

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Education Leadership Program**

EDLE 634, Section DL1

Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership

Fall, 2017, 3 credit hours

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Office Hours: Online - Mondays, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. [and by appointment].
Course Term: August 28 [30], 2017 to December 9, 2017.

Course Description

Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership (3:3:0) Examines current and emerging issues and trends impacting education to include: 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.

General Goals: Students in this course will learn how to access and manipulate GIS sites to retrieve and analyze demographic data, convey an understanding of demographic changes that have occurred and are projected to occur in America; including forces affecting the changing racial map, population shifts, cultural and generational gaps, and their impact on education. Students will analyze and explain research about education gaps related to race/ethnicity, disability, SES or dominant language and apply such research to narrowing at least one of these gaps.

Course Delivery

This is a 100% online course using an asynchronous format 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 **August 28th, 2017**. Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technology Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course. Per university policy in compliance with federal law, the professor will only communicate with students via their GMU email accounts, and will be unable to respond to emails sent from other accounts (i.e., Gmail, Yahoo, work email, etc.). Any announcements regarding the course will be sent to your GMU account. I will respond to emails within 48 hours, excluding weekends.
- 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.
- **Video/Screencasting Tools:** You will use Kasturi, Jing, or Camtasia to record your introduction videos and Platform of Beliefs assignment.
- **Group Work:** You will use **Google Docs** to complete your Collaborative Leadership Case assignment and Blackboard Discussion Boards to participate in various learning activities throughout the semester.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - [Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>]
 - [Windows Media Player: <https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>]
 - [Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/]

Email: All candidates are required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts. I strongly recommend that you do not forward your Mason e-mail to a different account because attachments are often lost that way. It is best to check e-mail directly from your Mason account daily. Per university policy in compliance with federal law, I will only communicate with candidates via their GMU email accounts and will be unable to respond to emails sent from other accounts (i.e., Gmail, yahoo, work email, etc.). Any

announcements regarding the course will be sent to your GMU account. I will respond to emails within 24 hours, excluding weekends.

On-line Expectations

- **Course Week:** Because online courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will **start** on Wednesday and **finish** on Tuesday.
- **Log-in Frequency:** Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 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 who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:** Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:** Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:** Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:** The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- **Accommodations:** Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Course Materials

Required Text

Frey, William H. (2015). *Diversity explosion: How new racial demographics are America*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Additional required readings are provided on the course site.

Recommended Texts

Smith, R.G. & Brazer, S.D. (2016). *Striving for equity: District leadership for narrowing opportunity and achievement gaps*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Noll, Wm James (2013). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Educational Issues [17th edition]*; New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Other Assigned and Optional Sources

Assigned and optional source materials will be available or their links will be listed on Blackboard. Assigned sources will also be listed on the tentative schedule below.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Apply to their school settings an understanding of the demographic shifts in America over the past 45 years and the projections for the next 35 years in the geographic locations of populations, the racial composition of populations by location, and the distribution of the populations by age.
2. Demonstrate their understanding of what we know about how to reduce opportunity and achievement gaps related to race/ethnicity, disability, SES and dominant language.
3. Apply their knowledge of opportunity and achievement gap closing interventions to their school setting in at least one of the areas of race/ethnicity, disability, SES or dominant language.
4. Discuss and analyze a school-based contemporary issue using a heuristic from Kowalski.

Course Alignment to National Standards

The following Education Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standard elements are addressed in this course:

ELCC 1.1: Candidates understand and can collaboratively develop, articulate, implement, and steward a shared vision of learning for a school.

- ELCC 1.2:** Candidates understand and can collect and use data to identify school goals, assess organizational effectiveness, and create and implement plans to achieve school goals.
- ELCC 1.3:** Candidates understand and can promote continual and sustainable school improvement.
- ELCC 1.4:** Candidates understand and can evaluate school progress and revise school plans supported by school stakeholders.
- ELCC 2.2:** Candidates understand and can create and evaluate a comprehensive, rigorous, and coherent curricular and instructional school program.
- ELCC 5.1:** Candidates understand and can act with integrity and fairness to ensure that schools are accountable for every student's academic and social success.
- ELCC 5.3:** Candidates understand and can safeguard the values of democracy, equity, and diversity.
- ELCC 6.3:** Candidates understand and can anticipate and assess emerging trends and initiatives in order to adapt school-based leadership strategies.

