GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION and HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Education Leadership Program

EDLE 690, Section 601 Using Research to Lead School Improvement
3 credits, Spring 2020
Mondays 4:45 – 7:45, January 27, 2020 – April 27, 2020
Robinson Secondary E109

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Prerequisite(s)/Corequisites: EDLE 620

University Catalogue Course Description
Using Research to Lead School Improvement (3:3:0) develops skills, insights, and understanding of how leaders use research to improve schools, with emphasis on the use of assessment and research data to identify school improvement needs and to design school improvement projects.

Course Delivery Method
Using Research to Lead School Improvement helps students to identify opportunities to improve student achievement and focus their efforts to change and restructure schools. Through workshops, discussions, presentations, and other learning activities, students will learn how to conduct library and field-based research, how to bridge theory and research to practice, and how to design school improvement projects based on sound theory and research. Some face-to-face classes may be replaced with asynchronous online meetings.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives
Students completing the course successfully will be able to:
- understand and apply planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity;
- understand and apply systems and organization theory;
- understand and apply management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations;
- understand and apply basic leadership theories and knowledge that impact schools;
- understand and apply research knowledge to a significant instructional problem.

Student Outcomes

Successful students will emerge from the course with the ability to:

- gather and analyze student achievement and demographic data available from their school, school district, and the state;
- search online databases for recent publications relevant to a specific topic, and prepare a brief summary of applied research on a topic relevant to the improvement of instruction at their school site;
- use education research to develop a position based on more than one's opinion;
- apply the principles of improvement science to design a school improvement plan;
- prepare and defend a proposal for a School Improvement Project (SIP) that becomes the blueprint for the capstone project required in the EDLE program internship.

Relationship of Course to Internship

Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership program has integrated internship-related activities into course work. During this course, students will prepare and present a proposal for a school improvement project that they will implement and evaluate as a part of their internship activities over the remainder of the program.

Professional Standards

National Standards

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

ELCC Standard 1.0. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning supported by the school community.

      1.2 Articulate a Vision
      1.3 Implement a Vision
      1.4 Steward a Vision

ELCC Standard 2.0. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.

      2.3 Apply Best Practice to Student Learning

ELCC Standard 3.0. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by managing the organization, operations, and resources in a way that promotes a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

> 3.1 Manage the Organization
> 3.2 Manage Operations
> 3.3 Manage Resources

ELCC Standard 4.0. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

> 4.2 Respond to Community Interests and Needs

ELCC Standard 6.0. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

> 6.2. Act to influence local, district, state, and national decisions
> 6.3. Anticipate and assess emerging trends and initiatives

Virginia Competencies

This course addresses the following Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Competencies:

a. Knowledge understanding, and application of planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity, including:

> (2) Collaborative leadership in gathering and analyzing data to identify needs to develop and implement a school improvement plan that results in increased student learning; (7) Identification, analysis, and resolution of problems using effective problem-solving techniques; and
> (8) Communication of a clear vision of excellence, linked to mission and core beliefs that promotes continuous improvement consistent with the goals of the school division.

b. Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including:

> (1) Systems theory and the change process of systems, organizations and individuals, using appropriate and effective adult learning models;
> (2) Aligning organizational practice, division mission, and core beliefs for developing and implementing strategic plans;
> (3) Information sources and processing, including data collection and data analysis strategies;
> (4) Using data as a part of ongoing program evaluation to inform and lead change;
> (5) Developing a change management strategy for improved student outcomes; and
> (6) Developing empowerment strategies to create personalized learning environments for diverse schools.

c. Knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations, including:

> (8) Application of data-driven decision making to initiate and continue improvement in school and classroom practices and student achievement.

f. Knowledge understanding and application of basic leadership theories and influences that impact schools including:

    (1) Concepts of leadership including systems theory, change theory, learning organizations and current leadership theory.

Required Texts

Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2016). *Learning to Improve: How America's Schools Can Get Better at Getting Better*. Harvard Education Press.

All students are now required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts. If you are uncertain about how to do this, please see me. It is my expectation that you will be fully competent to send and receive e-mail messages with attachments. If your computer at school or home has spam blocking that will prevent you from seeing messages with attachments, you are responsible for addressing this problem immediately.

