to define the specific improvement project you will implement. Finally, for the third assignment, you write and defend your proposal. The written proposal is the program-level Performance-Based Assessment for this course.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS must be submitted electronically, through TaskStream. TaskStream is an online assessment system used by the college to collect student work, provide feedback to students, and maintain an ongoing record of student assessment data. You will be provided with a TaskStream account and use TaskStream to submit work for courses, as well as to prepare and submit your internship portfolio.

Late work. I expect all students to submit their work on time, meaning no later than by midnight of the due date. Assignments will not be accepted later than **48 hours** after a due date. Papers due on a day when you are absent must be submitted via TaskStream by the due date.

Rewrites. Students may rewrite a paper (other than the final paper) and re-submit the paper for re-grading within one week of receiving the paper back. I recommend that students not consider re-writing papers with

scores of 3.5 or higher. If you wish to discuss your work, I am willing to do so at a time of mutual convenience. Papers that are initially submitted more than 48 hours late will not be graded. 6

Grading scale:
A+ 100
A 95-99
A- 90-94
B+ 87-89
B 83-86
B- 80-82
C 75-79
F 0-74

College of Education and Human Development Statement of Expectations
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See http://ods.gmu.edu/].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources
- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See http://caps.gmu.edu/].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See http://gse.gmu.edu/].

Tentative EDLE 690, Section 602, Summer 2011

Session	Date	Topic(s)	Assignments
1	5/9	Course Introduction Research, Leadership, and Change The School Improvement Project Proposal Using Data in Educational Planning and Decision Making	Due 5/11 Read, take notes, and reflect: Bauer & Brazer, Part II, Problem Articulation Review and bookmark (APA): http://owl.english.purdue.edu
2	5/11	Assessing Schools Examining School Performance and Determining Priority Goals Review Writing Assignment #1(due 5/20)	Due 5/16 Prepare for "Making Your Case"
3	**5/16**	**Electronic Session** Setting Change Objectives Problem Identification	Due 5/18 Presentation, "Making Your Case"
4	5/18	Discussion/Presentation: "Making Your Case"	Due 5/23 Read, take notes, and reflect: Bauer & Brazer, Part III, Building a Deep Understanding of the School Problem
	5/20	**Writing Assignment #1 due**	
5	5/23	Building a Deep Understanding of the School Problem • Root Cause Analysis • Researching Alternative Action Possibilities I • Locating & Conducting a Literature Source Search	
6	5/25	Researching Alternative Action Possibilities II Research Designs, Methods & Ethics Review Writing Assignment #2 (due 6/3)	Due 6/6 Read, take notes, and reflect: Bauer & Brazer, Part IV, Completing the Journey: Solutions, Actions, and Implementation
	5/30	**No Class (Memorial Day)**	
7	**6/1**	**Electronic Session** Critical Friend-Organizing and Writing an Annotated Bibliography	
	6/3	**Writing Assignment #2**	
8	6/6	Action Plans Implementing and Evaluating Review Writing Assignment #3 (due 6/13) and Poster/Power Point Session (due 6/8)	Due 6/8 Prepare for Poster Session

9	6/8	Poster Session	
10	6/13	Wrap Up	
	6/15	**Assignment #3 due**	

Writing Assignment 1: Improvement Target Proposal (20 Points)
Overview:
Data are tools – they represent a primary source of knowledge-building for school improvement. As leaders in your school, one of your primary tasks is to understand available data relating to your school's performance in meeting its goals and objectives. Additionally, you need to learn how to communicate about these data to various stakeholder groups. In this assignment, you are asked to assemble some of these data, and prepare a short summary suitable for presentation to a school leadership team.

Tasks:
1. Identify the variety of published data relating to your school's demographic characteristics (e.g., enrollment, attendance, composition of the student body, staffing); measures of student learning; and any perceptual data that might exist relating to such things as school climate. These data may be available on your school or school system's website, on related websites (e.g., state education department), or in published material.
2. Determine your school's primary performance objectives: What is the school expected to achieve? Dig deeper than routine accountability requirements; examine the school's current improvement plan, for instance, to identify current improvement priorities.
3. Examine relevant assessment data for at least a two-year period. To do this, you will need to **triangulate the data** available to you – look across various sources to answer the question: **How well are we doing?** As a leader in your school, you will add value to your analysis by using your craft knowledge to interpret what these data mean. You may limit your focus to one or more areas identified as priorities for your school (i.e. you do not need to present data on each and every curricula objective, but you should provide a reasonable synopsis of "how well we're doing).
4. Identify any areas that reflect priorities – for instance, areas in which students are achieving at a level below your school's goals and objectives. Be careful to identify performance indicators that clearly relate to the school performance objective(s) you've identified. The goal here is NOT to "solve" an identified problem, but to highlight areas that are in continued need of attention in your school's improvement plan.
5. Prepare an Improvement Target Proposal that includes a synopsis of the school's demographic characteristics, improvement goals, current levels of performance, and challenge area(s). Use the attached rubric as a guide to structure your paper.