Teaching and Learning Expectations

Each class will include a variety of activities and exercises. Out-of-class work will rely on readings and on the use of resource task sheets created to complement the primary text. Specific process goals for the class are as follows:

1. Classes will reflect a balance of activities that encourage the exploration of the use of research in instructional leadership. To promote an atmosphere that allows us to accomplish this, we will:
 - a. agree to disagree respectfully during class discussions;
 - b. strive to be open to new ideas and perspectives; and
 - c. listen actively to one another.

2. Candidate work will reflect what is expected from leaders. Hence, it is expected that candidates will:
 - 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 an on-line environment that approximates what we know about learning organizations. Consequently, it is important that we create a space that allows 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. demonstrate appropriate **respect for one another**;
 - b. voice concerns and opinions about class process openly;
 - c. engage in **genuine inquiry**;
 - d. recognize and celebrate each other's ideas and accomplishments;

- e. show an awareness of each other's needs; and
- f. **maintain strict confidentiality** regarding any information shared.

Course Requirements, Grading, and Evaluation Criteria

Students can earn a total of 500 points in this course. Graded assignments account for 75% (375 points) of the overall grade, while online course participation accounts for 25% (125 points).

General Expectations

Consistent with expectations of a Master's level course in the Education Leadership program, grading is based heavily on student performance on written assignments. The assignments constructed for this course reflect a mix of skills associated with the application of research to education leadership contexts. Overall, written work will be assessed using the following broad criteria:

- Application of concepts embedded in assigned readings and other materials and reinforced in classroom activities
- The quality of analysis, synthesis, and application
- The ability to write in a clear, concise, and organized fashion

Additionally, due to the nature of this online course, a significant portion of the class grade will be based on participation and the contribution you make to class discussions. The overall weights of the various performances are as follows:

Class participation - 125 points

Candidates are expected to participate actively in class discussions, small group activities, and in serving as critical friends to other colleagues. The participation rubric is available on the course site. Participation points will be assessed as part of each unit and the activities are as follows:

Orientation (5 points)

- Syllabus Quiz
- GIS activity

Unit 1: Diversity Explosion (40 points)

- Group discussions, blog posts, in-class activities, and peer review

Unit 2: Opportunity and Achievement Gap Research (40 points)

- Group discussions, blog posts, in-class activities, and peer review

Unit 3: Contemporary Issues (40 points)

- Blog posts

Written assignments - 375 points.

You will write **three papers** during the course. The first paper involves reporting a demographic analysis. The second is a literature review of the nature of an achievement gap and what the research suggests might help close it, followed by a set of proposed actions to narrow it in your setting. The third is a descriptive analysis of a contemporary issue from your schoolhouse. A description of each assignment and a rubric for grading each assignment are included at the end of this syllabus.

The three papers are related to one another. The first paper requires that you analyze the changing demographics of your school or school district. The second paper represents a synthesis and analysis of the research related to the nature of an achievement gap you select and what the research suggests regarding interventions to narrow the gap, followed by what you would propose to implement to narrow the gap in your setting. The third connects to [i] schoolhouse demographics and [ii] diversity profiles discussed in Papers 1 and 2.

Submitting papers: All three papers must be submitted on time, electronically via Blackboard.

Late work: Students' work is expected on time, meaning no later than by midnight of the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted except in emergency situations that have been discussed and approved by the instructor in advance of the due date. Please take advantage of instructor office hours and availability to get assistance prior to assignment deadlines.

