

EDL 651 Foundations of Inquiry

University of Kentucky College of Education
Research and Reflection for Learning and Leading

Course Syllabus

Fall 2007

Required course in the doctoral program leading to
EdD in Higher Education with Emphasis in Community and Technical College Leadership

A collaborative partnership between the Department of Educational Policy Studies and
Evaluation (EPE) and Department of Educational Leadership Studies (EDL)

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Letter to Students

Welcome to your first semester of doctoral studies leading to an EdD with Emphasis in Community and Technical College Leadership! You are a member of cohort composed of administrators and educators from KCTCS campuses across the Commonwealth who will engage in rigorous, applied doctoral education intended to prepare you for roles as educational leaders and change agents. I am excited to be part of the inauguration of this unique program.

The content covered in EDL 651 may be a review for you if you completed research course(s) during previous graduate work—or the content may be quite new to you. Because EDL 651 is the foundation for more advanced research courses in the program, it is critically important that all students are successful this semester. Because you are members of a closed cohort that will complete coursework together, you need to make concerted efforts toward transforming yourselves into a professional learning community that supports your peers’ learning as well as your own. Because I perceive that my primary role is to design activities and assignments that enable you to acquire new knowledge and practice new skills, I need you to tell me when we need to discuss possible changes to assignments or due dates. Please consider me a learning partner, not simply an instructor who disseminates information and issues grades. I am looking forward to our shared journey of discovery this semester.

UK Department of Educational Leadership Studies

Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Educational Leadership Studies in the College of Education at the University of Kentucky is to engage in teaching, research, and service that promote and contribute to improving the quality of education and educational leadership in the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

Belief and Commitment Statements

We believe that the most effective educational leader is a practitioner-scholar, and we commit to providing academic experiences that expand our students' knowledge, understanding, and expertise as both practitioners and scholars in the field of school administration and educational leadership.

We believe that faculty and students should be able to pursue their scholarly endeavors secure in the knowledge that their academic freedom is inviolate. Moreover, we commit to the active defense of that freedom should it be threatened.

We believe that there are no simple answers to the complex challenges facing contemporary education. We believe that incorporation of a multiplicity of perspectives, values, approaches, standpoints, and experiences can build a more complete understanding of, and more effective responses to, those challenges. We commit to the solicitation, consideration of, and respect for such multiplicities.

We believe that understanding of and appreciation for the diversity inherent in the human community adds richness and depth to all individuals' life experiences. In addition, we commit to building departmental, college, and university communities characterized by diversity in intellectual perspective, race, ethnic and cultural background, gender and sexual orientation, religious belief, age, physical ability, socio-economic status, and political persuasion.

We believe that learning is a highly individualistic endeavor, and influenced by the particular prior experiences and expertise of each learner, and we believe the incorporation of such experiences and expertise into our courses can enhance the learning of all involved. We commit to fostering learning environments conducive to such incorporation.

We believe that rigorous intellectual activity both enhances professional expertise and personal understanding of self, and we believe development in these areas contributes to improved professional practice. We believe we owe our students educational programs that provide academic challenges and demand intellectual rigor, and we commit to providing such experiences.

Professor's Learning-Teaching Philosophy

Formalized learning is both an individual and group experience. New information is acquired through various means (e.g., reading, writing, discussing, researching, presenting, listening) and then transformed into new knowledge through application, assessment, and reflection. Adults enrolled in doctoral programs are typically motivated to gain new knowledge and skills to enhance their professional practices or career opportunities. Because I believe adult learners must assume major responsibility for their learning, I assume two different roles, one as *instructional designer* who develops curricula with a learner-centered orientation, the other as *educator* who guides development of reasoning and judgment.

Learning occurs in both formal settings and informal moments through dynamic interactions linking individuals toward a common goal: transference of knowledge and skills. As often as possible, I use active-learning strategies that require adult learners to examine their professional knowledge, acquire new information and practice new skills, and then reconfigure what they know. I ask my students to assess their learning progress at regular intervals and reflect about what they have learned and what more they need to learn. The instructional strategies I use (e.g., peer discussions, small-group projects, assessment inventories, case studies) require students to be prepared to participate actively in scheduled learning events and to engage those events in a timely and responsive manner. Although I am the course instructor, I believe adult students are responsible for monitoring the learning process and for addressing problems created when their peers fail to engage fully in the process.

