

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

**EDLE 802, Section B02, Summer, 2023
Leadership and Decision Making
5/30/23 – 7/26/23**

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Schedule Information

Location: GMU Campus Thompson Hall, Room L014

Meeting time: Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10 p.m.

Course Description: EDLE 802 Leadership and Decision Making (3:3:0)

Engages students in the study of major leadership and decision theories that inform educational leadership research. Students use theory to help inform their own research interests. Students begin work on analytical literature review.

Prerequisite: EDLE 801

Required Text:

Johnson, B. L., & Sharon, K. D. (2009). *Decision making for educational leaders: Underexamined dimensions and issues*. State University of New York.

Course Objectives

EDLE 802 is the second in a two-course sequence designed to provide a firm foundation for students' research in education leadership. The general emphasis in the sequence is on students learning how to explore their research interests in the context of the large sweep of educational leadership as a field with a focus on how leaders at multiple levels and various contexts impact the effectiveness and improvement of schools and systems of schools. EDLE 802 provides a specific focus on theory and research surrounding leader decision making in general and in educational environments in particular.

Additionally, the course is designed to connect theory, research and practice by exploring a variety of leadership decision making perspectives:

1. Theory. What are the features and assumptions of the perspective? What content themes are stressed? Does the perspective adequately describe, explain, and predict something of interest in the world of education 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 about school leadership, organizations, and decision-making? What are the limitations of the perspective?

Nature of Course Delivery

This course will be delivered in a hybrid (50% in-person and 50% asynchronous) format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. Asynchronous assignments will be posted by Tuesday (a.m.) of asynchronous weeks and will be due on the following Monday by 11:59 p.m. The course Blackboard site will be available on 5/30/23.

On-line Course Expectations

- **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 several times a 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. 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 ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Technology 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 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/

General Goals

Content

All EDLE program goals are active in this course. The primary purpose of this course is to prepare students to exercise leadership in the school and larger community within an explicit conceptual framework. Candidates will deepen their understanding of: (1) the use of research and development tools to lead schools and communities, (2) how organizations function, and (3) how leaders influence school change and improvement. Specific content includes:

1. Reviewing and expanding on the meaning of leadership and the role leaders play in change within the school community.
2. Investigating political, financial, legal and instructional implications of issues related to the needs, strengths, and actions of the local school community and school division.

3. Clarifying which framework(s) students find most useful for informing their individual leadership philosophy;
4. Applying skills, knowledge, and dispositions gained through the Education Leadership Program to the analysis of case studies, focus group data, and role-playing exercises involving leadership behaviors.

Teaching and Learning

Each class will include a variety of learning activities. Out-of-class work will rely in part on the use of Blackboard and other web-based resources created to complement primary texts. Specific process goals for the class are as follows:

1. Classes will reflect a balance of activities that encourage inquiry and discourse. To promote an atmosphere that allows us to accomplish this, we will:
 - a. Start and end on time;
 - b. Maintain a written agenda reflecting objectives for each class;
 - c. Agree to disagree respectfully during class discussions;
 - d. Strive to be open to new ideas and multiple perspectives; and
 - e. Listen actively to one another.
2. Student work will reflect a level of quality expected from leaders. As such, students are expected to:
 - a. Prepare papers that are well researched, proofread, submitted on time, and conform to APA (7th ed.) guidelines;
 - b. Participate actively in class discussions;
 - c. Provide constructive oral and written feedback to others.

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a solid understanding of formal leadership and decision theory through discourse, presentation, and written paper assignments;
2. Review and summarize research literature and present persuasive written and oral critiques;
3. Engage in conversation to explore topics in their field of interest that represent opportunities for future investigation;
4. Use theory to frame researchable questions and extant literature to inform problems relating to research and professional practice; and
5. Further develop their ability to write doctoral-level papers.

NELP Standards

The following National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) program standards are addressed in this course:

Component 1.1: Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to collaboratively evaluate, develop, and communicate a school mission and vision designed to reflect a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community.

Component 2.2: Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, communicate about, and advocate for ethical and legal decisions.

Component 4.1: Program completers understand and can demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, develop, and implement high-quality, technology rich curricula, programs, and other supports for academic and nonacademic student programs.

Component 4.2: Program completers understand and can demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, develop, and implement high-quality and equitable academic and nonacademic instructional practices, resources, technologies, and services that support equity, digital literacy, and the school's academic and nonacademic systems.

Component 5.3: Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to communicate through oral, written, and digital means with the larger organizational, community, and political contexts when advocating for the needs of their school and community.

Component 6.3: Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to reflectively evaluate, communicate about, and implement laws, rights, policies, and regulations to promote student and adult success and well-being.

Component 7.3: Program completers understand and have the capacity to personally engage in, as well as collaboratively engage staff in, professional learning designed to promote reflection, cultural responsiveness, distributed leadership, digital literacy, school improvement, and student success.

Course Materials

Recommended Resource:

American Psychological Association (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition). Washington, D.C. American Psychological Association.

Other Course Resources will be listed in the weekly schedule and will be available on Blackboard.

Professional Dispositions

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: <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 <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

- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://course-support.gmu.edu/>.
- More information about VIA can be found at <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments/>. Questions can be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

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

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.

