EDAD 554 Leading the Learning Community
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2015
7-week session

Instructor: Dr. Kriss Kemp-Graham, Assistant Professor
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Virtual Hours: By Appointment
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NOTE: After reviewing this syllabus and you are unsure about the correctness of a date or assignment, please email me ASAP so that I can provide clarification and/or correction.
COURSE INFORMATION

REQUIRED TEXTS:


Principal Preparation Exam 068 Study Materials


REQUIRED VIDEO (DVD)

Please select one of the below listed documentaries. You will need to view one of the below documentaries for your documentary critique. More information about this assignment will be explained in greater detail further in the syllabus.

- American Teacher (2011) **Matt Damon** (Actor), **Jamie Fidler** (Actor), **Vanessa Roth** (Director) | Rated: NR | Format: DVD
- Waiting for “Superman” (2010), **Geoffrey Canada** (Actor), **Michelle Rhee** (Actor), **Davis Guggenheim** (Director) | Rated: PG | Format: DVD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is the capstone course that develops candidates for EXEMPLARY school leadership as evidenced by student knowledge, dispositions, and performance ability to promote success of all students by exercising visionary, collaborative, instructional, organizational, and political leadership.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through the activities of TAMU-Commerce **Principal Preparation Program** and this capstone course, students will demonstrate mastery in the following areas:
Leadership and campus culture,
Values and ethics of leadership,
Instructional leadership and management,
Human resources leadership and management,
Communication and community relations,
Organizational leadership and management, and
Curriculum planning and management.

This course, in particular, is intended to assist students in gaining the professional knowledge and skills needed to:

- Model and promote the highest standards of conduct, ethical principles, and integrity in decision-making.
- Analyze a variety of educational administration positions and functions and the influence each has had on the organization and operation of the school and the district.
- Serve as skilled group leaders, facilitators, and members; as public speakers; and as writers.
- Understand the components of organizational culture, models for culture building and change, and the role of the leader in creating, transforming, and sustaining culture in an organization.
- Define the components of effective school-based decision-making and describe the policies of SBDM in Texas.
- Define the multiple dimensions and necessary skills of campus improvement that lead to increased student achievement.

**Students will be challenged and expected:**

- To think critically about roles and responsibilities of effective principals;
- To engage in reflective thinking about roles and responsibilities of effective principals;
- To integrate a variety of ideas regarding roles and responsibilities of effective principals, including the active exploration and assimilation of new ideas;
- To be able to synthesize the coursework into a meaningful framework of understanding about roles and responsibilities of effective principals, including exploration, assimilation, and demonstration of new perspectives, and
- To encounter and develop solutions to real-world, realistic school based problems.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**
Student Learning Outcome #1: At the end of this capstone course, the student will exhibit their acquisition of the requisite skills and knowledge of Instructional Leadership required of a novice Principal in Texas by successfully and actively engaging in all course activities including the critical analysis of school level case studies that demonstrate that the Texas school leader is responsible for ensuring every student receives high quality instruction (Instructional Leadership).

Student Learning Outcome #2: At the end of this capstone course, the student will exhibit their acquisition of the requisite skills and knowledge of Human Capital required of a novice Principal in Texas by successfully and actively engaging in all course activities including the critical analysis of school level case studies that demonstrate that the Texas school leader is responsible for ensuring there are high quality teachers and staff in every classroom throughout the school. (Human Capital)

Student Learning Outcome #3: At the end of this capstone course, the student will exhibit their acquisition of the requisite skills and knowledge of Executive Leadership required of a novice Principal in Texas by successfully and actively engaging in all course activities including the critical analysis of school level case studies that demonstrate that the Texas school leader is responsible for modeling a consistent focus and personal responsibility for improving student outcomes. (Executive Leadership)

Student Learning Outcome #4: At the end of this capstone course, the learner will exhibit their acquisition of the requisite skills and knowledge of School Culture required of a novice Principal in Texas by successfully and actively engaging in all course activities including the critical analysis of school level case studies that demonstrate that the Texas school leader is responsible for establishing and implementing a shared vision and culture of high expectations for all students. (School Culture)