This is an exercise in *leadership communication*. Be selective – you cannot provide an overview of all of the data that might be available. Craft your examination to focus on important areas of concern. *NOTE – the tone of the paper is persuasive*. You are providing your expert judgment based on your analysis of school performance data, and in the end you are lobbying the tam to adopt the focus you identified as important.

Direct the paper to your school's leadership team as the audience – the team may include new members, such as one or more parents or community members. Avoid jargon, and be aware of the clarity of your presentation – if you confuse your audience or present a lot of disparate data that don't connect to your school's objectives, you've failed to add value to the discussion. *Use tables and/or graphs* sensibly to summarize briefly the discussion and direct the reader's attention.

This is a short paper (7 +/- pages), and should be written in a fashion that is suitable for the audience described above.

EDLE 690 Problem Identification

Levels:	exceeds expectations	meets expectations	approaching expectations	falls below expectations
Criteria:				
Introduction and Thesis (10%)	The paper starts with an introduction that provides a clear roadmap for the reader, foreshadowing what the remainder of the document is intended to provide in the way of information. The thesis statement appears in this introductory paragraph.	The paper starts with a brief introduction that alludes to the purpose of the paper and provides a general foreshadowing of what is to be included in the document. The thesis may not be entirely clear or appropriate.	The introduction provides only the barest hint about the purpose of the paper and the information to be shared. The thesis is either confusing or missing.	The paper lacks an introduction entirely, or the introduction fails to provide useful information that is linked to the intended purpose of the document.
Characteristics of the school and diversity of the school community (ELCC 4.2) (20%)	The paper includes a thorough and concise overview of the demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and the school community. The school's current improvement objectives are highlighted, and (if available) data related to characteristics of the school climate are described.	The paper includes a general overview of the demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and school community; the school's current improvement objectives; and measures of school climate. Some important demographic data are not evident.	The paper includes a limited review of demographic and staffing data; the school's current improvement objectives; and measures of school climate. Important data are omitted or presented inaccurately.	The presentation of demographic data and/or current improvement objectives is missing or wholly inadequate.
Use of data to analyze school performance related to the school's vision and objectives (ELCC 1.2) (25%)	The paper includes a clear and concise summary of the school's performance based on an assessment of important educational outcomes reflecting the school's vision and objectives, over at least a <u>two-year</u> period.	The paper includes a summary of the school's performance over a two-year period, using general measures of important educational outcomes.	The paper includes a summary of the school's current performance in general terms. Specific indicators or educational outcomes are unclear or missing	The assessment of school performance is missing or wholly inadequate
Identification of improvement area (ELCC 2.2) (25%)	The paper concludes with a recommendation of one or more focal areas to improve instruction. The identified areas(s) are well supported by the analysis of school data, and are clearly connected to the school's vision and improvement objectives and the emerging needs of the school community.	The paper concludes with a recommendation of one or more focal areas to improve instruction. The identified area(s) are generally supported by the analysis of school data, and are at least loosely connected to the school's vision and improvement objectives.	The paper concludes with a general recommendation of one or more focal areas to improve instruction. The identified area(s)are not clearly supported by the analysis of school data.	The recommendation is missing or wholly inadequate.
Use of tables and graphs to summarize data (10%)	Tables and/or graphics are powerfully used to present demographic and/or school performance data. Tables and/or graphs are clearly labeled and discussed.	Tables and/or graphics are used to present demographic and/or school performance data but in some cases are mislabeled or otherwise	Tables and/or graphics are used too sparingly to be effective or are largely distracting, mislabeled, or	Tables and/or graphics are not evident.

		difficult to interpret accurately.	otherwise confusing.	
Mechanics (10%)	The paper is nearly error-free, which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading	The paper includes occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice	The paper includes errors in grammar and punctuation, but spelling has been proofread	The paper includes frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Writing Assignment #2: Annotated Bibliography (20 Points)

Overview: As emerging leaders in your schools, you need to develop the skills associated with accessing the knowledge base on questions that are important to the understanding and improvement of teaching and learning. An annotated bibliography provides you with the opportunity to learn how to sift through existing research on a question that interests you and to begin to organize the knowledge that you are gaining by reading this literature.

