

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

**EDLE 895 DL: Emerging Issues in Administration and Supervision
Spring 2022**

Instructor:	Farnoosh Shahrokhi
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Office hours:	By appointment via <i>Blackboard Collaborate Ultra</i> or <i>Zoom</i>
Schedule:	Spring 2022 (January 26, 2022- May 11, 2022) Wednesday to Tuesday, 11:59 PM (EST)
Location:	Blackboard: https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/

Catalog Descriptions:

EDLE 895 - Emerging Issues in Administration and Supervision covers selected emerging issues in educational leadership. Students engage in research, study, discussion, and writing about various topics selected for the study.

Prerequisites: Admission to Ph.D. program or permission of instructor.

Course objectives & relationship to program goals:

The first courses in the EDLE doctoral specialization sequence allowed students to explore their research interests in the context of the larger sweep of education leadership as a field, with a focus on how leaders at all levels impact the effectiveness and improvement of schools and school systems. These survey courses introduced students to a wide variety of theories and applied research on leadership, school organization, policy, and decision making. The courses also provided the opportunity for students to develop their personae as researchers and develop the necessary skills to be successful as doctoral candidates in education leadership.

EDLE 895 is the last of the required classes in the EDLE doctoral specialization sequence. In contrast to the initial survey classes, the objective of this class is to allow students to develop a deep understanding of a problem they envision researching as a scholar, based on a thorough examination of the published research literature.

At the culmination of the class, students will present a prospectus that describes the problem and related research questions that they plan to study; situate these questions within the literature by providing a clear conceptual framework for the study; and provide a clear and compelling rationale for conducting the study (i.e., demonstrate the importance of addressing these questions in relation to extending the knowledge base and/or improving leadership practice).

All courses in the EDLE specialization are designed around the theme of connecting *theory, research, and practice*. Thus, we will explore:

1. **Theory:** What are the features and assumptions of the perspective used to inform your work? What content are themes stressed? Does the perspective adequately describe, explain, and predict something of interest in the world of educational leaders?
2. **Research:** What kinds of empirical questions tend to be addressed using this perspective? Are there any particular methodological considerations associated with the perspective (i.e., unit of analysis, typical research methods used)?
3. **Practice:** What does each perspective help us understand school leadership, organization, and decision-making? What are the limitations of the perspective?

Student Outcomes:

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

1. Read applied research literature and present a summary and critique of literature in relation to the potential contribution of the work to their research;
2. Engage in online class conversations that explore a research topic of relevance to the field that represents an opportunity for future scholarly investigation;
3. Describe, verbally and graphically, a conceptual framework that informs their area of interest;
4. Write a coherent research prospectus that includes a statement of the research problem, a conceptual framework, and a rationale for the study.

Relationship to Program Goals

EDLE 895 is a course in the Education Leadership specialization in the Ph.D. in Education program. It is aligned with the **CEHD Core Values: Collaboration, Ethical Leadership, Innovation, Research-Based Practice, and Social Justice**. This course also directly addresses the two major Ph.D. in Education Program goals: 1) Improve knowledge and skills useful in current or planned educational and counseling roles; and 2) Improve the ability to analyze current social, economic, political, and ethical issues and concerns in their relationship to various educational and community situations and activities. A primary goal of the Ph.D. in Education program is to teach students how to conduct research. Developing a conceptual framework and connecting existing research to a research topic of significance is a crucial component of engaging in and writing about research.

Nature of Course Delivery:

This is an online course that will include various activities and exercises. Your primary responsibilities are 1) to read the literature; 2) to share your questions, reflect on your experiences, and engage in productive discussion to make the literature relevant to the world of practice that we experience and understand; and 3) to write, share your written work, and provide feedback to others in a respectful fashion.

1. Classes will reflect a balance of activities that enable students to develop their personae as scholars. To promote an atmosphere that allows us to accomplish this, we will:
 - a. Commit to submitting assignments in a timely manner as specified in designated Blackboard (Discussion Board) due dates.
 - b. Agree to disagree respectfully during class discussions;
 - c. Strive to be open to new ideas and perspectives; and
2. Student work will reflect what is expected from scholars. As such, students are expected to:
 - a. write papers that are well researched, proofread, submitted in a timely fashion, and consistent with APA guidelines;
 - b. participate actively in online class discussions in a manner that challenges the best thinking of the class;
 - c. provide constructive feedback to others both on their ideas and on their written work, striving to learn from each other and test each other's ideas.
3. We will endeavor to create an online classroom climate that approximates what we know about learning organizations. As such, 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. be fully engaged in the course;
 - b. demonstrate appropriate respect for one another;
 - c. voice concerns and opinions about class process openly;
 - d. recognize and celebrate each other's ideas and accomplishments;

- e. show an awareness of each other's needs.

