

Syllabus for EDL-8200

FIELD-BASED PRACTICUM FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Field-Based Practicum for Superintendents is the culminating activity for students seeking the School Administrator endorsement. It requires a 150-hour internship experience at the district level, at a school site or at an alternative site. In the Practicum, students can put leadership theory into practice, working with a local school superintendent or other district official. Students will develop the practical skills and knowledge necessary to become an informed, dynamic professional at the senior administrator level in a comprehensive school district serving children in pre-K-12. The field experience will test the application of theory, challenge the ability to promote the success of all students, and provide opportunities to develop the skills necessary to solve complex organizational issues. The course experience will culminate in a final Capstone narrative or executive summary that demonstrates the candidate's understanding and acceptance of the responsibility of making decisions typical of those made by educational leaders.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing this course, you should be able to:

- CO 1** Apply leadership behavior in the planning and articulation of school programs, the development and implementation of new instructional activities, and the stewardship of a district's vision supported by community and stakeholders.
- CO 2** Manage the organization and its operation, applying best practice to support and design professional development and staff growth that promote effective instructional progress and a positive school culture.
- CO 3** Develop a collaborative relationship with families, community, and organizations through intra- and inter-communication methods attuned to the cultural, political, legal, and social context.
- CO 4** Demonstrate integrity in leadership behaviors that are ethical and fair and that respond to the needs and interests of a diverse community.
- CO 5** Manage district, school, and community resources, optimizing an efficient, safe, and effective environment conducive to learning.
- CO 6** Accept responsibility for leading, facilitating, and making decisions in the context of working with local, county, and state agencies.

- CO 7** Describe the future of the superintendency based on an examination of the role of women, minorities, and other ethnic groups aspiring to the position.

COURSE MATERIALS

You will need the following materials to complete your coursework. Some course materials may be free, open source, or available from other providers. You can access free or open-source materials by clicking the links provided below or in the module details documents. To purchase course materials, please visit the [University's textbook supplier](#).

Required Textbooks

- Duke, D. L. (2010). *The challenges of school district leadership*. Routledge.
ISBN-13: 978-0415996235 (paperback)
- Lumby, J., & Coleman, M. (2007). *Leadership and diversity: Challenging theory and practice in education*. Sage Publications.
ISBN-13: 978-1412921831

Recommended Textbook

- Kowalski, T. J. (2013). *The School Superintendent: Theory, Practice, and Cases*, (3rd ed.) Sage Publications.
ISBN: 978-1452241081

Electronic Portfolio Registration

As a capstone experience in the Educational Leadership program, you will prepare an electronic portfolio that demonstrates your incremental achievement of the program standards. Each course in the program helps you to identify artifacts to place in your portfolio on completion of the course. To this end, you are required to purchase an electronic portfolio registration code upon your entry into the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership program. Basic directions for purchasing access to and using your electronic portfolio are posted within the Educational Leadership Students Organization (online community).

COURSE STRUCTURE

The **Field-Based Practicum for Superintendents** is a 12-week, three-credit, graduate course that consists of **six** modules. Modules include learning objectives, study materials, and activities. Module titles and topics are listed below.

- **Module 1: Governance**

- Course objectives covered in this module: 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6
- Module topics:
 - the superintendent as leader, manager, and communicator
 - observation of leadership style
 - self-analysis and assessment of skills and attributes
 - relationships with parents, students, and community
- **Module 2: Political Systems**
 - Course objectives covered in this module: 3, 4, 5, and 6
 - Module topics:
 - political aspects of the school organization
 - systemic reform issues (national and state)
 - culture and climate in school organizations
 - articulating the vision and mission
 - state and mayoral takeovers
 - change models and resistance to change
- **Module 3: Action Research and Process of Inquiry**
 - Course objectives covered in this module: 1, 2, and 5
 - Module topics:
 - use of technology to problem solve and assess system progress
 - programs for exceptional students (gifted and children with disabilities)
 - bilingual/ESL programs and research on second language acquisition (Stephen Krashen)
 - high stakes testing
 - authentic and performance-based assessment
 - tracking
 - Section 504
 - arts education
- **Module 4: Gender, Race, and the Superintendency**
 - Course objective covered in this module: 7
 - Module topics:
 - theories of leadership and bias in the boardroom
 - mentorships, networks, and gatekeepers
 - perceptions of leadership—social and racial issues that impact on leadership opportunities
 - preparation curriculums and the platform of inequality
 - data analysis of the number of superintendents (state and nationally) by gender, race, and ethnic groups
 - federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination in the workplace, including Title IX
- **Module 5: Recruitment, Retention, and Staff Development; Facilities Issues**
 - Course objectives covered in this module: 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
 - Module topics:
 - recruitment of teacher personnel and other staff members
 - technology and the management of personnel records

- staff development plans based on staff supervision outcomes and district goals
 - current teacher improvement topics such as bonuses, tenure issues, and seniority
 - review of facilities and planning capital improvements
- **Module 6: The Superintendent and Public Relations**
 - Course objectives covered in this module: 1, 2, 3, and 5
 - Module topics:
 - communication skills and competence
 - management of crises situations within and outside the organization and with the media
 - community involvement and support of school budgets and programs through proactive communication systems
 - effective use of the media to communicate the district's message

ASSESSMENT METHODS

The assessment strategy for the **Field-Based Practicum for Superintendents** includes module discussion forums, reflective log entries, and activity reports, each addressing specific module objectives, topics, and field experiences. At the start of the course, you develop and submit a detailed action plan of your internship activities. The course culminates in a final practicum report—a capstone narrative or executive summary that relates theory to practice and wraps up the entire practicum experience. See below for further details about each assessment component.