Task:
1. Select a topic identified in the previous writing assignment. Base your selection on your review of relevant data, and on discussions with leaders in your school concerning the areas that reflect current and future improvement priorities for the school.
2. From this selection, state your focus as a research problem. For the purposes of reviewing the literature, your problem can be formulated by completing the sentence, "What is known about…? (e.g. What is know about why adolescent boys drop out of school?).
3. Find a number of *research articles* (original and syntheses) that speak to the question you selected. You will first be interested in building a deep understanding of the problem and the kinds of factors that are thought to cause problems like this in schools like yours and, later, to identify actions that have been found to be effective strategies to deal with these causes. This is an iterative process; as you examine the literature, you will narrow your search as you learn more about the problem. You might identify several articles that are review pieces or syntheses of the literature themselves, but you should also concentrate on identifying primary research (i.e., papers that present an analysis using quantitative or qualitative methods to contribute to the knowledge base on the question). Most of your research can be accomplished on the Internet, with support from your school library, the public library, and/or GMU libraries.
4. Prepare an annotated biography using *at least five (5*) of the most important papers you found. An annotated bibliography is a list of articles (or books) that includes *a brief description of the work and an evaluation of its usefulness*. The purpose of an annotated bibliography is to provide information about the relevance, utility, and quality of the source *for your purposes*.
5. Your annotated bibliography should include *a statement of the topic and research question* you are investigating; five or more annotated entries using the format shown below; and *a reference list* showing the papers you consulted (around 10 sources). Citations must be in APA format.

An example of an annotated entry is provided below:

Unknown (2009). *Complex teacher evaluation systems can produce negative perceptions.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

This study of the implementation of a "complex, performance based" teacher evaluation system, based on Charlotte Danielson's framework for teaching in one suburban school district sought to answer the question: Would implementation of the system lead teachers to believe that its use would improve instructional practice? Using Vroom's expectancy theory as a framework, the researchers combined the results of a survey of all teachers involved with interviews of administrators and selected teachers in reaching their conclusions. The study found that although teachers had high expectations for the effectiveness of the system, they perceived its implementation to be helpful in improving neither instruction nor student performance. The study's use of one school district sample and a 57% response rate to the survey limits its generalizability, but combined with results of other studies cited it tends to support the authors' conclusion that such systems should focus on what teachers perceive to be their

needs, rather than attempt to install a comprehensive and time consuming system. This recommendation also appears to be helpful in improving teacher evaluation procedures contemplated as part of the School Improvement Plan of Eagle Ridge Middle School.

EDLE 690 Annotated Bibliography

	exceeds expectations	meets expectations	approaching expectations	falls below expectations
Criteria:				
Statement of problem: (ELCC 1.2) (10%)	The paper begins with a clear statement of the problem, which specifically relates to a performance gap identified using assessment results, demographic data, and analysis of school and community needs.	The proposal begins with a statement of problem which relates generally to a performance gap identified using assessment data.	The statement of the research problem is evident, but is vaguely worded or poorly spelled out. It is difficult to discern a clear focus for the research.	The statement of research problem is missing or wholly inadequate
Bibliographic entries – content of summaries: (ELCC 6.1.) (40%)	Annotated entries provide a clear and concise summary of each research source. Each entry includes an overview of the research (including method and findings); and an assessment of its utility.	Annotated entries provide a summary of each research source. Each entry includes a brief overview of the research and an assessment of its utility, but may be lacking in specificity.	Annotated entries provide a general overview research sources, but lack detail or are missing significant elements needed to make the entries useful.	Annotated entries are severely lacking in detail, rendering them of little use
Bibliographic entries – focus (10%)	All entries clearly and specifically relate to the research question.	Most entries relate clearly to the research question.	Most entries relate only generally to the research question.	The connection between annotated entries and the research question is difficult to discern.
Bibliographic entries – quality (10%)	Sources are well balanced, including original research and synthesis pieces from high-quality, credible sources.	Entries are included from quality sources, but are dominated by synthesis pieces; original research is not evident.	One or more entries are included from questionable sources, reflecting largely opinion pieces rather than original research or syntheses of research.	. Entries are dominated by material from questionable sources: a review of research is not evident.
Bibliographic entries – quantity and form (10%)	Five or more annotated summaries are presented, along with a detailed reference list of about 10 sources consulted.	Five or more annotated summaries are presented, but a reference list of fewer than 10 sources consulted is included. a	Four or five annotated summaries are presented along with a reference list of sources are consulted. .	Fewer than four annotated summaries are presented along with a reference list of sources consulted.
References— (10%)	References are complete and presented in APA format.	References are in APA format, but a few (1-3) appear incorrect or are in improper format.	The document contains numerous incorrect or incomplete references.	References are omitted entirely.
Mechanics (10%)	Entries are nearly error-free, which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading.	Entries contain occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice.	Entries contain errors in grammar and punctuation but spelling has been proofread.	Entries contain frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