It is expected that all students will have access to standard word processing software that can be read by Microsoft Office 2010.

Students will also need a Google account to access the Google work suite (e.g., word documents).

Course Performance and Evaluation Criteria

General Expectations
Consistent with the expectations of a Master's level course in the Education Leadership program, grading is based heavily on student performance in 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 class activities
- The quality of analysis, synthesis, and application
- The ability to write in a clear, concise, and organized fashion

Additionally, a significant portion of the class grade will be based on participation and the contribution you make to class discussion.

Specific Performances and Weights
The overall weights of the various performances are as follows:

Class- and school-based assignments. Class participation - 20 points
Candidates are expected to form and work with a school-based leadership team to design their SIP. Candidates are expected to participate actively in class discussions, small group activities, and in serving as critical friends to other colleagues.

Written Assignments - 80 points
Several different types of performance-based assignments will be completed during the semester. Each assignment relates to the application of educational research in your school setting. A description of each assignment and a rubric for grading each assignment are included at the end of this syllabus.

TK20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement:
Every student registered for an EDLE course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit these assessments to TK20 through Blackboard. EDLE 690's required performance is the School Improvement Project Proposal. Evaluation of the performance- based assessments by the course instructor will also be completed in TK20 through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

GRADING SCALE:
A+ = 100
A = 95-99
A- = 90-94
B+ = 87-89
B = 83-86
B- = 80-82
C = 75-79
F = 0-74

Course Policies
ALL ASSIGNMENTS must be submitted electronically through Blackboard unless stated otherwise.

LATE WORK: Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the dates listed on the syllabus. Late assignments will be accepted on a case by case basis. Please take advantage of instructor office hours and availability to get assistance prior to assignment deadlines.

REWRITES: Rewrites of graded work will not be possible in EDLE 690.

COMMUNICATING WITH INSTRUCTOR: Feel free to discuss any/all concerns about the class with me. It is unlikely I will respond to email over the weekend. I typically check email twice daily.

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 Mason Honor Code (see http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/).

- 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 Mason 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). Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see http://ds.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.

- As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. You may seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or email cde@gmu.edu. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychology Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. The 24-hour Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Crisis Line for Mason is 703-380-1434.

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/.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus.
- **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**
  As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Plagiarism

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. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful, to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism. (Statement of English Department at George Mason University)

Plagiarism and the Honor Code: George Mason University operates under an honor system, which is published in the University Catalog and deals specifically with cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Please familiarize yourself with the honor code, especially the statement on plagiarism (http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html). 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.

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.

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 utilize the GMU Writing Center.

Professional Dispositions
Students are always expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions. See http:cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/

Class Schedule (May be adjusted depending on course direction)

Date/ Format	Activities	Class preparation
Jan 27	1. Introductions 2. Course overview 3. Motivation: Solutionitis 4. Introduction to Improvement Science 5. Forming a School-Based Leadership Team	Read syllabus LtI: Introduction LtI: Chapter 1
Feb 3	1. Defining a Standard Work Process: Maintaining the Classroom Environment 2. Identifying a Specific Important Problem 3. Connection to Current SIIP/ SIP 4. "Engaging Diverse Perspectives" 5. Writing Assignment #1	LtI: Chapter 2 *Bring your school's current SIIP/ SIP and mission/ vision statements* *Bring list of essential school-based leadership team members*
Feb 10	1. How Did We Do Last Year? (Act 4.1) 2. Causal System Analysis: Fishbone Diagrams 3. Causal System Analysis: System Improvement Maps	*Bring trend data for high-leverage problem* *Read and consider Wk 4.2 questions* LtI: Chapter 3 up to "Working Theory of Practice Improvement" (p. 72)
Feb 17	HOLIDAY – NO CLASS	*Meet with school leadership team as needed.*
Feb 24	1. Working Theory of Practice Improvement 2. Driver Diagrams 3. Writing Assignment #2 4. Workshop	LtI: Chapter 3 from "Working Theory of Practice Improvement" (p. 72) *Meet with school leadership team as needed.*
March 2	1. Workshop**	*Meet with school leadership team as needed.*
Complete school-based Causal System Analysis before March 7 **Assignment #1 Due March 7 @ 11:59pm**		

