Course Syllabus: EDLE 6013 Politics and Community Relations

Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education
EDLE-6013-DX1/EDLE-6013-X10
Summer I Session 2024: June 3 - July 5, 2024

Contact Information

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Instructor Communication

The best way to contact me is through email. I usually respond quickly. You can expect a response within 24 hours; however, it could be a little longer on weekends or holidays. I provide my personal cellular telephone number, but I ask it not be used for calls or texts unless absolutely necessary as I cannot assure anyone I am available at any given time during the summer hours.

Syllabus Changes or Updates

This syllabus is subject to change based on a variety of factors that may impact the hybrid course design.

Required Textbooks

School-Community Relations (2021) by Douglas Fiore. Taylor and Francis. Published July 30, 2021 by Routledge. ISBN 9780367458935. eBook ISBN 9781003025993.

Building Great School Board-Superintendent Teams: A Systematic Approach to Balancing Roles and Responsibilities. (2017) Bradley V. "Brad" Balch; Michael T. Adamson. Solution Tree Press. ISBN 10: 1945349131 / ISBN 13: 9781945349133

Course Description

This course is an in-depth study of political and community relations issues faced by the public school superintendent. Communications, partnerships, consensus-building, media relations, working with diverse groups, and superintendent-board working relationships will be studied.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

Specific learning objectives for the course derive from the standards outlined below. Satisfactory completion of the course will document that students have demonstrated the ability to satisfy the following standards:

See Appendix A: NELP District Standards

NELP District Level Standards
STANDARD 1 COMPONENTS:

Component 1.1 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to collaboratively design, communicate, and evaluate a district mission and vision that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, values, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community.

Component 1.2 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to lead district strategic planning and continuous improvement processes that engage diverse stakeholders in data collection, diagnosis, design, implementation, and evaluation.

Component 3.1 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, cultivate, and advocate for a supportive and inclusive district culture.

Component 5.1 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to represent and support district schools in engaging diverse families in strengthening student learning in and out of school.

Component 5.2 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to understand, engage, and effectively collaborate and communicate with, through oral, written, and digital means, diverse families, community members, partners, and other constituencies to benefit learners, schools, and the district as a whole.

Component 5.3 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to communicate through oral, written, and digital means within the larger organizational, community, and political contexts and cultivate relationships with members of the business, civic, and policy community in support of their advocacy for district, school, student, and community needs.

Component 7.1 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to represent the district, advocate for district needs, and cultivate a respectful and responsive relationship with the district's board of education focused on achieving the district's shared mission and vision.

Component 7.2 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to design, implement, cultivate, and evaluate effective and collaborative systems for district governance that engage multiple and diverse stakeholder groups, including school and district personnel, families, community stakeholders, and board members.

Component 7.3 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, engage in decision making around, implement, and appropriately communicate about district, state, and national policy, laws, rules, and regulations.

Component 7.4 Program completers understand the implications of larger cultural, social, economic, legal, and political interests, changes, and expectations and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate and represent district needs and priorities within larger policy conversations and advocate for district needs and priorities at the local, state, and national level.

See Appendix C:
Texas Superintendent Certification Domains and Competencies

- Domain I: Leadership of the Educational Community
  - Competency 001: The superintendent knows how to act with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner in order to promote the success of all students.
  - Competency 002: The superintendent knows how to shape district culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the educational community:
  - Competency 003: The superintendent knows how to communicate and collaborate with families and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs and mobilize community resources to ensure educational success for all students.
  - Competency 004: The superintendent knows how to respond to and influence the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context, including working with the board of trustees, to achieve the district's educational vision.

See Appendix A for a complete list of standards/competencies (if applicable)

Major Goals of the Course

The major goals of this course are to
- Explore various political aspects and challenges facing the school superintendency. Concepts as power, politics and ethics as they relate to educational reform movements and role relationships will be addressed.
- Develop understanding of the dynamics which directly affect the superintendent's behavior, as well as school board and community relationships.
- Increase need for system thinking as it relates to change leadership.
- Develop an understanding of the dimensions of power, politics and ethics with specific responsibility of the superintendent behavior, understanding special interest groups, and managing resistance to change.

