EDL 567

School, Family and Community Relations

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Catalog Description

Study of the knowledge, dispositions, and skills needed by school administrators to understand and respond to diverse community systems and needs, collaborate effectively, mobilize community resources, and interpret the school to the public through a variety of media and modes.
Course Description

This graduate-level course is required for a Master of Education degree in Educational Leadership and is an elective course in preparation for principal level administrative certification in Arizona. It is devoted to a study of the knowledge, dispositions, and skills needed by school administrators in order to understand and respond to diverse community systems, interests, and needs; collaborate effectively with families and community members; mobilize community resources to benefit students and families; and interpret the school to the public through a variety of media and modes. Collaborative and ecological systems-thinking leadership perspectives will be emphasized as well as presentation and communication skills. Instructional methods utilized include simulations, case studies, discussion, lecture, guest speaker presentations, and both individual and collaborative research projects.

Prerequisite Courses

Graduate standing only

Standards

Courses taught in the Educational Leadership program leading to Arizona certification are correlated with standards established by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the Arizona Professional Administrative Standards (APAS). The specific standards, **ISLLC Standard 4 and APAS Standard 3**, are included in this syllabus.

Course Objectives

1. Establish a vision and goals for proactive and collaborative leadership in schools, school districts, and agencies to encourage a more responsive school system that serves all students efficiently and equitably.
2. Prepare educational leaders who demonstrate an understanding of the need and capabilities that will enable them to
   - Function in a collaborative manner in the larger community and within the school or school district.
   - Develop a framework and design a process for collaboration at the school site for establishing school-community partnerships.
   - Identify and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different partnership programs and collaborative family-school-community efforts.
   - Assess the internal and external school and community environment and determine the most appropriate communication strategies for developing effective home-school-community relationships.
   - Demonstrate systemic/holistic thinking on a personal, policy, and political level.

Course Outline

Class Meeting 1: Topic: *Introduction, Case Studies, & Simulation*

Students will be introduced to both courses and then participate in a collaborative simulation where they must make school improvement decisions using data. This activity emphasizes need for increased
community relationships and collaboration as part of school improvement and begins the process for group collaboration, which is a smaller version of the combined course culminating project.

**Product:** Students will complete Part I of the Madison High Simulation. D2L Team Discussion

**Class Meeting 2:** **Topic:** Educational Partnerships & Ecological Systems
Students will be provided an introductory theoretical foundation for educational partnerships with families and communities. Students will revisit the Madison High School case study and apply the ecological systems model for developing further school improvement strategies.

**Product:** Madison HS Part 1 Analysis. D2L Team Discussion

**Class Meeting 3:** **Topic:** Understanding Your Community
Educational leaders need to know the data in order to understand ecological system influences and tap system resources. Students will analyze social, economic, housing, and demographic data to develop a community profile and basis for educational partnership strategies and interventions. Students will also begin developing a community inventory of community-based organizations and businesses, which will compliment educational partnership strategies and assist them in their community analysis assignment and related intervention strategies.

**Product:** Madison HS Part 2 Analysis, Community Analysis, D2L Team Discussion

**Class Meeting 4:** **Topic:** Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Contemporary Policy
Guest Speaker: District Representatives, Panel Discussion
We will connect the community demographic and trends analysis with specific challenges faced by educational leaders in Arizona school districts. We will discuss contemporary federal and state policies with implications on schooling in diverse communities. This session will also add a culturally relevant context to future sessions and dialogue about family, school, and community. Students will begin reviewing foundational concepts and frameworks essential in engaging families of ELL students.

**Product:** Team Analysis of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), D2L Team Discussion on Case #33 (GA&S, p. 324).

**Class Meeting 5:** **Topic:** Home and School as Partners – Part I
We will introduce students to family involvement through the lens of No Child Left Behind and contemporary research. Special emphasis will be made regarding strategies involving families of English Language Learners. Special emphasis will also be given to the role parent-teacher organizations and family involvement in site-based councils.

**Product:** Present summary of sections of No Child Left Behind with special emphasis on family involvement. D2L Team Discussion on Case # 34 (GA&S, p. 326).

