

**George Mason University
Graduate School of Education
New Professional Studies – Teaching**

**Transformative Teacher Leadership Certificate
Master of Arts in New Professional Studies – Teaching
Loudoun Cohort 1**

**EDUC 597 (2 credit): Special Topics in Education: Transformative Teacher
Leadership Part 1
Course begins Summer 2011 and ends Summer 2011**

Faculty Instructors	Office	Telephone	Email
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Office Hours – By Appointment

Office Location – Our offices are located at the PW Campus, but based on appointments to be scheduled, a drop-in office at the Loudoun Campus may also be used (Room 221).

I. Course Description

Catalogue Description - *Provides advanced study on selected topic or emerging issue in American or international education.*

Prerequisites - Admission to program in Graduate School of Education.

Teachers are often sandwiched between competing responsibilities and discordant roles, which oftentimes frustrate teacher efforts to exercise leadership as it pertains to curricula, policy and procedures. This course seeks to emphasize the role of teacher as leader and provide students with a better understanding of how to exercise leadership as it pertains to their own strengths, the systems they work in, and the needs of their students.

Deconstructing school cultures, providing a better understanding of the kinds of students entering our schools, and exploring the pressing demands within and beyond the classroom will allow teachers to better understand the role of power in leadership. This course will open a space for teachers to understand the work of collaboration and culture in leadership. It will also provide teachers a chance to understand their own personal traits and experiences that might offer a foundation on which to enhance their leadership role in schools and in their broader communities.

Teacher leadership sustains the democratic nature of schools, and the visibility of teachers in roles and positions of leadership in schools promotes the ideas and vision of an active democracy. A critical understanding of leadership and an exploration into how the nuances of power, culture and social structures promote the evolution of democracy in schools will be explored; this course seeks to encourage critical thinking as it relates to these and other factors pertaining to teacher leadership.

Nature of Course Delivery:

This course includes a variety of learning activities: discussions in seminar format, text-based/multi-media presentation of course materials, experiential learning activities including teacher action research, interactive assignments, cooperative learning group activities, online discussions and activities, and lecture.

II. Student Outcomes

Students will be expected to:

1. Reflect on their roles as teacher leaders
2. Better understand the structures and systems that both support and constrain leadership
3. Develop a critical understanding of collaboration and cooperation in working with stakeholders
4. Exercise teacher agency and voice in efforts to enhance student learning in multiple domains and across multiple need levels.

III. Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization

This course fits with the core values of the College of Education and Human Development, which include collaboration, research based practice, innovation, ethical leadership, and social justice. In addition it meets standards evolving through the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teachers and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) all of which epitomize the characteristics of highly qualified teachers (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001).

IV. Course Materials

Required Texts

Collins, S. (2010). *The hunger games*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Hinchey, P. (2008). *Action research*. New York: Peter Lang Primer.

Required Chapters

Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (2009). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers develop as leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin. (selected chapters will be distributed)

*Please Note: Additional articles, chapters, powerpoints, and media will be distributed and/or posted on Blackboard as needed.

V. Course Requirements

Readings. Readings are carefully chosen to stimulate thinking and dialogue. Some are chosen to challenge your thinking about particular issues. Others are chosen to dialogue with those challenges. Our hope and intention is that you will engage in dialogue around these readings and others you may want to bring to our deliberations. These readings will not contain answers; rather they are designed to raise questions. Any “answers” we come to will arise out of our deliberations as we compare ideas in readings with classroom experience and practical wisdom.

Evidence of incorporation of critical interaction with readings into on-line (Blackboard) discussions, team meetings, reflective log, and papers is the essential element of documenting that one has engaged with the readings.

Weekly Team Meetings. Teams are expected to meet together at least once a week throughout the year (in their school or in another designated location) to discuss all aspects of their learning. These regular team meetings allow teams to develop a supportive collaborative space to engage in critical dialogue over research and teaching issues, readings, and assignments. We ask teams to maintain a team log that will document their experiences and conversations to illustrate their journey over the course of the year.

Reflective Journals. Teachers are required to keep a journal of their reflections throughout the program. A journal is an essential tool in the development of the reflective habit, and you will find time to write during class days and outside of class. As you progress through the program, you will accumulate journal entries covering the full range of your experiences as a member of IET and as a member of your school community. You will be writing three types of journal entries – Reading Reflections, Field Notes, and Personal Reflections.

Reading Reflections: As you read articles and chapters, write down your ideas, analyses, new understandings, and questions in your journal. These reflections will prepare you to engage in class discussions on the readings.

