ELPS 605 – External Environments: Social, Political, and Economic Influences in Educational Leadership (3 credits)
Spring 2015 - Wednesdays, 5-9pm

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
Readings will be identified in class.

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;
· Scan various media in the environment to identify groups and/or issues that do or will likely impact educational policies;
· 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;
· Incorporate external demands to reform, as well as to maintain the current structure of, public education at all levels;
· 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;
· Analyze demographic and financial data; and
· 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, Association of School Business Officials, 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 Middle School Association, National Policy Board, and University Council for Educational Administration. (See applicable Colorado Principal Standards elsewhere in the syllabus.)

**Course Activities, Assignments, and Evaluation of Performance**

Activities and assignments are assessed according to rubrics, scored 4 (high) to 1 (low), and given the following weights in determining final grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnership plan and budget</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unified Improvement Plan</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</table>
External Forces Paper 25%
Preparation for, and participation in, class activities 25%
TOTAL 100%

Grades

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.

The University of Northern Colorado recently introduced pluses and minuses to its grading system. In Educational Leadership and Policy Studies the implementation of pluses and minuses in grading has been left up to the discretion of each professor. For this course, pluses and minuses will be used.

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.

**Email/Attachments**

**IMPORTANT:** Email will only be sent to, and accepted from, students’ UNC Bearmail accounts. Students must submit assignments electronically. Instructions for electronic submissions are as follows:

- All assignments submitted for review via email are sent as an attachment to an email message. The email itself should include the student’s name and what is being sent. All attachments should be sent in MS Word or in Rich Text format. The attachment should be labeled (on the paper) with the student’s name, date, and the title of the assignment.
- If there are any problems with sending the materials via email then the assignment should be submitted by the due date in print form.
- The instructor will attempt to reply to every electronic submission confirming receipt of the document. If a student does not receive confirmation it is his or her responsibility to determine why the email was not received.

**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.

**Late Assignments**

Efforts have been made to spread the required work for this course throughout the semester. However, if an assignment is not turned in on time it will automatically be subjected to penalties at the instructor’s discretion. If the assignment is over one day late one grade point will be taken off the final grade. If the assignment is a week late it will not be accepted.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Group Project on Interagency/Partnership Plan and Budget**
Each team will devote substantial time to a project that culminates in an oral presentation and 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 (ELCC/NCATE Standards 4.2, 4.2, 4.3).

Each team submits one copy of the interagency/partnership plan report (you may make a copy of all or part of the report for class members) and makes a presentation as if the team was proposing the plan to a governing board or another group whose approval and/or support is needed. The oral presentation should include the appropriate use of handouts and/or technology to enhance the presentation to a school district, college, city council, or other organizational board. The oral report should be from 20-30 minutes.

Other class members will provide feedback to the team on such criteria as clarity, appropriateness of plan, preparation, thoroughness, and expansion of knowledge on the topic. The room in which presentations are made can be equipped for a wide range of media/technology deliveries, including projection and sound systems for PowerPoint, overhead projection, VCR/DVD, and web-based presentations.

Each team’s performance will be assessed by the following rubric.

