

EAD 801: Leadership and Organizational Development

This course supports the study, analysis, and reflection upon conceptions of leadership and perspectives on how leaders improve organizations. The course content emphasizes leadership as a range of formal and informal acts – as a form of mind and action – in which any member of an organization may engage. It also considers what it might mean to be a follower. These variations and options are important because, while students may aspire to be formal leaders, many may be in a current position to serve as informal leaders and very influential followers. One goal for this course is for all members to gain new understandings of the leaders and leadership actions around them, to feel more able to lead themselves and to feel more able to help the organizations in which they work achieve desired goals.

EAD 806: The Evolving Practice of School Leaders

As the first in a two-course sequence (EAD 806 and EAD 807), this course provides the foundation for continued study in the masters in educational administration program. A core belief of this program—and of this course—is that school leadership must prioritize quality instruction for all students as its main mission. Grounded in this belief, students explore the work of school-level leaders.

Two primary questions will guide learning: (1) what does it mean to be a leader? and (2) what does it mean to lead others? In the process of exploring these two questions, students are introduced to a core body of leadership knowledge including the history of school leadership, enduring leadership problems, leadership ethics, and promising leadership practices and theories. Students are asked to acquire new knowledge, challenge existing assumptions, and step outside of familiar comfort zones. Other key components of this course include the development of critical reading, writing, and reflection skills; communication skills; and a philosophy of ethical leadership. Students can also expect to cultivate rich collegial relationships with your classmates, learn more about themselves as leaders, and begin to conceptualize individual roles in school improvement.

EAD 807: Perspectives on School Organizations

The contemporary history of educational reform follows a story of organizations and organizational change. Educational organizations of all stripes are being called upon to develop new structures, capabilities, and relationships, all motivated by new incentives and pressures to improve student achievement. Yet the problems addressed are steep and stubborn, some centuries old and highly resistant to reform.

School leaders face the central challenge of making things better for students and for the adults who work with them. Educational leaders are expected to be agents of organizational change, which requires an understanding the fundamental make-up of school as organizations; possessing the ability to diagnose problems; motivating commitment to improvement; devising and implementing plans for improvement; and monitoring and adapting plans in response to a multitude of policies. In some schools where conditions are quite strong, this work brings

marginal changes to curriculum, supplemental services, and teachers' professional development programs. In other schools where conditions are more difficult, such work involves motivating and managing comprehensive, school-wide improvement: simultaneous, coordinated change in curriculum and instruction, supplemental services, professional development, assessment and information systems, and more.

Acting as agents of organizational change requires that educational leaders develop a repertoire of concepts and knowledge about organizations in general and educational organizations specifically. This repertoire functions as a foundation for diagnosing the problems of educational organizations. It also functions as a foundation for devising and implementing solutions.

In this course, students develop concepts and knowledge to critically analyze schools as organizations and to frame plans for improvement. Specific learning objectives include:

- Develop three conceptual perspectives on organizations: 1) as rational/technical systems, 2) as natural/social systems, and 3) as open systems;
- Develop knowledge of classic problems of educational organizations, framed by our three conceptual perspectives;
- Develop knowledge of the contemporary agenda for reforming educational organizations, framed by our three conceptual perspectives.
- Develop critical thinking skills as demonstrated through class discussion, on-line engagement and written work.

EAD 811: Inquiry & Analysis of Teaching & Learning

In this course, students develop knowledge and skills for using varied forms of data to analyze and improve teaching and learning at the school level.

Historically, K-12 classrooms were considered the domain of the individual teacher, where teachers took sole responsibility for the teaching and learning that occurred behind their own closed doors. In our current *era of accountability* – with its focus on high-stakes testing, school reform, and instructional improvement – school leaders are advised to blow open the classroom doors to analyze and guide the teaching and learning happening within their schools. In addition, the definition of ‘school leaders’ has broadened to include many individuals beyond the principal, such as assistant principals, instructional coaches, grade-level or department chairs, other teachers, and community representatives. A common model for instructional decision-making in today’s K-12 schools is a collaborative effort among these various parties who work together to assess and address instructional needs in the school. Throughout this work, the use of data is becoming more and more central to collaborative efforts that are responsive to what is actually happening in schools in regards to teaching and learning.

The purpose of this course is to prepare students to join and lead such decision-making teams—to play a savvy, skilled, and strategic role in the use of data within their schools. Thus,

this course seeks to instill students with high levels of knowledge about the use (and misuse) of data in schools and with adept skills in collecting, analyzing, and using valuable data in the interest of improved teaching and learning.

Furthermore, this course emphasizes informed consumerism of data and skilled use of data within the contemporary K-12 school setting. Although there are many forms of data that provide insight into teaching and learning, this course focuses on three particular types – student assessment data, classroom observation data, and student work data – with clear attention to the distinct and complementary purposes of these different sources of information. In addition, students will cover both tangible nuts and bolts technical skills (e.g., using Excel software to analyze test scores, analyzing the level of cognitive demand in academic tasks) and more interpretive, nuanced soft skills (e.g., considering how to be critical of data sources, developing tools for building teacher collegiality through protocols). Throughout, we will consider the strengths and weaknesses of different forms of data as tools for driving teaching and learning in our classrooms, and we will focus on the leadership skills necessary for effectively infusing data into everyday practice in schools.

EAD 824: Leading Teacher Learning

As educators, prospective teacher leaders, peer coaches, principals, staff developers, and central office administrators must continually expand and refine their knowledge and skills in the areas of teaching, learning, schooling, and instructional supervision. Today, these administrative leaders are referred to as Learning Leaders and Leaders of Learning.

By developing all members of the school community as life-long learners, Learning Leaders and Leaders of Learning encourage and support faculty members to become more reflective and collaborative in their practice as they work together to improve achievement for everyone's students. This course provides participants with the basic knowledge, skills, strategies, and awareness of resources to serve in a wide variety of leadership roles in order to promote continuous improvement in student achievement in our schools and districts.

EAD 825: Shared Leadership in Schools

The process by which shared leadership develops remains poorly understood. What do actual efforts toward shared leadership look like in practice? How do principals and teachers socially construct shared leadership? How do they identify and differentiate their decision-making roles and relationships? How do principals and teachers decide what decisions and leadership activities are shared and by whom? What are some of the consequences for teachers, principals, and students in adopting efforts toward shared leadership? In what ways do the differing belief systems of administrators and teachers constrain shared leadership? How do district, state, and national policies influence the sharing of leadership inside a school? This course is designed to grapple with these and other questions related to the practice of shared leadership in an educational setting.

EAD 853: Education Finance and Policy

This course follows the evolution of public school finance, from its beginnings to the issues of today, paying particular attention to the impact of financial policy as defined by federal and state court decisions related to educational funding. In addition, we will focus on the application of theoretical funding structures to practical situations, such as: 1) trends in the fiscal structure of school districts in the United States and other countries, 2) the allocation and use of the educational dollar, 3) financing school facilities, 4) understanding school finance reform using Michigan's Proposal A, and 5) current issues in educational finance reform (e.g., teacher salary structures, “*pay for performance*”, pension and health benefits, privatizing and/or consolidating educational services, school choice). Throughout the course, students will examine the social-economic-political context in which public finance decisions evolve and their relationship to current educational issues throughout the nation.