Field Notes: Field notes will help you to develop the habit of carefully observing and documenting how your students respond to your teaching and the learning environment. You will use these field notes as data for your research studies.

Personal Reflections: As you go through different curricular and personal experiences in the next two years, write down your thoughts and feelings about these experiences. It is essential to record your journey through the program to understand your thoughts and direct your learning.

Your journal reflections will prove useful for your teaching practice, for discussions with teammates, as data for your classroom research, and for other course work assignments.

Though we generally consider journals to be private, we will ask you to submit a certain number of entries of your choice at the end of each semester. There is no set format for the journal. You may handwrite your journal entries in a diary or type them on a computer and collect the pages in a loose-leaf binder. Create a format and procedures that most effectively support the development of your reflective practice.

Class Day Reflective Feedback. You will be asked to respond to feedback questions after each class day. In addition to being an opportunity for you to revisit and reflect on your experience of the day, it also gives the faculty valuable information about how you experience the curriculum and where you are in your thinking.

Attendance and Participation in Class Activities are essential. Please note Section VII for details on the attendance policy.

VI. Course Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Leadership Portfolio

Over the course of the two weeks in class, you will have a chance to prepare a “portfolio” of material that explores and defines your ideas around leadership. You will be provided additional details on this portfolio in the class day agendas that will be handed out over the next two weeks. Material will include: Collage representing connections between culture, power, structure, and leadership, Leadership Timeline & lessons learned, paragraph on “Why Others Should be Led by You,” and goals for leadership development.

Field Trip to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Please see handout for additional details.

Summary of Grade

Attendance & Participation	20 points
Class day feedback	20 points
Leadership Portfolio	30 points
Field Trip – Folklife Festival	30 points

TOTAL	100 points

Grade Distribution

95-100	A
94-90	A-
85-89	B
80-84	B-
75-79	C
74 and below	F

VII. Policies and Information

Attendance Policy

You have joined this program with a team of teachers with whom you make a commitment of mutual social and intellectual support for the duration of the program. We do our best to design our pedagogy to accommodate your busy lives. In joining a graduate program, you are taking on important responsibilities.

Each of our eight-hour class days is equivalent to three weeks in a regular semester course that meets three hours per week. We are accountable to the State of Virginia, GMU, and the Graduate School of Education for meeting the expectations of class time and for ensuring that persons awarded the Transformative Teacher Leadership Certificate and the Master of Arts in New Professional Studies – Teaching have met their obligations. By disposition, we are not bureaucratic. Neither do we equate hours spent in class as a valid measure of learning. Nevertheless, we do track attendance, and you need to attend all class days. The dates for classes are arranged many months in advance. Please make your plans with these important dates in mind.

Because of the fullness of every class day, anyone who misses more than two days of class – regardless of the reason – will be asked to conference with the faculty to discuss his/her continued enrollment in the program. You cannot meet your commitments to your teammates and your obligations to the program when you are not in class on class days. To ignore absences is unfair to people who put aside other activities to come. It is a disservice to the work of teams.

Of course, absences due to emergency situations are unavoidable. When such a situation arises, you should call or e-mail us before class. **When you must miss all or a portion of a class day, you must take the responsibility to obtain the class day agenda, confer with your team about the missed activities, email a make-up plan to your advisor within 14 days of the missed class, and follow through by submitting the makeup work to your advisor within four weeks.** Failing to take this personal initiative and responsibility will result in unsatisfactory completion of the participation requirements embedded in each course.

Inclement Weather Policy

Check the GMU website <http://www.gmu.edu> for closing or call the GMU Information Line (703-993-1000) to hear announcements of any closings. Occasionally, IET will hold classes on Saturdays when the University is officially closed. Please check our Blackboard site for an opening or closing decision from the IET faculty. Make-up class days are worked into IET's annual calendar.

Change of Grade Policy

A policy for graduate students entitled “Change of Grades” is printed in the University catalog. The catalog states: “Additional work of any type submitted to improve a grade after the final grade has been assigned and sent to the Office of the Registrar is never accepted.”

There are three possible scenarios that may result in a grade change: (1) if professors allow students to resubmit improved assignments, these must be handed in prior to the final grade; (2) if there is a medical, personal, or family condition, the student may be given an “IN” (incomplete), which allows extra time to complete work (until the middle of the next semester); and (3) if a student appeals a grade he or she feels is unfair.

College of Education and Human Development Student 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/>].