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

Instructor: Dr. Shari Farris

Remote Hours TBA

University Email Address: shari.farris@tamuc.edu

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:


Discussions related to the TExES Exam will require:


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. The focus of this course is on facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school vision of learning that is shared by the school community by exercising highly integrated, transformational, and transactional leadership roles for transforming schools into learning communities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Through the activities of TAMU-Commerce Principal Preparation Program and this course, students are prepared to be competent administrators 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 outcomes are what you are able to do as a result of the interactive activities, readings and instruction that will occur in this course—these are my expectations of you in terms of academic performance.*

**Learning Outcome #1:** The learner will be an active and engaged participant in the class proceedings. Students will demonstrate their participation by engaging in discussions, asking and answering questions, engaging in class activities and group projects, and staying on task.

**Learning Outcome #2:** The learner will think critically; engage in reflective thinking; actively integrate a variety of ideas, including the active exploration and assimilation of new ideas; and synthesize the coursework into a meaningful framework of understanding, including exploration, assimilation, and demonstration of new perspectives. Students will demonstrate these behaviors by analyzing case studies, administrator simulations, writing documentary critique and engaging the class in a meaningful discussion of the issues and potential solutions.

**Learning Outcome #3:** The learner will think critically; engage in reflective thinking; actively integrate a variety of ideas, including the active exploration and assimilation of new ideas; synthesize the coursework into a meaningful framework of understanding, including exploration, assimilation, and demonstration of new perspectives; and develop solutions to a real-world, realistic problem. Students will demonstrate these behaviors by working in a **collaborative group** to create, organize, and **produce a campus case study portfolio** that illustrates the learning in the course as well as learning from the Principal Preparation Program.

**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

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<tr>
<td>Discussion (7)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study Responses (7)</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio (1)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documentary Critique (1)</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Final grades will be calculated on the following scale

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70</td>
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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

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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.
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.

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

No late work is accepted. Please contact me if you have an emergency situation.

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 Noble
6. TAMUC Campus

Please have a back up plan for internet outages.

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 plan ahead to complete assignments on time, no late work is accepted in this course. Please note that the acceptance of late work and requests for extension because of emergencies are provided at the discretion of the professor.

Principal Preparation Practice Questions
You will be provided with an opportunity to discuss challenges and strategies used to answer the problems in the TExES 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 Boot Camps 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 detail and 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 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

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 these 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 issue 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 document.
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 you 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 group, (group assignments 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 and engage in higher order 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 AEIS report for the selected campus. Students will obtain the latest AEIS 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. **AEIS Reports:** a copy of the current AEIS report for the campus being considered.
5. **Needs Analysis:** identification of major school wide issues determined from analysis of the AEIS 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 TExES 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.**

**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 phone by appointment.

**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](http://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...
Please Note: The proposed class schedule is tentative. All assignments and due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
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).

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.
COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR
CLASS SCHEDULE
Dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

WEEK 1-Competency 1
The principal knows how to shape campus culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

Readings
1. Vornberg, Chapters Titled Educational Leadership is no Accident, School Communication and Public relations, Systemic Approach to Educational Accountability Appendix A
2. Walsh, Chapter 1, 2
3. Kemp-Graham, Chapter 2
4. Wilmore, Chapter 1-3

Discussion:
Post your original response to the Discussion Questions, then respond to at least 2 of your peers. (A minimum of 3 postings per discussion question is required)

Case Study Assignment:
Review Chapter 2 Kemp-Graham
Complete Mini Assignment #5 (Speech) on page 17.

No late work is accepted.

Student Notes:
WEEK 2 – Competency 2

The principal knows how to communicate and collaborate with all members of the school community, respond to diverse interests and needs, and mobilize resources to promote student success.

Readings
2. Walsh, Chapter 9
3. Kemp-Graham, Chapter 3
4. Wilmore, Chapter 4

Discussion:
Post your original response to the Discussion Questions. Then respond to at least 2 of your peers.

Case Study Assignments:
Chapter 3 Kemp-Graham
Mini assignment #6 - page 33

No late work is accepted.

Student Notes:
WEEK 3- Competency 3

The principal knows how to act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical and legal manner.

Readings
1. Vornberg Chapters titled: Ethics and School Administration, Systematic Approach to Educational Accountability
2. Walsh Chapter 10
3. Kemp-Graham, Chapter 4
4. Wilmore, Chapter 5

Discussion:
Post your original response to the Discussion Questions. Then respond to at least 2 of your peers.

Case Study Assignments:
Chapter 4 Kemp-Graham
Write an open letter to the community addressing the racial and equity concerns at Thurgood Marshall. It must be evident in your letter that you have read the case study and are familiar with the challenges present in the school. The letter should not be less than 500 words.

No late work is accepted.

Student Notes
WEEK 4-Competency 4

The principal knows how to facilitate the design and implementation of curricula and strategic plans that enhance student teaching and learning; ensure alignment of curriculum, instruction, resources and assessment; and promote the use of varied assessments to measure student performance.

Readings
1. Vornberg, Chapter titled: Curriculum Instruction and Assessment
2. Walsh, Chapter 3
3. Kemp-Graham, Chapter 5
4. Wilmore, Chapter 6

Discussion
Post your original response to the Discussion Questions. Then respond to at least 2 of your peers.

Case Study Assignments:
Chapter 5 Kemp-Graham
MiniProject #2.

No late work is accepted.

Student Notes
WEEK 5 – Competency 5

The principal knows how to advocate, nurture, and sustain an instructional program and a campus culture that are conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Readings
1. Vornberg, Chapters Titled: Educational Leadership is no Accident, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Systemic Approach to Educational Accountability
2. Walsh, Chapter 6,7
3. Kemp-Graham, Chapter 6
4. Wilmore, Chapter 7

Discussion:
Post your original response to the Discussion Questions. Then respond to at least 2 of your peers.

Case Study Assignment
Chapter 6 Kemp-Graham
Mini Project #2 (p. 89)

No late work is accepted.

Student Notes
WEEK 6—Competency 6

The principal knows how to implement a staff evaluation and development system to improve the performance of all staff members, select and implement appropriate models for supervision and staff development, and apply the legal requirements for personnel management.

Readings
1. Vornberg Chapters Titled: The Principal and Human Resource, Budgeting, Facilities
2. Walsh Chapter 4,5
3. Kemp-Graham, Chapter 7
4. Wilmore, Chapter 8

Discussion
Post your original response to the Discussion Questions. Then respond to at least 2 of your peers.

Case Study Assignment
Chapter 7 Kemp-Graham
Mini Assignment #8 (p. 125)
Portfolio Due

No late work is accepted.

Student Notes
Week 7- Competencies 7-9

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

The principal knows how to apply principles of effective leadership and management in relation to campus budgeting, personnel, resource utilization, financial management, and technology use.

The principal knows how to apply principles of leadership and management to the campus physical plant and support systems to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.

Readings
1. Walsh Chapter 8,10
2. Kemp-Graham, Chapter 10
3. Wilmore, Chapter 9-15

Discussion
Post your original response to the Discussion Questions. Then respond to at least 2 of your peers.

Case Study Assignment
Chapter 8
Chapter 10 Kemp-Graham
Mini Assignment #1 (p. 164)

No late work is accepted.