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

Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership
EDLE 634.602– 3 Credits, Fall 2023
Online Course: 9/11/23 – 12/2/23
Four (4) Synchronous meetings on Monday, 5:00-8:00pm

Instructor:	Richard G. Deivert, Ph.D.		
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University Catalog 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.

Nature of Course Delivery: **This course will be delivered using the online model with a combination asynchronous (66%)/synchronous (34%) [BBCU] format**. ***EDLE 634 will be available on Blackboard on or before September 11.***

A variety of instructional methods are used to cover the subject matter and create a dynamic, interactive learning environment. These methods *may* include large and small group discussions, case studies, media, Internet assignments, group Blog submissions, lecture, guest practitioners, group presentations, interviews, collaborative learning and reflection. There is some out-of-class work (research) expected. The challenge is to become a community of learners.

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.

Instructor Support:

Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the professor via telephone. 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.

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

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 Readings:
Postings on Contemporary Issues in Education Leadership from the instructor and reliable sources.

*William H. Frey Diversity Explosion: How New Racial Demographics are Remaking America Brookings (2018), 2nd ed.

*Carter, P. L., & Welner, K. G. (Eds.). Closing the opportunity gap (2013).

Supplemental texts - **not required**: Instructor will introduce various concepts from these sources.

Koonce, G. (2017). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Educational Issues 20th ed.)*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill. Currently out of print.

Marx, G. (2015). *A Guide to Twenty-One Trends for the 21st Century: Out of the Trenches and into the Future*. Bethesda, MD: Education Week Press.

Required Resources Due to the nature of this course, the online publications listed below will be used to provide students with the most current issues and best practices and information in the field. Students are required to sign up for the publication prior to the start of the course. The instructor will provide registration and access information. The publications will be used as a regular part of every class.

ASCD SmartBrief   https://www.smartbrief.com/ascd/

SmartBrief on Special Education
https://www.smartbrief.com/signupSystem/subscribe.action?pageSequence=1&briefName=speciale d&campaign=in_brief_signup_link&utm_source=brief

Students will sign up to receive these online newsletters which provide a daily (ASCD), current snapshot of the education community with news from Education Week, The Washington Post and other leading sources written by experts in summary form. Each class will start with a brief report out on a current trend or issue from this resource.

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 daily for articles posted and be prepared for class discussions on the topic.

Course Performance Evaluation
Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. 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: (30 points)

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.

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

Students will work in groups of 2 or 3, with defined roles and prepare a presentation on a selected topic, which is to be defined/described and include relevant related research.

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	=	74 - 0 points

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.
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 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 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 follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA/SLL 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 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/**.**