Student Learning Outcome #5: At the end of this capstone course, the learner will exhibit their acquisition of the requisite skills and knowledge of Strategic Operations required of a novice Principal in Texas by successfully and actively engaging in all course activities including the critical analysis of school level case studies that demonstrate that the Texas school leader is responsible for implementing systems that align with the school's vision and improve the quality of instruction. (Strategic Operations/Competency 7)
COURSE OUTLINE AND EXPECTATIONS

DESIGN OF THE CLASS

This class is designed on constructivist principles. This means that the instructor creates an environment for learning by providing focus and guidance to the content. Assignments are designed to be learning experiences for students, and it is presumed and expected that students actively participate in the class through the construction of their own learning. As a graduate level course, the instructor expects quality work from each student supported by adequate preparation and involvement.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Given the constructivist design of the class, this course will be interactive. It is my expectation that all students participate fully for all activities and assignments in order to maximize their learning experience. This web based course will be made up of several learning activities including (but not limited to) small & large group discussion, student-led learning activities, lecture notes and clarification, reflection activities, individual learning activities, written papers, and reflective, integrative examinations. In order for this class to be interesting and beneficial, each student is expected to have recorded weekly minutes in the eCollege portal. The eCollege reports these minutes to me. In certain circumstances if a student is (inactive) for “0” recorded minutes, they are dropped from the course.

Students must be prepared to lead and/or enter into discussions, to ask relevant questions, and to share the results of their study and reflection. This means that each student should be (1) conscious of the class schedule and the requirements for each class (knowing what to be prepared for), (2) self-disciplined (spending time to be fully prepared), and (3) eager to share with your classmates (participating actively by sharing what you have prepared).

ONLINE CLASS ENVIRONMENT

Please practice courtesy, respect the opinions of others, be positive in speech and effort, encourage your classmates, respect confidentiality, and support each other’s learning.

GRADING—Scoring Rubrics located in the DocSharing Tab

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion (7)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study Responses (7)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio (1)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Assessment</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentary Critique (1)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Please Note: The proposed class schedule is tentative. All assignments and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
Final grades will be calculated on the following scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>90-100</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 70</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Please Note: While students may receive numerical grades for various assignments listed in the syllabus based on the criteria provided by the instructor and which contribute to an overall grade average represented in the breakdown listed above, these grades are to provide feedback to students and to guide the instructor in making an assessment of student work. The final grade awarded for the course, however, will be at the sole discretion of the instructor and will be based on several factors, including but not limited to the rubric provided (see Course Grade Rubric attached). Points will be deducted for the submission of late work.
ASSIGNMENTS

Completion of assignments

Each student is expected to work individually and/or with a group at the direction of the instructor to complete the assignments of the course. It is expected that all course work will be submitted by the posted deadline. Assignments will not be accepted via email to the professor and work submitted to the wrong dropbox will not be accepted. Please be mindful of your submission deadlines.

Late Work Policy

In each module there will be a late box. Work that is not completed by the due date may be placed in the late box. Late work will not be accepted beyond the second day after the due date. Please note that late work WILL be penalized. The penalty is as follows:

- 1 day late: One Letter Grade Penalty
- 2 days late: Two Letter Grade Penalty

Points will be deducted from the graded assignment. For example, a student submits an assignment one day after the due date. The assignment is graded and the student earned an B on the assignment. An additional deduction is required because of the late submission. Therefore the final grade that the student will receive will be a C. Had the student submitted the work on time, the student would have earned a B. Therefore, it is imperative that you submit your work in on time.

Internet Outages.

In the instances when you experience internet outages and you are requesting an extension, documentation of the outage will need to be provided. Please contact your internet provider for the documentation. If you are in an area that is prone to frequent internet outages, I strongly urge you to seek alternate methods of accessing ECollege. Ecollege can be accessed on your smart phones. Additionally, there are numerous places where internet access is Free:

1. McDonalds
2. Starbucks
3. Public Library
4. Dairy Queen
5. Barnes and Nobles
6. TAMUC Campus

Please have a back up plan for internet outages.