Course Delivery Method

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 @gmu.edu) and password. The course site will be available on Tuesday, January 18, 2022.

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.

Technical Requirements

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

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers, see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operating systems on different devices, see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- 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://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Online Expectations

- **Course Week:** Because online courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will start on Wednesday and finish on Tuesday with assignments typically due by Tuesday midnight EXCEPT where noted on the syllabi. This schedule should allow sufficient time to complete and post assignments for this course.
- **Login 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 three times per week.
- **Participation:** Students are expected to engage in all course activities throughout the semester actively, including viewing 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 using all course technology. Students struggling with the course's technical components are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:** Students should anticipate technical difficulties during the semester and 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. The student's responsibility is to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities, and assignments.
- **Instructor Support:** Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues. 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 that others do not consider them 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 adequate accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Course materials:

Since this class is heavily focused on students' research interests, there is only one required text that is limited in length. You should use information in the readings from book chapters (Bryk) and research articles to develop your work products. All students are expected to have access to a personal computer and use basic word processing, email, and web browser programs. **All correspondence by email will use your Mason email account.** We will also use Blackboard to facilitate communication, post assignments, class handouts, and submit written work for assessment. The majority of our work will be through Discussion Board and under Assignments.

Required Text

Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better.*

Recommended Text

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Grading:

Consistent with the expectations of any doctoral program, grading is based heavily on student performance on written assignments. The assignments constructed for this course reflect a mix of skills that build toward the presentation of a coherent research prospectus and the ability to collaborate with colleagues. Overall, written work will be assessed using the following broad criteria:

- Application of concepts reflected in online class discussions and readings, and your ability to pick the most salient concepts and apply them.
- Creativity and imagination; papers allow you to speculate and float questions or ideas reflecting your appreciation of the literature.
- Organization and writing. A clear, concise, and well-organized paper will earn a better grade.

Additionally, a portion of your class grade will be based on participation and your contribution to class discussions. The overall weights of the various performances are as follows:

Class leadership and participation

Students are expected to have read assigned readings prior to the date they appear on the "class schedule" below. Students are expected to participate actively in online discussions, study group activities, and serve as

critical friends to other students. Students will periodically have an opportunity to read and review each other's work in colleague-critical teams, as well.

Facilitator roles: The content material for this class will be constructed by the class – in other words, the "current topics" will be selected by the class *based on your research interests*. You will be responsible for:

- Reviewing the research literature ahead of time, selecting and assigning *no more than three* readings for the class. The expectation is that these will be applied research articles, not digests or magazine articles.
- Presenting in draft form a conceptual framework and research proposal that describes the research purpose, question(s), and relevance of the proposed study. (One focus of class discussion might be elaborating the theoretical, research, and practical significance of conducting such a study.)

Written Assignments (100 Points)

These 100 points are with expectation of participation in all assignments that require online presentation and discussion. Six different types of papers will be expected of students in this class:

1. Students will provide a two-page summary of Bryk's chapters on Improvement Science highlighting practical, policy, and research implications for school improvement. (Part of 10 points for class participation)
2. Students will work in small groups to select an emerging issue that is of great concern to them and holds important implications for the field of educational leadership. (10 points)
3. Students will submit a brief paper describing the research purpose and questions they intend to focus on for their dissertation work. (15 points)
4. To facilitate work on students' research topics, students will submit a minimum of fifteen (15) one-page annotated bibliography entries prepared based on reading applied research articles related to a research topic of interest. (30 points)
5. Students will prepare an online poster and present, in poster-session format, their concept map of constructs related to their research topic and question(s). We will use a webinar format for this activity. (15 points)
6. Students will write a research prospectus that describes the work they propose for their dissertation research. (20 points)

All papers must be submitted to Blackboard as Word file attachments. The specific assignments appear at the end of the syllabus.

Late work: It is expected that student work will be submitted on time. Late assignments may receive a deduction in points; however, assignments will not be accepted later than one week after the due date.

Grading scale: Grading Scale:

A =	93-100%
A- =	90-92%
B+ =	88-89%
B =	80-87%
C =	70-79%
F =	Below 70%

Professional Dispositions:

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Core Values Commitment:

The College of Education and 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 <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://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 George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound-emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- 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 Mason's Title IX Coordinator assistance by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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