As our cohort transitions through the necessary stages of group development, I know we will experience conflict. Disagreements may emerge when we discuss controversial topics, share opposing opinions, or fail to complete our assigned responsibilities. Such occurrences signal the need for us to develop or revise norms about how we interact with one another and function as a unit. For us to become a true professional learning community, we must work collaboratively and intentionally toward creating and sustaining “safe” environments (a) where all participants are respected and appreciated for their uniqueness and feel free to express their views about relevant issues and (b) where risk taking is supported by mutual trust and candor is protected by confidentiality.

Throughout the semester, I will assume various roles—guide, facilitator, encourager, explorer, discussant, provocateur—as we study and learn together. During discussions I may intentionally say something to provoke thinking about a topic in a new way or to challenge someone to justify her or his position. Please understand that such instances may not reflect my personal views, even if I convincingly present them as my opinions. My intention is to challenge us to consider alternatives or to defend our stance as educators in publicly supported institutions.

As a leadership educator and scholar, I engage in continuous learning through my own research and professional reflection. Because I am not an authority on community and technical college leadership or an expert on all research methodologies, I anticipate this semester will provide opportunities for my own professional growth. I set high performance standards for my students and expect them to deliver their best work possible at every stage in their development as practitioner-scholars and educational leaders. I commit to providing guidance, critical feedback, and encouragement to help my students achieve the course objectives and their personal goals.

Integration of Syllabus with UK College of Education Conceptual Framework

This graduate course addresses the four themes within the conceptual framework for the UK College of Education: *research*, *reflection*, *learning*, and *leading*. Throughout the semester students have opportunities to review, analyze, discuss, and apply **research** from diverse perspectives in education, including professional scholarship and practitioner inquiry, and reflect on their own practices as KCTCS administrators and educators as they study, observe, and work at their various campuses. **Reflection** is integrated through oral and written communication to help students hone their analytical and problem-solving skills that comprise critical elements of professional practice. This course supports the commitment of the UK College of Education to ensure that its graduates continue their professional careers equipped for life-long **learning** and **leading** in their work locations and professional organizations. The ultimate goal in addressing these four themes is to produce educational leaders who work together to improve student learning among diverse populations and improve education in Kentucky and beyond.

Commitment to Diversity

UK is committed to making diversity central to university policies, decisions, and practices to strengthen diversity within the Commonwealth. Efforts by a broad-based task force appointed by President Todd defined diversity as

embracing difference or promoting increased knowledge regarding race/ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, veteran affairs, and thought within an inclusive community. This definition of diversity values an inclusive institutional culture, academic programs, and co-curricular activities that prepare students for active, global citizenship. This commitment further allows for an educational process that fosters growth among all members of the academic community by including a wide array of talents, and recognizing the human differences are organizational strengths (University-Wide Comprehensive Diversity Plan Task Force Report, April 2005, p. 6).

Because the desired outcome is excellence in education, UK “does not practice discrimination on the basis of race/ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability” (p. 6).

The UK College of Education supports the university-wide definition of diversity and enhances it through an expanded interpretation. This broader conceptualization of diversity includes learning exceptionalities, native languages, socioeconomic status, and life experiences often created by residing in unique geographical regions such as Appalachia. Curricula within the UK College of Education, field experiences, and membership of its faculty and student body reflect a commitment to diversity.

Leadership within community and technical colleges requires understanding of and sensitivity to differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area. Hence, diversity is a theme woven throughout this graduate course, which focuses on preparing and developing practitioner-scholars educational leaders with requisite knowledge, dispositions, and skills to practice effectively multiple responsibilities of instructional leadership and change agency.

Course Description in UK Bulletin 2007-2008

EDL 651 is an introductory study of assumptions and procedures of systematic inquiry used to investigate administrative, leadership and supervisory phenomena in education. Issues regarding both quantitative and qualitative models of inquiry are included.

