

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Education Leadership Program

EDLE 612 – 601/602- 202410-24063 – Education Law
3 Credits, Fall 2024

Wednesdays, 4:45 – 7:45 p.m. September 3rd to December 9th 2024
Robinson Secondary School – Media Center
5035 Sideburn Rd, Fairfax, VA 22032

Faculty

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Prerequisite(s): B- or higher in EDLE 620, EDLE 690, and IP in EDLE 791.

University Catalog Description: (3:3:0) Provides legal foundations of U.S. public schools. Examines general principles of constitutional, federal, statutory, and case law and applies judicial decisions to educational environments. Focuses on legal responsibilities, constraints, and opportunities of public school officials. Includes components of Special Education law.

Course Overview: Through reading, textbooks, case studies, court cases, and presentations, students will learn how to analyze and resolve legal and ethical dilemmas, interpret, synthesize, and apply regulations, constitutional, statutory, and case laws to PK-12 school-based scenarios, and use legal research resources.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a hybrid format (50%) of face-to-face, synchronous, and asynchronous communication via Mason's Learning Management System (LMS). You will log in to the course site using your Mason email name (everything before @gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on September 3, 2024.

To access your course in Blackboard Learn: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/>

Under no circumstances may students participate in online class sessions while operating motor vehicles.

Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Evaluate school-based dilemmas through the use of philosophical and theoretical ethical models;
2. Identify precedent and emerging issues in education law;
3. Apply constitutional, case, and statutory law to issues of student discipline
4. Apply federal and case law to issues of sexual harassment and child abuse; and
5. Analyze key education law issues in a manner that reveals comprehension of political, social, ethical, and legal influences, specifically the principles, laws, policies, cases & regulations applicable in education as they apply to special populations.

Relationship of Course Goals to Program Goals

This course will enable students to develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will prepare them to create and maintain learning environments that value diversity, continual knowledge acquisition, instructional leadership, innovative and ethical decision-making, reflective practice, and achievement of all school-aged youth.

Relationship of Course to Internship

Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership program has integrated "embedded experiences" into coursework. 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.

Professional Standards

The course addresses VADOE Competencies and NELP Standards dealing with education's legal, ethical, and political context. Specific NELP Standards addressed include 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 5.3, and 6.3. Virginia competencies include c(6) Legal issues and e(1) Philosophy of education that reflects honesty, fairness, caring, and equity. In addition to these competencies, students will develop an explicit understanding of Virginia's "Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Intervention Act (Code of Virginia 22.1-98). Such an understanding will include:

1. Recognizing child abuse and neglect
2. Reporting child abuse and neglect
3. Intervention following a Child Protective Services investigation

Required Texts

- Alexander, K., & Alexander, M.D. (2022). *The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers* (7th ed.). West Academic Publishing
- Shapiro, Joan P. & Stefkovich, Jacqueline A. (2022). *Ethical Leadership and Decision Making in Education* (5th ed.). Routledge
- Additional required readings and research will be required. Instructions will be posted on

Blackboard.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed internet access with updated browsers.
 - Blackboard Learn supported browsers:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support
- Consistent and reliable access to GMU email and the course LMS, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Speakers and a microphone or a microphone-enabled headset for use with the synchronous web conferencing tools.
- Note that students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

Expectations

- Course Week:
As the Schedule of Classes indicates, our course week will begin on Wednesdays.
- Log in Frequency:
Students must actively check the course LMS site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least three (3) times per week. In addition, students must log in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students struggling with the course's technical components are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work based on individual technical issues will not be accepted.

- Workload:
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities, and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should use the Calendly link in the Blackboard course site to schedule a one-on-one session with the instructor.
- Netiquette:
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them so that others do not consider them personal offenses. Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words. Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time as outlined by the instructor.

- Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).
 - Graded assignments account for 75% of the overall grade, and leadership, engagement, and reflection requirements account for 25%. Each assignment relates to applying ethics and law in the school context. Rubrics for the Performance-Based Assessments are included at the end of this syllabus. Students are expected to submit all assignments on time and in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).
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|---|----------------------------|
| • Use appropriate grammar. | • Spell correctly. |
| • Writing should be the caliber of a graduate candidate. | • Type all work. |
| • Use Times Roman or Arial 12-point font. | • Write clearly. |
| • Include a cover page with name, date & assignment. | • Find a good proofreader! |
| • Follow APA guidelines (double space, references, etc.) | • Avoid plagiarism |

Expectations for Written Work

Expectations for Group Work

- Each team member has a clearly identifiable role of contribution.
- Practice conflict resolution and consensus building.
- Proofread documents and multimedia.
- Use clear transitions.
- Manage time.
- Conduct a practice run.

