GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Education Leadership Program

EDLE 612, Section 601: Education Law
3 credits, Summer 2024
Meeting Day: Tuesdays, May 14 through July 16, 2024, 4:45-7:45 p.m.

Faculty

Name:	Christine Smith J.D.
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Phone:	
Email:	cmit91@gmu.edu

Prerequisite(s): B- or higher in EDLE 620, EDLE 690, and EDLE 791.

University Catalog Description: (3:3:0) Provides legal foundations of U.S. public schools. Examines general principles of constitutional, federal, statutory, and case law and applies judicial decisions to educational environments. Focuses on legal responsibilities, constraints, and opportunities of public school officials. Includes components of Special Education law.

Course Overview: Through reading, case studies, court cases, and presentations, students will learn how to analyze and resolve legal and ethical dilemmas, how to interpret, synthesize, and apply regulations, constitutional, statutory, and case laws to PK-12 school-based scenarios, and how to use legal research resources.

Course Delivery Method: This course is delivered via a hybrid format through face-to-face, synchronous, and asynchronous sessions. The course incorporates a variety of instructional methods, including large and small-group instruction, cooperative learning activities, Internet, lectures, individual presentations, case studies, simulations, and written and verbal assignments.

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/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/

Course Learning Objectives

This course serves as the foundation for understanding the legal process related to education in the Master's sequence in Education Leadership. All of the program goals are active, to a greater or lesser degree, in this course. Students taking this course will:

1. Engage in reflective practice about education law (internship-related assignments);
2. Strengthen and improve their communication skills through class discussion, writing, and collaborative group work
3. Understand the legal implications and responsibilities associated with cultural, economic, and learning diversity;
4. Reflect on the intersection of law and ethics and the ethical implications of applying education law to everyday situations in schools and school divisions; and
5. Learn how to use the internet to obtain legal information.

The Education Leadership Program aspires to develop leaders who are able to redress local problems of practice and promote equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students through collective inquiry, reflection, and practice.

Candidate Learning Outcomes

Students will focus on significant legal and ethical issues in education. At the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

1. Evaluate school-based dilemmas through the use of philosophical and theoretical ethical models;
2. Identify precedent and emerging issues in education law;
3. Apply constitutional, case, and statutory law to issues of student discipline
4. Apply federal and case law to issues of sexual harassment and child abuse; and
5. Analyze key education law issues in a manner that reveals comprehension of political, social, ethical, and legal influences, specifically the principles, laws, policies, cases & regulations applicable in education as they apply to special populations.

Relationship of Course Goals to Program Goals

This course will enable students to develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will prepare them to create and maintain learning environments that value diversity, continual knowledge acquisition, instructional leadership, innovative and ethical decision-making, reflective practice, and achievement of all school-aged youth.

Relationship of Course to Internship

Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership program has integrated "embedded experiences" into coursework. This means that some of the work for this class is related to your internship. You may write about embedded experiences in your internship journal and Collective Record, but they can only count over and above the minimum 320 hours required for the internship.

National Standards and Virginia Competencies

The course addresses VADOE Competencies and NELP Standards dealing with education's legal, ethical, and political context. Specific NELP Standards addressed include 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 5.3, and 6.3. Virginia competencies include: c(6) Legal issues and e(1) Philosophy of education that reflects honesty, fairness, caring, and equity. In addition to these competencies, students will develop an explicit understanding of Virginia's "Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Intervention Act (Code of Virginia 22.1-98). Such an understanding will include:
1. Recognizing child abuse and neglect
2. Reporting child abuse and neglect
3. Intervention following a Child Protective Services investigation

Required Texts

- Alexander, K., & Alexander, M.D. (2022). The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers (7th ed.). West Academic Publishing
- Shapiro, Joan P. & Stefkovich, Jacqueline A. (2022). Ethical Leadership and Decision Making in Education (5th ed.). Routledge
- Stedrak, L., & Mezzina, J. (Edited by) (2021). Legal Literacy for Public School Teachers Education Law Association No. 100 in the K-12 Series
- Additional required readings and research will be required. Instructions will be posted on Blackboard.

Texts are available in the GMU Bookstore in the Johnson Center. Additional materials and

hand-outs will be posted on Blackboard and/or distributed in class.

Suggested Resources:

Virginia Code: https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/
United States Code: http://uscode.house.gov/search/criteria.shtml
U.S. Dept. of Education: http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml
Legal Information Institute of Cornell Law School:
https://www.law.cornell.edu/
George Mason University Library/LexisNexis Academic**:** http://library.gmu.edu/

Classroom Materials:

To successfully complete required assignments, candidates must have access to a personal computer with internet access, be able to use basic word processing and email, and access appropriate websites (see suggested resources) for supplemental materials. **Correspondence by email will use your Mason email account.**

Outside-of-Class Resources:

Candidates are required to use Blackboard as part of this course. Vital information for the course will be posted on the Blackboard site; we will communicate regularly through this site. Candidates are required to submit their course assignments electronically using the Blackboard website. Online access is vital for the distance learning aspects of the course and is an integral part of the course participation grade. **All candidates are required to activate and monitor their GMU email accounts**.

Cancellation Policy: If a cancellation is necessary, the class will be made up via an electronic activity. Specifically, candidates are expected to log on to the computer to participate in an electronic discussion/activity as directed, which will replace the missed class.

Course Performance Evaluation

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

Graded assignments account for 75% of the overall grade, and online course participation accounts for 25%. Each assignment relates to the application of ethics and law in the school context. Rubrics for the Performance-Based Assessments are included at the end of this syllabus. Students are expected to submit all assignments on time and in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

Expectations for Written Work

Use appropriate grammar.   Spell correctly.
Writing should be the caliber of a graduate candidate.   Type all work.
Use Times Roman or Arial 12-point font.   Write clearly.

Include a cover page with name, date & assignment.   Find a good proofreader!
Follow **APA guidelines** (double space, references, etc.)   Avoid plagiarism

Expectations for Group Work

- Each team member has a clearly identifiable role of contribution.
- Practice conflict resolution and consensus building.

- Use clear transitions.

- Manage time.

- Proofread documents and multimedia. • Conduct a practice run.

Course Performance Evaluation Weighting:

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 that have been discussed and approved by the instructor in advance of the due date. Papers are due as indicated on the reading schedule that follows. ALL ASSIGNMENTS must be submitted **electronically, either through Blackboard or VIA**. If you happen to be absent on the day an assignment is due, the due date remains unchanged.

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement:
Every candidate registered for any Education Leadership course with a required performance-based assessment (designated as such in the syllabus) is **required to submit these assessments to VIA through Blackboard**. In EDLE 612, the required performances are the *Code of Ethics and Case Study Analysis* and the *Special Populations Analysis of Special Education Law.* The rubrics for these two assignments are presented on the course Blackboard site under the heading of Assessments. These performances **must** be submitted to VIA through Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course, or part of an undergraduate minor.) Evaluation of the performance-based assessments by the course instructor will also be completed in VIA through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to VIA through Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required VIA Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Professional Dispositions

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

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

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/**.

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Candidates

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 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 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 "Chrissy Smith" or "Ms. Smith."

- 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 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/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 the 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/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; and when using direct quotes, students must use quotations, provide page numbers, and ensure that credit is given to the author of quoted material. If a candidate's work contains plagiarism, the candidate

will receive no credit for the assignment.

Copyright: Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet 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, 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, but 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. http://integrity.gmu.edu/

Diversity, Religious Holiday: Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/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 release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/