Major Course Objectives

This course provides an overview of the basic issues and general procedures involved in conducting and evaluating various forms of systematic inquiry in education. It focuses upon the major traditions in educational research, the epistemological paradigms upon which they are based, and their major methods, designs, and techniques. This course provides the foundation for the systematic inquiry and research strand of the doctoral program leading to an EdD in Higher Education with an Emphasis on Community and Technical College Leadership. It includes concepts, perspectives, and vocabulary that emerging scholars need and use throughout their doctoral studies and in their professional practices.

By the end of the semester, students are expected to be conversant with the major traditions of systematic inquiry in education and their supporting paradigms as well as with their strengths, limitations, and relative applicability in the investigation of various educational issues. By the end of the course, students should be able to

- Use the vocabulary of systematic inquiry and research correctly;
- Discuss the basic values supporting the major paradigms and epistemologies of inquiry in an informed fashion;
- Select and defend the appropriateness of research traditions, methods, and designs for given topics of inquiry;
- Critique and evaluate the research of others; and
- Discuss intelligently the basic issues and concerns involved in conducting high quality, rigorous, and meaningful systematic inquiry in the field of educational policy, administration, and leadership.¹

Required Course Textbooks and Readings

Professional reading and reflection are fundamental components of this research foundations course. In addition to the resources listed below, students will be expected to read all articles and Web-based materials identified by the instructor throughout the semester. Additional resources are listed in the **References** at the end of this syllabus.

McMillan, J. H. (2008). *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). New York: Longman.

¹ Adapted from EDL 651 course syllabi developed by Dr. Susan Scollay, Associate Professor with joint appointment to UK Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation and UK Educational Leadership Studies.

Instructional Technology Requirements

This course requires the use of information technology: Students are expected to have regular access to a personal computer and the Internet to complete their learning activities. In addition to the UK Web sites dedicated to the doctoral program, students will be required to access course materials and conduct learning self-assessments through the textbook publisher's Web sites including www.ablongman.com/mcmillan5e and www.researchnavigator.com.

Student Responsibilities

Doctoral students have a major responsibility for their own learning. As members of a learning cohort, they are also responsible for helping their fellow doctoral students. As adult learners, they are encouraged to network with their cohort peers and engage in collaborative problem solving before seeking assistance from the instructor. A class roster is posted online at <http://academics.uky.edu/education/epe/kctcs/> to encourage and support peer and instructor communication.

The University defines acceptable reasons for absences as (a) serious illness, (b) university-related trips, (c) major religious holidays, and (d) other circumstances that the instructor finds to be "reasonable cause for nonattendance." Because the cohort meets only once a month, regular attendance is essential. If professional or personal responsibilities create scheduling conflicts, then students must make decisions about their priorities. If students must miss a cohort meeting, then they must notify me about the reason for the absence **before the absence occurs**. In the event of **emergency absences** (e.g., personal illness, major accident, death of family member), students should notify me as soon as possible, **preferably through e-mail communication**. Additional assignments may be required for missed cohort meetings.

UK Policies

The adopted UK academic policies apply in this course and are articulated in the *Students Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* and the *UK Graduate Bulletin*. Important policies and regulations applicable to this course include, but are not limited to, those concerning attendance, cheating and plagiarism, course withdrawal, incomplete grades, and acceptable standards of English. An instructor retains absolute discretion concerning the acceptance of required assignments after the established due dates and reserves the right to lower the grade on assignments that are submitted late.

Canceled Class. If a cohort meeting must be canceled due to bad weather or other unforeseen circumstances, we will make every possible effort to contact you in sufficient time to avoid an unnecessary travel.

Changes to Syllabus. I retain the right to modify this syllabus, if necessary, to meet the learning objectives of this course. Changes to this syllabus will be discussed with you and provided in writing as an addendum distributed electronically via e-mail and posted on <http://academics.uky.edu/education/epe/kctcs/>.

Go to www.research.uky.edu/gs/bulletin/bullinfo.shtml for more information about UK Policies.