March 9	1. Using Academic Research for School Improvement 2. Types of research 3. Reading articles 4. Accessing Research Online 5. Workshop	Lauer, 2006
March 16	1. Adaptive Integration/ Variation in Performance 2. Workshop	*Read research articles. Meet with school leadership team as needed.*
Assignment #2 Due March 21 @ 11:59pm		
March 23	1. Operationalizing Drivers 2. Measuring Outcomes, Intermediate Outcomes 3. Workshop	LtI: Chapter 4 *Meet with school leadership team as needed.*
March 30	1. PDSA 2. Designing a PDSA Cycle 3. More Measures: Process, Leading, Lagging, Balancing 4. Assignment #3	LtI: Chapter 5 *Meet with school leadership team as needed.*
April 6	HOLIDAY – NO CLASS	
Complete school-based Working Theory of Practice Improvement before conference		
April 13 and 20	1-1 Scheduled VIDEO Conferences with Dr. Hunter NO FACE-TO-FACE MEETING Asynchronous ONLINE class material posted as needed	*Bring WToPI to conference*
Complete school-based Concept Framework before April 27		
April 27	1. Closure 2. Workshop	LtI: Chapter 7 *Bring Concept Framework to class*
Assignment #3 Due May 4 @ 11:59pm		

Writing Assignment 1: Improvement Target Proposal 30 points

Data are tools – they represent a primary source of knowledge-building for school improvement. As leaders in your school, one of your primary tasks is to understand available data relating to your school's performance in meeting its goals and objectives. Additionally, you need to learn how to communicate about these data to various stakeholder groups. In this task, you are asked to assemble some of these data, and prepare a short summary suitable for presentation to a school leadership team.

Tasks:

1. Identify the variety of published data relating to your school's demographic characteristics (e.g., enrollment, attendance, composition of the student body, staffing); measures of student learning; and, as applicable, collected perceptual or supplementary data. Measures of student learning may be available on your school or school system's website, on related websites (e.g., state education department), or in published material. Perceptual and supplementary data may need to be collected.

2. Work with your school-based leadership team to determine your school's primary performance objectives: What is the school expected to achieve? Dig deeper than routine accountability requirements; examine the school's current improvement plan, for instance, to identify one or more current improvement priorities.

3. Examine relevant data for at least a two-year period. To do this, you will need to triangulate the data available to you – look across various sources to answer the question: How well are we doing? As a leader in your school, you will add value to your analysis by using your craft knowledge to interpret what these data means. You may limit your focus to one or more areas identified as priorities for your school (in other words, you do not need to present data on each and every curricular objective, but you should provide a reasonable synopsis of "how well we're doing.")

4. Identify any areas that reflect priorities – for instance, areas in which students are achieving at a level below your school's goals and objectives. Be careful to identify performance indicators that clearly relate to the objective(s) you've identified. The goal here is NOT to "solve" an identified problem, but to highlight areas that are in continued need of attention in your school's improvement plan.

5. Conduct a complete Causal System Analysis with your school leadership team, identifying the specific problem to be addressed; primary and secondary factors contributing to the problem; and a system improvement map that parses the school into different levels or organizations and identifies how factors contributing to the problem manifest within each level/ organization.

6. Prepare a paper describing an area that requires attention. Include a brief overview of relevant school demographic characteristics (particularly characteristics of the student body); information related to the school's improvement goals; data relevant to current levels of performance; perceptual or supplementary data (as applicable); a clear statement of the specific problem area(s) you believe require attention in your improvement planning; factors contributing to the problem (i.e., Fishbone analysis); and where and how contributing factors manifest in the school (i.e., System Improvement Map). Use the attached rubric as a guide to structure your paper.

This is an exercise in leadership communication. Be selective – you cannot provide an overview of all of the data that might be available. Craft your examination to focus on important areas of concern. NOTE – the tone of the paper is persuasive.

Avoid jargon, and be aware of the clarity of your presentation – if you confuse your audience or present a lot of disparate data that don't connect to your school's objectives, you've failed to add value to the discussion. Use tables or graphs sensibly -- to briefly summarize the discussion and direct the reader's attention.

