Program in Educational Leadership  
College of Education and Behavioral Sciences  
University of Northern Colorado

ELPS 605 – External Environments: Social, Political, and Economic Influences in Educational Leadership (3 credits)  
Fall 2014

Instructor

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Course Description

This learning experience is one of four introductory explorations of educational leadership and policy. Students explore social, economic, political, and other external influences on policies and operations of elementary/secondary and higher education institutions. The course will also acquaint students with various aspects of the Colorado Growth Model, specifically School Performance Frameworks and state requirements for Unified Improvement Planning.

Texts and Readings

All readings will be posted on BlackBoard.

Relationship of Course to Program Knowledge Base

Students in educational leadership at UNC are exposed to five domains in which they:

(1) Develop a personal vision for educational leadership;  
(2) Examine and use modes of inquiry to help them frame problems and gather information;  
(3) Understand organizational culture, communication, and change;  
(4) Explore educational leaders’ roles in supervising professionals and developing human potential; and  
(5) Examine influences from the external environment that shape educational policies, structures and operations.

Learning experiences in this course contribute to students’ understanding of underlying beliefs of the leadership development program. Particular emphasis is given to statements in italics:

• Human growth and development are lifelong pursuits.
• Leadership encompasses a learned set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices.
• Organizations are artifacts of a larger society.
• Learning, teaching, and collegiality are fundamental activities of organizations.
• Validated knowledge and active inquiry form the basis of practice.
• Moral and ethical imperatives drive leadership behavior.
• Effective leadership in organizations depends on individual and team efforts.
• Leaders' behaviors and actions model their beliefs and values.
• Leaders effect positive change in individuals and organizations.
• Effective leaders develop positive interpersonal relationships.
• Diversity strengthens organizations.
• Organizations and leaders are accountable.

Course Objectives

The broader environment represents numerous educational and non-educational demands to which individuals and groups in society respond. Education is one of many social responsibilities, and educational leaders must be sensitive to and respond to societal needs and conditions. This aspect of leadership development increases awareness of possibilities and constraints which society places on educational institutions, relationships between such constraints and educational policies and operations, and influences that leaders have in shaping societal expectations and priorities.

Course activities for this portion of the program's knowledge base provide students with:

- Knowledge of social, economic and political influences on curricula, policies and operations;
- Such skills and behaviors as identifying societal and community needs; planning and budgeting; involving stakeholders in identifying goals and priorities; deciding among alternative strategies to respond to external demands; relating goals of education and resource inputs to outcomes of programs; analyzing demographic and financial information; and strengthening programs to address diversity/multicultural/concerns;
- Positive attitudes toward the role of external agencies and groups that influence education and toward educational leadership in a culturally diverse society.
- Knowledge of Colorado accountability strategies, specifically, the Colorado Growth Model

These knowledge bases, skills, behaviors and attitudes will be developed using individual readings, group activities, class discussions, visits with leaders in various social and educational agencies, and reflective activities. As a result, students will:

- Increase knowledge of governmental agencies that directly, and various groups in society that indirectly, influence curricula, policies and the allocation of resources;
- Understand changing demographics and consequent pressures from public and private sectors that shape elementary/secondary and post-secondary education;
• Become more aware of social and cultural change in society and the implications of racial, ethnic and cultural diversity for the development of educational goals and curricula;
• Explore the role of partnerships between schools, colleges and universities, businesses, and community groups;
• Understand the concept of, and model programs for, the integration of service delivery for students and families;
• Understand local, state and federal sources of revenue, and the constraints they entail, in supporting educational institutions and individual programs;
• Relate financial planning and budgeting to educational goals and priorities;
• Understand the concept of accountability and its implications for the development, implementation, and assessment of educational program performance.

Standards from Professional Organizations

Courses in the Educational Leadership programs are designed to prepare individuals to serve as leaders in the field of education. Learning experiences address skills, competencies, and performance expectations identified by numerous professional organizations with an interest in the preparation of educational leaders. Among the organizations consulted are the American Association of School Administrators, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, National Policy Board, and University Council for Educational Administration, among others.

Course Activities, Assignments, and Evaluation of Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnership plan and budget</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final reflection paper</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaded discussions (8 total)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>200</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grades are awarded in accordance with the Graduate School guidelines: a grade of “A” is awarded for outstanding work, a grade of “B” reflects acceptable work at the graduate level, a grade of “C” reflects work that is minimally acceptable at the graduate level. Grades of “D” or “F” reflect work that is unacceptable to apply toward a graduate program. Graduate School guidelines require a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (average grade of “B”) to remain in good academic standing and for graduation.