Quality of Student Work

Unless specified otherwise, all papers submitted to me must be presented in the writing style and format described in the fifth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*², specifically those found on pages 296-320. All papers must be word-processed in either **Times New Roman 12-point font** or **Arial 10-point font**. Students are expected to follow rules of usage and principles of composition presented in *The Elements of Style*³.

Plagiarism. Where appropriate, references to professional and research literature need to be integrated into the text and cited at the end of all papers. According to UK rules, the minimum consequence for cheating or plagiarism is an “E” in the course. Cheating or plagiarism is basically stealing ideas or intellectual property created by others. Students are cautioned to reference all resources properly: The mere re-phrasing of another author’s work does not excuse the student from the requirement for including proper citations. Cite all your sources accurately and appropriately! Furthermore, the re-cycling of assignments from other courses can be interpreted as self-plagiarizing and fails to meet the minimal standards of intellectual rigor required in graduate study.

Late Submittals. Each written assignment is to be delivered me as an attachment to an e-mail message addressed to **tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu** and sent no later than 10:00 AM on the due date. Late assignments will be accepted only in cases of extreme emergencies, and the decision to accept late work is solely at my discretion.

Incomplete Grade. Incomplete grades for this course are issued very reluctantly and sparingly. The UK Graduate School permits students **one calendar year—unless a shorter time frame is determined mutually by the student and instructor**—to remove an “I” grade or the grade automatically converts to an “E” (a failing mark). UK rules require students requesting an “I” grade to complete a contract specifying how and when the “I” will be removed within the calendar year. The contract must be submitted to the instructor before an “I” grade can be issued. Incomplete work and missing assignments will be assigned “E” grades if the student does not submit a completed Incomplete Grade Contract by the course deadline.

² American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

³ Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). New York: Longman.

Course Requirements and Expectations

Unless specified otherwise, all student-generated written assignments must be submitted to me electronically as an attachment to an e-mail message **no later than 10:00 AM on the due date**.

1. **Professional Reflections and Course Participation.** Students will write responses to questions posed by me in Blackboard and engage in asynchronous dialogue with their cohort peers. To receive credit for course participation, students must respond to each online activity by the due date appearing in the tentative course calendar (pp. 10-11).
2. **Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography.** Students will identify a researchable topic and conduct independent reviews of research literature using strategies described in Chapter 3 and 4 of the course textbook as well as UK library and other Web-based search engines. Students will use EndNote software (available free at <http://download.uky.edu>) to develop an annotated bibliography of 5-10 references.
3. **Critical Analysis of Published Research.** Students will critique three published research articles using guidelines that I will provide later in the semester. Finished products must conform to the APA guidelines for academic writing.
4. **Web-based Practice Tests.** Students will conduct self-assessments of their knowledge and understanding of course content by completing selected Practice Tests found on the textbook publishers' Web site (www.ablongman.com/mcmillan5e). To earn credit for these assignments, students must complete the online Profile in order to assure copies of the practice-test results are sent directly to me (tricia.ferrigno@uky.edu).
5. **Final Examination.** A comprehensive examination will be administered near the close of the semester for students demonstrate their mastery of course content and their ability to extrapolate from and apply that content.

Grading Scale

Course grades are based on a cumulative point total. The relative weighting for each of these expectations is presented in the matrix below.

Class Assignments/Expectations	Points Possible
1. Professional Reflections & Participation	10
2. Literature Review & Annotated Bibliography	10
3. Critiques of Research Articles	30
4. Web-based Practice Tests	10
5. Final Examination	40
Total Points	100

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale: A=90-100 points, B=80-89 points, C=70-79 points, E=<70 points. Course credit: three graduate hours.

