EDU 680 – Professional Learning in Schools
Syllabus
Summer, 2009

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to help practicing educators create a culture that is hospitable to human learning in their work settings and thereby enhance their capabilities for school leadership.

COURSE OUTCOMES: At USM all courses take into account the Educational Leadership Policy Standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium 2008 (ISLLC 2008) that describe proficiencies for candidates for administrative certification by the Maine Department of Education (Title 20-A, MRSA, Sections 2701 - 2704).
In EDU 680, these proficiencies are:

Standard 1: An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.
Functions:
A. Collaboratively develop and implement a shared vision and mission.
B. Collect and use data to identify goals, assess organizational effectiveness, and promote organizational learning.
C. Create and implement plans to achieve goals.
D. Promote continuous and sustainable improvement.
E. Monitor and evaluate progress and revise plans.

Standard 2: An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
Functions:
A. Nurture and sustain a culture of collaboration, trust, learning, and high expectations.
C. Create a personalized and motivating learning environment for students.
F. Develop the instructional and leadership capacity of staff.
G. Maximize time spent on quality instruction.

Standard 3: An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
Functions:
D. Develop the capacity for distributed leadership.
E. Ensure teacher and organizational time is focused to support quality instruction and student learning.

Standard 4: An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
Functions:
A. Collect and analyze data and information pertinent to the educational environment.
B. Promote understanding, appreciation, and use of the community's diverse cultural, social, and intellectual resources

**Standard 5:** An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

**Functions**

B. Model principles of self-awareness, reflective practice, transparency, and ethical behavior  
C. Safeguard the values of democracy, equity, and diversity  
D. Consider and evaluate the potential moral and legal consequences of decision-making  
E. Promote social justice and ensure that individual student needs inform all aspects of schooling

**COURSE ACTIVITIES:**

Class activities will include discussions of readings, group activities, interviews with practicing school administrators, student presentations, guest speakers, and scenarios and case studies.

Each participant will propose and develop a **specific professional learning project** to be carried out during the coming school year. Each participant will draft one or more project ideas to be submitted during the second class, stating what the project is designed to accomplish, the rationale for the project, what actions may be taken to accomplish the project and a timeline for the project. Each participant will present their project design, intended outcomes and an assessment plan at a final class. A panel of educators will respond to and score the participant’s presentation.

**EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS:**

1. Read assigned texts, articles and case studies.
2. Prepare on time required memos, letters, and reflective pieces, using standard/acceptable mechanics and usage.
3. Enlist the help of practicing educational leaders and professional colleagues who are willing to share insights and artifacts.
4. Work with other students to prepare.
5. Participate actively in class activities.
6. Develop and receive approval for a professional learning project.

**EVALUATION:**

A student’s grade in this course will be based upon class participation (which includes attendance), class presentations, and projects. While there are no right or wrong answers to questions or problems on which students will be writing, the quality of the writing will be a factor in grade determination. Note: Students are expected to attend all classes that are scheduled. If extenuating circumstances require your absence from class, call Roland or Tom (as appropriate) to let either know you won’t be in class. Be aware that more than two absences will negatively impact your grade.

**TEXTS:**

Suggested readings include,

Roland Barth, *Improving Schools from Within*, Jossey-Bass, 1990
Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller, *Teachers in Professional Communities*, Teachers College Press, 2008
Johnson, Susan Moore, *Helping Teachers Learn*, Sage, 2004
Johnson, Susan Moore, *Teachers at Work; Achieving Success in Our Schools*, Basic Books, 1990

**SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS:** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please make an appointment with Roland or Tom as soon as possible.

If at any point you encounter difficulty with the course or feel you could be performing at a higher level, consult with Roland or Tom. Students experience difficulty in courses for a variety of reasons. For problems with writing skill or time management, make an appointment to see a student tutor at the Learning Center, Luther Bonney, 2nd floor (780-4228). Help is also available through the Counseling Center, 106 Payson Smith (780-4050) and the Office of Academic Support for Students with Disabilities, Luther Bonney, 2nd floor (780-4706). The USM TTY number is: 780-4395.

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