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Writing Assignment #3: School Improvement Proposal (40 points)

Overview: School leaders are increasingly expected to engage in short-term action research projects to demonstrate the efficacy of school programs and practices. As a part of your internship, you will propose a School Improvement Project (SIP) that addresses the problem or "achievement gap" identified through research on your school. Your proposal will describe a specific improvement project that you will *design, implement, and evaluate* during your internship, and later analyze in one of your concluding courses. The expectation is that you will lead a team in implementation of this project.

Tasks:

1. OVERVIEW: The proposal should start with a concise and well thought out description of the achievement gap you have identified through your assessment of student performance and achievement data, followed by a clear **statement of purpose** that generally demonstrates how you intend to address the performance gap. After stating this purpose, include an **overview** of the project that provides a brief description of what you intend to do to implement your proposal.

2. RATIONALE: Include a concise and well thought out **rationale** that describes why it is important to address the performance gap you identified, and your espoused theory of action that suggests why taking the proposed action will lead to improvement in the targeted area. Be sure to describe how your SIP connects to or reinforces your school's vision and objectives. Use the research literature to support your strategy for addressing the achievement gap you identified.

3. OUTCOMES: Provide a short description of the **specific outcomes** you are seeking by implementing your project. Be specific; identify the performance indicators you intend to track in order to measure the educational outcomes that are important in your improvement area.

4. INVOLVEMENT: The expectation is that you will be engaging members of your school community in designing and enacting your improvement project. Provide a short summary of those persons you involved in the creation of this proposal, and which stakeholders you envision involving in the enactment and assessment of the SIP. Describe how you plan to enlist their support and build your team, including the means you will use to maintain effective communication throughout the project.

5. ACTION PLAN: The proposal must include a clear, step-by-step **action plan** that defines the objective of the project (i.e., restates your purpose as an action objective), and delineates each of the major tasks that need to be completed during the project; when each task will be completed; who is responsible for each task; the resources needed to complete each task; and specific "success signals" that serve as indicators of the completion of major steps in the project. Use the action planning format in Bauer & Brazer, Chapter 9 (9.2) to prepare the action plan.

6. BUDGET: Following the action plan, a clear, well thought out **budget summary** should be presented. This can be a short narrative presentation (you do not need budget codes, etc.) The narrative should include a synopsis of the funding needed to complete the project; a description

of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project, and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been (or will be) procured (if necessary).

7. EVALUATION PLAN: Include a narrative explanation of how you plan to **evaluate your project**, which includes a) the specific indicators you will be examining to determine impact of the project on student performance or on the learning environment; b) a description of how and when you plan to collect data about these indicators, and c) a brief description of the analysis you plan to conduct to examine these data in order to ascertain the impact of the project on your intended outcomes.

8. CONSEQUENCE ANALYSIS: In closing, briefly discuss the advantages and the potential limitations of the project. In particular, conduct a **consequence analysis** to predict any issues that might arise during implementation, or any limitations you might face in terms of using the evaluation design to draw trustworthy inferences about the effectiveness of the project. If possible, include reference to issues raised in the literature.

NOTE: The proposal is not an essay, per se; it can be written using each of the sections listed above, and some information can be presented in bullets (e.g., a listing of outcomes measured) or in tables (e.g., the action plan). There is a fair amount of redundancy in this proposal – for instance, the description of the project should provide a brief explanation that matches the project delineated in the action plan, and the list of outcomes measured should relate to the evaluation plan (which describes how you will go about collecting these data and what you will look at to know if you were successful). Your audience for this proposal is your principal(or other administrators who have the author to approve implementation) – imagine that you are presenting this document to him/her, and lobbying for adoption of this project (which you will lead).