Assignments

- Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the dates listed on the syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted except in emergencies that have been discussed and approved by the instructor in advance of the due date. Papers are due as indicated on the reading schedule that follows. ALL ASSIGNMENTS must be submitted **electronically, either through Blackboard or VIA**. If you happen to be absent on the day an assignment is due, the due date remains unchanged.
- ***VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement:***

Every candidate registered for any Education Leadership course with a required performance-based assessment (designated as such in the syllabus) is **required to submit these assessments to VIA through Blackboard**. In EDLE 612, the required performances are the *Code of Ethics and Case Study Analysis* and the *Special Populations Analysis of Special Education Law*.

The rubrics for these two assignments are presented on the course Blackboard site under the heading of Assessments. These performances **must** be submitted to VIA through Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course, or part of an undergraduate minor.) Evaluation of the performance-based assessments by the course instructor will also be completed in VIA through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to VIA through Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required VIA Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Other Requirements

Aspiring education leaders are expected to demonstrate a professional attitude, initiate and facilitate class discussions without dominating them, and make balanced contributions in both asynchronous and synchronous group activities. They should also respectfully provide and receive constructive peer feedback to enhance learning and engagement. Attendance and active participation in every session are mandatory. Absence, tardiness, and passive engagement will affect student performance outcomes. In case of emergencies, students must contact the instructor to discuss possible mitigation of the impact on their final grade.

Grading

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

Use of Generative AI

The use of Generative AI tools should follow the fundamental principles of Mason’s Academic Standards. This includes being honest about using these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.

Professional Dispositions (CEHD Student Guide)

Throughout their studies in the College of Education and Human Development, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that reflect the positive dispositions of professionals. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide>.

Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students. *Please check for announcements on the course website for any updates to the schedule if you miss a class. You are expected, however, to keep pace with the calendar of assigned readings.*

Class		Topic	Assigned Readings	Activities Due
1	9/4 F2F	Review Syllabus & Course Expectations Ethical Decision Making	Videos (Blackboard)	

2	9/11 AO	Developing an Ethical Code Legal and Moral Decisions	Library Reading (Blackboard) Ethical Leadership & Decision Making: Chapters 1-3 and 5: Assigned Case Studies	Offline Activities
3	9/18 F2F	First Amendment: Religious Liberty	Library Reading (Blackboard) The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapter 5 Ethical Leadership & Decision Making: Chapter 7 Case Studies from Textbook	GROUPS Assignment 2
4	9/25 AO	First Amendment - Expression	The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapters 4 Court Case Analysis (Blackboard) Ethical Leadership & Decision Making: Chapter 11 Case Studies from Textbook Journal Article (Blackboard)	Discussion Activities (Bb)
DUE 9/29		Submit Assignment One: (posted by 11:59)		
5	10/2 F2F	The Instructional Program Student Records	The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapters 2 & Chapter 13 Ethical Leadership & Decision Making: Chapter 4 Case Studies from Textbook	
6	10/9 AO	Student Discipline & Due Process	The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapters 3 & 7 & 8 Court Case Analysis (Blackboard) Case Studies from Textbook	Discussion Activities
7	10/16 AO	Tort Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liability • Negligence • Student Injury 	Simulation (Blackboard) The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapter 12	Discussion Activities

8	10/23 SO	Child Abuse Sexual Discrimination	The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapter 11 and 842 -845 Case Studies from Textbook Simulation (Blackboard)	In Class Activities
9	10/30 F2F	Teacher Employment	The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapters 15 - 18 Case Study from Library (Blackboard) Case Studies from Textbook	
10	11/6 AO	Equity, Equality, and Equal Protection	The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers:	
DUE: 11/10		Submit Assignment Two (posted by 11:59)		
11	11/13 F2F	Presentation of Cases		Group Presentations and Discussion
12	11/20 AO	Poverty English Language Learners	Video: (Blackboard) Case Law Review (Blackboard)	
	11/27	HOLIDAY		
13	12/4 SO	Students with DisAbilities IDEA Section 504	The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers: Chapter 10 Government Handbook (Blackboard)	
DUE: 12/9		Submit Assignment Three: SPED Case Study (posted by 11:59)		

CEHD Commitments

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here:

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to Mason's Academic Standards (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/>)
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must register with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin when the instructor receives a written letter from Disability Services (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound-emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding the use of your LMS should be directed to:
 - Blackboard Learn: <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>
 - Canvas: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/>
- For information on student support resources on campus, see:
 - TimelyCare: <https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/>
 - Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as the [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Other reminders:

GMU Add/Drop Policy: The last day to drop this class without any penalty is provided on the GMU academic calendar page: <http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendar/>. It is the student's responsibility to verify that they are properly enrolled, as no credit will be

awarded to students who are not.

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 the quoted material. If a candidate's work contains plagiarism, the candidate will receive no credit for the assignment.

Copyright: Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to email (don't cite or forward someone else's email without permission), newsgroup material, and information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page unless the materials are made available through a fair use claim or consistent with the TEACH Act.

Academic Integrity & Inclusivity: This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas, and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences, meaning we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should also do so, keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e., we may disagree without being disagreeable.
<http://integrity.gmu.edu/>

Diversity, Religious Holiday: Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (<http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/>). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.

Student Privacy Policy: George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for the release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/>