Grading Scale

A+	500+ points
A	475 - 499
A-	450 - 474
B+	435 - 449
B	415 - 434
B-	400 - 414
C	375 - 399
F	Below 375 points

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/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- 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 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 stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20> Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.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/>].
- 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 Student Support & Advocacy Center staff helps students develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through confidential one-on-one support as well as through interactive programs and resources. Some of the topics they address are healthy

relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health (see <http://ssac.gmu.edu/>). Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-3686). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://ssac.gmu.edu/make-a-referral>

Other reminders:

GMU Add/Drop Policy: The last day to drop this class without any penalty is provided on the GMU academic calendar page <http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendar/>. It is the student's responsibility to check to verify that they are properly enrolled, as no credit will be awarded to students who are not.

Plagiarism Statement: Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting (Statement of English Department at George Mason University).

Plagiarism and the Internet: Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page. Shareware graphics are not free. Freeware clipart is available for you to freely use. If the material does not say "free," assume it is not. Putting someone else's Internet material on your web page is stealing intellectual property. Making links to a site is, at this time, okay, but getting permission is strongly advised, since many Web sites have their own requirements for linking to their material.

If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor or utilize the GMU Writing Center.

Academic Integrity & Inclusivity: This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences, meaning we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should also do so keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e. we may disagree without being disagreeable. <http://integrity.gmu.edu/>

Diversity, Religious Holiday: Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (<http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday->

calendar/). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.

Student Privacy Policy: George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/>

Other Concerns: If you have concerns or issues relating to the content or conduct of the class, please talk with me directly. Although the specifics of these conversations are entirely confidential, they may provide me with useful suggestions that may be shared indirectly with the class to improve the learning experience for all students. As a matter of policy, I do not respond to anonymous e-mails.

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

Proposed class schedule:

Proposed Class Schedule

To accommodate the learning needs of the class, the topics and reading schedule may be amended during the semester. Any changes will be communicated via email or Blackboard.

Note: Please refer to the Weekly Schedule on Blackboard for the most up-to-date version of the course schedule.

Week	Dates	Lessons	Readings & Activities
1	8/30 to 9/5	Orientation Lesson 1: America's Racial Map	Reading: Syllabus Activities: Syllabus quiz & Google map exercise Reading: Frey, Chaps. 1 & 3 Activities: Post answers to blog re: assigned reading & conduct GIS exercise
2	9/6 to 9/12	Lesson 2: The Cultural Generation Gap Lesson 3: Population Shifts	Reading: Frey, Chapt. 2 Activities: Watch 2 videos & small group discussion Reading: One of Frey, Chaps. 4-7 Activities: Summarize one Frey chapter & participate in a group investigation
3	9/13 to 9/19	Lesson 4: How and Where We Live	Reading: One of Frey, Chaps 8-11 & Chapt. 12 Activities: Summarize one Frey chapter, participate in a group investigation & blog on conclusions
4	9/20 to 9/26	Lesson 5: Where and With Whom Our Children Go to School	Reading: Orfield et. al report Activities: Blog on Orfield report, take IAT and blog on results & participate in a peer review
-----	9/26	Assignment #1 Due	
5	9/27 to 10/3	Lesson 6: The Nature of Gaps	Reading: Berliner article Activities: Post on blog re: gap causes, post on blog gap selected & meet with group members
6	10/4 to 10/10	Lesson 7: Narrowing Gaps	Readings: Smith and Brazer and Yeager & Walton articles Activities: [i]Post on blog conclusions re: role of schools [ii] conduct peer review, revise final draft
	10/10 to 10/13	Fall Break	
7	10/18 to 10/24	Lesson 8: Introduction to Unit 3 [Contemporary Issues] Connections to Units 1 and 2	Readings: <i>10 Critical Issues Facing Education</i>