These goals will be achieved through readings, writing, reflection, and application of new knowledge and skills.

Grading/Assessment

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment.

Assignments	Points	Calculated
Participation: Writing and Responding to Discussion Posts	130	(13 posts X 10 pts)
Participation: Online Zoom Class Sessions	40	(4 Zooms X 10 pts)
Correspondence with State Legislators	80	(4 msgs X 20 pts)
Radio or Podcast Interview	10	Due June 11
Power Structure Diagram (Like Word Web)	30	Due June 18
Social Media Posts	30	(3 posts X 10 pts)
News Releases	80	(4 msgs X 20 pts)
NELP/TEA Assessment #5: Equity Plan	100	Due July 5
TOTAL POINTS	500	

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	450 to 500
B	400 to 449
C	350 to 399
D	300 to 349
F	Less than 300

Assignments, Quizzes, and Examinations

There will be no quizzes nor examinations in this class. Instead, the assignments in this course have heavier weighting. This course is intending to use purposeful work-based assignments as authentic assessments. As such, weekly assignments will have a higher level of scrutiny when graded and be held to a higher standard of performance.

Projects Required

There will be no final examination in this class. The major project, the NELP/TEA Assessment #5, Current Events Based Equity Plan, will take the place and carry the weight of a final examination.

Extra Credit

This is a doctoral-level class so there are no extra credit assignments.

Attendance Policy

An expectation of this course is that students attend four live, online discussion sessions, one each week, for a total of four during this summer session. We will attempt to set times and dates when the majority of the class can attend.

Regular attendance is expected. If a class must be missed, please discuss it with the professor beforehand. If an emergency arises, please either telephone or email the professor, if possible.

One of the cornerstones to the WCOE Ed.D. experience is the opportunity to interact with colleagues from across other campuses, districts, and professions. To this end, we hold in-person sessions. Students are expected to maintain a physical and professional engagement in these experiences. However, we do understand some circumstances cannot be avoided. Therefore, we have established the following policy:

1 absence =   make up required experiences/coursework with colleagues
2 absences = final grade will be lowered by one letter and make up required experiences/coursework with colleagues
3 absences = Failing

COVID policy – if a student is quarantined due to COVID, that student may Zoom a Saturday class. Under these circumstances a student will be required to provide documentation of quarantine requirements from his/her public health district or health care provider.

Attendance/Participation

Regular online participation is required. Please attend to discussions in a timely manner. Professional dialogue opportunities are part of this class; participation will be considered part of the grade.

Student Handbook

Refer to: Student Handbook-2023-24

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

Artificial Intelligence

Advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) have now provided generative and creative applications such as Chat GPT, Google Bard, Google Sparrow, and others. Certainly, these tools can be quite useful in the learning process; however, the content they generate do not represent the effort and learning of the student.

Submitting AI generated work in place of the original and genuine work of the student will be considered a form of academic misconduct.

Quality Requirements
"Turning in" all assignments is not enough to ensure an "A" in the course. Quality of work turned in on time is the most important criterion for receiving an "A."

Expectations for Written Work
- Correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling are expected on all written assignments (although web discussions are not held to the high standard of a research project or other written assignment).
- Written assignments should be done in Microsoft Word and turned in as an attachment in Dropbox on D2L.
- Discussions should be completed within the D2L discussion space and *NOT* uploaded as an attachment.
- Due dates should be honored in order to receive the highest grade.
- When referring to the ideas of others, works should be cited using the APA format.

Adhering to Professional Ethics
When using professional sources in your writing, please cite sources you have used or ideas you have adapted when completing assignments. Use of copyrighted materials must adhere to legal and ethical guidelines. If part of an assignment is submitted for credit in more than one course, both professors must pre-approve this dual credit and the dual use should be referenced clearly on both assignments.

