

EDA 395 Program Evaluation and Decision Making
Spring, 2007
M 4-7, SZB 524 Unique # 09665
Instructor James R. Yates

The Context

Public school leadership operates in a context of external and internal review. Expectations are high and increasing for enhanced performance of students, teachers, and leaders. The policies, processes, pedagogy procedures, personnel training, professional behaviors, leadership decisions and actions, and accountability data are all areas of interest for review. Therefore, school leadership must have access to and utilize appropriately accurate information that provides descriptions of the opportunities and performances of the educational enterprise. These evaluations activities must center upon the performance and achievements of students; but, must be inclusive of all students. Additionally, educational leadership must have in place mechanisms which foster effective decision-making based upon these performance data.

The Problem

Generally, school leadership preparation and experiences of practice have not focused, to any significant degree, upon appropriate conceptual structures, methodologies, procedures of data collection and analysis, interpretation and dissemination to appropriate audiences of performance information related to schools and students.

The Course

This required course in the preparation of school leaders at the University of Texas at Austin, is designed to initiate formal instruction in the school administrator preparation programs which will partially address “the problem.” The course is designed around four components; exploration of the conceptual and theoretical aspects of educational evaluation, practice of critique and analysis of sample educational evaluations, the development of an educational evaluation design, and an introduction to mechanisms of effective and efficient decision making processes.

The Goal

Students will acquire knowledge and skill essential in developing, analyzing, utilizing, sharing information and making decisions related to the performance of schools and those associated with schools.

The Procedures

The course will consist of three primary experiences or activities:
1) Information will be presented through lecture, assigned readings, simulations, group activities and question/answer class discussions.

2) Students will select from the class readings list, an education evaluation article to be critiqued. The evaluation selected must be approved by the instructor. The evaluation critique is presented to the entire class in a class presentation, and a written document is developed which communicates evaluation information from the article, formatted for dissemination to school leaders and stakeholder audiences.

Since the class is in a distant learning format for some students, students participating in distant locations must plan to be in Austin and the distant learning classroom at the University of Texas, College of Education, on the scheduled date of their presentation. In other words, all presentations will be made from the distant learning classroom located in the George I. Sanchez building.

Students participating in the class in distant locations must include in the Student Information Sheet specific information on where their distant learning site is located, and the specific phone # that would be available if needed during class meeting times.

3) Students will be responsible for at least three written products:

A) A one page analysis of each of the evaluations presented by class members (for example, if there were 18 class members, there would be an expectation of 18 one page analyses, one for each article presented by fellow students.) Students are expected to obtain, and read the specific evaluations to be presented by classmates. Students should be prepared to respond and interact with the presenter relative to the specific evaluations on the date of the presentation to the class. To facilitate the student access to the specific evaluations, each student is to inform the rest of the class where “their” article is available or how to access the article or to furnish a hard copy to each classmate one week prior to their presentation to the class. That is to say, each class member will have read the article that is the basis of their classmates’ presentations, have written a one page critique of the article and is prepared to discuss the article during the class presentation. **The one page critique must be turned in to the instructor no later than the date of the class presentation by the class member.**

B) A write up of the class presentation you made to the whole class (no more than 5 pages in length).

C) An educational evaluation design developed by the student to address a specific education evaluation issue, or concern that is of interest to the individual student (no more than 10 pages in length).

The write up of the class presentation and the evaluation design developed will be due on the dates assigned in the class schedule. Written materials must have an identifying name and date on the materials. Written materials must follow the APA Publication guidelines presented in: *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed). (2001). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.*

Course information, additional readings and other communications can be found in the Library Electronic Reserve for the course. The access code is **8581**.

The first course assignment is for the Student Information Sheet to be completed and emailed to the instructor by **5:00 p.m. the day preceding the 2nd class meeting**. Additionally, students should read, "What is Plagiarism" found in the electronic reserve. The instructor will respond to scholastic dishonesty according to University policies and procedures.

The second assignment is the identification from the readings list the article/evaluation to be critiqued by the student and presented to the class. This selection is due by the 2nd class meeting, and should be emailed to the instructor **by 5:00 p.m. the day preceding the 2nd class meeting date**. From these data, a presentation schedule will be developed and shared with the class so that all students will be aware when various products are due and which articles will be examined through the class presentations. The instructor may assign evaluations not selected by students in order to prevent students selecting the same evaluation, to broaden the content to be covered by the evaluation critiques or to confirm the presentation schedule.

The grades

The following processes and products will determine grades.

1. Class attendance, participation in assigned activities, timeliness and quality of all products turned in by the assigned due dates and performance on any assignments or assessments. (30 percent)
2. Class presentation of the selected article/education evaluation (30 percent)
3. Quality of the write up of the class presentation (15 percent)
4. Quality of the written product of the evaluation design of an educational product, process, activity or context developed by the student (25 percent)
5. Any other assessments or products assigned by the instructor that are in the view of the instructor likely to enhance the meeting of the course objectives (adjustments in percent to be determined if and when such assessments are assigned)

Other Course information:

1. No incomplete grades will be assigned except in the sole judgment of the instructor, there are circumstances beyond the student's control that have precluded the student completion of the course.
2. Class attendance is expected. Occasionally a student may have a conflict in schedule with class meeting dates, such as attendance at a professional conference. The instructor does not make a judgment nor provide excused absences. It is the responsibility of the student to determine whether a class must be missed and to obtain any information or material that was presented in the class missed. However, if a student must miss a class, the student should notify the instructor as soon as possible that they will be absent.

3. Out of respect for all class participants, all electronic communication devices, such as cell phones, should be turned off or not brought to class with the exception of devices that are needed to accommodate students with disabilities. Devices that go off in class will result in a grade of C being entered for the student for that class period.
4. All products of the course are due and **not** accepted by the instructor after the date assigned for completion.
5. Students with disabilities should feel free to discuss with the instructor any accommodation needs that are appropriate to their disability. The Office for Students with Disabilities, located on the 4th floor of the Student Services Building, is available to advise, counsel, communicate, and arrange for accommodations and so forth for students with identified disabilities.
6. Instructor Office Hours one hour prior to class meeting times and other times by appointment
7. Students should feel free to communicate with the instructor:
 - a. Department of Educational Administration, Office SZB 310
 - b. Instructor email Yates@mail.utexas.edu
 - c. Telephone-Department 471-7551
 - d. Instructor 471-8581
 - e. Instructor home 266-9907