**Class Meeting 6:** **Topic:** Home and School as Partners – Part II
We will introduce students to theory, research, and practice about contemporary culturally-relevant family engagement strategies with special emphasis on engaging families of English Language Learners.

**Product:** Present summaries of Hiatt-Michaels Chapters 4-7. Identify specific strategies for relevant to your context and school’s Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan. D2L Team Discussion on Case # 37 (GA&S p. 334).

**Class Meeting 7:** **Topic:** School-Community Collaboration: The Role of Business Partnerships
We will present additional possibilities for partnerships with schools and school districts. Special emphasis will be on the role of business and school-business partnerships. Principles of collaboration and collaborative leadership will also be discussed. We will analyze leadership for school and
community partnerships through the lens of the Decker, Decker, & Brown’s (2007) “partnership continuum” in order to operationalize ISLCC standard #4. Special attention will be given to the role of business partnerships in K-12 education.

Product: Identify local area businesses that may assist in the development of your school’s Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan. D2L Team Discussion.

Class Meeting 8: Topic: Culminating Project Workgroups
Students will be provided class time to meet with their Culminating Project groups and begin the planning process. Students will need to make sure they have made all individual group member assignments. Groups will need to apply previous sessions and readings into developing a Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan, which should be evident in the Culminating Project presentation and Executive Summary.

Products: Group member assignments, Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan. D2L Team Discussion.

Class Meeting 9: Topic: School Public Relations – Part I
Students will be introduced to the practice of public relations in a school district. Specific emphasis will be on the procedures, responsibilities, and boundaries at the school district and building levels. Various strategies for dealing with the media from the school district perspective will also be discussed.

Product: Participation in media training, D2L Team Discussion on Case # 40 (GA&S p. 345).

Class Meeting 10: Topic: School Public Relations – Part II
Students will receive media training and practice specific media skills. Students will also be introduced to the role of media and better understand the media perspective.

Product: Participation in simulation requiring specific media skills. Identify promotion and marketing strategies for school’s Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan. D2L Team Discussion on Case # 39(GA&S p. 341).

Class Meeting 11: Topic: School Safety and Crisis Management – Part I
Students will be introduced to research surrounding school safety with emphasis on prevention strategies. Implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) will also be discussed.

Product: School-specific implementation steps and development plans. Identify components relative to school’s Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan. D2L Team Discussion.

Class Meeting 12: Topic: School Safety and Crisis Management – Part II
Students will examine key strategies for managing building-level crises and be introduced to district-level emergency response/crisis management procedures and plans.

Product: Students will refine media skills in context of a crisis simulation. Students will identify agencies, structures, and processes for developing relative components in their school’s Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan. D2L Team Discussion.

Class Meeting 13: Topic: Political Realities and Community Mobilization
Students will discuss community mobilization and the political context around important school and school district issues. Special emphasis will be given to strategies for community leadership development and mobilization of community support for bonds and overrides.
Product: Students participate in simulation for engaging community relative to school improvement planning. Identify components relative to school’s Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan. D2L Team Discussion on Case # 42 (GA&S p. 351).

Class Meeting 14: Topic: Culminating Project Workgroups
Students will have one last session to organize and plan for project presentations in groups.
    Products: Develop Executive Summary, Review and Practice Assignments. D2L Team Discussion.

Class Meeting 15: Topic: Culminating Project Presentation
Students will present their school improvement plans to the Governing Board, answer questions, and be interviewed by a reporter on camera. Each group will submit a written Executive Summary by D2L prior to the presentation for Governing Board members and instructors to review.
    Products: Executive Summary, Presentation, Media Interview.

Final Class Meeting: Topic: Final Exam
Students will engage in a reflective discussion with school district leaders based on what they have discovered about leadership for family-school-community partnerships through course readings, discussions, and experiences. School district leaders will share their insights.
    Product: Self-Assessment Paper

Course Assignments

Participation
It is assumed that individuals enrolled in the course are self-directed learners who will actively engage in collaborative learning. Class participation is expected in (a) doing team projects, (b) making oral presentations in class, and (c) taking part in class discussions and simulations. Team work is essential to collaboration. Therefore, you are encouraged to work together on selected team projects as noted below and everyone is expected to participate equally. Although collaboration may be desirable and potentially powerful, please remember that your participation in teams for the Ecological Systems Analysis, Community Analysis, and School Communication Evaluation assignments are your responsibility. An additional 1-2 pages must be added for each additional person. No more than three may work together on the selected assignments.