Your research proposal should be no more than twelve pages, and should include citations and a reference list in APA format.

EDLE 690 SIP Proposal

Levels: Criteria:	exceeds expectations	meets expectations	approaching expectations	falls below expectations
Statement of purpose and overview of project: Use of data to identify SIP topic that relates to and supports the school's vision and objectives (ELCC 1.2.b) (10%)	The proposal begins with a clear statement of purpose, which relates specifically to a performance gap identified using assessment results, demographic data, and analysis of school and community needs. A concise, but thorough description of the proposed project is provided that spells out the actions intended to reduce the identified performance gap.	The proposal begins with a statement of purpose which relates generally to a performance gap identified using assessment data. A brief description of the proposed project is provided.	The statement of purpose and/or description of the project is evident, but vaguely worded or poorly spelled out. It is difficult to discern a clear focus of the project.	The statement of purpose and/or project description is missing or wholly inadequate.
Rationale: Use of best practice research strategies to promote improvement (ELCC 2.3c) (10%)	The proposal includes a concise and well supported rationale that describes the nature of the problem being addressed, why the problem is important, and how taking the proposed action is intended to lead to improvement. Specific, current research is presented in support of the strategy selected to address the identified performance gap	The proposal includes a rationale that describes the nature of the gap being addressed and why the problem is important to the attainment of the school's vision and objectives, but is somewhat unclear about how taking the proposed action is intended to lead to improvement. Research support is referenced.	The proposal includes a rationale, but only generally connects the proposed action to the reduction of the identified problem. Research supporting the proposed action is weakly presented or not evident.	The rationale is weak or wholly inadequate. It is not clear how enacting the proposed project relates to addressing the problem.
Outcomes: Identification of specific outcomes that will be used to monitor and evaluate the project (ELCC 1.4b) (10%)	Specific indicators are identified and described that will be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of the project. Each indicator is well connected to either monitoring implementation fidelity of the project or promoting the desired outcome(s).	Specific outcome indicators are identified and described that could be used to monitor and evaluate the impact of the project. Indicators used to monitor implementation fidelity are unclear.	The proposal makes general reference to the kinds of outcomes sought, but specific measurable indicators of implementation fidelity and/or project outcomes are not clearly identified.	The outcomes associated with the project are not specified, or outcomes that do not relate to the identified performance gap are proposed.
Involvement: Identification and formation of team to enact project (ELCC 1.3) (5%)	The proposal clearly describes which stakeholders will be involved in enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the SIP. All stakeholders who are important to the success of the project are involved. Team member roles and responsibilities are outlined, as are means that will be used to maintain effective communication among team members.	The proposal describes the primary stakeholders who will be involved in enactment of the SIP. One or more groups whose involvement may be important are omitted. Attributes of team organization are described in general terms.	The proposal is unclear about stakeholder involvement in enactment of the SIP, or fails to mention groups who are obviously important to the success of the project. Attributes of team organization are referenced in general terms.	Stakeholder involvement in planning and/or implementation is not evident.

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Action Plan: Development of action plan to guide the implementation of SIP (ELCC 3.1) (20%)	The proposal includes a clear and well thought out action plan that focuses on effective deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to guide the implementation of the SIP. The plan thoroughly delineates each of the major tasks to be accomplished in enacting the project; when each task will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each task; and specific "success signals" or process indicators that will be tracked to monitor completion of each stage of the project.	The proposal includes an action plan that describes how human, fiscal, and material resources will be used to implement the SIP. The plan delineates most of the major tasks needed to enact the project; when various tasks will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each task; and specific "success signals" or process indicators that will be tracked to monitor completion of each stage of the project. Some necessary tasks or implementation details are vaguely described or missing.	The action plan includes detailed tasks, time lines, persons responsible, resources, and success indicators, but does so in a fashion that is unlikely to result in successful deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to accomplish the stated purpose. Significant tasks are inadequately spelled out or are missing entirely.	The action plan is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or wholly missing. It is entirely unclear how any proposed actions can result in successful implementation of the project.
Budget: Use of new and existing resources to facilitate SIP (ELCC 3.3) (5%)	The proposal includes a detailed and well thought out budget summary that demonstrates the ability to identify, seek and procure new and existing resources to facilitate the implementation of the SIP. The budget includes a synopsis of the funding needed to accomplish the project; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project; and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured.	The proposal includes a budget summary that spells out in general terms how resources will be identified and procured to facilitate the implementation of the SIP. Funding needed to accomplish the project is identified; existing resources that will be devoted to the project are outlined; and how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured is described.	A budget summary is presented, but it is lacking in sufficient detail or is missing necessary components. The use of existing resources is not well thought out, and/or procedures for leveraging these resources are undeveloped or missing.	The budget is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or wholly inadequate to support the objective and action plan described.
Evaluation: Plan to monitor and evaluate the project (ELCC 1.4) (15%)	A clear, well developed plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to each educational indicator will be collected, when these data will be collected, and how they will be analyzed. The evaluation plan includes steps that will be taken to examine and adjust the project during enactment (i.e., monitor implementation) and to summatively assess the efficacy of the project in terms of reducing the identified performance gap.	A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to most of the identified educational indicators will be collected, when these data will be collected, and how they will be analyzed. The evaluation plan includes general steps that will be taken to monitor implementation and to summatively assess the efficacy of the project.	A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, but it lacks specificity and/or is not clearly connected to the espoused objectives of the SIP. Steps that will be taken to collect and analyze various data are unclear, as are methods that will be used to monitor implementation and to summatively assess the efficacy of the project.	The evaluation plan is poorly organized, lacks sufficient detail, or is wholly inadequate to support the evaluation of the project.