Academic Integrity

Your work must reflect academic integrity and honesty. The university’s policy on academic honesty states that cheating on examinations, submitting the work of others as your own, or plagiarism in any form “may be subject to (1) a zero or an “F” on the work in question, (2) an “F” in the course, (3) other academic penalties as outlined in the
professor’s course requirements and expectations, (4) disciplinary action as specified in the Sanctions for Misconduct section below [in the student handbook] or (5) any combination thereof’ (UNC Student Handbook, p.7). You are encouraged to seek immediate assistance if you are unsure of how to properly paraphrase or cite a source so that you properly credit the work of the author.

**Students Needing Accommodations**

Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, voice/TTY (970) 351-2289, or fax (970) 351-4166, or visit www.unco.edu/dss as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**CEBS Inclusivity Statement**

The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty and staff within CEBS will be accepting of differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples’ perspectives, behaviors, and world views may be different from their own.

**Blackboard (Bb):** Students must be proficient in accessing material in Blackboard and participating in discussion boards. Consult with the instructor if you need assistance.

**IMPORTANT:** Your instructor will communicate important information to you in two ways: an announcement posted on the course Blackboard (Bb) site AND through email. Therefore, students should check their email daily, if possible, in case there have been adjustments/additions to the class requirements. Students will be notified in plenty of time to complete any supplemental assignments. Again, be sure to check your email and/or Bb announcements often. **Before driving to class (particularly if the weather is “iffy”), check the Announcements in Bb and your Bearmail in case there has been a class cancellation for some reason.**

**Late Assignments**

If you are late in participating in any of the 8 threaded discussions you will not receive credit.

Late submissions for the Partnership Plan or the Final Reflection Paper will be assessed as follows: up to 24 hours late -10%, up to 48 hours late -50%, over 48 hours late = no credit.
THREADED DISCUSSION

The discussions will be assessed in the following manner: Each of the 8 threaded online discussions will consist of 3 prompts. You must answer each of the 3 prompts in a thorough, clear, and concise manner. You must also respond to at least 1 classmate’s response. You may choose which classmate’s prompt you will respond to and you only have to choose one per threaded discussion. You will receive 1 point for your response to a classmate. You will receive up to 9 points for your initial response to the 3 prompts for a total of 10 points maximum for each threaded discussion. Your responses to the 3 prompts will be graded as 3=excellent, 2 = average, 1=below average, 0=unacceptable or no response. This will be discussed more thoroughly in the first online collaborate session.

PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Each student will devote substantial time to an Interagency/Partnership Plan and Budget that culminates in a written report of the following:

A plan for linking educational institutions with social service agencies and/or businesses. The report details program goals and objectives, composition of coordinating board, description of services provided and responsibilities of participants, a brochure or one-page flyer (e.g., to announce its formation or to attract volunteers or participants), and a budget (with revenue sources and expenditures) to support this plan. This plan will provide evidence of students’ understanding of content related to the course objectives and state/national standards. Your written report should be a minimum of 5 pages and a maximum of 10 pages (double-spaced).

FORMAT OF THE WRITTEN PLAN

1. Title of the Project

2. Goals and Objectives
   a. How do the participating organizations benefit?
   b. How is this project related to the school vision?

3. For whom is the brochure/flier intended (e.g., organization from whom you are seeking the partnership; School Board; people who will benefit from the service(s))? Note: The brochure is a separate handout, but just mention here who the brochure is designed for.

4. Coordinating Board
   a. Who are the board members?
b. Rationale for why they were selected?
c. For what are they responsible?

5. Description of the Services
   a. Specifics of the project itself (how services will be provided)
   b. Who will benefit?
   c. Responsibilities of each partner organization
   d. Procedures needed to make the project successful

6. Budget
   a. Detailed summary of realistic projected expenses and sources of funding
   b. Explanation for how budget will help sustain the project

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**Brochure**

Brochure: While the brochure is a separate document, it should: include a clear description of project purposes, participating organizations, services to be provided, and recipients of services. Brochure is attractive, easy to read, and free of errors.