	10/24	Assignment #2 due	
8	10/25 to 10/31	Lesson 9: Contemporary Issue #1 [School District]--‘Taking Sides’	Readings: [Case Study [pdf]]: ‘Let’s Not Rap’ Activities: Blog response to [i] describe the roles Demographics and Diversity play; and [ii] briefly describe and analyze the different points of view ‘at odds’ here
9	11/1 to 11/7	Lesson 10: Contemporary Issue #2 [School House]--‘Taking Sides’	Readings: Student researched Activities: Self-directed [on Blackboard]
10	11/8 to 11/15	Lesson 11: Contemporary Issues #3—A Heuristic Offered A Case Study examined Assignment #3 introduced	Reading: Kowalski’s introduction to <i>Case Studies on Educational Administration</i> [Case Study [pdf]]: <i>The Dark Side of Decentralization</i> Activities:[i] Applying the heuristic to problem/analysis [self- directed]; [ii] Assignment #3 reviewed [part 1]
11	11/16 to 11/21	Lesson 12: Contemporary Issues #3 A Case Study examined Assignment #3 continued	Readings: [Case Study [pdf]]: <i>A Bully’s Threat</i> Activities: [i] Blog response to Case Study—Using the heuristic, outline different action steps in resolving this issue
----	11/21- 11/24	Thanksgiving Break	
12	11/29 to 12/5	[individual] completion of Assignment #3	Activities: <i>ibid.</i>
	12/5	Assignment #3 Due	

Writing Assignment 1: Analysis of Changing Demographics (125 points)

Rationale

It is important that school leaders understand the demographic changes that are occurring and are projected to occur in the nation, their state, their school district and their school. This assignment requires that you demonstrate your grasp of the demographics of your school or school district, compare them to the state, project demographic changes on the basis of trends in your school district or school, and describe what needs to be done instructionally to meet the needs implied by the

current and future demographics. The conclusions of this paper will help inform the work on the final assignment.

Tasks

Select the data from credible sources that you will use.

Write a paper of 8-10 pages that includes these elements:

- an introduction that treats your thesis and foreshadows what you will do to support it, including the data that you will provide,
- a description of the changing demographics of your school district or school, including
 - a rationale for presenting the data you selected (i.e., why they were important)
 - comparisons with previous years, and with similarly situated schools, the state and/or the nation,
- a description of your projections of the future demographics of your school district or school, including a figure(s) or table(s) displaying past, current and future data.
- an analysis of the data and their implications for education in your school district or school and;
- a conclusion that summarizes your thesis and your support for it.

Assessment Rubric for Writing Assignment 1: Analysis of Changing Demographics

Criteria (Points)	Levels of Achievement			
	exceeds expectations 90 to 100 %	meets expectations 80 to 89 %	approaching expectations 70 to 79 %	falls below expectations 0 to 69 %
<i>Introduction (10)</i> The introduction orients the reader to the purpose of the paper and presents the paper's thesis	The introduction draws the reader into the paper effectively. The thesis is clear and the author foreshadows the data and how it will be used to support the thesis.	The introduction orients the reader to the paper, but the thesis is unclear, or the author has not foreshadowed how the thesis will be supported.	The introduction orients the reader to the paper, but the thesis is unclear, <i>and</i> the author has not foreshadowed how the thesis will be supported.	The introduction is missing or unintelligible.
<i>Description of the data (25)</i> The data	The author makes clear why the data were selected, why the sources are	The author leaves unclear why the data were selected, why the	The author leaves unclear why the data	The description of data is missing.

