



EDAD 641
School District Instructional Leadership: Curriculum
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2013

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbook(s): *Developing the curriculum* (8th edition) by Oliva and Gordon (2012) Allyn and Bacon ISBN 978-0132627511

Understanding by design (2nd edition) by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (July 24, 2005)
TAMUC library ebook LB2806.15.W542005eb

Optional: Selected articles to be assigned

Course Description:

The EDAD 641 School District Instructional Leadership: Curriculum course is designed to develop candidates who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by

- promoting a positive school culture,
- providing an effective instructional program,
- applying best practices to student learning,
- designing a comprehensive district improvement plan and district professional growth plan, and
- developing the competencies for the Standard Superintendent Certificate in the area of curriculum as a school district instructional leader.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. The learner will demonstrate an understanding of best practices that promote the success of all students.
2. The learner will apply the necessary knowledge and skills to design and implement districtwide curriculum.

3. The learner will demonstrate the competencies necessary to provide an effective instructional program.
4. The learner will be able to evaluate program effectiveness through federal, state, and local assessments and program evaluation tools.
5. The learner will demonstrate skill in providing a comprehensive professional development plan for staff.
6. The learner will be an active and engaged team member within the cohort learning community by analyzing, constructing, creating, and evaluating information presented within the textbooks, selected readings, and resources.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This web-based course relies heavily on written responses, interaction, and discussion. It is problem-based and inquiry oriented. Learning in this course will take place as a result of online discussion boards, lectures/power-point presentations, readings and concentrated study, and participation in intensive group learning exercises in online venues.

Assignments include a series of written responses to readings and online discussions. The readings cannot be neglected. It is important that you set aside time to read and digest the readings before you write or participate in discussion boards.

A wide variety of instructional methods will be used to provide students with meaningful learning experiences. Some of these may include focused discussions, written reflections, problem-solving activities, independent research, and the direct teaching model.

Assignments

Student Learning Outcomes: 1 – 6

Assessment Method: Assignments will be in different formats and will include individual and group projects.

Book Response Paper:

- Each student will respond in writing to a curriculum related book of their choice. The purpose of this assignment is:
 - To provide students with the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of ideas that impact curriculum, curriculum formation, and the role of schools in educating students in the 21st century.
 - To provide students with the opportunity to integrate and synthesize ideas presented in the readings in a way that can be applied to the world of work.
 - To provide students with the opportunity to write in a scholarly style and to present their thoughts in a meaningful way.
- In the **(5-7 page, 12 pt., double-spaced)** paper, please answer/discuss these questions **thoroughly** (see bullets below):
 - *What are the authors' purpose(s) for writing this book?*
 - *In thinking of the book, what are some of the significant ideas the authors are advocating? What are the implications of the authors' ideas for district leaders? In*

other words, if you as a district leader were swayed by the authors' ideas, what might that mean for the district's understanding and vision for the implementation of curriculum and instruction?

- *Considering the content of the book, how would you apply the authors' ideas and arguments to the context of your work as a district level official in charge of curriculum & instruction? What might be the implications of such application to practice? In other words, if you were to adopt the author's ideas (some or all), which ones would you adopt and how would you go about implementing these ideas in practice? What kind of impact would expect to see? Why might these ideas be important for the overall function of the district and its teachers and students with regard to teaching and learning?*
- Despite the wording of the guiding questions, offering a simple summary of the ideas presented in the book is **not** an acceptable interpretation of the assignment. Students should **seek to make sense** of the authors' work **and to infuse their own understanding** into the assignment. I am particularly interested in your ideas about how the authors' point-of-view and supporting ideas can be integrated into district and campus operations with regard to curriculum and instructional leadership. I am also looking to see that you are **digging deeply into the authors' ideas** and that you are aware of the implications of those ideas or perspectives particularly in light of the current educational environment. You are free to take any position relative to the authors' point-of-view, but you must be able to support your position actively. That is, you are to be actively engaged with the text and can demonstrate your engagement with frequent relevant quotes to support your ideas.
- That being said, remember that one objective of this course is to engage in "active exploration of new ideas", which means that you are expected to expand your current perspective to include ideas put forth in this class and—for this assignment—from this (and other) text(s). While you may not agree or find value on the authors' views on a personal level, you are committed in this class to consider on a professional level that the authors' views have value and have the ability when incorporated into practice to change educational practice in a way that can have a positive impact for all involved.
- In preparing this assignment, students should use this as an opportunity to practice scholarly writing and to sharpen their skills at analyzing, integrating, synthesizing, and evaluating the works of authors. **The use of appropriate quotes from the text to support your thoughts is imperative.**
- Use the appropriate format for papers as specified in the APA Publication Manual (6th ed.).

