

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**  
**EDUCATION LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**  
**EDLE 634, SECTION 602, SUMMER 2013**  
**CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN EDUCATION LEADERSHIP (3 CREDITS)**  
**GENERAL SYLLABUS**

**Instructor:** Roberto Pamas, Ed.D.  
**Phone:** (703) 658-5900 (O)  
**Fax:** (703) 658-5997  
**Website :** <http://www.taskstream.com>  
**E-mail:** [Roberto.Pamas@fcps.edu](mailto:Roberto.Pamas@fcps.edu)  
**Mailing address :** George Mason University  
4400 University Drive, MSN 4C2  
Fairfax, VA 22030-4444

**Schedule Information**

**Location:** Washington Lee HS, Room 2116

**Meeting Times:** Mondays, Wednesdays (5:00 pm – 8:00 pm)  
April 29, 2013 – June 12, 2013

**Textbook:** Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2012). *The Leadership Challenge: how to make extraordinary things happen in organizations* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Whitaker, T. (2012). *What Great Principals Do Differently: 18 Things That Matter Most* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Eye On Education.

**Course Description**

This course examines current and emerging issues and trends impacting education. Inquiring into demographic shifts; globalization; technology, data-based decision-making; inclusion of diverse learners in American schools; and recent research on student achievement when influenced by race, gender, and poverty.

**Course Delivery**

Class sessions will consist of lectures, discussions, problem-based learning, role-playing, and student presentations. Students should see themselves as my partners in creating a valuable and memorable educational experience.

## **Student Outcomes**

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

1. Explain several of the seismic shifts and major trends and their implications for society at large and schools and school districts in particular.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of diverse groups in the United States and review education in the United States in reference to diverse groups as well as the privileges or inequities that members of these groups have encountered on the basis of race, ethnicity, and social class.
3. Articulate how student diversity can help teachers and administrators develop curriculum that includes global literacy with a significant effect on economic, cultural, and political matters, with particular attention on how culture influences learning.
4. Explain the definitions and characteristics of children with special learning needs, i.e., learning disabilities, behavioral disorders, visual and hearing impairment, ADHD, and giftedness.
5. Describe the educational rights of individuals with disabilities including the legal foundations, models of service delivery, and the concepts of mainstreaming and inclusion.
6. Describe ways in which special educators and regular educators can partner with regard to shared goals, collaboration, referrals, and placements.
7. Articulate effective knowledge management strategies that use technology to enhance administration, teaching, and learning at the school and district levels.
8. Apply principles of legal, ethical, social, and equity issues related to technology (such as copyright, fair use, equitable access, free speech) along with effective techniques for evaluating technology effectiveness.
9. Synthesize recent research relative to student achievement in diverse school settings, with particular attention to the relationships between student achievement and gender, race, and poverty.
10. Identify various strategies to maximize the effective use of data to improve student achievement and effective ways to communicate results to various community groups.
11. Demonstrate the ability to make educational decisions which are supported by data rather than only on personal opinions.

## **Relationship of Course Goals to Program Goals**

This course is intended as one of two culminating courses in the Masters in Education Leadership Program. Course content focuses on key contemporary issues in public education, both current and emerging. At the conclusion of the course, participants are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills that increase their effectiveness when working in diverse school settings; an expected hallmark of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **National Standards and Virginia Competencies**

In relationship to professional organization competencies, participants in this course will demonstrate proficiency in appropriate VA DOE competencies and ISLLC standards. VA DOE: 1-d, 1-e, 2-c, 2-d, 3-g, 4-a, 5-c, 6-e, 6-f. ISLLC: 1-K1, 1-K4, 1-K5, 2-K7, 2-K10, 2-P5, 2-P6, 2-P9, 2-P16, 2-P18, 3-K8, 3-P3, 3-P16, 3-P17, 4-K1, 4-K2, 4-P11, 5-K3, 5-P12, 6-K6, 6-K8, 6-P2, 6-P4, 6-P5. With regard to NCATE Curriculum Guidelines, candidates in this course will demonstrate an understanding of, and capabilities in, all four areas of education leadership; strategic leadership (1.3, 1.6, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4); instructional leadership (3.3, 3.4); and organizational leadership (7.2, 7.4, and 9.3).