This paper should be no more than ten (10) pages (not including the cover page or appendices) and should be written in a fashion that is suitable for the audience described above.

Improvement Target Proposal Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Introduction and thesis (2 points) Any written statement should begin with an introduction that draws the reader into the topic and includes a one-sentence thesis. The thesis states what the author intends to prove or demonstrate in the body of the written work. For this paper, the thesis must name the improvement target(s).	The paper starts with an introduction that provides a clear roadmap for the reader, foreshadowing what the Improvement Target Proposal is intended to provide in the way of information. The thesis appears as the last sentence of the introductory paragraph.	The paper starts with a brief introduction that alludes to the purpose of the paper and provides a general foreshadowing of what is to be included in the document. The thesis may not be entirely clear or appropriate.	The introduction provides only the barest hint about the purpose of the paper and the information to be shared. The thesis is either confusing or missing.	The paper lacks an introduction entirely, or the introduction fails to provide useful information that is linked to the intended purpose of the document.
Characteristics of the school and diversity of the school community (2 points) (ELCC 4.2) This section is intended to help the reader understand the nature of the school so that the priority area will make sense.	The paper includes a relevant overview of the demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and the school community. The school's current improvement objectives are highlighted.	The paper includes a general overview of the relevant demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and school community, and the school's current improvement objectives. Some important demographic data are not evident.	The paper includes a limited review of relevant demographic and staffing data, and the school's current improvement objectives. Important data are omitted or inaccurately presented.	The presentation of demographic data is missing or wholly inadequate.

Use of data to analyze school performance related to the school's vision and objectives **(5 points)** (ELCC 1.2) This section explains where the school has been in terms of the improvement target.	The paper includes a clear and concise summary of the school's performance based on an assessment of important educational outcomes reflecting the school's vision and objectives, over at least a two-year period.	The paper includes a summary of the school's performance over a two-year period, using general measures of important educational outcomes.	The paper includes a summary of the school's current performance in general terms. Specific indicators or educational outcomes are unclear or missing.	The assessment of school performance is missing or wholly inadequate.
Causal System Analysis (5 points) (ELCC 1.3) This is the most important point of the paper in which you discuss analyses implying where the school ought to focus its effort to improve the improvement target.	The paper clearly discusses the primary factors contributing to the improvement target(s) and why those factors were identified. A thorough Fishbone diagram is in an appendix, including secondary factors. The paper discusses the levels/ organizations of an improvement map and why those levels/ organizations were identified. A detailed improvement map is in an appendix.	The paper discusses most of the primary factors contributing to the improvement target(s) OR rationales for factors are unclear OR the paper discusses most of the levels/ organizations of an improvement map OR the rationales for levels/ organizations are unclear. Detailed improvement map and Fishbone diagrams are in appendices.	The paper does not discuss most of the primary factors contributing to the improvement target(s) OR rationales for factors are missing OR the paper does not discuss most of the levels/ organizations of an improvement map OR the rationales for levels/ organizations are missing. An improvement map AND Fishbone diagrams are in appendices, but at least ONE map/ diagram is incomplete.	The causal system analysis is missing or wholly inadequate OR the Fishbone diagram OR the improvement map is missing.

Foci of Improvement Plan (2 points) (ELCC 1.3) This section explains exactly where the school ought to focus its effort to improve the improvement target(s).	The paper concludes by clearly identifying the focal contributing factor(s) to be mitigated and which manifestations of the focal factors will be targted. The improvement target(s) are problem-specific, user-centered, and well supported by the analysis of data, and are clearly connected to the school's vision, improvement objectives, and the emerging needs of the school community.	The paper concludes by clearly identifying the focal contributing factors to be mitigated and which manifestations of the focal factors will be targted. The improvement target(s) are somewhat: problem-specific, user-centered, and supported by the analysis of data. Improvement targets are somewhat connected to the school's vision, improvement objectives, and the emerging needs of the school community.	The paper concludes by identifying a broad contributing factor or broadly states which manifestation will be mitigated. The improvement target(s) are not clearly problem-specific, user-centered, or supported by the analysis of data. The identified achievement gap(s) are not clearly supported by the analysis of school data.	The recommendation is missing or wholly inadequate.
Use of tables and graphs to summarize data (2 points) Tables and/or graphs should appear as support to the text. Data should be organized for ease of understanding.	Tables and/or graphs are powerfully used to present demographic and/or school performance data.	Tables and/or graphs are used sparingly, but effectively, to present demographic and/or school performance data.	Tables and/or graphs are used somewhat effectively, but in some instances they are distracting, mislabeled, or otherwise confusing.	Tables and/or graphics are not evident.
Mechanics and APA (2 points) Your written work should always represent you as accurate and precise.	The paper is nearly error-free which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading.	There are occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice.	Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread.	There are frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Writing Assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography 10 Points