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**RUBRIC FOR PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory (0-7)</th>
<th>Needs Improvement (8-11)</th>
<th>Proficient (12-15)</th>
<th>Advanced (16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Goals and Objectives</strong></td>
<td>Goals and objectives of partnership project are not clearly presented. Benefits to all partners are not clear.</td>
<td>Goals and objectives of partnership project are clearly presented in one of the following: written report or brochure</td>
<td>Goals and objectives of partnership project are clearly presented in written report and brochure.</td>
<td>Goals and objectives of partnership project are clearly presented in written report and brochure. Mutual benefits to participating organizations are clear in goals and objectives and the relationship to the school vision is articulated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordinating Board</strong></td>
<td>Membership of coordinating board is unclear. Rationale for membership is unclear</td>
<td>Membership of coordinating board is clear, but rationale for selection is unclear</td>
<td>Membership of coordinating board is clear, with understandable rationale for selection.</td>
<td>Membership and rationale are clear and justified. Expectations of ongoing responsibilities of board are clear, and governance of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Services</td>
<td>Responsibilities of board are unclear. Responsibilities and/or governance of board are unclear or inconsistent.</td>
<td>Responsibilities of board are clear.</td>
<td>board is clearly explained.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Services</td>
<td>Explanation of services to be provided through project is unclear.</td>
<td>Services to be provided through project are identified. Lack of clarity in identification of recipients of services and/or responsibility of each partner organization.</td>
<td>Services to be provided through project are clear, with identification of beneficiaries of project, responsibilities of each partner organization identified, and clear explanation of procedures needed to make project successful.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional Brochure</td>
<td>Brochure does not include one of the following: project purposes, participating organizations, services to be provided, and recipients of services. Brochure contains technical errors (spelling, grammar, etc.) and/or is otherwise not appealing in appearance.</td>
<td>Brochure includes general description of project purposes, lists participating organizations and services to be provided. Recipients of services are identified. Brochure contains technical errors (spelling, grammar, etc.) and/or is otherwise not appealing in appearance.</td>
<td>Brochure includes clear description of project purposes, participating organizations, services to be provided, and recipients of services. Brochure is attractive, easy to read, and free of mechanics errors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Budget omits</td>
<td>Budget accounts for</td>
<td>Budget accounts for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
significant expenditures needed to implement project. Sources of funding are not identified or are unrealistic.

many of the necessary expenditures but does not account for identification of all costs. Sources of funding are identified, but are incomplete and/or unrealistic.

expenditures necessary for project to succeed and identifies sources of funding. In-kind contributions of partner organizations are identified, with appropriate dollar amounts. Budget is realistic.

expenditures necessary for project to succeed and identifies sources of funding. Budget is realistic and reflects creativity in identification of funding sources. Budget provides for sustainability of project.

**REFLECTION PAPER**

**Introduction:** During this course you will have been exposed to numerous data and opinions regarding economic, social, and political aspects of education in Colorado and in the United States. It is assumed that through the learning experiences (readings, guest speakers, videos, activities) you have reflected upon the knowledge gained. This final paper will allow you to express your opinions regarding the current, and possible future, direction of education in the United States and/or Colorado.

**The Question:** Based upon what you have learned in this class, in what areas do you feel optimistic or pessimistic with respect to education in the U.S. and Colorado?

**Instructions:** Write an organized, double-spaced paper (4-5 pages) answering the question above, making sure to support your opinions with specific examples from course content. The maximum of five pages is to encourage strong organization and succinct writing.

**Rubric for Grading Reflection Paper**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Pts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content: Clearly addresses the question and provides sufficient evidence to support arguments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>x 4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure: Follows specifics of instructions; includes an introduction; paper is organized with appropriate headings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x 4.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
when needed; paper has a concluding paragraph

Style: Writing is concise and of graduate-level quality; no major errors in spelling, punctuation, syntax, or grammar

*Web Sites of Interest*

**Government Sites:**
- Colorado Commission on Higher Education: http://www.state.co.us/cche_dir/hecche.html
- Colorado Department of Education: http://www.cde.state.co.us
- Colorado General Assembly: http://www.leg.state.co.us
- United States Census Bureau: http://www.census.gov

**Organization Sites:**
- Access: http://www.schoolfunding.info
- American Federation of Teachers: http://www.aft.org
- Colorado Association of School Boards: http://www.casb.org
- Colorado Association of School Executives: http://www.co-case.org
- Colorado Education Association: http://www.coloradoea.org
- Colorado Federation of Public Employees: http://www.cfpe.org
- Colorado Principals’ Center: http://www.coloradoprincipalscenter.org
- Education Commission of the States: http://ecs.org
- National Education Association http://www.nea.org
- National School Boards Association http://www.nsba.org

**Other Policy/Legislation Sites:**
- Federal and state legislation::http://www.law.cornell.edu/statutes.html
- Legal research: http://www.findlaw.com
  http://www.courts.state.co.us/
- Colorado Constitution and statutes: http://www.michie.com/colorado/
- Public policies: http://www.stateline.org

**Aligning Course with Colorado Principal Standards**
The following Colorado Principal Standards and competencies will be addressed in this course:

1.2. **School Improvement Plan**: Principals ensure that the unified improvement plan provides the structure for the vision, values, goals, and changes necessary for improved achievement and developmental outcomes for all students, and provides for tracking of progress based on data. Principals ensure that the school improvement plan is an actionable, meaningful plan that includes the implementation of strategies to identify and support student engagement, healthy development, attendance and successful completion of school for all students. The plan should be reviewed frequently and revised to adjust strategies based on progress toward goals. The principal shall ensure that any school improvement plans are aligned with and mutually supportive of each other and existing district plans.

