EDAD 5369 / 6369: “The School Superintendency” (Fall 2017)

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           Online as scheduled

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a study of the roles, responsibilities, and relationships of the public school superintendent, with an emphasis on the role in Texas public schools. The course will examine the roles and responsibilities detailed in law and policy, as well as in the context of various leadership theories. Relationships with various constituencies, including school board, staff, and community, will be examined.

II. RATIONALE:

This course is designed to complement the superintendent certification program by focusing on current issues and requirements for success in the role of superintendent. Theories, principles, and practices will be examined. Ethics, legal issues, frameworks for leading change, and interpersonal relations will be explored.

III. / IV. STATE ADOPTED PROFICIENCY DOMAINS / TExES COMPETENCIES:

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 2--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 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 II—Instructional Leadership

- Competency 5--The superintendent knows how to facilitate the planning and implementation of strategic plans that enhance teaching and learning; ensure alignment among curriculum, curriculum resources, and assessment; and promote the use of varied assessments to measure student performance.
- Competency 6--The superintendent knows how to advocate, nurture, and sustain an instructional program and a district culture that are conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
Competency 7--The superintendent knows how to implement a staff evaluation and development system to improve the performance of all staff members and select appropriate models for supervision and staff development.

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.

Competency 10--The superintendent knows how to apply organizational, decision-making, and problem-solving skills to facilitate positive change in varied contexts.

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. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The student will:

- Understand the duties and responsibilities of a superintendent as defined in law and policy;
- Demonstrate understanding of the complex interpersonal relationships of the superintendent to the school board, staff, professional organizations, and the community at-large;
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the role of the superintendent as the leader of the educational community;
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the role and responsibility of the superintendent as Chief Executive Officer of the district, including but not limited to planning and executing duties related to instructional improvement, finance, human resources, and other district operations;
- Understand the challenges faced by contemporary school superintendents;
- Understand and recognize the competencies, skills and attributes required of a superintendent;
- Demonstrate an understanding of various leadership frameworks used by successful superintendents in leading large-scale change and organizational improvement; and
- Understand and recognize the role of politics in educational decision-making.

VI. COURSE TOPICS:

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

- Roles and responsibilities of a public school superintendent, with particular emphasis on requirements under the Texas Education Code;
- History of the role of superintendent of schools;
- Characteristics of, and considerations for, the relationship of the superintendent of schools to the school board, staff, professional organizations, community at-large, and other pertinent stakeholder groups;
- Ethics in the role of superintendent of schools;
- Organizational and leadership theories and frameworks applicable to the superintendency;
- Developing a vision for the school district and leading the educational community in the achievement of that vision; and
- Internal and external political influences on the unique role of the superintendency both in shaping policy and responding to changes in policy.
VII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES:

- Lecture and discussion
- Research
- Online readings, videos, forums, and meetings
- Guest speakers

VIII. EVALUATION, GRADE ASSIGNMENT, AND DELIVERABLES:

- **Mini-Quizzes (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.

- **School Board Meeting Project (20 points maximum):** Students will be required to attend two (2) school board meetings—one in their “home” district and one outside their “home” district. Students will submit a reflection paper not to exceed 5 pages (word processed, double-spaced) comparing and contrasting the two meetings, with special attention to the Superintendent-School Board relationship. Agendas from each meeting will be attached to the reflection paper. Specific assignment guidance will be provided during the first class meeting.

- **Major Project (40 points maximum):** Students will develop and implement a product consisting of a personal reflection paper and in-class presentation detailing their personal values, beliefs, and theory of action as they relate to leadership in public education. Specific assignment guidance will be provided during the first class meeting.

  In addition, EDAD 6369 students will submit a 2-page reflection paper using direct observation of a public school district superintendent in a setting other than a school board meeting. The reflection paper will describe the actions of the superintendent and relate those actions to one or more of the TExES competencies. Failure to submit the reflection paper will result in a 10-point deduction for the “Major Project” grade. Specific assignment guidance will be provided during the first class meeting.

- **Online discussions (10 points maximum):** Discussion forums will be posted on Blackboard related to content presented in class or through required readings. Specific requirements for participation in each online forum will be included in the individual assignments.

- **Class attendance and participation (10 points maximum).** Students will be expected to attend and actively participate in each class session and participate in all online course requirements.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE, EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES:

- This is a “blended” course using both traditional class sessions and online instruction. The class will meet for five (5) traditional “face-to-face” classroom sessions, in addition to online requirements. Availability of outside speakers and opportunities may impact the topics. The detailed class schedule will be distributed during the first class meeting and will be posted on Blackboard. The instructor 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 GIVEN 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 textbooks are integral resources 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. Students will be expected to familiarize themselves with the uses of Blackboard and WebEx in order to navigate the online class environment.

• Professional conduct is expected in this course. Professional conduct includes, among others, interactions with peer colleagues, faculty, timely completion of assigned tasks and responsibilities; adherence to professional ethical standards; and adherence to University policies regarding plagiarism. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary actions. All written work submitted must be the student’s original work and conform to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) available online and via their publications. This means that any substantive ideas, phrases, sentences, and/or any published ideas must be properly referenced to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency in the selling of term papers of other academic materials. It is the student’s responsibility to know all relevant university policies concerning plagiarism. Any documented cases of plagiarism can and will result in dismissal from the course with a failing grade, and may result in other more serious sanctions by the College of Education and Human Development and the University.

• The department aspires to create a safe and diversity-sensitive learning environment that respects the rights, dignity, and welfare of students, faculty, and staff. Diversity means the fair representation of all groups of individuals, the inclusion of minority perspectives and voices, and appreciation of different cultural and socioeconomic group perspectives. We aspire to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Departmental courses will strive to provide opportunity for all students to discuss issues of diversity including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

• I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Consult the Academic Calendar on the university website for the final date to withdraw with a grade of “W.”

• Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

• Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

• In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical
campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

X. REQUIRED TEXTS:

The following texts are required reading for this course:


XI. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES:

The following represent source material for this course:


The following represent resources that may be helpful in completing the required assignments for this course:

- Bell Library – http://rattler.tamucc.edu/
- EndNote – http://endnote.com/
- OWL at Purdue – http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

XII. GRADE APPEALS:

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.
XIII. DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.