Please Note: The proposed class schedule is tentative. All assignments and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
**Computer/Technology Problems**

In the instances when you experience problems with accessing ECollege, please contact IT for assistance. Please provide the instructor the name of the IT technician that provided you with assistance. The technician will also provide you with a “ticket number;” that number should also be forwarded to the instructor.

Please note that the acceptance of late work and requests for extension are provided at the discretion of the professor.

**Principal Preparation Practice Questions**

Each week, you will be assigned practice exam questions to complete. You will be provided with an opportunity to discuss challenges and strategies used to answer the problems in the Principal Prep Discussion Area. Participation is not required but strongly encouraged. The more familiar you are with the format of the questions on the exam the better you will perform on the actual exam. Principal Preparation Exam boot camps are offered each semester. Students will be notified of upcoming Principal Prep Bootcamps via email.
Case Study Responses

Each week you will be assigned a case study to review from the Preparing for School Leadership in Texas: Mastering Principal Competences and Challenges of 21st Century Leadership textbook. It is important that you review all artifacts provided in the case. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of how theory links to practice.

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.

3. A title page is not necessary (unless otherwise specified). Each paper should have a single spaced heading in the top left corner of the EVERY page which must include the following

   Example

   Johnny Student
   EDAD 544
   July 25, 2012
   Reflection#1

4. Papers should be formatted in 12 point, “Arial” or “New Times Roman” font only.

5. Papers should have 1 inch margins on all four sides, a double-spaced body, and be numbered beginning on the 2nd page (the page number should be in the top right corner).

6. Papers must be submitted in the 6th APA format.

7. Papers should be written in MS Word and uploaded to the appropriate dropbox.

Please Note: The proposed class schedule is tentative. All assignments and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
Each student will select and review one of the three documentaries listed below. The DVDs can be purchased from Amazon. In some instances, you may be able to rent the movie. All three documentaries focus on issues in American Education. As you watch your selected documentary, listen to the speakers very carefully and envision yourself being assigned as an administrator of a school profiled in the documentary. Based on the TeXes Principal Competencies, how would a Texas School Leader to provide assistance (based on the Principal Competencies)?

- **American Teacher** (2011) Matt Damon (Actor), Jamie Fidler (Actor), Vanessa Roth (Director) | Rated: NR | Format: DVD
- **Waiting for "Superman"** (2010), Geoffrey Canada (Actor), Michelle Rhee (Actor), Davis Guggenheim (Director) | Rated: PG | Format: DVD

Should anyone have difficulty accessing this movie, please make me aware ASAP. A detailed description of the purpose of a documentary critique, guidelines and suggestions is available under the DocSharing tab. Questions below are provided as a guide for organizing your thoughts. There is a five page minimum.

**QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED**

These questions are valuable to answer before you get started because they will provide you with the adequate background information and research that you will need to include into your review. Acquiring this information beforehand and keeping it constantly in mind will smooth out your writing process.

1. **What is the main issue/topic of the documentary? Is it a political, social, or just informative piece? How would a Texas Principal deal with these issues based on the Principal Competencies?** This is the first step to writing your review. Knowing whether the documentary is political, social, or informative will affect the specific details that you choose to discuss within your review as well as slightly alter your audience.

2. **What is the context of this issue? Is this issue controversial? How would a Texas Principal deal with this issue based on the Principal Competencies?** (Do research if necessary!) Context will help both you and your readers determine the significance and accuracy of the film based on the events at the time. Including context into your review will also allow readers to see that you are knowledgeable in your topic.

3. **How accurate is the documentary? How does this reflect Texas schools and how would A Texas Principal deal with this issues?** Find out what is accurate, inaccurate, or slightly skewed about the documentary. It is very important to inform your reader about this.