Discussions

Each student is expected to complete all reading and written assignments on time, and actively engage in class by closely connecting class topics and discussions to textbook and other readings. Post and respond to Discussion prompts during the assigned week of each module. Participate in endeavors with the goal of contributing meaningfully and implementing higher order thinking skills. You cannot receive participations points if you are not contributing to the discussion. To earn participation points, you must discuss and apply knowledge of the readings to each discussion prompt.

You should read, analyze, and respond to the questions and comments from me and the other members of the class. You are required to actively participate in our discussions. You must do more than complete assignments; you must demonstrate your regular reading of others' responses. I am looking for evidence that you are an active participant in the learning experience. This can be done by relating real world experiences to the discussions or summaries, building on other's comments with alternative solutions, and pointing out problems or adding another dimension to the discussion. Stating your

agreement or providing a one sentence response does not fall within these parameters. Responses should be substantial.

The discussion forums are related to the readings, external resources, and activities. Upon completion or near completion of the assigned readings and activities, you are expected to engage in an ongoing discussion/debate with your learning community peers. Your contributions to the discussion forums will be graded for quality and timeliness of your contributions.

Student Learning Outcomes: 1 – 6

Assessment Method: Class participation will be determined by the professor.

Participation

Student Learning Outcomes: 1 – 6

Participation:

- Each student will work individually and in group discussions, at the direction of the instructor to complete the assignments for this course.
- The participation grade will reflect the successful interaction of students as well as the successful completion of all assignments whether graded or not.

Final Exam

Student Learning Outcomes: 1 – 6

Assessment Method: The examination will be comprised of essay questions that indicate your application of the knowledge you gain from the course.

Your final exam will consist of the initiation and successful completion of *the District Curriculum Needs Assessment Report*.

District Curriculum Needs Assessment Report:

- Each student will prepare a **district curriculum needs assessment report** reflecting the successful understanding, integration, synthesis, and application of the content/activities of the course. The focus of this report will be to assess AEIS reports from a district selected by the student.
- The purpose of this assignment is
 - to analyze data in the form most available to schools and districts
 - to apply theoretical perspectives to a real life situation
 - to formulate an action plan that addresses needs of students and faculty with the goal of improving the performance of students throughout the district
 - to organize and communicate effectively through a formal report to the school community
 - to tackle a “messy” problem with limited parameters and guidance (that is, “ a real life problem”); in other words, to engage in higher order and critical thinking
- For the purposes of this assignment, you will be a new superintendent to the district. The school board has commissioned you to conduct a thorough analysis of the schools within the

district and prepare a report representing your findings and plan of action to set the schools on the road to improvement.

- The report should be professional in appearance and design and suitable for presentation to a school board.
- The report should have **at least these sections** and should be labeled appropriately:
 1. Cover page: with appropriate, professional looking cover art; labeled “District Analysis & Report”; include your name.
 2. Title page: with information as specified by APA style manual (exception: no running heading is needed); include “Date Submitted: with date” at the bottom of the page; and a Table of Contents: list the contents of the report with page numbers.
 3. Introduction: a brief formulation of your thoughts regarding the assignment, a highlight of what is to come in the report, and other important information you deem necessary to introduce the report.
 4. District Background and other relevant information: relevant information about the district/campuses that will help provide an understanding of the context for curriculum improvement.
 5. Needs Analysis: identification of the major curriculum issues found in the AEIS reports to be addressed in the report; these should be 3 to 5 broad, district-wide issues that when addressed will impact the district as a whole.
 6. Plan of Action: a detailed plan of action (with timelines and/or sequencing) for the district to address needs and issues you identified; it is suggested that this section be based on a typical District Improvement Plan format (table format); you must address each need you identified in the previous section and what you intend to do to address each need; you must also provide a Theoretical Foundation for your actions; this should include relevant points from the theory covered within the scope of the class that will provide a direction and anchor for the various action points of your plan of action; you are provided free reign in how and where you will present this foundation, but it should provide meaning and substance to your action steps.
 7. Conclusion: a brief statement bringing your thoughts to a meaningful conclusion
 8. References: a list of references used to construct your curriculum report
- Your report will be graded on several criteria (see District Curriculum Needs Assessment Report Rubric attached for more detailed information); however, overall your report should reflect **quality in depth and breadth**. That is, your **report should encompass the content of the class** demonstrating your ability to synthesize and integrate the concepts discussed and indicate a depth of understanding of the related topics and literature while demonstrating the ability to package information in a cogent and scholarly manner. That is to say, the content is just as important as its presentation.