Consult the Course Calendar for assignment due dates.

Promoting Originality

One or more of your course activities may utilize a tool designed to promote original work and evaluate your submissions for plagiarism. More information about this tool is available in [SafeAssign](#).

Discussion Forums

Each module in the course has two online class discussion forums (Module 1 also has an ungraded but required Introductions Forum). All discussion forums take place asynchronously.

Class discussion forums provide daily or weekly opportunities to exchange ideas and thoughts with other students. The course mentor will monitor the board and participate as appropriate. During this aspect of the course, you respond to questions that assist you in developing your ideas, you share those ideas with your classmates, and you comment on their posts. The course texts and external websites will serve as reference points for the discussion and will assist you in better understanding the scope of the superintendency as a career.

Please participate in online discussions as you would in constructive face-to-face discussions. You are expected to post well-reasoned and thoughtful reflections for each item, making reference, as appropriate, to your readings. You are also expected to reply to your classmates' posts in a respectful, professional, and courteous manner. You may, of course, post questions asking for clarification or further elucidation on a topic.

Action Plan

You will develop a 150-hour, 12-week action plan (approximately 12.5 hours per week) that uses a school district as the base of study, all under the mentorship of a certified school administrator. The action plan will comprise **six** activities (or sets of activities)—one for each module of the course—and address specific module objectives, topics, and field experiences consistent with district-wide objectives and the six [ISLLC standards](#). It will include objectives aligned with standards, proposed activities, timelines, and anticipated outcomes. For further details, see Module 1.

Reflective Log

You will maintain a reflective log on the course website that will include personal observations, comments, ideas, and other statements that monitor the various steps of the practicum. The log is shared with the course mentor only.

Activity Reports

On completing each module's practicum activity (or set of activities), you will prepare and submit an activity report in which you describe the activity and its relationship to ISLLC standards and the original action plan, list your accomplishments, describe any feedback from the on-site administrator, and provide artifacts.

Final Report

You will produce a final report in electronic format. Included will be samples of your work during the practicum.

Artifacts

You will organize all the products of the practicum into an artifact file for review by the University mentor and yourself. It will serve as both a means to evaluate your work as well as a means to display to others the outcomes of the experience.

On-Site Mentor Report

The on-site mentor or school administrator will provide feedback on your performance relative to the ISLLC standards.

Portfolio Artifacts and Reflective Narrative

The principal artifacts for this course are the documents you create that can support the hours accrued for the practicum. These can include memoranda, meeting agenda, formal presentations, etc. Accompanying each artifact is a reflective narrative that describes the process and how the artifact meets specific standards and prepares you for school leadership.

Upload your artifacts to your electronic portfolio, and be certain to indicate their alignment to the applicable ISLLC standards.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

- **Action plan**—10%
- **Activity reports with summary statements (6)**—42%
- **Reflective log**—18%
- **Discussion forums (12)**—18%
- **Final practicum report (summative)**—12%

All activities will receive a numerical grade of 0–100. You will receive a score of 0 for any work not submitted. Your final grade in the course will be a letter grade. Letter grade equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

A	= 93–100	B	= 83–87
A–	= 90–92	C	= 73–82
B+	= 88–89	F	= Below 73

To receive credit for the course, you must earn a letter grade of C or higher on the weighted average of all assigned course work (e.g., assignments, discussion postings, projects, etc.). Graduate students must maintain a B average overall to remain in good academic standing.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

First Steps to Success

To succeed in this course, take the following first steps:

- Read carefully the entire Syllabus, making sure that all aspects of the course are clear to you and that you have all the materials required for the course.
- Take the time to read the entire Online Student Handbook. The Handbook answers many questions about how to proceed through the course and how to get the most from your educational experience at Thomas Edison State University.
- Familiarize yourself with the learning management systems environment—how to navigate it and what the various course areas contain. If you know what to expect as you navigate the course, you can better pace yourself and complete the work on time.
- If you are not familiar with Web-based learning be sure to review the processes for posting responses online and submitting activities before class begins.

Study Tips

Consider the following study tips for success:

- To stay on track throughout the course, begin each week by consulting the Course Calendar. The Calendar provides an overview of the course and indicates due dates for submitting activities and posting discussions.
- Check Announcements regularly for new course information.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

To ensure success in all your academic endeavors and coursework at Thomas Edison State University, familiarize yourself with all administrative and academic policies including those related to academic integrity, course late submissions, course extensions, and grading policies.

For more, see:

- [University-wide policies](#)
- [Undergraduate course policies and regulations](#)
- [Graduate academic policies](#)
- [Nursing student policies](#)
- [Academic code of conduct](#)