As emerging leaders in your schools, you need to develop the skills associated with accessing the knowledge base on questions that are important to the understanding and improvement of teaching and learning. An annotated bibliography provides you with the opportunity to learn how to sift through existing research on a question that interests you and to begin to organize the knowledge that you are gaining by reading this literature.

Tasks:

1. Use the problem, challenge, or gap you identified in the previous writing assignment. With this focus, articulate a research or guiding question. For example, "Why do second language learners experience disproportionately low achievement in mathematics?" That might be a bit broad, so your research problem or question is likely to narrow as you read relevant literature.
2. Find a number of research articles (empirical studies, and syntheses) that speak to the question you selected. This is an iterative process; as you examine the literature, you will narrow your search by stating (and restating) the research question that defines what you want to know and why.
3. Prepare an ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY using three (3) of the most important papers you found. An annotated bibliography is a list of articles (or books) that includes a brief description of the work and an evaluation of its usefulness. The purpose of an annotated bibliography is to provide information about the relevance, utility, and quality of the source **for your purposes**.
4. Your annotated bibliography should include a statement of the topic and research question you are investigating and three annotated entries using the format presented in class. References must be in APA format.

Annotated Bibliography Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Statement of problem (1 point) (ELCC 1.2) A clear statement of the problem helps to guide the reader.	The paper begins with a clear statement of the question or problem, which specifically relates to a performance gap identified using assessment results, demographic data, and analysis of school and community needs.	The paper begins with a statement of the question or problem which relates generally to a performance gap identified using assessment data.	The statement of the research question or problem is evident, but is vaguely worded or poorly spelled out. It is difficult to discern a clear focus for the research.	The statement of research question or problem is missing or wholly inadequate.
Bibliographic entries – content (4 points) (ELCC 2.2) Articles read and reviewed should contain original research or useful reviews of research.	Annotated entries provide a clear and concise summary of each research source. Each entry includes an overview of the research (including research question, method and findings); and an assessment of its quality and utility.	Annotated entries provide a summary of each research source. Each entry includes a brief overview of the research and an assessment of its utility, but may be lacking in specificity.	Annotated entries provide a general overview of research sources, but lack detail or are missing significant elements needed to make the entries useful.	Annotated entries are severely lacking in detail, rendering them of little use.
Bibliographic entries – focus (1 point) Articles read must focus on the research	All entries clearly and specifically relate to the research question or problem.	Most entries relate clearly to the research question or problem.	Most entries relate only generally to the research question or problem.	The connection between annotated entries and the research question or problem is difficult to discern.

Bibliographic entries – quality (1 point) Articles used must be worthwhile.	Sources are well balanced, including original research and synthesis pieces from high-quality, credible sources.	Entries are included from quality sources, but are dominated by synthesis pieces; original research is not evident.	One or more entries are included from questionable sources, reflecting largely opinion pieces rather than original research or syntheses of research.	Entries are dominated by material from questionable sources; a review of research is not evident.
Bibliographic entries -- quantity (1 point)	Three annotated summaries are presented.	Three annotated summaries are presented. Some references appear incorrect or are in improper format.	Fewer than three annotated summaries are presented or the annotated entries contain numerous incorrect or incomplete references.	Annotated summaries and/or reference list are missing or wholly inadequate.
References (1 point)	References are complete and presented in APA format.	*Purposefully blank. Only scores of 4, 2, or 1 given for this criterion.*	The document contains numerous incorrect or incomplete references.	References are omitted entirely.
Mechanics (1 point)	The paper is nearly error-free which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading.	Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice are present.	The paper contains errors in grammar and punctuation, but spelling has been proofread.	The paper contains frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Writing Assignment 3: SIP Proposal 40 points

School leaders are increasingly expected to engage in short-term action research projects to demonstrate the efficacy of school programs and practices. As a part of your internship, you will propose a School Improvement Project (SIP) that addresses a problem identified through research on your school. Your proposal will describe a specific improvement project that you will **design, implement**, and **evaluate** during your internship, and later analyze in one of your concluding courses. The expectation is that you will lead a team in implementation of this project.