Reading
You should have these completed in time for our discussion at the designated session. Required texts and related handouts enable individuals to discuss the topics or issues identified. Get started early in the week so you can stay on top of this. Additional readings will be posted on D2L in electronic versions under “Content.” Please be aware that I may add or change readings in the course of the semester to enrich student understanding. I will notify you in advance.

D2L Team Discussions
Students will be assigned to D2L discussion teams. Every week, each team will be assigned questions from a case study or previous week’s session content. Click on “Discussion” and the link for the next class session where this is assigned. Each team member is expected to post their individual response (several sentences) with explanation, insight, and examples and to read all team member responses.
To post a new message, click the session link and “compose.” In the subject heading, enter your group letter then type your message and click “post.” To comment on a colleague’s comment, click on their message and click “reply.”

You should engage your team members in a professional dialogue both challenging and affirming ideas and asking questions. Please remember to be courteous and respectful in your perspectives. **You must submit your responses by Friday night (midnight) before the next assigned session.** For example if the next session occurs on a Monday, you must submit all of your responses by the following Friday.

That week’s assigned team leader (everyone will have a turn) will give a summary in the next session including the various challenges, issues, and implications surrounding these responses.

**Quizzes**
Quizzes are given throughout the course reviewing the reading assignments and session content since the previous quiz. I will count the best four scores. You will see your individual quiz scores on D2L, however, there will only be up to four quiz scores entered. If your quiz #5 score is higher than any one of these, I will insert that quiz score in place of some other lower quiz score.

**Madison High School Simulations**
You will take part in two-part in-class simulation that requires students to analyze various school and community data and develop an outline for collaborative school improvement. Students will apply the ecological systems model, community analysis, and school improvement planning techniques to guide intervention strategies, which tasks are essential to future assignments. **In-class teamwork is required on this assignment.**

**Ecological Systems Analysis**
This assignment is intended to introduce you to the complexity and power of collaborative systems. First, identify some student-related issue/need at your school. You will analyze the systems influencing the problem using the ecological systems model, which will help you identify resources, create partnerships, and design intervention strategies. You must address and apply all of the selected elements from the ecological systems model. See the template attached to the front course page and complete all listed sections. The paper should be 5-7 pages in length, use APA (i.e., formatting, citations, references). See the template posted on the D2L front course page for specific instructions, APA formatting helps, and scoring. **You may work in teams of 2-3 on this assignment.** I have provided you with the reference to the Ecological Systems Model:


**Community Analysis**
You will analyze community data trends (i.e., social, economic, housing, demographic) from the U.S. census by school district, town (not for Sunnyside students), or zip code. Where this is not available by school district in Sahuarita, you may use your school’s zip code or use the report from the Green Valley-Sahuarita Chamber of Commerce. Make sure you cite your source from below in APA. You will also identify the community organizations, churches, businesses within a defined radius from your school and develop a plan for addressing a school-related problem. If you have no school, you will need to identify one or work in a team with someone else. **You may work in teams of 2-3 on this assignment.**
See the template posted on the D2L front course page for specific instructions, APA formatting helps, and scoring.

School Communications Evaluation
You will evaluate a written communication piece from your school (i.e., letter, flyer, newsletter, etc.) using the guidelines established by George Pawlas in Gallager, Bagin, & Moore, pp. 103-143 (Available on D2L). Discuss the purpose and intended audience of this piece. Make specific recommendations on how the piece may be improved toward achieving its objectives. If this is a stellar piece, be prepared to defend at length why this is so. Attach the original and improved version (you only need show the improved text, not the fancy designs—not included in the page length). (4-5 pages). **You may work in teams of 2-3 on this assignment.** See the template posted on the D2L front course page for specific instructions, APA formatting helps, and scoring.