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Consequence analysis: Identification of potential issues related to enactment of plan within the school and school community (ELCC 4.2) (10%)	The proposal concludes with a detailed analysis of the benefits and limitations of the proposed project design, highlighting possible issues relating to enactment of the plan within the school and school community. Advantages and disadvantages of the project and evaluation design are highlighted, including an assessment of issues relating to the involvement and support of important stakeholders within the school community. Issues relating to implementation fidelity and the trustworthiness of the evaluation research design are clearly spelled out.	The proposal concludes with a general analysis of the benefits and limitations of the proposed project design, including issues relating to the support and involvement of important stakeholders. Obvious advantages and disadvantages of the project and evaluation design are identified. Selected issues related to implementation fidelity and trustworthiness of the research evaluation design are explored, although some important potential issues are not identified.	The proposal concludes with a cursory analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed design. Issues of stakeholder involvement, implementation fidelity, and trustworthiness are only superficially addressed.	The proposal concludes with a general restatement of the project's purpose and/or description, but lacks any reasonable reflection on the strengths or weaknesses of the proposed design. A consequence analysis is not evident.
Support: Informed consumer of educational theory and concepts (ELCC 6.1) (5%)	Specific, developed ideas and/or evidence from research are used to support the selection of the achievement gap and the strategy identified for addressing it.	Research used to support the project lacks specificity or is loosely developed.	General supporting ideas or evidence are presented.	Few to no solid supporting ideas or evidence from research are included.
Organization of proposal (5%)	Proposal is powerfully organized and fully developed.	Proposal includes logical progression of ideas aided by clear transitions.	Proposal includes brief skeleton (introduction, body, and conclusion) but lacks effective transitions.	Proposal lacks logical progression of ideas.
Mechanics (5%)	Proposal is nearly error-free, which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading.	Proposal includes occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice.	Proposal includes errors in grammar and punctuation, but spelling has been proofread.	Proposal includes frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Class Participation (20 points)

Levels: Criteria:	exceeds expectations value: 4	meets expectations value: 3	approaching expectations value: 2	falls below expectations value: 1
Attendance (25%)	Exemplary attendance, no tardies	Near perfect attendance, few tardies	Occasional (1-3) absences or tardies	Frequent (>3) absences or tardies
Quality of Questions, Interaction (25%)	Most queries are specific and on point. Deeply involved in class dialogue. Challenges ideas, seeks meaning.	Often has specific queries, stays involved in class dialogue, though sometimes tentative or off-base.	Asks questions about deadlines, procedures, directions or for help with little specificity. Little discussion of ideas.	Rarely asks questions of any quality.
Effort (25%)	Willingly participates when asked. Plays a leadership role in groups. Engages and brings out the best in others.	Willingly participates when asked. Takes on group tasks. Engages others.	Reluctantly participates when asked. Seeks easiest duties in groups. Tolerates others.	Actively avoids involvement when possible. Complains about others. Has large set of excuses.
Engagement (25%)	Enthusiastically initiates discussion. Personalizes and takes ownership of activities. Always knows where class or group is.	Sometimes initiates discussion and always works well with direction. Generally knows what's going on.	Seeks direction, but does not initiate discussion. May know where class or group is.	Waits for direction. Knows little of what is going on. Cannot describe where class or group is.