Course Description

This course is designed to prepare educational leaders with the knowledge and practical skills needed to lead school-level improvement initiatives within the unique context of the school.

Rationale

The USD Reflective Decision-Making model for preparing educators provides the framework supporting the School of Education professional programs. Reflective leaders are skilled educators whose practices and decisions draw upon the best available theory, research, and experiential wisdom. Reflective decision-making engages administrators in cycles of thought and action based on theoretical, ethical, and professional knowledge. The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected.

Textbooks & Required Web Site Registration

The textbooks adopted for this course are:


The books listed above for this course can be purchased from Barnes and Noble at the University of South Dakota: call 605-677-6291 or email bn@usd.edu.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives/Outcomes</th>
<th>Standards/Codes</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop and articulate collaborative process for creating a data-informed mission and vision for a school</td>
<td>NELP 1.1</td>
<td>Class discussion posts, mid-term exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articulate, advocate, model, and cultivate a set of core values that define the school’s culture</td>
<td>NELP 1.2</td>
<td>Examination of examples of achievement data reflection paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify school goals and determine whether school goals are aligned with the school vision and mission</td>
<td>NELP 1.2</td>
<td>Critical examination of school goals, vision, mission reflection paper; Class discussion posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate how well vision, mission, goals reflect an understanding of social, cultural, and intellectual needs of all students within the school community based upon a core set of values</td>
<td>NELP 1.2, 2.3</td>
<td>Critical examination of school vision, mission, goals reflection paper; Class discussion posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examine multiple measures of data to assess school’s capacity for continual and sustainable school improvement</td>
<td>NELP 1.4</td>
<td>Activities, discussion posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create a school improvement plan based upon analysis of multiple measures of data which ensures that the collective and individual needs of all students inform all aspects of schooling and creates a culture of continuous, responsive, sustainable, data-based school improvement</td>
<td>NELP 1.4</td>
<td>Final: School improvement plan project including review of literature, data analysis, and development of a school-based improvement plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate integrity, fairness, transparency, trust, collaboration,</td>
<td>NELP 2.1, 2.4</td>
<td>PLC peer review discussions</td>
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</table>
ethic behavior, and perseverance when working in simulated professional learning communities

Instructional Methods and Activities

Online Instruction
This course will be presented over the Internet using the D2L program as provided by the University of South Dakota. If this is your first online course at the University, I would suggest that you review the new [CDE Online Orientation Guide](#) for online learning for valuable information to help you be successful as an online learner.

The instructional methods for the course include lecture notes, collaborative discussions, collaborative activities, readings, reflective essays, practice data analysis, a mid-term, and a culminating school improvement plan based upon an authentic “problem” in your own context. This plan will follow the Victoria Bernhardt Continuous Improvement Plan model.

Technology. Desire 2 Learn (D2L) will be the course management software for this course. The University has established minimum hardware and software requirements to ensure the effective delivery of USD online courses. These are outlined under the “Technology Support and Requirements” section in the [Online Student Handbook](#) document in the Getting Started widget on the course homepage.

Course and University Policies

University Policies

Academic Integrity
The University of South Dakota considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The University supports the imposition of penalties on students who have been adjudicated to have engaged in academic dishonesty, as defined in the “Conduct” section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook, and South Dakota Board of Regents policy 2-33 [www.sdbor.edu/policy/Documents/2-33.pdf](#).

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

a. Given a zero for that assignment.
b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
d. Dropped from the course.
e. Failed in the course.
**Freedom in Learning**

Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the dean of the college or school that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

**Disability Accommodation**

Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class or as soon as possible after the diagnosis of a disability. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester.

Please note: if your home institution is not the University of South Dakota but one of the other South Dakota Board of Regents institutions (e.g., SDSU, SDSMT, BHSU, NSU, DSU), you should work with the disability services coordinator at your home institution.

Ernetta L. Fox, Director  
Disability Services, Room 119 Service Center  
(605) 677-6389  
Web Site: www.usd.edu/ds  
E-mail: disabilityservices@usd.edu

**Diversity and Inclusive Excellence**

The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected.

**USD’s drop or withdrawal from course policy.**

This course begins on **Monday, January 8, 2018 and ends on Friday, May 4, 2018.** The last day to drop the class and receive a 100% refund is Wednesday, January 17, 2018. Again, dropping the course after January 17, 2018 means that the student is fully financially responsible for the course in the event of a “drop,” whereby some credits remain for the semester, or are partially responsible for the course in the event of a “withdrawal,” whereby all credits for the semester are dropped. The latter is based on the date of the withdrawal. The last day to drop the class with a grade of “W” is Friday, Monday, April 2, 2018. Faculty members have the right and responsibility to drop a student from the course if the student is not responding, progressing, or participating.
Activities

This class hones your knowledge, skills, and dispositions as an adaptive, instructional, and transformational leader. You will be asked to **thoroughly** read, reflect upon, and apply theories and concepts from textbooks, professional peer reviewed articles, websites, and lecture notes. The course is designed to allow two weeks for each module to promote deeper critical reading and thoughtful application of theory to practice. You will be required to complete bi-weekly activities, weekly discussion posts, and complete a culminating Continuous Improvement Plan project. There is also an essay mid-term exam. There is a lot of reading in this course and it is expected that you will read each assignment in its entirety. This course should be compatible with your internship requirements.