4. **What do participants have to know or believe to understand or appreciate this documentary? How does this issues relate to schools in Texas? How would a Texas Principal deal with this?** Your answer to this question is exactly the background information that what you
will have to inform your reader about, whether it is in the introduction or insinuated throughout the review. For example, if your documentary is about some unheard-of sport, you may first have to explain the sport’s rules in your review. Of course, you may need to do some assumptions as to what your think your audience knows and does not know.

5. **Who would you like to invite into your audience and who is excluded?** This information is very important to reveal at the beginning of your review because after the first few sentences, readers will know whether or not they are interested, and you should waste as little of their time as possible. Sometimes, making this apparent will require you to change your tone a bit to match the topic of which you are writing.

6. **Which specific points in the film do you wish to analyze in detail?** (These can include scenes, quotes, fluency of film, bias, use of imagery, use of music/sound, degree of interest, juxtaposition of shots, etc.)
Each student, working in assigned groups (located under Home Tab) will analyze a campus case study of a selected campus in need of improvement. This assignment will reflect the successful understanding, integration, synthesis, and application of the content/activities of this course as well as the knowledge and content gained in the principal preparation program as a whole. All analysis should be directly aligned to one of the nine Principal competencies. It should be clear that you have a firm understanding of what Principals in Texas are expected to know and do in terms of leading schools in Texas.

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 ideas that address the needs of students, faculty, and staff with the goal of improving a campus
✓ to organize and communicate effectively through a written report
✓ 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

To complete the assignment, students should:

✓ Select a campus in Texas with an Unsatisfactory Rating. You can choose any level and any school from the TEA published list. http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/

✓ Analyze the TAPR report for the selected campus. Students will obtain the latest TAPR report for the campus they have selected and analyze the data from the report to determine the needs of that particular campus. Needs should not be limited to only academic or instructional issues. Students will so want to gather other information on the campus and district to help them understand the campus as much as possible in this limited timeframe and proximity to the campus.

✓ Create a plan to deal with the identified needs of the campus based on the TExES Domains & Competencies and the skills and behaviors of effective principals. Students should also consider the concepts and ideas presented in other courses in the Principal Preparation Program.

✓ Submit a portfolio (your collection of electronic artifacts) that demonstrates student learning with regard to campus improvement and the content of this and
other courses in the Principal Preparation Program. The portfolio should be professional in appearance and design.

ALL PORTFOLIOS

Portfolios should have at least these sections:

1. **Title page:** with information as specified by APA style manuals (exception: no running heading is needed) and includes “Date Submitted: with date” at bottom of the page.
2. **Introduction:** a brief formulation of your thoughts regarding the assignment highlighting what is coming in the portfolio, and other important information you deem necessary to introduce the project.
3. **District Background and other relevant information:** relevant information about the district/campus that will help provide an understanding of the context for school improvement
4. **TAPR Reports:** a copy of the current TAPR report for the campus being considered
5. **Needs Analysis:** identification of major school wide issues determined from analysis of the TAPR report to be addressed. Align the issue to the nine Principal competencies.
6. **Vision Statement and Model:** An overall vision statement that describes a future state of success of the campus and a model that illustrates the process to be used to move the campus forward.
7. **Plan of Action:** a plan of action (use a District or Campus Improvement Plan format) which addresses the needs of the campus, represents the skills and behaviors of effective principals as demonstrated in the TEES Domains & Competencies, and represents the characteristics of effective schools as demonstrated in research by Lezotte and Edmonds. You should consider short, medium, and long term goals—think beyond a single year, in other words. You should also consider how you would implement your ideas—that is, what needs to be done for the idea to become a part of the school climate and culture? Finally, how will you know when you have succeeded in moving the campus toward improvement?
8. **Conclusion:** a brief statement bringing your thoughts (and portfolio) to a meaningful conclusion
9. **References:** a list of references of sources used to construct your portfolio

Your Campus Case Study Portfolio will include narrative commentary for each section, but you might want to supplement your commentary with evidentiary artifacts to support your thinking and your analysis.