1.3. **Leading Change**: Principals collaboratively develop a vision and implementation strategies for improvements and changes which result in improved achievement and developmental outcomes for all students. Principals demonstrate the ability to effectively manage organizational change, developing and fostering a collaborative culture that inspires innovation, creativity, and continuous school improvement. They model self-awareness, reflective practice, transparency and ethical behavior. Principals analyze organizational practices and make changes as necessary based on a review of data. They understand the implications of changes for the school community, and demonstrate flexibility and adaptability. Principals can clearly define and communicate challenges to all stakeholders in their school community and can implement problem-solving strategies to seek positive solutions to school challenges.

2.1. **Curriculum, Instruction, Learning, and Assessment**: Principals enable school-wide conversations about standards for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and data on student learning based on research and best practices, and ensure that the ideas developed are integrated into the school’s curriculum and instructional approaches. Principals demonstrate current knowledge of research in teaching, learning and child development, and ensure that their schools provide a comprehensive education that promotes cognitive, physical, mental, social emotional health and growth. They ensure that an age-appropriate curriculum consistent with the Colorado Academic Standards is taught and monitored through effective formative assessment practices, and the use of summative assessments. They engage staff in developing knowledge about student development, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and analysis and use of data in order to establish and achieve high expectations for students. Principals ensure high expectations for all students, including students identified as gifted, students with disabilities, and students considered “at risk” of school failure.

3.1. **Intentional and Collaborative School Culture**: Principals articulate and model a clear vision of the school’s culture, and involve students, families, and staff in creating a climate that supports it. Principals articulate a strong and clear vision for the school’s culture, and foster broad ownership among the school community for that vision. Principals deploy school structures in a manner the supports the culture. They build
relationships that create a trusting, collaborative, innovative, respectful and supportive school culture where teachers want to work, students want to learn and all families feel welcomed and empowered to help their students succeed.

3.3. **Equity Pedagogy**: Principals demonstrate a commitment to a diverse population of students by creating an inclusive and celebratory school culture, and provide direction in meeting the needs of diverse student talents, experiences, and challenges. Principals ensure that all adults in the school have high expectations for all students, and believe that all students can reach those high expectations. They support the use of a variety of teaching styles designed to meet the diverse needs of individual students. Students’ individual backgrounds are valued as a resource, and principals advocate for approaches to instruction and behavioral supports that build on student strengths.

5.1. **School Resources and Budget**: Principals establish systems for marshaling all available school resources to facilitate the work that needs to be done to improve student learning, achievement, and healthy development for all students. They implement effective operational systems to use time, personnel, technology and resources to support student learning. Within the parameters of the district and economic environment, principals ensure that all school operation systems are managed according to principles of business management, budgeting and accounting practices.

5.3. **Systematic Communication**: Principals facilitate the design and utilization of various forms of formal and informal communication with all school stakeholders. Principals communicate the school’s distinctive learning environment and student learning results in an open and transparent manner, in order to attract parent and community support.

6.1. **Family and Community Involvement and Outreach**: Principals design structures and processes which result in family and community engagement, support, and ownership of the school. They create a culture of engagement and communication with families and community to build relationships that support students and families to improve student learning, achievement and healthy development, and school performance. Principals engage parents/guardians in understanding and taking part in activities to improve their student’s learning, and partner with school- and community-based resources to support students and their families. They build and sustain school-community partnerships with businesses and other civil and social organizations to ensure multiple learning opportunities for students.

6.2. **Professional Leadership Responsibilities**: Principals strive to improve the profession by collaborating with their colleagues, district leadership, and other stakeholders to drive the development and successful implementation of initiatives that better serve students, teachers, and schools at all levels of the education system. They ensure that these initiatives are consistent with federal and state laws, district and board policies, and negotiated agreements where applicable. Principals act as leaders in the field to influence local/district/state or national decisions that have an effect on student
learning. They are aware of federal and state laws, and district and board policies including negotiated agreements, and ensure that the protocols and processes they adopt in their schools are consistent with these requirements. As necessary they advocate for changes that better serve students, teachers and schools. They establish and maintain systems to protect the confidentiality of student records and family communications.

6.3. **Advocacy for the School**: Principals develop systems and relationships to leverage the district and community resources available to them both within and outside of the school in order to maximize the school’s ability to serve the best interests of students and families. Principals look for ways to leverage and develop district and community resources at their disposal, and to advocate for what they need to meet the needs of their schools. They understand and work collaboratively within the governance structure of the school, including with district leadership and the local school board, where consistent with local district practice, in order to improve governing relationships and develop clarity about each body’s roles and responsibilities in educating students.

7.3. **Use of Data**: Principals use evidence to evaluate the performance and practices of their schools, in order to continually improve attainment of student growth.