College of Education and Human Development
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research

Fall 2015
EDSE 843 001: Leadership in Special Education Administration
CRN: 78479, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Pamela Baker	**Meeting Dates:** 08/31/15 - 12/21/15
Phone: 703-993-1787	**Meeting Day(s):** Wednesday
E-Mail: pbaker5@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s):** 4:30 pm-7:10 pm
Office Hours: By appointment	**Meeting Location:** Fairfax FINLEY 119

Note: This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

Course Description
Examines leadership issues and applies them to the administration of special education programs. Explores current challenges in the delivery of services for exceptional children through case studies and projects. Prerequisite(s): Admission to PhD in education program, or permission of instructor. Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3 Hours of Lab or Studio per week: 0

Prerequisite(s): Admission to PhD in education program, or permission of instructor

Co-requisite(s): None

Advising Contact Information
Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

Nature of Course Delivery

Learning activities include the following:
1. Readings in preparation for class
2. Class lecture and discussion
3. Application activities
4. Small group activities and assignments
5. Individual activities and assignments
6. Video and other media supplements
7. Research and presentation activities
8. Online supplements and activities via Blackboard

Learner Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Define leadership.
• Describe the general behavioral and affective elements that define good leaders.
• Identify specific forms/styles of leadership and explain how the behaviors relate to specific organizational goals.
• Articulate their core beliefs about teaching, learning, and leadership, and relate these to their vision of effective school leadership.
• Connect major leadership and organizational theories, and apply these to the understanding of real-world puzzles associated with leadership practice.
• Describe the general manner in which policies are made including:
  ➢ types of policy decisions
  ➢ various constituent groups affected by each type of decision
  ➢ goals that are often sought in policy-making
  ➢ political and rhetorical tools used in policy-making
  ➢ factors that contribute to uncertainty in policy-making
  ➢ types of errors that affect policy making
  ➢ tools for reducing uncertainty and error in policy making
• Illustrate reform movements and how they gain momentum by providing examples of the political and rhetorical tools relative to selected reform movements that affect special education.
• Analyze educational policy-making discussions and describe the elements of policy-making.
• Analyze current change initiatives in the context of historical education reform proposals/policies considering the following:
  ➢ fidelity of the reform outcome with the intended purpose
  ➢ internal consistency of logic in the arguments for or against the reform
  ➢ the efficacy of the reform in meeting the stated goals of the policy-makers
  ➢ unintended consequences of the reform
• Explain how special education laws and policies conform or fail to conform to expectations for genuine change using frameworks for analyzing organizational behavior and outcomes.

• Articulate the leadership role(s) they aspire to take at the conclusion of their program of study.
• Begin to articulate how they plan to develop their leadership capabilities in the near future.

Required Textbooks

Crockett, J. B., Billingsley, B. S., & Boscardin, M. L. (Eds.). (2012). *Handbook of leadership*

and administration for special education. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis.

Rath, T. (2007). *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. New York, NY: Gallup Press.

Digital Library

Effective summer 2015, the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research will discontinue the use of the Pearson Digital Library. No further registrations will be accepted. Students who hold current subscriptions will continue to have access to the library for the remainder of their subscription time. However, no further updates will be made to the digital library. During this time, should a textbook be revised or a new book is adopted for a class where the text is included in the digital library, Pearson will have options available to you and will provide you with an individual e-text or, if there is no e-text, a printed copy. Students, who have purchased a 3-year subscription directly through Pearson Education, will also have an option to obtain a prorated refund. However, 3-year subscription access cards purchased via the GMU bookstore will need to speak with a George Mason Bookstore Representative. Please be aware that the issuance of a refund, in this case, is at the discretion of the George Mason bookstore. Concerns or questions may be directed to Molly Haines at Molly.Haines@pearson.com.

Recommended Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual* (6th ed.). Washington, DC:

Author.

Additional Readings

Each week students are expected to access and complete all readings and activities provided in the applicable folder in the course content section of the course Blackboard site available at http://courses.gmu.edu

Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Special Education: Students with Disabilities who Access the General Curriculum K-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization.

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 http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/].

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. [See http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/]

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

Course Policies & Expectations
    Attendance.

For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom (see Professional Disposition Criteria), and complete all assignments with professional quality and in a timely manner. When absence from class is unavoidable, students are responsible for getting all class information (e.g., handouts, announcements, notes) from another class member prior to the class meeting that follows the absence. Be aware that points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and typically cannot be reclaimed.

Late Work.
Points will be deducted for work submitted late (up to 10% per day). This includes any items that are not submitted upon request due to class absence or tardiness. This includes items initiated or modified during class as well as those listed in the syllabus.

APA Style
The standard format for any written work in the College of Education and Human Development is APA. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) or to access one of the internet sites that provides a summary of this information. All work produced outside of class must be typed in APA style unless otherwise noted.

Academic Integrity
Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you use either exact words or paraphrased ideas. Generally, if you use 4 or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper citation. Evidence of plagiarism or any other form of cheating in this class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the registrar and Dean's office. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. The instructor reserves the right to submit your work to plagiarism detection services for an integrity assessment as needed.