set the stage for the analysis	credible and what the reader should note in the table(s) and/or figure(s). The data include past demographics, current demographics and projected demographics.	sources are credible, or omits past, current or projected demographics.	were selected <i>and</i> why the sources are credible.	
<i>Presentation of data (15)</i> The written description of data is illustrated in a table(s) and/or figure(s)	The table(s) and/or figure(s) follow logically from the text and enhance the reader's understanding of what the author presented in writing.	The table(s) and/or figure(s) follow logically from the text but fail to enhance the reader's understanding of what the author presented in writing.	The table(s) and/or figure(s) do not follow logically from the text.	The table(s) and/or figure(s) are absent.
<i>Analysis (30)</i> The analysis of the data indicates their implications for a school district or a school.	The author states clearly and logically the implications for the school district or school of the data analyzed.	The author states but leaves somewhat unclear the implications of the data for the school district or school.	The analysis is present but fails to account for the implications for the school district or school.	The analysis is absent.
<i>Conclusion (10)</i> The conclusion finishes the paper by summarizing the thesis, support for the thesis and what the author has learned.	The conclusion follows logically from the analysis, includes a re-worded statement of the thesis and summarizes clearly how the analysis of the data supports the thesis.	The conclusion follows logically from the analysis, but does not include either a re-worded statement of the thesis or a clear summary of how the analysis of the data supports the thesis.	The conclusion follows logically from the analysis, but \includes neither a re-worded statement of the thesis nor a clear summary of how the analysis of the data supports the thesis.	The conclusion is illogical or absent.
<i>Mechanics and APA (10)</i> Your written work should always represent you as accurate and precise.	The paper is nearly error-free, and reflects clear understanding of APA format.	The paper contains either writing errors (e.g., spelling, grammar, questionable word choices) or APA errors.	The paper contains writing errors (e.g., spelling, grammar, questionable word choices) <i>and</i> APA errors.	The paper is difficult to understand because of issues related to clarity and correctness of writing.

Writing Assignment 2: Review of Research on Narrowing Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (150 points)

Rationale

If they expect to produce positive results, school leaders need to be knowledgeable about the demographics of their student bodies, and the research surrounding the nature of and possible amelioration of opportunity and achievement gaps. To make progress on shrinking opportunity and achievement gaps, it is important to understand the factors that cause or propel those gaps. In the absence of such understanding it is difficult, if not impossible, to launch interventions to diminish the influence of the factors associated with creating and/or widening the gaps. To complete this paper you will conduct a literature review of research that will enable you to:

- describe the nature of the gap, including what appears to cause or propel it;

- describe the interventions that appear to hold promise in narrowing the gap; and
- provide a rationale for one or more interventions that you would apply to the gap in your setting.

Tasks

- (1) Identify the gap you wish to address. You may select from among gaps associated with differences in performance based on race/ethnicity, social-economic status, dominant language or disability.
- (2) Select the research sources on which you will rely. These sources may include theoretical pieces, reviews of research, original research (quantitative and/or qualitative), and reports of practice. Reviews of research and original research studies found in peer-reviewed journals should predominate. **Include at least 8 or more credible sources.**
- (3) Write an 10-15 page paper that includes:
 - an introduction that identifies, explains, and justifies the gap based you have selected, in part, on your analysis of demographics contained in Assignment 1, and states your thesis regarding the causes of the gap and what might be done to narrow it, and foreshadows how you will support your thesis;
 - a synthesis of the research reviewed that is organized on the basis of your thesis, not a serial review of studies (Remember the research brief from EDLE 690?)
 - a description of the rationale for and the implementation of one or more interventions to narrow the gap;
 - a description of how you would implement the intervention, including
 - Who will receive the intervention
 - Who will conduct the intervention
 - How the intervention will be conducted (e.g., what will those conducting the intervention do and how often, and what will the students do and how often?)
 - A description how you would evaluate the intervention, including
 - an assessment of the implementation of the intervention, and
 - an assessment of the intervention's effects (consider the outcomes studied in the research you reviewed; and
 - a conclusion that restates your thesis and summarizes how the research supports the thesis