### RUBRIC FOR PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory (1)</th>
<th>Needs Improvement (2)</th>
<th>Proficient (3)</th>
<th>Advanced (4)</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 or two of the following: written report, brochure, and oral presentation.</td>
<td>Goals and objectives of partnership project are clearly presented in written report, brochure, and oral presentation.</td>
<td>Mutual benefits to participating organizations are clear in goals and objectives and the relationship to the school vision is articulated.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coordinating Board</strong></td>
<td>Membership of coordinating board is unclear. Rationale for membership is unclear. Responsibilities of board are unclear.</td>
<td>Membership of coordinating board is clear, but rationale for selection is unclear or inconsistent. Responsibilities of board are unclear.</td>
<td>Membership of coordinating board is clear, with understandable rationale for selection. Responsibilities of board are clear.</td>
<td>Membership and rationale are clear and justified. Expectations of ongoing responsibilities of board are clear, and governance of board is clearly explained.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Description of Services</strong></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 identified. Recipients of services are specified. Responsibility of each partner organization is delineated.</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotional Brochure</strong></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 clear description of 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>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
<td>Budget omits significant expenditures needed to implement project. Sources of funding are not identified or are unrealistic. Budget accounts for 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. Budget accounts for 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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Oral Presentation</td>
<td>Casual and disinterested demeanor. Presentation delivery inappropriate and distracting.</td>
<td>Two or more lapses in professional demeanor and/or language. Presentation aids do not contribute to further understanding of the speakers' message and/or technology malfunctions distract from the presentation.</td>
<td>Language appropriate. Presentation aids appropriate and clear. Technology is used effectively. All members of the group contribute to the presentation.</td>
<td>Demeanor and language make the presentation clear and persuasive. Presentation aids are appropriate, attractive, and help to clearly convey the speakers' message. Technology is used effectively. Responses to questions are answered professionally and effectively. All members of group contribute to an effective presentation.</td>
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**External Forces Paper**

During this course students will be exposed to activity and actions occurring in the larger environment. The larger environment is defined as the environment beyond the school and district. It is helpful to think in terms of activity and action occurring at the state and national level. It is also useful to think in terms of economic, social, and political forces operating at the state and national level.

The assignment is to write a brief paper that would describe these forces in a manner that would be useful to a practicing principal trying to do sense making in their school community. Sometimes it helps to think in terms of messages and signals from the larger environment.
Unified Improvement Plan: Development and Preparation

Embedded throughout the course are various activities associated with understanding, interpreting, and using data to improve student achievement. These activities culminate with a group assignment that consists of the development of a Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) based on a flat file from the Colorado Department of Education. For this assignment each group will do the following:

1. Read the *CDE Unified Improvement Planning Handbook.*
2. Develop at least one major improvement strategy with at least four action steps.
3. Develop a plan to communicate the UIP to stakeholders.
4. Develop a plan to use the UIP to guide school improvement.

It is expected the following items will be used and understood during the completion of the assignment:

1. The growth model worksheet.
2. The data base manipulation worksheet.
3. The root cause analysis.
Evidence of Preparation and Participation

Students are expected to participate in, and contribute to, the class discussion and activities. Students are expected to read all assignments for each class. Active and relevant participation includes:

- Providing informed opinions and commentary
- Raising insightful questions
- Remaining alert and focused on the topic of discussion or presentation
- Challenging ideas in a constructive and professional manner
- Providing leadership and partnership in group activities
- Displaying a professional demeanor at all times
- Accepting responsibility in completion of group and individual assignments, and taking the initiative in requesting advance arrangements regarding any absences
- Satisfactory completion of enrichment activities (e.g., class presentations, short, reflective papers, discussion board participation, etc.)

IMPORTANT: In preparation for each class meeting in which text chapters or other readings are to be discussed, students are to come to class prepared to discuss the following:

1. What was your overall impression of what you read?
2. What point(s) did the author make that you found of particular interest (be prepared to cite the page number/paragraph/sentence/quote?)
3. With which points did you agree/disagree?
4. Have you seen evidence of that to which the author/speaker alludes in your current or past experiences in education?

RUBRIC FOR GRADING

4 Excellent attendance; often voluntarily participates in class discussions; comments are relevant and succinct; listens respectfully when others talk; is attentive during lectures/presentations; sensitive to others; active, productive member in team settings; all enrichment activities completed on time and demonstrate a seriousness of purpose.

3 Occasional voluntary participation in discussions; comments are usually relevant and succinct; usually attentive while others are talking/presenting; all but one enrichment activity completed on time and of high quality; usually a productive member in team settings.

2 Seldom participates in class discussions; occasionally dominates discussions; comments are often irrelevant or not succinct; occasionally fails to listen respectfully when others speak/present; more than one enrichment activity missed or done haphazardly; less than productive member in team settings.

1 Often fails to listen respectfully; distracting behavior in class; insensitive to others; virtually a non-productive member in team settings.
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 that 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.

**KNOWLEDGE BASE**