Tasks:

1. OVERVIEW: The proposal should start with a concise and well thought out description of the improvement target(s) you have identified through your assessment of important outcome data, followed by a clear **statement of purpose** that generally demonstrates how you intend to address the performance gap. After stating this purpose, include an **overview** of the project that provides a brief description of what you intend to do to implement your proposal.
2. RATIONALE: Include a concise and well thought out **rationale** that describes why it is important to address the performance gap you identified, and your espoused theory of action that suggests why taking the proposed action will lead to improvement in the targeted area. This section should discuss the rationale for your chosen a) contributing factors and b) level/ organization of the system from your Improvement Target Proposal, and c) focal primary and secondary drivers from you Driver Diagram. Be sure to describe how your SIP connects to or reinforces your school's vision and objectives. Use research (i.e., action and academic) to support your rationales. Fishbone diagrams, system improvement maps, and Driver Diagrams should be in appendices.
3. INVOLVEMENT: The expectation is that you will engage members of your school community in designing and enacting your improvement project. Provide a short summary of who you involved in the creation of this proposal, and which stakeholders you envision involving in the enactment and assessment of the SIP. Describe how you plan to enlist their support and build your team, including means you will use to maintain effective communication throughout the project.
4. ACTION PLAN: The proposal must include a clear, step-by-step **action plan** that delineates each of the major tasks that need to be completed during the project; approximately when each task will be completed; who is responsible for each task; the resources needed to complete each task; the roles of PDSA cycles in your plan and the details of your first cycle; and plans for scaling (if applicable). PDSA graphics should be in an appendix.

6. OUTCOMES: Provide a short description of the specific a) lagging, b) leading, c) intermediate, d) process measures you are seeking by implementing your project. Be specific.
7. EVALUATION PLAN: Include a narrative explanation of how and when you plan to collect data about these measures.
8. CONSEQUENCE ANALYSIS: In closing, briefly discuss the potential limitations of the project. In particular, discuss the balancing measures you will use to monitor any unintended outcomes.
9. BUDGET: Briefly discuss an approximate budget. This can be a short narrative presentation (you do not need budget codes, etc.) The narrative should include a synopsis of the funding needed to complete the project; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project, and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been (or will be) procured.

Your research proposal should be no more than 14 pages (not including cover page and appendices), and should include citations and a reference list in APA format.

SIP Proposal Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Statement of purpose and overview of project **(4 points)** (ELCC 1.2) Use of data to identify SIP topic that relates to and supports the school's vision and objectives.	The proposal begins with a clear statement of purpose, which relates specifically to an educational outcome identified using important outcome data, demographic data, and analysis of school and community needs. A concise, but thorough description of the proposed project is provided that spells out the actions proposed to reduce the identified performance gap.	The proposal begins with a statement of purpose which relates generally to an educational outcome identified using important data. A brief description of the proposed project is provided.	The statement of purpose and/or description of the project are evident, but is vaguely worded or poorly spelled out. It is difficult to discern a clear focus of the project.	The statement of purpose and/or project description is missing or wholly inadequate.
Rationale (4 points) (ELCC 1.3) Use of research-supported strategies to promote continual and sustainable improvement	The proposal includes concise and well supported rationales that describes the nature of the problem being addressed, why the problem is important, factors contributing to the problem, and how taking the proposed action is intended to lead to improvement. Specific action and academic research is presented in support of the strategy selected to address the identified improvement target.	The proposal includes rationales that describes the nature of the problem being addressed and why the problem is important to the attainment of the school's vision, but it is somewhat unclear about how taking the proposed action is intended to lead to improvement. Research supporting the general improvement strategy is referenced.	The proposal includes rationales, but only generally connects the proposed action to mitigation of the identified improvement target. Research supporting the proposed action is weakly presented or not evident.	Rationales are weak or wholly inadequate. It is not clear how enacting the proposed project relates to mitigating the identified improvement target.