**Assessment Rubric for Writing Assignment 2:
Review of Research on Narrowing Opportunity and Achievement Gaps**

Criteria (Points)	Levels of Achievement			
	exceeds expectations 90 to 100 %	meets expectations 80 to 89 %	approaching expectations 70 to 79 %	falls below expectations 0 to 69 %
<i>Introduction (10)</i> The introduction orients the reader to the purpose of the paper and presents the paper's thesis	The introduction draws the reader into the paper effectively. The gap of interest is identified and justified on the basis of the findings of the first paper. The thesis, or theory of action, is clear and the author foreshadows how the review will be organized to support the thesis.	The introduction orients the reader to the paper, and identifies a justified gap, but the thesis is unclear, <i>or</i> the author does not foreshadow how the thesis will be supported.	The introduction orients the reader to the paper, but the thesis is unclear, <i>and</i> the author does not foreshadow how the thesis will be supported.	The introduction is missing or unintelligible.
<i>Research synthesis (20)</i> The synthesis supports the thesis, or theory of action, regarding both causes and	The synthesis is clearly organized in accordance with the thesis and provides persuasive evidence to support the thesis or theory of action.	The synthesis is either unclear or unsupported by the evidence.	The synthesis is unclear <i>and</i> unsupported by the evidence.	The synthesis section is a serial review or is unintelligible.

possible amelioration of the gap.				
<i>Assessment of Sources (5)</i> The synthesis includes descriptions of the research reviewed and its quality.	The descriptions of the research refer to the problems or questions addressed, the methods used, the findings and conclusions and an assessment of credibility.	The descriptions of the research lack one or two of the required elements.	The descriptions of the research lack more than two of the required elements.	The descriptions of the research do not refer to the required elements.
<i>Quality of Sources (10)</i> To support the thesis the sources should be of high quality	The synthesis is based on a review of credible studies, largely from peer reviewed journals.	The synthesis is based on a review of a mixture of credible and less credible sources.	The synthesis is based largely on a review of reports of practice and/or prescriptive pieces	The synthesis is based on inadequate sources.
<i>Quantity of Sources (5)</i> The paper includes at least the minimum number of sources required.	The synthesis relies on at least 8 or more sources.	The synthesis relies on fewer than 8 sources but 6-7 sources	The synthesis relies on fewer than 6 sources but 4-5 sources	The synthesis relies on 3 or fewer sources.
<i>Intervention(s) (30)</i> The rationale, implementation and evaluation of the proposed intervention is persuasive and based on the research.	The rationale, implementation and evaluation of the proposed intervention are compelling and clearly based on the research synthesis.	The rationale, the implementation <i>or</i> the evaluation is not compelling and not linked to the research synthesis.	Two of the three elements (rationale, implementation and evaluation) appear unrelated to the research synthesis.	All three elements are unrelated to the research synthesis or one or more elements is missing.
<i>Conclusion (10)</i> The conclusion restates the thesis and summarizes the synthesis.	The conclusion includes a clear restated thesis and a clear summary of the synthesis.	The conclusion includes an unclear restated thesis or an unclear summary of the synthesis.	The conclusion includes neither a clear restated thesis nor a clear summary of the synthesis.	The conclusion is absent or unintelligible.
<i>Mechanics and APA (10)</i> Your written work should always represent you as accurate and precise.	The paper is nearly error-free, and reflects clear understanding of APA format.	The paper contains either writing errors (e.g., spelling, grammar, questionable word choices) or APA errors.	The paper contains writing errors (e.g., spelling, grammar, questionable word choices) and APA errors.	The paper is difficult to understand because of issues related to clarity and correctness of writing.

Assignment #3: A Contemporary Issue [100 points]

1. Background & Rationale

These days, School Leadership is fraught with issues—national, state and local. Mostly local. And, as you can infer from a close examination of the Case Study, *A Bully's Threat*, issues bubble up unexpectedly and instantaneously, are grounded in the vagaries of school demographics and diversity profiles, and quite often connect to secondary issues: in this case school suspension rates, bullying, threats of gun violence and decision-making of school leadership. Additionally, many issues germinate first outside of the immediate school environment but find ways to insinuate themselves quickly into the schoolhouse where they fast become a school-based issue.

2. Tasks

- Read [and think about] the Case Study, *A Bully's Threat*, in terms of the elements listed in 'Background & Purpose'

- Select a recent [difficult] issue that your School leadership confronted, that resulted in a moderately successful outcome.
- Create a one-page timeline of [i] the origins and context [demographic and diversity profiles] of the issue [ii] how it evolved and who was involved [iii] action steps that were taken by school leadership to resolve it
- Describe how the contexts in the timeline influenced the evolution of the issue
- Analyze the leadership reaction, action plan and attempts at resolution in terms of your knowledge of leadership theory and practice

Your paper should be 4 to 6 pages long (excluding the title and reference pages) and include:

- an introduction that includes a thesis statement
- a profile of the school and community [demographics & diversity]
- an outline of the evolution of the issue from beginnings to ‘resolution’
- an analysis of leadership responses/actions in terms of leadership theory and practice
- two research-based [different] plans of action that would have led to a different outcome.

A Case Study of a Contemporary Issue

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations [90 to 100%]	Meets Expectations [80 to 89%]	Approaching Expectations [70 to 79%]	Falls Below Expectations [0 to 69%]
Introduction <i>[weighting 10%]</i>	The introduction is well drawn, introducing the reader to [a] the chosen issue, [b] the reasons for its choice, and [c]and explains how it connects to the author’s schoolhouse.	The introduction is reasonably well drawn, introducing the reader to [a] the chosen issue, [b] one or two reasons for its choice, and [c] a short explanation as to how it connects to the author’s schoolhouse.	The introduction is briefly drawn and introduces the reader to [a] the chosen issue, [b] a reason for its inclusion, and [c] a brief explanation of its connections to the author’s schoolhouse.	The introduction briefly mentions the chosen issue, and a reason for its inclusion.
Description of context —including important demographics, consideration of diversity—and connections to the issue. <i>[weighting 20%]</i>	The paper clearly defines demographic and diversity data as they affect the issue described.	The paper somewhat defines demographic and diversity data as they affect the issue described.	The paper defines either demographic data or diversity data – but not both as it affects the issue.	The paper provides the briefest of contexts to help the reader understand the issue.

<p>An Outline of [a] events that precipitated the issue, and [b] key school factors that influenced the issue, in timeline format.</p> <p><i>[weighting 15%]</i></p>	<p>In concise timeline format, the paper clearly outlines both the evolution of events and factors and stakeholders that influenced the issue.</p>	<p>In concise timeline format, the paper outlines the evolution of either events or factors and stakeholders that influenced the issue.</p>	<p>A general timeline is offered in loose chronological form, describing the evolution of the issue.</p>	<p>The issue is briefly described in narrative format with no mention of an unfolding timeline of events.</p>
<p>Author's Analysis of the issue includes 2 research-based scenarios that would have led to a different outcome.</p> <p><i>[Weighting 20%]</i></p>	<p>A thoughtful, research-based analysis of the issue examines the leadership response and foreshadows 2 prudent [alternate] scenarios leading to a different outcome.</p>	<p>A research-based analysis of the issue examines the leadership response and foreshadows 1 alternate scenario leading to a different outcome.</p>	<p>A research review of the issue and leadership response leads to a general description of a different outcome.</p>	<p>Analysis uninformed by research-based strategies in reaching for a different outcome.</p>
<p>The Action Plans for a different outcome appear to be grounded in thoughtful Research on the issue.</p> <p><i>[weighting 10%]</i></p>	<p>The twin recommendations are grounded in thoughtful research [3] on the issue.</p>	<p>The twin recommendations are grounded in thoughtful research [2] on the issue.</p>	<p>The twin recommendations are grounded in research [1] on the issue.</p>	<p>No research informs the recommendations for a different outcome.</p>
<p>Spelling, grammar, mechanics.</p> <p><i>[weighting 5%]</i></p>	<p>The paper is error free and is clearly and professionally presented.</p>	<p>The paper has no spelling errors and no more than two mechanical errors.</p>	<p>The paper has some spelling, grammar and/or mechanical errors.</p>	<p>The project contains many significant errors.</p>