Course Culminating Project
Student teams will present a Comprehensive Education Partnership to a mock Governing Board based on the case study “The Challenge at Ardath High. **Teamwork is required for this assignment.** Although two sessions will be provided for you to work together in class on this assignment, you are expected to collaborate outside of class. The culminating project products will consist of the following:

- **Juried Oral Presentation** – 20 minutes (PowerPoint required), Allow 10 minutes for questions
- **Executive Summary** of the Comprehensive Education Plan that incorporates all elements of the School Improvement Plan template. The family and community engagement portion should include all elements of the Comprehensive Educational Partnership Plan found on pp. 271-273 in Decker, Decker, & Brown (2007).
- **PowerPoint Presentation and Handouts** to the Governing Board members
- **Demonstration of Presentation, Speaking, Audience Interaction, and Media Skills** (you will present 20 minutes to the Governing Board, respond to 10 minutes of questions from Board members, and be interviewed on-camera by a reporter).

Final Exam
You will conduct a self-assessment of your leadership development during the semester according ISLCC standards drawing specifically from course experiences, content, and readings (Please cite). Also discuss your challenges, triumphs, and areas needing improvement.

Your analysis will be divided into the six sections (The section heading should indicate the ISLCC standard number only and NOT the whole standard typed out). This assignment counts as the final exam for both courses.

Students will be given more instructions to this exercise at Class Meeting 15. You will attend the Final Class Meeting, give a 3 minute overview to the class, and hand in your papers. This final session also includes a guest speaker presentation.

Method of Evaluation
*Assignments will be weighted as follows:*
D2L Team Discussions 15%
Madison High School Improvement Outline 5%
Ecological Systems Analysis 10%
Community Analysis 5%
School Communications Evaluation 10%
Quizzes 15%
Culminating Project 25%
Final Self-Assessment 15%
Total 100%

Estimation of Grades:

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = Below 60%

Required Textbooks


Additional Required Readings (These will be available on D2L)


Pawlas, G. (2005). *The administrator’s guide to school-community relations*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education. (We will only use pp. 103-144,


Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2004). *Toolkit for schools: Involving parents in No Child Left Behind*.

**University Policies**

**Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all classes. Any absences must be cleared with instructor. It is professional courtesy to do this well in advance (recommended: beginning of the semester). In the case of an emergency, students should notify the instructor before the absence if possible or within three days following the absence. More than three absences of any type may result in a grade reduction. Students are responsible for all material covered during absences and can expect to be provided with an alternative assignment for time missed in class.

All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion. Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean's designee) will be honored.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Resources (621-3268; drc.arizona.edu) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

**Expected Classroom Behavior**

You are expected to participate in scholarly and professional dialogue at all times relative to course content and readings. Although though we may engage in analytical and critical discourse, conversations should be respectful of religious, cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity and sexual orientation. Although time will be provided for student discussion and reflection, the instructor may need to end student discussions to allow time for course content delivery. No one student should dominate class discussions. A wide variety of student participation will be expected. To minimize disruptions, cell phones are expected to be turned off. Although food and beverages may be consumed at times, please see that all refuse is properly discarded.
**Code of Academic Integrity**

Integrity is expected of every student in all academic work. The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own. Students engaging in academic dishonesty diminish their education and bring discredit to the academic community. Students shall not violate the Code of Academic Integrity and shall avoid situations likely to compromise academic integrity. Students shall observe the provisions of the Code whether or not faculty members establish special rules of academic integrity for particular classes. Failure of faculty to prevent cheating does not excuse students from compliance with the Code.

Conduct prohibited by the Code consists of all forms of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism as set out and defined in the Code of Conduct, modifying any academic work to obtain additional credit in the same class unless approved in advance by a faculty member; failure to observe rules of academic integrity established by the faculty member for a particular course; and attempting to commit any act prohibited by this Code. Any attempt to commit an act prohibited by these rules shall be subject to sanctions to the same extent as completed acts.