## **Course Expectations and Requirements**

Access to a computer, the Internet, and email are essential for this course. Candidates will be given access to TaskStream for communication and resource purposes and are expected to competently use standard computer office tools, such as word processing, spreadsheets, database, and presentation software.

Candidates are expected to attend each class for its entirety. Candidates who must be absent from class are expected to notify the instructor in advance by telephone or email. Candidates who arrive late or leave early, will lose participation points. **If you miss a class, you will lose 2 participation points. In addition, if you are absent for an oral activity, there will be no alternative way to engage in the activity and you will not receive credit for it.**

Assignments are to be completed by the due date outlined. 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 and may be submitted in advance electronically.

## **CEHD/GSE Expectations for All Students**

### **George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students**

- a. Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- b. Mason Email – 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, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].
- c. Counseling and Psychological Services – 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/>].
- d. Office of Disability Services – 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 <http://ods.gmu.edu/>.
  - e. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
  - f. The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – 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/>].
  - g. University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

**Core Values Commitment:** The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].
- **Plagiarism:** Students must avoid plagiarizing the work of others. Specifically, when referencing a source or author, students must give appropriate source documentation; and when using direct quotes, students must use quotations, provide page numbers, and ensure that credit is given to the author of quoted material. If a student's work contains plagiarism, the student will receive no credit for the assignment.

## EVALUATION AND GRADING

Since this is a graduate-level class, high quality work on all assignments and meaningful class participation is expected. Students should come to class motivated to expand their knowledge; be willing to complete work outside of class appropriate for graduate level study; come to class ready to enjoy the course and to learn from one another; complete class assignments on time and with a high level of scholarship; model excellent professional behaviors.

### **Reflective Journal**

**25%**

Written summaries and responses to required reading, including ethical considerations; each summary should include the most important points made by the authors and a brief explanation of how this material could relate to the job of principal. Class discussion will revolve around these summaries.

**Assignment #1****25%**

Students will select an issue that is of high interest to them and write an **essay** [3 to 5 pages] which [a] shows evidence of reading and thought on the topic; [b] connects to research/thought/ examples in practice; and [c] which analyses the prevailing issue[s] and presents at least 3 recommendations as possible solutions.

**Possible Topics:**

|                                |                                     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ESOL                           | Teacher Pay                         |
| Graduation Rates               | Teacher Assignments                 |
| Gender Equity                  | Class Size                          |
| Gifted Programs                | High School Reform                  |
| Disabilities                   | Grouping and Tracking               |
| Standards                      | Standardization vs. Variation       |
| Assessment                     | Retention and Promotion             |
| Low Performance in Urban Areas | Centralization vs. Decentralization |
| Low Performance in Rural Areas | Charter Schools                     |
| AYP as defined by NCLB         | School Choice and Vouchers          |
| Teacher Education              | Teacher Quality                     |
| Home Schooling                 | Achievement Gap                     |

**Class Presentation (15) and Interview #2 (15)****30%****Class participation and attendance****20%**

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions, in group activities, and in serving as critical colleagues 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.

**The grading scale is:**

|    |   |                     |
|----|---|---------------------|
| A+ | = | 100 percent         |
| A  | = | 95 – 99 percent     |
| A- | = | 90 – 94 percent     |
| B+ | = | 86 – 89 percent     |
| B  | = | 83 – 85 percent     |
| B- | = | 80 – 82 percent     |
| C  | = | 75 – 79 percent     |
| F  | = | 74 percent or below |

