The Mission of the faculty of the Educational Leadership Program is to develop leaders with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to build learning communities within a pluralistic, democratic society.

Course Introduction

This course will examine the politics of educational organization and leadership. It is designed for the educational leader and researcher who deal with the impact of political action on managing and leading educational institutions. It provides an introduction to the field of educational politics with special emphasis on theoretical and conceptual analysis of the political behavior of education’s stakeholders.

Prerequisites

Admission to the doctoral program in educational leadership.

Course Objectives

1. Develop and educate leaders of educational organizations.
2. Develop conceptual knowledge and skills in order to explore, analyze, and explain the societal forces that influence educational policy and decision making at all levels of the educational system, as well as within different organizational settings.
3. Analyze, synthesize and apply research and theory derived from the political and social sciences, educational politics, and policy making literature to problems of practice.
4. Increase your capacity to deal with uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and the value conflicts inherent in educational organizations and leadership.
5. Understand the nature of political action.
6. Understand the ways that political activity shapes educational policy and organization.
7. Understand the elements of macro-politics and micro-politics as related to educational organization and leadership.
8. Examine the challenges to the leader/administrator of micro-politics within an educational setting.
9. Examine the moral/ethical dilemmas facing educational leaders in dealing with the
10. Develop the skills to critically evaluate your beliefs about the educational enterprise and its role in society.

Topical Outline of Course Content

1. The Politics of Education as a Field of Inquiry
2. Political Culture
3. Nature of the Polity
4. Citizenship
5. Political Structures
6. Political Participation
7. Interest Groups
8. Coalitions
9. Political Conflict
10. Power, Influence and Control
11. Policy Formation: Political Systems Analysis
12. Policy Formation: Agendas, Alternatives & Public Policy
13. Elite Theory: Abrupt versus Incremental Change
14. Micropolitics – Building Level Politics
15. Local Level Politics
16. State Level Politics
17. Federal Level Politics
18. Global Level Politics
19. Intergovernmental Relations
20. Current Political Controversies

Administration

The course is designed to be a collaborative effort with each student responsible for his or her own learning. The instructor’s responsibility is to provide a structure within which the student is free to learn. To this end, class structures and processes will be based on student and instructor interests and are subject to change.

The Class will consist of:

1. The first section of each class will focus on the politics of educational organization and leadership through discussion of the assigned and supplemental readings.
2. There will be a fifteen-minute break
3. The second part of each class period will be a lab.

Each student is responsible for:
1. The readings for each class prior to the topic except for the first session.

2. Participation in class discussions and lab. You are expected to attend all class sessions, to be on time, and to contribute to the class discussions and the lab. If emergencies arise, you should notify me as soon as possible and secure class notes and assignments from fellow classmates. More than two absences will constitute grounds for failure in the course.

3. As stated above, the primary objective of this course is to develop and educate leaders of educational organizations. There are two fundamental components to consider in this process: 1.) the leader; and 2.) the educational system. You, as the educational leader, are the first component. Therefore I will ask you to make explicit your interests, beliefs, values, attitudes, biases, ideologies, etc. It is essential that you have some awareness of yourself, as you are the instrument through which political leadership takes place. In addition, it is important that you develop the capacity to express your interests, etc. to others. In other words, develop your own "voice".

Secondly, the ability to analyze or "make sense" of the politics of educational organizing is an essential skill for educational leadership as organizational systems are the context within which this leadership occurs. In order to meet this objective, this course seeks to demystify the politics of educational organizations and facilitate the student's development of critical thinking skills.

In order to accomplish the above, written papers will be used as a vehicle to describe and analyze your current political experiences in the light of course concepts and propositions. Each paper should be approximately 10 pages in length and counts for 20% of the grade. All assignments are due the class session after they are listed in course syllabus.

The paper will consist of two sections:

a. Description and Analysis: Use relevant concepts and propositions from the readings and/or the class to make sense of your political situation, experiences or events. Use empirical data (descriptions) from your educational system if possible (approx. 8 pages).

b. Your personal response and what that tells you about yourself as an educational leader. Make explicit your values, beliefs, attitudes, affective responses, etc. to the events which you described and analyzed (approx. 2 pages).

Grading

3
Final Grades will be computed as follows. Breaking it down by paper, from 0-6 points will be awarded for the category of empirical data, from 0-10 points for the category of concept application, and from 0-4 points for the category of personal response. “Empirical data” means providing empirical data on which to base your analysis. “Concept application” means applying concepts from the reading and class to your empirical data. And lastly, “personal response” means explicating your personal response to the organizational events that you used as empirical data.

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Class Participation

0-20%

Total

0-100%

REQUIRED READINGS:


(Or an appropriate area history book of your choice)

Course Pack, Halle Library, E-Reserves

TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

1. May 8, 2006  
   Course Introduction
Required Readings:


c. Mahler- Comparative Political Analysis

d. Other readings as assigned

Supplemental Readings:


2. May 10, 2006

Political Culture and Ideology

Required Readings:


f. Other readings as assigned
Supplemental Readings:


3. May 15, 2006

The Nature of the Polity: Citizenship Rights, Political Participation, Representation, Interest Groups and Coalitions

Required Readings:


b. Wirt & Kirst – Chapter 3: The Origins and Agents of School Demands


i. Other readings as assigned

**Supplemental Readings- Political Participation:**


**American Political Science Review**, 87(2), 303-

**Supplemental Readings- Interest Groups:**


4. May 17, 2006  Political Conflict

Required Readings:
- Schattschneider - The Semisovereign People: Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4
- Other readings as assigned

Supplemental Readings:


Required Readings:
Supplemental Readings:


6. May 24, 2006

Policy Formation

Topic #1 - Political Systems Analysis

Required Readings:

a. Wirt & Kirst – Part I, Chapters 1 & 2: Political Systems Analysis
c. Other readings as assigned

Supplemental Readings:

**Topic #2 - Agendas, Alternatives & Public Policy**

**Required Readings:**
- a. Kingdon – Agenda, Alternatives, and Public Policies
- b. Other readings as assigned

**Supplemental Readings:**
- a. Linblom – Science of Muddling Through
- b. Wildavsky – Politics of the Budgetary Process
- c. Other readings as assigned

7. **May 29, 2006**

   Memorial Day

8. **May 31, 2006**

   **Policy Formation**

**Topic #3 - Abrupt versus incremental change: Dissatisfaction Theory - The Laws of Political Quiescence and Discontent**

**Required Readings:**
Community, educational and social impact perspectives.
Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia.


Supplemental Readings:


Required Readings:

d. Wirt & Kirst – Chapter 7: The Micropolitics within schools
g. Other readings as assigned.

Supplemental Readings:


j. Lipski – Street Level Bureaucracy

10. June 7, 2006

**Local & State Level Politics**

**Topic #1 - Local Level Politics**

**Required Readings:**

- a. Wirt & Kirst – Chapters 4, 5 & 6
- b. Other readings as assigned

**Supplemental Readings:**

Topic #2 - State Level Politics

Required Readings:
   a. Wirt & Kirst – Chapters 8 & 9

Supplemental Readings:

11. June 12, 2006

Federal & Intergovernmental

Topic #1 - Federal Level Politics

Required Readings:
   b. Wirt & Kirst – Chapters 10 & 11
   c. Schattschneider - The Semisovereign People: Chapters 5, 6, 7 & 8

Supplemental Readings:
Topic #2 - Intergovernmental Relations and Current Policy Issues

Required Readings:
  a. Wirt & Kirst – Chapters 12 & 13

12. June 14, 2006   Assignment – Final Papers and Student Presentations