



**EDLE 636: Section 601**  
3 Credits, Fall 2024

**Adult Motivation and Conflict Management in Education Settings:  
A Case Study Approach**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment via Blackboard Collaborate. I am also available by email or phone.  
**Course Term:** September 3 – December 9, 2024  
Class meetings on selected Wednesdays, 5:00-8:00 at Westfield HS H110

**Course Description:**

This course uses case studies and simulations to examine adult motivation, conflict mediation and resolution skills, factors that affect teacher/staff retention and attrition, and safety/security issues. It focuses on character and ethics education in schools, coaching and mentoring, and adult motivation to support positive behaviors in work settings.

**Course Delivery Method Course Delivery**

This is a hybrid course using a face-to-face and asynchronous format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. Synchronous sessions may be utilized via Blackboard. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on August 27, 2024. **Under no circumstances may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles.**

**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](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
- Canvas supported browsers: <https://guides.instructure.com/a/720329>
- 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.

### *Online Expectations*

- **Course Week:** Our in-person and synchronous sessions will be scheduled on select Wednesdays from 5:00-8:00 and the class schedule will reflect the details. Alternating weeks will feature asynchronous study.
- **Log-in Frequency:** Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, at a minimum this should be 2 times per week.
- **Participation:** Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of 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 are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course.
- **Technical Issues:** Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:** Expect to log in to this course **at least two times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials when meeting asynchronously. Students are expected to attend all synchronous session. Remember, this course is **not** self-paced. There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **CLASS SCHEDULE** section of this syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Advising:** If you would like to schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues, we can meet via Blackboard. Send me an email to schedule your one-on-one session and include your preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- **Etiquette and Netiquette:** Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. I suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** I will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructor.
- **Accommodations:**  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

## National Standards and Virginia Competencies

The course addresses selected Virginia Department of Education (VADOE) Competencies.

Specific VADOE standards addressed include:

- a7 Knowledge, understanding, and application of planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity, including identification, analysis, and resolution of problems using effective problem-solving techniques.
- b1 Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including systems theory and the change process of systems, organizations and individuals, using appropriate and effective adult learning models
- b3 Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including information sources and processing, including data collection and data analysis strategies
- b4 Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including using data as a part of ongoing program evaluation to inform and lead change
- b7 Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including effective communication skills including consensus building, negotiation, and mediation skills.
- c2 Knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations, including principles and issues of supervising and leading others to ensure a working and learning climate that is safe, secure, and respectful of a diverse school community
- c3 Knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations, including management decisions that ensure successful teaching and learning including, human resources management and development, theories of motivation, change in school culture, innovation and creativity, conflict resolution, adult learning and professional development models
- c8 Knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations, including application of data-driven decision making to initiate and continue improvement in school and classroom practices and student achievement

- d4 Knowledge understanding and application of the conditions and dynamics impacting a diverse school community, including principles of effective two-way communication, including consensus building and negotiation skills
- e2 Knowledge, understanding and application of the purpose of education and the role of professionalism in advancing educational goals, including integration of high quality, content rich, job-embedded professional learning that respects the contribution of all faculty and staff members in building a diverse professional learning community
- e3 Knowledge, understanding and application of the purpose of education and the role of professionalism in advancing educational goals, including reflective understanding of theories of leadership and their application to decision-making in the school setting
- e4 Knowledge, understanding and application of the purpose of education and the role of professionalism in advancing educational goals, including intentional and purposeful effort to model professional, moral, and ethical standards as well as personal integrity in all interactions
- f1 Knowledge understanding and application of basic leadership theories and influences that impact schools including concepts of leadership including systems theory, change theory, learning organizations and current leadership theory
- f2 Knowledge understanding and application of basic leadership theories and influences that impact schools including concepts of leadership including historical leadership theories including organizational theory, motivational theory, political and social systems theory to practical situations

## **Content**

All of the EDLE program goals are active, to a greater or lesser extent, in this course. The primary purpose of this course is to help students consider how as school leaders they may access [and use] relevant research regarding the creation of conditions in schools that will cause teachers to be attracted to teaching, to stay in the school and in teaching, and to improve their practice and their impact on increasing student learning.

## **Course Objectives**

Students will:

1. Investigate, evaluate and apply results of research regarding motivation to adults in school settings;
2. Explore and apply the results of research regarding factors related to teacher recruitment, retention and improvement, including methods of creating a culture of continuous improvement through professional support, collaboration and professional development;
3. Conduct a case study of a plan for differentiated compensation by applying the results of research regarding motivation and a variety of compensation plans;
4. Review and apply models of leadership as they relate to creating conditions that recruit, retain and lead to improvement of teaching; and
5. Investigate, evaluate and apply to school settings research regarding models of conflict management.

## Student Outcomes

Successful students will emerge from the course able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and ability to create conditions that will attract teachers, retain teachers and motivate teachers to improve their practice and student learning
2. Identify motivation principles and apply them to the creation of such conditions
3. Exercise leadership skills that engender and support such conditions
4. Apply conflict management skills in developing and maintaining such conditions
5. Speak to these competencies in a leadership interview setting

## 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. Specific process goals for the class appear below.

1. Classes will reflect a balance of activities that encourage high quality, ethical leadership. To promote an atmosphere that allows us to accomplish this, 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.
  - f. The ultimate goal is to function as *a community of learners*.
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 endeavor to create 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. display an awareness of each other's needs.

## **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 the internship. Students may write about embedded experiences in their internship journals and Collective Records, but they can only count over and above the minimum 320 hours required for the internship.

## **Course Materials**

Kowalski, Theodore J. *Case Studies on Educational Administration [6<sup>th</sup> edition]*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Whitaker, Todd (2020) *What Great Principals Do Differently: 20 Things That Matter Most[3rd Edition]*. New York: Routledge.

Kosmoski, G & Pollack, D. (2005). *Managing Difficult, Frustrating, and Hostile Conversations: Strategies for Savvy Administrators*. [2<sup>nd</sup> Edition]. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Additional Resources will be listed in the weekly schedule and will be available on Blackboard.

## **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 required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts.**

## **Course Requirements, Performance-based Assessment, and Evaluation Criteria**

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend every face-to-face class for its entirety. Maximum class participation points will be earned by students who attend all classes, and actively engage in the synchronous sessions and engage in asynchronous activities required.

## **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.

## **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>.

## GMU Policies and Resources for Students

### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- 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 Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

### **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, 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).

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .**