## **PROPOSED COURSE SCHEDULE**

| Session | Topics   | Class Assignments/Additional Readings |
|---------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 4-29-13 | Introductions<br>Review of Syllabus<br><i>Chapter 1 (Whitaker)</i> |                                       |
| 5-1-13  | Chapter 1<br><i>Chapter 2 &amp; 3</i>                              |                                       |
| 5-6-13  | Chapter 2<br><i>Chapter 4 &amp; 5</i>                              |                                       |
| 5-8-13  | Chapter 3<br><i>Chapter 6</i>                                      | <b>JOURNAL DUE</b>                    |
| 5-13-13 | Chapter 4<br><i>Chapter 7 &amp; 8</i>                              |                                       |
| 5-15-13 | Chapter 5<br><i>Chapter 9 &amp; 10</i>                             |                                       |
| 5-20-13 | Chapter 6<br><i>Chapter 11</i>                                     | <b>Interview write-up due</b>         |
| 5-22-13 | Chapter 7<br><i>Chapter 12</i>                                     | <b>JOURNAL DUE</b>                    |
| 5-27-13 | Memorial Day Holiday<br>NO CLASS                                   |                                       |
| 5-29-13 | Chapter 8 & 9<br><i>Chapter 13</i>                                 |                                       |
| 6-3-13  | Chapter 10 & 11<br><i>Chapter 14</i>                               | <b>Research assignment due</b>        |
| 6-5-13  | <i>Chapter 15, 16, 17, 18</i>                                      |                                       |

|         |  |                    |
|---------|--|--------------------|
| 6-10-13 | Chapter 12<br><i>Chapter 19 &amp; 20</i> | <b>JOURNAL DUE</b> |
| 6-12-13 | Reflection –<br>Course Wrap-up           |                    |

## Assessment Rubric for Presentation

|   | Exceeds Expectations  | <b>Meets Expectations</b>   | <b>Approaching Expectations</b>                                      | <b>Falls Below Expectations</b>   | <b>SCORE</b> |
|---|---|---|--|---|--------------|
| <b>CRITERIA</b>   |   |   |  |   |              |
| <b>Presentation Content</b><br>20%                      | Provides new insights into issues and makes suggestions for future plans.                           | Provides complete and accurate understanding of issues                          | Provides incomplete understanding of issues                          | Provides misconceptions of issues   |              |
| <b>Data analysis</b><br>20%                             | Analysis of data is persuasively presented, and application is made to a "big picture" context      | Analysis of significance is presented clearly and succinctly.                   | Basic facts are present  | Information is incomplete   |              |
| <b>Handouts, Visuals and Reading Assignments</b><br>20% | Provides support to presentation that contains rich, vivid and powerful detail                      | Clearly communicates main idea of presentation with suitable support and detail | Information is not clear   | Information results in an isolated and random format                              |              |
| <b>Presentation Delivery</b><br>20%                     | Presentation was clearly done by professional consultants. The School Board spent its money wisely. | The presentation was adequate but the delivery could be a bit more polished..   | The presentation appeared to have been done by a group of students . | The delivery of the presentation came across as poorly planned and not rehearsed. |              |
| <b>Audience Involvement</b><br>20%                      | The presentation involved the audience throughout and they gave a standing ovation.                 | The audience was involved in the presentation.                                  | Some attempts were made to involve the audience in the presentation. | No attempts were made to involve the audience in the presentation.                |              |

**Written Assignment – Assessment Rubric**

|  | <b>Exceeds Expectations</b><br>(Clear, convincing, substantial evidence) | <b>Meets Expectations</b><br>(clear evidence) | <b>Approaching Expectations</b><br>(limited evidence)          | <b>Falls Below Expectations</b>   | <b>SCORE</b> |
|--|--|---|--|---|--------------|
| <b>CRITERIA</b>                                      |  |   |  |   |              |
| <b>Introduction</b><br>(Statement of purpose)<br>20% | Contains a sharp focus and a clearly identifiable statement of purpose.  | Contains a focus                              | Contains an unengaging or poorly focused statement of purpose. | Does not present a thesis or purpose statement that is clearly identifiable or developed. |              |
| <b>Research Summary</b><br>20%                       | Major points are strong and supported by examples                        | Major points are given                        | Major points lack clarity                                      | Major points are missing  |              |
| <b>Possible Solutions</b><br>20%                     | Concepts are insightful and inspiring                                    | Concepts are good                             | Concepts do not go beyond the obvious                          | Concepts are missing or underdeveloped  |              |
| <b>Reflection</b><br>20%                             |  |   |  | missing   |              |
| <b>Mechanics</b><br>20%                              | No errors  | A few minor errors                            | Several distracting errors                                     | Many major mechanical errors  |              |



