George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Independent School Leadership Program

EDLE 620.DL2
Organizational Theory & Leadership Development

Spring 2024, 3 credit hours
Asynchronous Online

Instructor:	Regina D Biggs, Ph.D.
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Phone:	
Office Hours:	Online - by appointment
Course Term:	

Co-requisite(s): Application to the Independent School Leadership Program.

Course Description

EDLE 620: *Organizational Theory and Leadership Development* (3:3:0) Studies basic organizational theories and models of leadership and management. Emphasizes shared leadership in professional environments, communication skills, systems thinking, and personal and organizational change. Bridges theory to practical applications in educational settings.

General Goals: Organizational Theory and Leadership Development is intended to provide students with an opportunity to explore meanings of leadership in schools, leaders' role in school change and restructuring; and ways school leaders make sense of school organization. Students will explore both how organizations function and leadership choices within organizations, and they will have an opportunity to begin to develop a vision of their leadership practice and situate it within a perspective of how school organizations work.

Course Delivery Method

This 100% online course uses 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 @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on January 16, 2024.

Under no circumstances may 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.

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/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support
- 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/

- **Email**: All candidates are required to activate and monitor their GMU email accounts. Per university policy and in compliance with federal law, I will only communicate with candidates via their GMU email accounts. I will not respond to emails from other accounts (i.e., Gmail, Yahoo, work email, etc.). Any announcements concerning the course will be sent to your GMU email address. I will respond to emails within one business day of email receipt (i.e., excluding holidays and weekends).

- **Video Conferencing**: Students are encouraged to communicate with each other and the instructor using Blackboard Collaborate or Zoom for both group collaboration sessions and the instructor's virtual office hours.

- **Microsoft Office**: All students will require access to Microsoft Office. We will be using Word for this course. If you do not have access to this software, you must obtain it within the first two weeks of the course. Having the most recent software version is best but not required.

- **Google Account**: This semester, we will use Google Drive to organize our collaborative work. Students will post work products on Blackboard Discussion Boards for class commentary and assessment. All students are required to have an active Gmail account to participate in these activities. This Gmail account should be distinct from your school email address, even if you can access Google through your school account (email should end in @gmail.com).

Online Expectations

- **Asynchronous Course Week:** Because online courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will generally **start** on Wednesday and **finish** on Tuesday, with exceptions communicated to students via email.

- **Office hours-** see Blackboard for hours and Calendly link

- **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 three times per week.

- **Participation**: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, 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 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 referenced in the Class Schedule presented on the Blackboard site.** 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. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- **Confidentiality:** By federal law, any materials identifying specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

  o Video recordings — whether made by instructors or students — of class meetings that include audio, visual, or textual information from other students are private and must not be shared outside the class.

  o Live video conference meetings (e.g., Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio, textual, or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household or recorded and shared outside the class.

- **Netiquette:** The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed online can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them so others do not consider them personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach to 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 accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services and provide the

instructor with a Faculty Contact Sheet. Academic accommodations are initiated through Faculty Contact Sheets, which are not retroactive.

Program Learning Objectives

The Education Leadership program is designed to prepare candidates for leadership and management positions in various educational settings. The program emphasizes understanding the complexities of change in schools, communities, and organizations. This first class is intended to introduce students to theory and practice in school leadership. Theories presented in this class through readings, mixed media, and engagement activities will be used throughout the program to frame the candidate's thinking about leadership practice and decision-making.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Understand the meaning and significance of the education leader's vision and core beliefs in school organizations;
2. Explore and differentiate traditional and critical leadership and organizational theories and their relationship to the study and practice of educational leadership; and
3. Engage multiple conceptual and theoretical tools and strategies for observing, describing, and analyzing leadership cases for organizational change and enhanced institutional performance.

Professional Standards

The Independent School Leadership Concentration coursework is informed by professional leadership standards and the NAIS Principles of Good Practice, reflecting an overall dedication to quality education characterized by independent schools. Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Define, identify, and articulate the meaning and significance of the education leader's vision and core beliefs in school organizations.
2. Construct and articulate a vision of effective school leadership as supported by their values and core beliefs around leadership, teaching, and learning.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of traditional and critical leadership and organizational theories and their relationship to the field of education leadership.
4. Compare and contrast the theoretical assumptions and traditional organizational theories that inform Bolman & Deal's four-frame model for analyzing organizational behaviors and outcomes.
5. Develop leadership cases that reflect connections between leadership and organizational theory, research, and practice.
6. Analyze leadership cases and scenarios through the practice of framing and reframing.

NELP Standards

NELP Standard 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.

NELP Standard Component 1.2 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to lead improvement processes, including data use, design, implementation, and evaluation.