Electronic Media.
The use of electronic devices that record class or photograph individuals or materials may not be used without instructor permission. Computers may be used to take notes during class, but they may not be used for internet exploration or other non-class activities during class time. Routine access (daily) to e-mail and Blackboard for communication and assignments is crucial to participation in this class. Retain electronic copies of all course products for use during the portfolio phases of the M.Ed. or Ph.D. programs.

Workload Expectation.

For each in-class hour devoted to this course content, students are expected to spend at least 3 hours outside of class on course-related assignments, which is a typical in-class to out-of-class ratio for graduate level coursework. Exemplary work should be considered for presentation or publication opportunities.

Blackboard Submission

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, (*NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE*) to Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Grading Scale

A	=	95 – 100 percent	A-	=	90 – 94 percent
B+	=	85 – 89 percent	B	=	80 – 84 percent
C	=	70 – 79 percent	F	=	Below 70

Note: Traditional rounding principles apply

Assignments

Performance-based Assessment (Blackboard submission required).
Not applicable to doctoral courses.

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Blackboard submission required).
Not applicable to doctoral courses.

Other Assignments.

Application Activities

Students are expected to actively participate in all application activities. Active participation includes the asking of questions and the presentation of one's own understanding with regard to the readings and class sessions as well as interactive discussion and participation in activities with other class members. Active participation also includes listening and respectful consideration of the comments of others. This will require all students to complete the required readings, activities, and assignments for that specific class meeting in advance. Required application materials and activities (e.g., supplemental readings, cases for review, external websites, discussion forums, topical reflections, other application activities) can be found in Blackboard's Course Content section in a folder labeled by Week Number.

Additionally, during each class meeting there will be the opportunity to earn point(s) for the successful completion of in-class application activities (e.g., case analysis, reflection activities, small group activities, discussion of readings). If students are not in attendance, thus not able to participate and contribute to class when these activities occur, assigned points cannot be earned. One cannot earn full points for active participation while texting, tweeting, surfing the internet, or engaging in other forms of multi-tasking behaviors.

StrengthsFinder

Complete the StrengthsFinder assessment and submit the results to plong9@gmu.edu by midnight on 9/9/15 using the envelope icon on the left side of the results screen in a box titled *My Top 5 Strengths* within the StrengthsFinder website. You should complete the assessment prior to reading the book. Please bring the book and your summative report with you to class on the night your results are scheduled for discussion (Week 3).

Building and Applying a Theoretical Framework

Students will choose aspects of leadership theory to examine more closely in an effort to develop a theoretical framework upon which decisions and/or research can be based. A sampling of leadership theories/models will be provided in-class and online. Students will select and read at least 1 book, at least 3 peer-reviewed journal articles, and at least 1 additional resource (e.g., website, video, technical report). Each resource will be annotated and posted to Blackboard so others can benefit as well. A coordinated effort will be made to minimize the duplication of resources. Finally, students will synthesize the resources bringing their own interpretation of what has been learned and how such information can be applied to the profession to write a paper that is grounded in a theoretical framework. APA expectations are a given; length is a minimum of 5 pages of narrative (not inclusive of title page, references, etc.).

Differentiated Projects

Each adult learner brings varying levels of experience, especially in leadership roles, to a course such as this. In order to address your differing backgrounds, strengths, and needs you will select activities from a menu of options so that you can tailor this portion of the course to address your own professional goals. You should refer to the appendix for details regarding this assignment. As no two projects will be the same, submission can be either electronic or in hard copy as scheduled in the syllabus.

Final Exam

A comprehensive exam applying key course content and materials will be administered. Students will be able to prepare their responses in advance and should be prepared to share responses for discussion during the final exam session.

Assignment Summary

Below are the basic weights of the various kinds of work required for the course, but students should always bear in mind that grading is primarily a judgment about your performance on a particular assignment. Grades are designed to indicate your success in completing assignments, not the level of effort you put into them.

Application Activities (face-to-face and online)	100
StrengthsFinder	25
Differentiated Project	150
Theoretical Framework Paper	100
Final Exam	100
Total	475

