George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Education Leadership Program
EDLE 634 - Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership (3 Credits)
Section 601, Fall 2011

Instructor: Roberto Pamas, Ed.D.
Phone: (703) 658-5900 (O)
Fax: (703) 658-5997
Email: Roberto.Pamas@fcps.edu
Website: http://www.taskstream.com
Address: George Mason University
           4085 University Dr., MSN 4C2
           Fairfax, VA 22030-4444

Schedule Information

Location: Briar Woods High School, Room 506

Meeting times: Wednesdays (4:30 pm – 7:30 pm)
                      September 7, 2011 – December 7, 2011

Textbook   Heifetz, Ronald & Linsky, Marty. Leadership on the Line (2002).

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 21st 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

- 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.

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
9-07-2011	Introductions Review of Syllabus	
9-14-2011	Chapter 1	
9-21-2011	Chapter 2	
9-28-2011	Chapter 3	**JOURNAL DUE**
10-05-2011	Chapter 4	
10-12-2011	Chapter 5	
10-19-2011	Chapter 6	**Interview write-up due**
10-26-2011	Chapter 7	**JOURNAL DUE**
11-02-2011	Chapter 8	
11-09-2011	Chapter 9	**Research assignment due**

11-16-2011	Chapter 10	
11-30-2011	Chapter 11	**JOURNAL DUE**
12-07-2011	REFLECTION Course Wrap-up	

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Assessment Rubric for Presentation

	Exceeds Expectations	**Meets Expectations**	**Approaching Expectations**	**Falls Below Expectations**	**SCORE**
CRITERIA					
Presentation Content 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	
Data analysis 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	
Handouts, Visuals and Reading Assignments 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	
Presentation Delivery 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.	
Audience Involvement 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

	Exceeds Expectations (Clear, convincing, substantial evidence)	Meets Expectations (clear evidence)	Approaching Expectations (limited evidence)	Falls Below Expectations	SCORE
CRITERIA					
Introduction (Statement of purpose) 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.	
Research Summary 20%	Major points are strong and supported by examples	Major points are given	Major points lack clarity	Major points are missing	
Possible Solutions 20%	Concepts are insightful and inspiring	Concepts are good	Concepts do not go beyond the obvious	Concepts are missing or underdeveloped	
Reflection 20%				missing	
Mechanics 20%	No errors	A few minor errors	Several distracting errors	Many major mechanical errors	