**Confidentiality of Student Records**

[http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm](http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm)

**Subject to Change Statement**

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

**Recommended Faculty**

Dr. Jeff Bennett has been the primary instructor of this course. Other faculty members who are able to teach this course include Dr. John Taylor and Dr. Rose Ylimaki.

**Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)**

**Standard 4**: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

**Knowledge**

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:

- emerging issues and trends that potentially impact the school community
- the conditions and dynamics of the diverse school community
- community resources
- community relations and marketing strategies and processes successful models of school, family, business, community, government and higher education partnerships
Dispositions
The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:

- schools operating as an integral part of the larger community
- collaboration and communication with families
- involvement of families and other stakeholders in school decision-making processes
- the proposition that diversity enriches the school
- families as partners in the education of their children
- the proposition that families have the best interests of their children in mind
- resources of the family and community needing to be brought to bear on the education of students
- an informed public

Performances
The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- high visibility, active involvement, and communication with the larger community is a priority
- relationships with community leaders are identified and nurtured
- information about family and community concerns, expectations, and needs is used regularly
- there is outreach to different business, religious, political, and service agencies and organizations
- credence is given to individuals and groups whose values and opinions may conflict
- the school and community serve one another as resources
- available community resources are secured to help the school solve problems and achieve goals
- partnerships are established with area businesses, institutions of higher education, and community groups to strengthen programs and support school goals
- community youth family services are integrated with school programs
- community stakeholders are treated equitably
- diversity is recognized and valued
- effective media relations are developed and maintained
- a comprehensive program of community relations is established
- public resources and funds are used appropriately and wisely
- community collaboration is modeled for staff
- opportunities for staff to develop collaborative skills are provided

Arizona Professional Administrative Standards
Standard 3: The administrator implements positive and proactive communication strategies for effective parent and community involvement to improve the learning environment for all students

The performance assessment shall measure the extent to which the administrator:

1. Articulates organizational purpose and priorities to the community and news media
2. Requests and responds to community feedback
3. Demonstrates consensus building and conflict mediation
4. Formulates and implements plans for internal and external communications
5. Uses communication skills to strengthen community support
6. Develops support for organizational priorities
7. Responds appropriately to the electronic and printed news media.

## COURSE SCHEDULE
(Additional readings may be included as the semester progresses)

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<td>Introduction, Case Studies, &amp; Simulation: Madison High School – Part I</td>
<td>Read Syllabus</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>No Class – Labor Day</strong></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><em>Educational Partnerships &amp; Ecological Systems</em> Madison High School – Part II D2L Team Discussion</td>
<td>Decker, Chp. 1</td>
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| 4     | **QUIZ 1 (9/8 Session)**
*Understanding Your Community*
D2L Team Discussion | Decker, Chp. 2
HM, Chp. 3 (Ramos) |
| 5     | *Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Contemporary Policy* Guest Speaker D2L Team Discussion | Decker, Chp. 3
HM, Chp. 1 |
|       | **Ecological Systems Analysis Due** | |
| 6     | **QUIZ 2**
*Home and School as Partners – Part I*
D2L Team Discussion | Decker, Chp. 5
HM, Chp. 2 (Ferguson) |
| 7     | *Home and School as Partners – Part II* Guest Speaker D2L Team Discussion | HM, Chps. 4-7 |
| 8     | *School-Community Collaboration: Role of Business Partnerships* Guest Speaker D2L Team Discussion | Decker, Chps. 4, 6 |
|       | **Community Analysis Due** | |
| 9     | *Culminating Project Workgroups*
School Improvement Planning
Comprehensive Education Partnership Plan D2L Team Discussion | Decker, Chp. 7
*Gallager, Bagin, & Moore, pp. 103-143* |
| 10    | **QUIZ 3**
School Public Relations: Part 1 (PR Specialists, Media Training) Guest Speaker D2L Team Discussion | Decker, Chp. 10 |
<p>| 11    | School Public Relations: Part 2 (Media Management) Guest Speaker D2L Team Discussion | <em>Gallager, Bagin, &amp; Moore, pp. 226-241</em> |</p>
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<td>D2L Team Discussion – Last one!</td>
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<td>Culminating Project Workgroups Culminating Project: The Challenge at Ardath High</td>
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