Your Campus Case Study Portfolio will be graded on several criteria; however, overall your portfolio should reflect quality in depth and breadth. That is, your portfolio should encompass the content of the class (and the Principal Preparation Program) by 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.

In addition, the process of creating the portfolio is another key component of the assignment. Your ability to work together equitably to produce a quality produce is of utmost importance to the success of the assignment and your grade. It is expected that all group members will participate fully, actively, and equitably in every aspect of the portfolio assignment. *NOTE: One grade will be awarded for the project and all members will receive the same grade.*

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**Critical Assessment**

The Principal knows how to apply organizational, decision making and problem solving skills to ensure an effective learning environment. The principal knows how to:

• implement appropriate management techniques and group process skills to define roles, assign functions, delegate authority, and determine accountability for campus goal attainment.
• implement procedures for gathering, analyzing, and using data from a variety of sources for informed campus decision making.
• frame, analyze, and resolve problems using appropriate problem-solving techniques and decision-making skills.
• use strategies for promoting collaborative decision making and problem solving, facilitating team building, and developing consensus.
• encourage and facilitate positive change, enlist support for change, and overcome obstacles to change.
• apply skills for monitoring and evaluating change and making needed adjustments to achieve goals.

*Assignment: Students will review case study and provide a plan (written report) for the reorganization of the school building. The plan will incorporate all of the above skills.*

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**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

This course is an on-line class. You will need a minimum of technology to successfully complete the course. You will need access to an email account on a daily basis. I will be emailing during the course to communicate information, assignments, and other addenda. You need to check your MyLeo email each day for these communications. You will also need to communicate often with your classmates. Please use MyLeo email accounts in this course. In addition, begin the course by introducing yourself and locating a classmate “buddy.” Exchange phone numbers and contact...
information. Please respect the privacy rights of your classmates and use this information for class purposes only unless you have specific permission from each class member to do otherwise. In order to complete your assignments, you will need to be proficient at MS Office programs, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher. All assignments submitted electronically must be in MS Office formats.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Course Concerns: If you have questions pertaining to the content of this course, please contact me via email, or by phone (urgent issues only please), or visit with me before or after class. If you need an appointment outside of class, please visit with me to set up a time.

Other Questions or Concerns: Contact the appropriate TAMU-Commerce department relating to your questions or concerns. Contact information for individual departments is available by navigating the information on the university web page (www.tamuc.edu). Phone numbers are available by clicking on “Contact Us” link at the bottom left corner of the university web main page. If you are unable to reach the appropriate department with questions regarding your course enrollment, billing, advising, or financial aid, please call 903.886.5520 (Educational Leadership Department secretary) between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

The best way to contact me is via email at kriss.kemp-graham@tamuc.edu or text 862-485-0906. I check my email regularly every day of the week. Please limit phone calls to urgent situations.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Cell Phones: If you’d rather text than email me, please identify yourself. I receive hundreds of emails/texts per day. Please identify who you are, which class you are in, and what your question is.

Citizenship: All students enrolled in the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (see Students Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).
**Courtesy:** Please practice courtesy, respect the opinions of others, be positive in speech and effort, encourage your classmates, respect confidentiality, and support each other’s learning.

**Late Work:** All assignments are due on the date assigned.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism WILL NOT BE TOLERATED and will result in an automatic “F” for the course. Various versions of your work and papers may be run through Turn It In software to verify authorship authenticity, as well as to assist you in seeing possible areas that might be unintentionally plagiarized and allow for editing your work.

**Scholarly Expectations:** All work submitted for credit must be original works created by you—the scholar—for this class setting. All work that is created by another that you use in your work must be cited appropriately using APA Publication Manual (6th edition) formatting. It is my expectation that any work you produce for this class be of high quality and represent the skills and behaviors of an excellent academic scholar demonstrating passion for the field (see the Rubric for Course Grade for a listing of those behaviors).

**University Specific Procedures:**

**ADA Statement:** 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 132

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

Student Disability Resources & Services
**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*).
Please Note: The proposed class schedule is tentative. All assignments and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.