Involvement (2 points) (ELCC 3.4) Identification and formation of team to distribute leadership	The proposal clearly describes which stakeholders will be involved in enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the SIP. All stakeholders who are important to the success of the project are involved. Team member roles and responsibilities are outlined, as are means that will be used to maintain effective communication among team members	The proposal describes the primary stakeholders who will be involved in enactment of the SIP. One or more groups whose involvement may be important are omitted. Attributes of team organization are described in general terms.	The proposal is unclear about stakeholders' involvement in enactment of the SIP, or fails to mention groups who are obviously important to the success of the project. Attributes of team organization are referenced in general terms.	Stakeholder involvement in planning and/or implementation is not evident.
Involvement (2 points) (ELCC 2.1) Understand and sustain a culture of trust, collaboration and high expectations for students	The proposal clearly describes how the candidate will build a collaborative team to promote improvement goals, and build trust throughout enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the SIP.	The proposal describes some ways the candidate will build a collaborative team and build trust in enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the SIP .	The proposal is unclear about ways collaboration and involvement will be fostered throughout the project.	The proposal is silent with regard to stakeholder involvement and/or trust building.

Action Plan (6 points) (ELCC 3.1) Development of action plan to guide the implementation of SIP	The proposal includes a clear and well thought out action plan that focuses on effective deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to guide the implementation of the SIP. The plan thoroughly delineates each of the major tasks to be accomplished in enacting the project; approximately when each task will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each task; the roles of PDSA cycles in your plan and the details of your first cycle; and plans for scaling (if applicable).	The proposal includes an action plan that describes how human, fiscal, and material resources will be used to implement the SIP. The plan delineates most of the major tasks needed to enact the project; approximately when various tasks will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each task; the roles of PDSA cycles in your plan and the details of your first cycle; and plans for scaling (if applicable). Some necessary tasks or implementation details are vaguely described or missing.	The action plan details tasks, time lines, persons responsible, resources, and PDSA plans and scalability plans, but does so in a fashion that is unlikely to result in successful deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to accomplish the stated purpose. Significant tasks are inadequately spelled out or are missing entirely.	The action plan is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or wholly missing. It is entirely unclear how any proposed actions can result in successful implementation of the project.
Professional development (2 points) (ELCC 2.3) Inclusion of appropriate human resource development plans. Much, if not all, of these plans may be addressed in the ACTION PLAN section.	The proposal includes clear and well thought out plans for the development and supervision of instructional and other staff needed to enact the plan.	The proposal includes plans for the development and supervision of instructional and other staff needed to enact the plan, but lacks specificity or fails to anticipate the learning needs of some stakeholders.	The proposal includes vague or superficial plans for to develop the skills and abilities of stakeholders who are involved in enactment of the plan.	The proposal fails to account for the human resource development needs of stakeholders who are involved in enactment of the plan.

Outcomes (4 points) (ELCC 1.4) Identification of specific outcomes that will be used to monitor and evaluate progress and plans	Specific lagging, leading, intermediate, and process measures are identified and described. Each measure is demonstrably connected to either monitoring implementation fidelity of the project or mitigating the identified improvement target.	Specific measures are identified and described that could be used to monitor and evaluate the impact of the project. Measures used to monitor implementation fidelity are unclear.	The proposal makes general reference to the kinds of outcomes sought, but specific measurable of implementation fidelity and/or project outcomes are not clearly identified.	The outcomes associated with the project are not specified, or outcomes that do not relate to the identified improvement target are proposed.
Evaluation (4 points) (ELCC 2.2) Plan to monitor and evaluate the project	A clear, well developed plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to each measure will be collected and approximately when these data will be collected. The evaluation plan includes steps that will be taken to examine and adjust the project during enactment (i.e., monitor implementation) and to assess summatively the effectiveness of the project in terms of mitigating the identified problem.	A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to most of the identified educational indicators will be collected and approximately when these data will be collected. The evaluation plan includes general steps that will be taken to monitor implementation and to assess summatively the effectiveness of the project.	A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, but it lacks specificity and/or is not clearly connected to the espoused objectives of the SIP. Steps that will be taken to collect various data are unclear, as are methods that will be used to monitor implementation and to summatively assess the efficacy of the project.	The evaluation plan is poorly organized, lacks sufficient detail, or is wholly inadequate to support the evaluation of the project.

