EDPD 502 6R5: VCET Teacher Leadership and Policy:
STEM Focus Part B
2 Credits, Fall 2014
Online Course: September 22-December 18

PROFESSOR(S):
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
Prerequisites/Corequisites: EDPD502 – VCET Teacher Leadership and Policy Part A
This course provides advanced professional development for experienced teachers in teacher leadership, educational policy, technology, data driven decision making and effective instructional practices for diverse learners. Offered through the Virginia Center for Excellence in Teaching. Selection process is state-wide and competitive. The course has four versions. This version focuses specifically on STEM (e.g., equity issues, integration, content coaching, etc.)

DELIVERY METHOD
This course will be delivered online using asynchronous and synchronous formats via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. 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 September 29th.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS
To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:
- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard;
- Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course;
- 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 the course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs respectively, available for free downloading by clicking on the link next to each plug-in:

- o Adobe Acrobat Reader: http://get.adobe.com/reader/
- o Windows Media Player: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-media-player
- o Apple QuickTime Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

EXPECTATIONS
Course Meetings
- **Synchronous meetings:** We will have one monthly synchronous, whole-class meeting. These meetings will take place on the Mondays chosen by the class.
- **Asynchronous meetings:** Students are required to meet monthly in their critical friends groups using Collaborate or some other online tool of their choosing.

Log-in Frequency
Students must log in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings. In addition, 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. 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, and you are unable to come to the Mason campus, we can meet via

telephone or web conference. Send me an email to schedule your one-on-one session and include your preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

Netiquette
Our goal is to be **collaborative**. 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 them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **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.

LEARNER OUTCOMES or OBJECTIVES:
This course is designed to enable students to:
These outcomes cover Parts A and B of the course. All students will take Part A in summer 2014 and Part B in fall/spring, 2014-15.
(1) Develop increased knowledge of instructional and curricular issues in their fields and/or in interdisciplinary instruction.
(2) Develop knowledge and skills as teacher leaders.
(3) Gain knowledge and skills related to educational policy at the national, state and local levels.
(4) Gain knowledge and skills in using data for educational decision-making.
(5) Increase their understanding of diverse learners.
(6) Use technology as a teacher, learner, and teacher leader.
(7) Share their increased knowledge, skills, and understandings with others in their educational communities.
(8) Develop understanding of STEM integration, standards, and practices

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Samaras, A. P. (2011). *Self-study teacher research: improving your practice through collaborative inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
1. **Self-study Research Plan Update (15%)**
Based on their action plans written during the summer, students will update as needed. Students will then design a self-study research project plan: that will include a literature review, plans for data collection and an analysis plan.

2. **Research Project (50%)**
Based on the research plan update (item 1), students will conduct a self-study project including data collection and analysis about an STEM equity or school change intervention of their choosing. I realize that the projects may not be completed at the end of the semester; however, all of the major components should be in place. The results of this project will be presented at the final meeting in February of the VCET Academies conference.

3. **Policy Implication Assignments (10%)**
Based on your work with Dr. Earley over the summer, students will complete two policy-related tasks:
- (1) Provide policy implications based on the findings of their self-study project (5%); and
- (2) Write a reflection on the presentation by Virginia's Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Staples (planned for October 2014). Dr. Staples presentation will be electronic in real time but if you are not able to participate we will have the presentation recorded so you may watch and listen to it at a later time. If Dr. Staples is not available, we will substitute another public official.

4. **Participation and Engagement (25%)**
This VCET experience has been designed for students to engage and work with other teacher leaders in STEM from throughout Virginia. Therefore, participation and engagement is expected throughout the online portion of the course. This portion of the grade includes participating in critical friends groups and submitting small assignments and completing and discussing course readings.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See **http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/**).

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (See **http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/**).

c. 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.

d. 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/**).

e. 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/**).

f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

g. 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

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS
Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT
The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: **http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/**.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website http://gse.gmu.edu/.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

This is the basic structure of the course and the associated activities. Assignments are subject to change, and smaller assignments may be assigned along the way. For instance, you may be asked to post pieces of your project along the way for feedback. All changes will be provided in ample time and announced via Blackboard and email. All assignments will be posted to the course Blackboard site.

Whole Class = class meeting online via Collaborate (see link in Blackboard course)

CF Meeting = submission required for review by your Critical Friends group. You will need to meet either via Collaborate or at a location of your group's choosing. A summary of the recommendations and comments will need to be posted to Blackboard following the meeting.

Session Number	Topic	Self-Study Project Timeline and Assignments Due
1 **Whole Class** Sept. 29	Introduction to the Course Overview of Self-Study Teacher Research Process and Project Choosing and Refining a Research Question	• Review research topics identified over the summer • Read Preface, Chapters 1 & 2 (post-session if needed) **For session 2:** • Read Chapter 4 • Complete Critical Friend Inquiry (CFI) 4.1 (p. 82)

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CF Groups
 	
October
	Research Design	**During the session:**
		• Discuss responses Critical Friend Research Memo
		• Discuss changes in your topic/research plan
		
		For session 3:
		• Read Chapters 6, 7 (up to p. 152), & 8
		• POST Self-study Research Plan Update, include:
		    ○ CFI 6.4 (p. 134) and
		    ○ 6.9 Aligning RQ with Method (p. 135)

3 **Whole Class** **October**	Research Design	**During session** • Discuss Chapters 6-8 **For Session 4** • Post response to CFI 8.1 (p. 171-172) • Read: Chapters 9 & 10 • Begin data collection (if you have not started)

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CF Group
 	
November
	Working Group	• Discuss CFI 8.1
		• Continue work on your projects and seek feedback from CFs
		
		For session 5
		• Read Chapters 11 & 12
		• Post
		   o CFI 11.1 (p. 215)
		   o Literature review draft
		   o Progress update to the instructors; be sure to include any questions/concerns

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Whole Group
 	
November
	Data Collection and Analysis
	
	Validation
		• Discuss Chapter 12
		• CF groups: Respond to CFI 11.1
		• Discuss project progress, including data collection
		• For session 6
		   o Post Literature Review draft
		   o Complete to CFI 12.2

6 **CF Group** **December**	Working Group	• Respond to CFI 12.2 • Generate a list of questions/concerns for the instructor • Begin/continue analyzing data and working on rough draft of final project
7 **Whole Group** **December**	Discussing Our Findings Looking Ahead	• Discuss findings, next steps, and the final project • Discuss preparation for February's conference • Upload project by _____