EDAD 5361/6361
CURRENT TOPICS: SCHOOL LAW AND FACILITIES
Syllabus
Fall 2016

Instructor: Dr. Doyne “Scott” Elliff
Time/Location: 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. Oct 20, Nov 3, Nov 16, and Dec 1 in Bay Hall 128
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.; Thursdays 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
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I. Course Description: This course is an overview of educational administration program content and the opportunity to discuss current issues in administration, which include the structure and function of national, state and local agencies of educational governance and the politics of education.

II. Rationale: This course is designed to complement the superintendent certification program by focusing on issues related to school law and facilities planning. Theories, principles, and practices will be examined. Specifically, planning for facilities bond issues and the legal impact of historic and contemporary legislative and judicial action on school operations will be explored.

III/IV. State Adopted Proficiency Domains and TExES Competencies covered in this course:
The following domains and competencies will be covered in the course:

Domain I--Leadership in the Educational Community

Competency 1--The superintendent knows how to act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner in order to promote the success of all students.

Competency 3--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 4--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.

Domain III--Administrative Leadership

Competency 8--The superintendent knows how to apply principles of effective leadership and management in relation to district budgeting, personnel, resource utilization, financial management, and technology use.

Competency 9--The superintendent knows how to apply principles of leadership and management to the district's physical plant and support systems to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.
State Certification Examination (TExES): The Texas Examination of Educator Standards is based on the domains and competencies listed in the Test Framework that is a separate handout. Please see the SBEC website, http://www.sbec.state.tx.us, for the framework and the Superintendent Study Guide.

V. Carnegie Project for the Education Doctorate (CPED) Principles: The content and delivery methods for this course are designed to reflect the following design principles.

1. Is framed around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice.
2. Prepares leaders who can construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, and communities.
3. Provides opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships.
4. Provides field-based opportunities to analyze problems of practice and use multiple frames to develop meaningful solutions.
5. Is grounded in and develops a professional knowledge base that integrates both practical and research knowledge, that links theory with systemic and systematic inquiry.
6. Emphasizes the generation, transformation, and use of professional knowledge and practice.

VI. Course Objectives and Outcomes:

The student will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of best practices in school facilities planning
- Demonstrate an understanding of the legal and financial implications related to bond issues and bond elections
- Describe the historical evolution of school law at various levels of government, and the role of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches of government in that evolution
- Distinguish among federal, state, and local roles in implementation of laws and policies
- Identify significant areas of school law and the contemporary implications and applications of those laws

VII. Course Topics: The following general topics will be included in this course. Other topics may be added as appropriate.

1) Best practices in school facilities planning
2) Legal and financial implications for school bond issues and elections
3) Historical perspectives on public school law development
4) Federal, state, and local roles in school law development and implementation
5) Significant school law implications for school districts and the superintendents leading them, including but not limited to:
   - Special Education (IDEA)
   - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
   - Title IX
   - ESEA / NCLB
   - Student Privacy (FERPA)
   - Rights to Freedom of Expression for Students and Staff
   - Educator contract rights
• Texas Open Meetings Act
• Open Records / Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

VIII. Instructional Methods and Activities

Instructional delivery methods will include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Lecture and Discussion  
b. Research  
c. Online readings and videos  
d. Guest Speakers

IX. Evaluation and Grade Assignment:

• Mini-Quiz (20 points maximum): Four mini-quizzes over topics covered in class lectures, as well as required readings and videos (text and online), will be administered via Blackboard.

• Major Project: School Law Review Research Paper and Class Presentation (50 points maximum—30 points for content and substance of white paper, 20 points for class presentation): All students will submit a research paper with supporting bibliography related to a topic relevant to the school law course content, pre-approved by the instructor. The paper should be not less than 5, nor more than 6 pages in length (word processed, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced), plus bibliography page, using APA format for bibliographical citations. A minimum of five (5) sources must be cited. In-class presentation should be maximum of 10 (ten) minutes with accompanying Power Point or similar media.

EDAD 6361 students will submit an additional reflection paper detailing the “real world” implications of the selected school law topic based on data from an interview with their district superintendent. The additional reflection paper should be approximately two (2) pages in length (word processed, double-spaced) Failure to submit the reflection paper will result in a deduction of 10 points from the Major Project grade.

• Secondary Project: School Facilities Review (20 points maximum): Students will conduct a review of the status of facilities within their “home” district, including age, suitability for contemporary instructional delivery, and bond capacity. Interviews with the superintendent of schools and / or key staff responsible for facility construction and financing should be conducted. Students will submit a summary of findings, not to exceed 5 pages (word processed, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced), containing their findings and recommendations. Specific assignment guidance will be provided during the first class session.

Specific guidance for the preparation of the major and secondary projects will be provided in class at the first meeting.

• Class attendance and participation (10 points maximum). Students will be expected to attend each class and participate in all online course requirements.
Course Schedule and Policies:

- This is a hybrid online / traditional course. In addition to online requirements, the class will meet for four (4) traditional classroom sessions. The detailed course schedule will be provided during the first class session and will be posted on Blackboard. Availability of outside speakers and opportunities may impact the topics. The professor reserves the right and discretion to change the schedule in order to take advantage of opportunities that may arise during the semester.
- This is a graduate course, and graduate-level performance is expected. Students will be expected to comport themselves accordingly, arrive punctually for class, and refrain from texting or using cell phones during class time. Written assignments will be expected to demonstrate graduate-level writing skills. Students who need assistance with writing skills should avail themselves of assistance at CASA.
- Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Late assignments WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND CREDIT WILL NOT BE AWARDED unless in emergency situations, pre-approved by the instructor. Acceptance of late work and any grade penalties imposed will be at the discretion of the instructor.
- The textbook is an integral resource for this class, as are other readings required by the instructor. Students are expected to read all assigned textbook chapters and additional readings prior to class discussion.
- Attendance and class participation—both online and in class—are expected and will be considered in the computation of the final grade.

X. Textbook (Required)


XI. Bibliography


Additional resources will be provided online during the course of the class experience.