Online Posts and Mutual Respect
Remember that there are other human beings reading your postings, so treat everyone with respect. Don't post anything you wouldn't be willing to communicate face to face. Distance conveys a degree of anonymity. It is for this reason that we must be cognizant of our postings online. You are provided with Netiquette guidelines and Rules for Discussion Posts. Please observe them.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)
Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into D2L through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Important Dates
- Last day for term schedule changes: June 6, 2024. Check date on Academic Calendar.
- Deadline to file for graduation: June 24, 2024. Check date on Academic Calendar.

- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" June 26, 2024. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies
Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy
College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy
To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university

property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry
Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit Campus Carry.

Active Shooter
The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit Safety / Emergency Procedures. Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "*Run. Hide. Fight.*" which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: *"Run. Hide. Fight."*

Notice
Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Module 1 6/3 to 6/4	Fiore, Chapters 1 & 2: Public Opinion & Taking the Pulse. Research how to write legislators. Assign letter. Due June 6.	Jn 4, 2024
Module 2 6/5 to 6/6	Fiore, Chapters 3 & 4: Everybody's Role & Everybody's Job Plus, Read about the News Release at the end of Chap. 7. Assign Informational News Release. Due June 9. Message to Legislator #1 Due.	June 6

Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Module 3 6/7 to 6/9	Fiore, Chapters 5 & 6: Internal Publics; External Publics. News Release #1 Due.	June 9
Module 4 6/10 to 6/11	Chapters 7 & 8, Relationships with the Media. Assign First Crisis News Release. Due June 16. Radio Interview Due. Social Media Post #1 Due.	June 11
Module 5 6/12 to 6/13	Chap. 11 & 12: Saying/ Mean & Communicating in Crisis Message to Legislator #2 Due.	June 13
Module 6 6/14 to 6/16	Chap. 9 & 10, Social Networks. Discussion is social media posts. News Release #2 Due.	June 16
Module 7 6/17 to 6/18	Fiore, Chapters 13 & 14. Assign Second Crisis News Release. Due June 23. Power Structure Diagram Due. Social Media Post #2 Due.	June 18
Module 8 6/19 to 6/20	Balch and Adamson, Intro & Chap 1 & 2: Legal Perspectives & New Team Orientation Message to Legislator #3 Due.	June 20
Module 9 6/21 to 6/23	Balch and Adamson, Chapters 3 & 4: Team Roles and Responsibilities & Effective Communication News Release #3 Due.	June 23
Module 10 6/24 to 6/25	Balch and Adamson, Chapters 5 & 6: Team Decision Making & Team Leadership. Assign Third Crisis News Release. Due June 30. Social Media Post #3 Due.	June 25
Module 11 6/26 to 6/27	Balch and Adamson, Chapters 7 & 8: Foundational Statements & Continuous Improvement Message to Legislator #4 Due.	June 27
Module 12 6/28 to 6/30	Balch and Adamson, Chapters 9 & 10: During Change & Dysfunctional News Release #4 Due.	June 30
Module 13 7/1 to 7/2	Balch and Adamson, Chapters 11 & 12: Evaluation & The Future	July 2, 2024
Module 14 7/3 to 7/4	Holiday	
Module 15 7/5	NELP/TEA Assessment #5: Current Events Based Equity Plan Due	July 5, 2024

Appendix A: Standards/Competencies

Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency
Student will respond to a district level issue within legal boundaries	NELP Standard 2 (2.1-2.3), Standard 3 (3.1-3.2), Standard 5 (5.1-5.3), Standard 6 (6.1), Standard 7 (7.1-7.4)

Appendix B: Standards/Competencies

Assignment/Module/ Course Activities	Standard or Competency
Final Examination	NELP Standard 2 (2.1-2.3), Standard 3 (3.1-3.2), Standard 5 (5.1-5.3), Standard 6 (6.1), Standard 7 (7.1-7.4)

NELP district-Level Standards:
https://www.npbea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NELP-DISTRICT-Standards.pdf