

**George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Educational Leadership Program**

**EDLE 634 Section 601 Contemporary Issues in Educational Leadership
3 credits, Summer 2022
Tuesdays 4:45-7:45, 5/24/22 to 7/19/22, Woodson HS Library, 117**

Faculty:

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Office Hours: By individual appointment as needed
Office Location: Robinson Secondary School
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Course Description

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.

Course Overview

This course is intended as one of two culminating courses in the Master's in Education Leadership Program. Course content focuses on key contemporary issues in public education, which hold important implications for education leadership, policy, and practice in the 21st century. At the conclusion of the course, students will be expected to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to increase their effectiveness in working with multiple school and community stakeholders in increasingly diverse and complex education contexts.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered in a hybrid format with face to face sessions as well as asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. A variety of instructional methods will be used in this face-to face and online (hybrid) course to deepen student's understanding of the course content and create a dynamic, interactive learning community in a seminar format. The instructional methods will include cooperative learning structures, small and large group discussion, group presentations, print and electronic media, guest lecturers, online submissions, and individual research. The course site will be available on 5/23/22.

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 operation 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 will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]
 - 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: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
 - 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/

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Analyze contemporary issues and major trends in education and their implications for society at large and schools, communities and school districts in particular.
2. Define characteristics and skills of future-focused leaders and learn strategies to address the implications for leadership in education systems and individual schools.
3. Evaluate how student diversity can help teachers and administrators develop curriculum that includes global literacy with a significant effect on economic, cultural, and political matters, with particular attention on how culture influences learning.
4. Synthesize recent research relative to student achievement in diverse school settings, with particular attention to the relationships between student achievement, gender, race, poverty, and ability.
5. Identify various strategies to maximize the effective use of data to improve student achievement and effective ways to communicate results to various community stakeholders and groups.
6. Defend educational decisions using data rather than personal opinion.
7. Describe rights, regulations, philosophies, and methods used in educating diverse groups such as Limited English Proficient and Students with Disabilities.
8. Utilize various data sources to predict future issues/trends in education and to improve student achievement.
9. Work independently and interdependently to successfully accomplish group projects.
10. Listen to multiple perspectives, consider suggestions, seek common ground, and maintain objectivity.

Professional Standards

This course is intended as one of two culminating courses in the Masters in Education Leadership Program. Course content focuses on key contemporary issues in public education, both current and emerging. At the conclusion of the course, participants are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills that increase their effectiveness when working in diverse school settings; an expected hallmark of education in the 21st century.

In relationship to professional organization competencies, participants in this course will demonstrate proficiency in appropriate VA DOE competencies and Professional Standards for Educational Leaders. VA DOE: 1-d, 1-e, 2-c, 2-d, 3-g, 4-a, 5-c, 6-e, 6-f. ISLLC: 1-K1, 1-K4, 1-K5, 2-K7, 2-K10, 2-P5, 2-P6, 2-P9, 2-P16, 2-P18, 3-K8, 3-P3, 3-P16, 3-P17, 4-K1, 4-K2, 4-P11, 5-K3, 5-P12, 6-K6, 6-K8, 6-P2, 6-P4, 6-P5.

Required Texts

Koonce, G. (2017). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Educational Issues (20th ed.)*. New York, NY:

Wagner and Dintersmith. (2015). *Most Likely to Succeed*.

Blackboard Site- Research articles, briefs and reports will be posted to the Blackboard site related to discussion topics for specific class sessions. Students will be required to check the site weekly for articles posted and be prepared for class discussions on the topic.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, hard copy).

Assignments and/or Examinations

Below is a list and a brief summary of the required assignments in this course. Please refer to the assignment rubrics at the end of the syllabus for more detailed information on exactly what is expected for each assignment.

