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EDLD 560.01: Elementary Level Leadership

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling
EdLd 560 - Elementary Level Leadership
Autumn, 2001

Place: Education Building, Room 212
Time: Wednesday evenings, 4:10 – 7:00 p.m.
Instructor: Dean Sorenson, Ph.D.
Office Hours: By Appointment
Phone Office: 243-5610

1. Course Description

This course will focus on the knowledge and skills required to be an effective elementary school leader and will focus on managing a building while planning for school improvement.

2. Culminating Course Outcome.

Students will develop an educational platform and entry plan that addresses activities, knowledge and skills required to successfully lead an elementary school toward improvement. This plan will be specific enough to be used in practice and will include in-depth reflection on the student's belief system and application of these values, assumptions and expectations to school culture.

3. Enabling Outcomes.

Your platform/entry plan should include but not be limited to the following issues:

- a. Develop an **educational platform** that outlines your belief system, vision, operating principles and professional development plan.
- b. Develop an **entry plan** that expresses your knowledge of each of the following and how you plan to incorporate this knowledge into action as an administrator:
 - Become familiar with the school as an organization (organizational theory - open systems/social theory) and the process of change.
 - Develop an awareness of school culture and climate and how to assess them.
 - Become familiar with important personnel issues such as selection, retention, supervision, evaluation and professional development.
 - Demonstrate and understanding of decision making theory.
 - Design a student discipline plan.
 - Design the use of technology as an administrative tool.
 - Contrast and compare leadership styles and identify your own style.
 - Develop the skills to be informed consumers of educational technology.
 - Demonstrate and understanding of conflict management.

4. Assignments & Activities

Class activities require active participation by all class members. The instructor subscribes to a philosophy of learning that holds that everyone engaged in learning teaches every other engaged person. That is, an open mind, participating in meaningful, informed discussion is a powerful learning environment. When someone is not in class and thereby not engaged in the discussion, the learning environment for everyone else is diminished.

Student contributions will be judged on a demonstrated understanding of the knowledge base, the ability to translate and apply that knowledge to real situations and the student's ability to communicate effectively during times of conflict or disagreement among colleagues. Informed contributions to class discussions are critical to collective learning and professional development. It is expected that all students will foster their own learning and the learning of others through their positive and thoughtful engagement in class activities.

Should individual written assignments be given, it is expected that these assignments be the original work of the individual and that APA style will be applied with requisite attribution and citation.

Activities may include:

- Individual written assignments and oral presentations
- Large and small group discussions of readings, professional experiences and emerging ideas and concepts
- Individual and small group presentations on other activities in which collaboration and team work is expected
- A mid-term exam to provide guidance in study and focus for the comprehensive examination.

Issues for Class Discussions (Weekly)

As a part of the reading assignments, each student is expected to bring to class, the following week, three higher order, thought provoking issues for class discussion. These topics should be in writing and may be submitted to the instructor or class members.

Individual Class Presentation (20-30 minutes) Presentation of your educational platform and entry plan.

Your presentation should be predicated on applicable theories and the practical nature of leadership as well as your belief system and vision for the school. This assignment should be practical and usable for anyone entering the principalship for the first time or taking on a new administrative position. Over the years, these presentations have taken a variety of forms. One obvious format would be a traditional Power Point presentation with narrative however, some students have found very creative ways to present the core elements of this assignment. Try and find a creative method of presenting your work to the class.

Final Paper (10-12 pages)

This paper should present your educational platform and entry plan in a comprehensive way attending to the issues described in 3 (a) and (b) above, as well as any other issues you may feel appropriate. This assignment should be practical and usable for anyone entering the principalship for the first time, or taking on a new administrative position.

5. Grading

Students will be asked to engage in developing student assessment criteria and describe the nature of quality work. The following products/activities will be part of that discussion. Students will also be asked to self-evaluate their performance.

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| • Class attendance and quality of participation in class discussions | 20% |
| • Quality of questions provided for class discussion | 20% |
| • Presentation to class and final written document (Platform/Entry Plan) | 20% |
| • Presentations of issues taken from enabling outcomes or readings | 15% |
| • Final examination | 25% |

6. Required Readings

- Sergiovanni, T.J. (2001). The principalship: A reflective practice perspective. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Other readings as may be assigned.