NELP Standard Component 3.3 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, cultivate, and advocate for equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive instruction and behavior support practices among teachers and staff.

NELP Standard Component 4.3 Program completers understand and can demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, develop, and implement formal and informal culturally responsive and accessible assessments that support data-informed instructional improvement and student learning and well-being.

NELP Standard Component 4.4 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to collaboratively evaluate, develop, and implement the school's curriculum, instruction, technology, data systems, and assessment practices in a coherent, equitable, and systematic manner.

ICAISA Standards

Mission

The school has a clear statement of its educational mission. The stated mission and philosophy guide the school's admissions, program, planning, and decision-making.

The school's mission is congruent with principles of academic scholarship: permitting and encouraging freedom of inquiry, diversity of viewpoints, and independent/critical thinking.

Governance and Fiscal Responsibility

The school's governing board is a deliberative body with clearly defined roles and responsibilities that are communicated to all constituents. It provides for the continuity of the mission.

Program

The educational program stems from the school's beliefs about teaching and learning, which are regularly reviewed and consistent with the school's mission.

Professional Staff

The administration actively supports faculty and staff's professional development by allocating time and resources.

Culture and Climate

In keeping with its mission, the school promotes an equitable, just, and inclusive community of adults and students, fosters a learning culture, and inspires students to respect and value diversity.

Health, Safety, and Well-being

The school ensures that it provides appropriate care and support for all students, including their health and well-being.

Recruitment, Admission, Enrollment, and Retention

The school has procedures to ensure that students are mission appropriate and can be served by the program.

Required Course Texts

Recommended Course Text

Course Performance Evaluation

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

Each assignment, except for the autoethnography, should be considered in relation to the course content and the independent school context. Rubrics for the Performance-Based Assessments are provided on the Blackboard site. Students are expected to submit all assignments on time and in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

Assignments

Leadership and Reflection Requirements

To maximize learning and engagement in the online environment, students are expected to participate actively in asynchronous class discussions and asynchronous and synchronous group activities and serve as critical friends to other students. Weekly prompts and activities require student participation. In this course, engagement points are accrued by unit rather than per learning activity. The participation assessment rubric is presented on the Blackboard course site.

Expectations for Written Work

Use appropriate grammar.	Spell correctly.
Writing should be the caliber of a graduate student.	Type all work.
Use Times Roman or Arial 12-point font.	Write clearly.
Include a cover page with your name, date & assignment.	Find a good proofreader.
Follow APA guidelines (double space, references, etc.)	Avoid plagiarism.

Expectations for Group Presentations

Each team member has a clearly identifiable role of contribution.
Practice conflict resolution and consensus-building.
Use clear transitions.
Proofread multimedia in use.

Grading Scale:

Course Policies

Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the dates listed on the syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted except in emergencies discussed and approved at the instructor's discretion.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/

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

- George Mason University takes pride in the diversity of our university community. We aim to create an environment at Mason, in our classrooms and beyond, that is inclusive, inspirational, and focused on the needs of those we serve. Please view the Mason Diversity Statement for more information.

- 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 are invited to share their name and gender pronouns with the instructor and how best to address you in class and via email. I use she/her for myself, and you may address me as "Regina Biggs" or "Dr./Professor Biggs."

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 the use of Blackboard should be directed to https://its.gmu.edu/article-categories/teaching-learning/.

- 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 "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/.

Other Reminders:

- *GMU Add/Drop Policy:* The last day to drop this class without any penalty is provided on the GMU academic calendar page http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendar/. It is the student's responsibility to check to verify that they are properly enrolled, as no credit will be awarded to students who are not.

- *Plagiarism*: Students must avoid plagiarizing the work of others. Specifically, when referencing a source or author, students must give appropriate source documentation; when using direct quotes, students must use quotations, provide page numbers, and ensure that credit is given to the author of the quoted material. If a candidate's work contains plagiarism, the candidate will receive no credit for the assignment.

- *Copyright:* Copyright rules also apply to Internet users 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 email (don't cite or forward someone else's email without permission), newsgroup material, and information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page unless the materials are made available through a fair use claim or consistent with the TEACH Act.

- *Academic Integrity & Inclusivity:* This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas, and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences, meaning we each have the freedom to express our ideas. Still, we should also do so, keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e., we may disagree without being disagreeable. https://oai.gmu.edu/

- *Diversity, Religious Holiday:* Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (https://ulife.gmu.edu/religious-holiday-calendar/). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.

- *Student Privacy Policy:* George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for the release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/.

- ***Other Concerns:*** If you have concerns or issues relating to the content or conduct of the class, please talk with me directly. Although the specifics of these conversations are entirely confidential, they may provide me with useful suggestions that may be shared indirectly with the class to improve the learning experience for all students. As a matter of policy, I do not respond to anonymous emails.