Schedule

Tentative Course Organization and Schedule

Meeting	Topic	**Assignments Due**/Readings Due
Week 1 9/2/15	Introduction to Leadership in Special Education	Overview of course materials and website (MyMason)
Week 2 9/9/15**	**Starting with Yourself	**StrengthsFinder Assessment Due**; **Check BB Folder
Week 3 9/16/15	Strengths-based Leadership	Rath (all); Check BB Folder
Week 4 9/23/15	Special Education as a Microcosm of the Bigger Picture: Overview of Leadership Theories and Models	Check BB Folder
Week 5 9/30/15	The Context of Special Education Leadership within a Framework for Organizational Change	Crockett, Billingsley, & Boscardin (CB&B) Ch. 1-2; Check BB Folder
Week 6 10/7/15	Preparation of Future Special Education Leaders	CB&B Ch. 3-4; Check BB Folder
Week 7 10/14/15	Impact of Leaders on Teaching and Learning: Research to Practice	CB&B Ch.14-19; Check BB Folder
Week 8 10/21/15	The Politics of Leadership in Sped: Power, Leverage, and Policy	CB&B Ch.5-8; Check BB Folder
Week 9** 10/28/15	**The Importance of Influencing Policy Development in Special Education	**Check BB Folder
Week 10 11/4/15	Building Capacity, Managing Conflict, and Balancing Differing Priorities	CB&B Ch.9-13; Check BB Folder
Week 11 11/11/15	Recognizing Hidden Influences and Unforeseen Consequences	**Theoretical Framework Paper Due;** CB&B Ch. 20; Check BB Folder
Week 12 11/18/15	Leading for Community Change: Working for Reform Beyond the Schools	Check BB Folder
11/25/15	*Thanksgiving Holiday*	*No Class…Mason Closed*
Week 13 12/2/15	Sustaining Change: Goals for Today and Tomorrow	**Differentiated Project Due**; Check BB Folder
Week 14 12/9/15	Ethical Leadership: What is your code?	Check BB Folder
Week 15 12/16/15	The Future is Now	**Final Exam Due**; Check BB Folder

Note: Syllabus is subject to change as needed. Common sense and instructor discretion will be the governing forces in dealing with any circumstances that may arise that are not explicitly addressed in this syllabus. Inclement weather cancellations will shift content to online delivery format and does not excuse students from completion of requirements.
**Online Session

Appendix

Differentiated Project
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Required Elements:

Title Page
3-5 pages to establish a framework for your exploration
6-9 pages of activity commentary
3-5 pages of synthesis noting impact of activities on your needs and philosophy
Reference Page (at least 8 references required)
Unlimited Appendix for Supplemental Information in support of selected activities

Note: Minimum of 12 pages of narrative plus title page, reference page, and appendices

Reflective Framework for Project:

Type a 3-5 page double-spaced overview of your professional situation, your philosophy about supporting the education of exceptional learners, and the learning needs you have as you advance your knowledge and skills in special education leadership.

I. Background and Goals
How did you arrive here? Describe your professional background and current position. Discuss your reasons for entering this profession, your ongoing motivation for seeking additional ways to support exceptional learners, your purpose for becoming a leader in special education, and your professional goals. Include your strengths from the StrengthsFinder assessment.

II. Philosophy of Leadership
How do you think one should approach this profession? Articulate your core beliefs about teaching, learning, and leadership. Relate these ideals to your vision of effective leadership in special education and the role(s) you aspire to take by the conclusion of your program of study.

III. Learning Needs
What do you need to know more about right now or in the near future? Identify the direction that the rest of your exploration will take as you seek ways to attain your professional goals. This section should match with the activities you choose to complete in the remainder of this project.

Plan and Implement:

Select the aspect(s) of the field of special education leadership you intend to examine based on your stated needs. Choose and complete at least 3 activities to enhance your knowledge or skills. Examine at least 2 self-selected resources (e.g., books, journal articles, or websites) to prepare yourself for each of the selected activities. Type a 2-3 page double-spaced summary of each activity selected. Include a brief description of what you did and what you learned; integrate the resources you used to prepare for the activity and any others that may be relevant. Make sure that

there is a clear link between the activities selected and the learning needs you stated. Options include, but are not limited to the following:

- Observe relevant school-based or central office settings
- Observe relevant community-based, agency, state, or national settings
- Observe a policymaking group in action on a relevant issue (e.g., Congress, school board, agency board, VDOE)
- Meet individually or as a small group with one of your Congressmen or state representatives to discuss special education issues
- Shadow/Interview individuals in positions of interest to you
- Complete a field-based leadership project to address a problem in your setting or in the field as a whole
- Complete a policy analysis related to a situation in your setting or to the field as a whole
- Develop a school/district-wide change plan directly related to special education services
- Develop a needed professional development program/session related to special education services
- Develop a business plan to independently support people with disabilities
- Build a website or other collection of resources to share with others (e.g., parents, colleagues, individuals with disabilities)
- Conduct a comparative analysis of an international setting/organization regarding special education or disability issues
- Research how to obtain and expend external funding
- Write a proposal for external funding
- Write a proposal for a conference presentation
- Present at or attend a professional conference
- Prepare a manuscript for submission
- Other (ask instructor to confirm acceptability)

Note: You may have family members help you arrange experiences, but you may NOT use them for observations or interviews. You may select the same bulleted item up to 2 times.

Synthesis:

Reflect upon your experience as a whole. Type a 3-5 page double-spaced synthesis explaining how this exploration has enhanced your professional development by: (a) Summarizing your personal and professional growth by connecting the learning outcomes of your activities back to the philosophy, needs, and goals that you highlighted at the start of this paper; (b) Synthesizing and integrating relevant literature to support key points within your summary including what you have learned about your own strengths and other course concepts; and (3) Identifying what you still need to know and/or do to reach your goals.

Note: You may use first person in the completion of this project.