Consequence analysis (4 points) (ELCC 6.2) Identification of potential issues related to enactment of plan within the school and school community to positively influence the school context	The proposal includes a brief discussion of the limitations of the proposed project design, highlighting possible issues relating to enactment of the plan within the school and school community. Balancing measures are discussed and are clearly justified.	The proposal includes a vague analysis of limitations. Obvious limitations of the project and evaluation design are identified. Balance measures are discussed, but not fully justified.	The proposal includes a cursory analysis of limitations. Balance measures are identified but not justified.	The proposal includes a general restatement of the project's purpose and/or description, but lacks any reasonable reflection on limitations. A consequence analysis is not evident.
Budget (2 points) (ELCC 3.2) Use of new and existing resources to facilitate SIP	The proposal includes a brief budget summary that demonstrates the ability to identify and procure new and existing resources to facilitate the implementation of your SIP project. The budget includes a summary of the funding needed to accomplish the project; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project; and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured.	The proposal includes a brief budget summary. Funding needed to accomplish the project is identified; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project is outlined; and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured is described.	A budget summary is presented, but it is lacking or is missing necessary components. The use of existing resources is not well thought out, and/or procedures for leveraging these resources are undeveloped or missing.	The budget is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or wholly inadequate to support the objective and action plan described.

Support (2 points) (ELCC 6.3) Use available knowledge related to current and emerging trends	Specific, developed ideas and/or evidence from research are used to support the selection of the achievement gap and the strategy identified for addressing it.	Supporting research used to support the project lacks specificity or is loosely developed.	General supporting ideas or evidence are presented.	Few to no solid supporting ideas or evidence from research are included.
Organization of proposal (2 points)	The proposal is powerfully organized and fully developed.	The proposal includes logical progression of ideas aided by clear transitions.	The proposal includes brief skeleton (introduction, body, and conclusion) but lacks effective transitions.	The proposal lacks a logical progression of ideas.
Mechanics and APA (2 points)	The proposal is nearly error-free, which reflects clear understanding of APA and thorough proofreading.	Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice are present.	Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread.	The proposal contains frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Class Participation Assessment Rubric (20 Points)

	4 Exceeds Expectations	3 Meets Expectations	2 Approaches Expectations	1 Falls Below Expectations
Attendance (2.5 points)	Exemplary attendance (no absences, tardies or early dismissals)	Maximum of one absence or two tardies and/or early dismissals	Occasional absences (more than one) and/or frequent tardies and early dismissals	Frequent absences and/or tardies
Quality of interaction -- questions, comments, suggestions **(2 points)**	Most queries are specific and on target. Deeply involved in whole class and group discussions.	Often has specific queries, stays involved in class discussion.	Asks questions about deadlines, procedures, directions. Little discussion about class topics and/or ideas.	Rarely interacts with the instructor or class mates in an appropriate manner
Effort (2.5 points)	Volunteers as appropriate and often leads in group settings. Engages and brings out the best in others.	Willingly participates with instructor and classmates. Engages others.	Reluctantly participates when asked (rarely volunteers) Seeks easiest duties within groups.	Actively avoids involvement. Complains about others and uses excuses to explain deficiencies.
Demonstration of preparation for class (3 points)	Demonstrates preparation regularly by referring to previous learning, text and other sources to contribute to class discussion and is prepared for each class.	Demonstrates preparation regularly by referring to previous learning, text and other sources to contribute to class discussion.	Demonstrates preparation and readiness periodically.	Is unable to demonstrate readiness for class
Satisfactory completion of school-based and in-class assignments (10 points)	All assignments are satisfactorily completed and submitted on time.	All assignments are satisfactorily completed and most are submitted on time.	Most assignments are satisfactorily completed.	Most assignments are not satisfactorily completed.