1. Class Discussion and Participation (25 points)

Students are expected to participate in class by completing readings prior to class discussions and making thoughtful and informed contributions to the discourse. As such, weekly readings should be completed prior to the class meeting for which they are assigned. Students are also encouraged to share relevant materials and resources to stimulate discussion, learning, and improved practice in the field, while fostering an environment that welcomes diverse and critical perspectives, given the aims of this course. If an unforeseen circumstance arises that keeps an individual from attending class prepared and on time, that student is responsible for notifying the professor prior to the scheduled class time. Only those students who attend class regularly, arrive on time, and are actively informed and engaged in the coursework will be eligible for maximum participation points.

2. Group Presentation: Trends for the 21st Century (30 points)

Collaboration is a key skill for 21st century leaders and learners. This assignment allows future leaders to share their knowledge of 21st century trends (a trend selected by the group) that are likely to have a significant impact on our students, schools, districts, communities, and our future. Based on Marx's work, these trends are grouped into 8 "spheres". Students will be assigned to groups and selected spheres, inclusive of several trends. Using the course materials provided, students will research two "spheres" and demonstrate their collective knowledge on related research, perspectives, issues, and insights to the class and explore their particular trend within the context of the two "spheres." The focus of the half-hour presentation will be on the implications for education and particularly the role of the educational leader in addressing the issues. Students will synthesize the implications for the educational leader into a one-page executive summary document that will also be distributed to the class. Through this collaborative learning activity, students will connect the learning to current and future practice, with a focus on the role of the educational leader, including challenges and opportunities. Students are encouraged to use other 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, and effective communication to convey the essential knowledge and implications. A rubric is provided as an assessment for this assignment.

3. Issue Brief (20 points)

Students will select a contemporary issue in education that is of great interest to them and holds important implications for the study and practice of education leadership. Once selected, the student will write an issue brief (4 to 5 pages) that: (a) clearly describes the underlying assumptions and arguments informing multiple perspectives on the issue; (b) integrates current research/policy literature and popular media coverage of the issue; (c) analyzes competing perspectives on the prevailing issue and their implications for education leaders, and (d) presents at least three recommendations for policy and/or leadership practice as possible solutions.

4. Small Group Project/Presentation on Current Issue (25 points)

Students will work in groups of 4 or 5, with defined roles and prepare a 40-minute interactive presentation (which includes a Q & A) with visuals/PPT, on a selected topic, which is to be defined/described and include relevant related research. The group will discuss the topic's implications and potential impact on education. Multiple perspectives from key stakeholders should be presented. See list of possible topics.

Possible Topics for Issue Brief Paper/Small Group Presentations:

Bullying, discipline, technology, personnel shortages/recruitment/retention, professional learning, professional standards, personalized learning, performance-based assessment, common core, response to intervention/multi-tiered systems of support, funding, school turn around, charter schools, graduation rates, gender equity, inclusive practices, employee compensation, teacher leadership, blended learning, parent/community involvement, no-zero policies, cultural observance dates, Title IX impact, State standards versus national standards, etc. Contact the instructor if you would like to explore a topic that is not listed.

Assignment Expectations and Possible Points:

All papers must be typed (12 pt. font, 1-inch margins, double-spaced in APA format – 7th edition) and submitted electronically to the instructor. It is expected that student work will be submitted on time (before 11:59 p.m. on the due date). If you miss class the day an assignment is due, it is your responsibility to ensure the assignment is turned in before the deadline to avoid a failing grade. If you anticipate needing an extension (except, of course, in the case of a true emergency), please decide prior the deadline. Designate one person in each group to submit the group presentation ensuring that each group member's name is included on the presentation document.

Class Discussion and Participation	25 points
Education Issue Brief	20 points
21st Century Trends: Group Presentations	30 points
Small Group Project/Current Issue Presentation	25 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE 100 points

Grading

The grading scale for the final course grade is as follows:

A+	=	100 points
A	=	95-99 points
A-	=	90-94 points
B+	=	87-89 points
B	=	83-86 points
B-	=	80-82 points
C	=	75-79 points
F	=	below 75 points

Professional Dispositions

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

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-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.

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

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 must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off 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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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