Format for Papers to be submitted:

1. All papers are to be type written.
2. Papers should be clearly and cogently written using proper grammar and punctuation reflecting the level of scholarship expected of doctoral students.
3. All papers should use APA formats as specified in the current APA Publication Manual (6th edition).
4. Papers should be written in MS Word and placed in the appropriate Dropbox.

Grading

Grades will be determined on a total point basis as follows:

Book Response Paper	25% = 25 pts.
Discussions	24% = 24 pts.
Participation	16% = 16 pts.
Final exam	35% = 35 pts.

(District Curriculum Needs Assessment Report)

The grading scale listed below is a guide. The Instructor reserves the right to evaluate and assign the final course grade.

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

NOTE: This syllabus represents a relationship between the two of us regarding the evaluative measures and the content included in EDAD 641. I reserve the right to amend, revise, or change the content of the syllabus as deemed necessary.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

This is a web based course and some obvious technological resources will be required, including: 1) access to a computer with Internet access (high-speed preferred), 2) Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet software 3) computer speakers, and 4) Word processing software (Microsoft Word preferred).

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means that our course works best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0 or 8.0). Your online courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the “myCourses” tab and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

As a student enrolled at Texas A&M University-Commerce, you have access to an email account via MyLeo; all class emails from your instructors will be sent from eCollege (and all other university emails) will go to this account, so please be sure to check it regularly. You are to email us via the eCollege email system or your MyLeo email as our spam filters will catch yahoo, hotmail, etc. and we will not check for your email in spam.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuccommerce.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

E-mail is the best method of contacting me. TAMU-commerce eCollege provides an efficient system of email for communication for class work and individual communication. I will check my e-mail several times each day. Please post questions appropriate for the entire class to my eCollege Virtual Office; otherwise you may email me directly. *Please reserve the use of cell phone calls for emergencies.* If you would like to meet, please email me for an appointment. I will be happy to provide any reasonable support to help you succeed.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Examination Policy

Questions will require analysis and synthesis requiring the student to formulate answers demonstrating their ability to apply knowledge.

Assignment Policy

Assignment due dates are posted in the assignment section of eCollege along with instructions for each assignment. All projects should be submitted in the eCollege dropbox and saved as a .doc file unless specified otherwise.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted in the course.

Incompletes

An incomplete will not be available for this course.

Graduate Online Course Attendance Policy

A major component of this course is on line interaction with peers and the instructor. Each class member is expected to participate fully in online discussions, projects, journaling etc. each week of the course. Expectations for attendance on-line will be posted with each assignment. Learning will be segmented into weeks or units. Materials and assignments will be available to students and then close on established dates. It is important to stay on schedule with the class agenda.

Scholarly Expectations

All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical, particularly at the graduate level, to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested by the instructor. Work

submitted at the graduate level is expected to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and be of significantly higher quality than work produced at the undergraduate level.

Academic Honesty:

Please see the TAMU-C Graduate Catalog and the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2010) for the discussion of academic honesty. Academic honesty is especially important when it comes to citing/quoting sources in research papers and assignments. Students are responsible for reading this material and becoming familiar with the conventions for acknowledging sources of information. Consequences for academic dishonesty range from failing a specific assignment to expulsion from the University.

"Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty, which includes, but is not limited to plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments) and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material."

(Texas A&M University –Commerce, Graduate Catalog)

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132**

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR
