

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

**EDLE 690. 602 – Using Research to Lead School Improvement  
3 Credits, Fall 2024  
Thursdays 4:45 – 7:45 Fairfax High School C114**

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

EDLE 620

**University Catalog Course Description**

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.

**Course Overview**

Not Applicable

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered in-person and online synchronously and asynchronously. See class dates (below) for details. Students are expected to attend in-person and online synchronous class meetings. Instruction will be delivered via Mason’s Learning Management System. The course site will be available before 8/26/2024.

**Learning Outcomes**

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

- understand and apply planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity;
- understand and apply systems and organization theory;
- understand and apply management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations;
- understand and apply basic leadership theories and knowledge that impact schools;
- understand and apply research knowledge to a significant instructional problem.

## **Relationship of Course to Internship**

Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership program has integrated internship-related activities into course work. During this course, students will prepare and present a proposal for the Internship Improvement Project (IIP) **that they will implement and evaluate as a part of their internship** activities over the remainder of the program.

## **Professional Standards**

### *National Standards*

The following National Educational Leadership Preparation standard elements are addressed in this course:

NELP Standard 1: Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to collaboratively lead, design, and implement a school mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community.

Component 1.1

Component 1.2

NELP Standard 3: Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive school culture.

Component 3.1

Component 3.2

Component 3.3

NELP Standard 6: Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to improve management, communication, technology, school-level governance, and operation systems to develop and improve data-informed and equitable school resource plans and to apply laws, policies, and regulations.

Component 6.1

Component 6.2

NELP Standard 7: Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to build the school's professional capacity, engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture, and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning.

Component 7.2

Component 7.4

### ***Virginia Competencies***

This course addresses the following Virginia Department of Education (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.

## **Required Texts**

Hinnant-Crawford, B.N. (2020). *Improvement Science in Education: A Primer*. Myers Education Press.

**All students are now required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts.** If you are uncertain about how to do this, please contact [edleprog@gmu.edu](mailto:edleprog@gmu.edu). 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.

It is expected that all students will have access to standard word processing software. Students will also need a Google account to access the Google work suite (e.g., word documents).

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

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

## **General Expectations**

Consistent with the expectations of a master's level course in the Education Leadership program, grading is based heavily on student performance in 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 embedded in assigned readings and other materials and reinforced in class activities
2. The quality of analysis, synthesis, and application
3. The ability to write in a clear, concise, and organized fashion

## **Use of Generative AI**

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

## **Course Policies**

- All assignments must be submitted via the LMS unless stated otherwise.
- Late assignments will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Please take advantage of instructor office hours and availability to get assistance prior to assignment deadlines.
- Rewrites of graded work will not be possible in EDLE 690.
- Feel free to discuss any/all concerns about the class with me. It is unlikely I will respond to email over the weekend. I typically check email twice daily.

## **Professional Dispositions (CEHD Student Guide)**

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

## **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 be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (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](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding 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: <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
  - TimelyCare: <https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/>
  - Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development's Student Success Resources, please visit: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.

**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 [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](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).