Tentative Course Calendar

Week	Location	Topic	Reading Assignments	Products Due
Fundamental Principles of Educational Research				
1	Cohort Meeting Aug 24-26 KCTCS Versailles	<i>Systematic Inquiry: What is it? Why is it important to community and technical college educators?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Functions and principles of educational research ▪ Major traditions ▪ Standard format for research report 	M ⁴ : Chap 1	8/27/07 (10 am) BB Response (i.e., response to online question)
2	Online	<i>Problem Formulation: How do research designs differ in defining study focus?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nature of research problems ▪ Statements, questions, hypotheses ▪ Criteria for evaluating problem statements 	M: Chap 2	9/3/07 (10 am) Chap 1 Self-Test Chap 2 Self-Test BB Response
3	Online	<i>Review of Research Literature: What strategies are used in locating appropriate literature? What criteria are used for evaluating study reports?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Functions of literature review ▪ Strategies to locate and review research literature ▪ Guidelines for writing literature review ▪ Tools for storage and retrieval management 	M: Chap 3-4 EndNote	9/10/07 (10 am) Chap 3 Self-Test BB Response
4	Online	<i>Sampling Procedures: How do they differ between quantitative and qualitative studies? What criteria are used to evaluate sampling procedures?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Types of sampling strategies ▪ Subjects vs. participants ▪ Sampling strategies influences on study outcomes 	M: Chap 5 APA writing guidelines	9/17/07 (10 am) Chap 5 Self-Test BB Response
5	Cohort Meeting Sep 21-22 KCTCS Versailles	<i>Educational Measurement: What are the differences between measurement, assessment, and evaluation? What is the purpose of research measurement?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Principles of descriptive statistics ▪ Validity of measurement ▪ Reliability of measurement 	M: Chap 6 APA writing guidelines	9/24/07 (10 am) Chap 6 Self-Test Lit Review & Annotated Bib
6	Online	<i>Educational Measures: What are they and how do they differ? What criteria are used to evaluate different educational measures?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tests ▪ Questionnaires ▪ Observations ▪ Interviews 	M: Chap 7	10/1/07 (10 am) Chap 7 Self-Test BB Response
Overview of Research Paradigms				
7	Online	<i>Scientific Tradition & Positivist Paradigm: What are the unique elements of quantitative research?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nonexperimental vs. experimental designs ▪ Criteria for evaluation of quantitative study reports <p>[Statistical inferences to be covered in later course]</p>	M: Chap 8-9 Review sections M: Chap 2, 5-7	10-8-07 (10 am) Chap 8 Self-Test Review 1 Wall & Rinehart ⁵

⁴ McMillan, J. H. (2008). *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer*. Boston: Pearson.

⁵ Wall, R., & Rinehart, J. S. (1998). School-based decision making and the empowerment of secondary teachers. *Journal of School Leadership*, 8, 49-64.

Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)

Week	Location	Topic	Reading Assignments	Products Due
8	Online	<i>Naturalistic Tradition & Interpretivistic Paradigm: What are the basic characteristics of qualitative research?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Characteristics and types (e.g., case study, ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory) ▪ Quality assurances ▪ Criteria for evaluation of qualitative study reports 	M: Chap 11 Review sections M: Chap 2, 5, 7	10/15/07 (10 am) Chap 11 Self-Test BB Response
9	Cohort Meeting Oct 19-20 TBA	<i>Emerging Research Methods: How do they differ from traditional designs?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mixed-methods, secondary data analysis, action research, historical, evaluation and policy analysis ▪ Criteria for evaluation of mixed-method and action research study reports 	M: Chap 12	10/22/07 (10 am) Chap 12 Self-Test Review 2 Schnorr ⁶
10	Online	<i>Interpretation & Implications: Why are the discussion and conclusion sections in reports important?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interpretation of results ▪ Limitations, recommendations, implications ▪ Criteria for evaluation of discussion, conclusion 	M: Chap 13	10/29/07 (10 am) Chap 13 Self-Test BB Response
Policy, Ethical, and Legal Issues in Academic Inquiry				
11	Online	<i>Human Subjects: What procedures and structures exist to protect subjects and participants for harm?</i>	Readings UK IRB Website	11/5/07 (10 am) Review 3 Walker ⁷
Application and Assessments of Learning				
12	Cohort Meeting Nov 9-10 ASHE Louisville	<i>Field Experience: What have we learned about being intelligent consumers of research?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conference attendance ▪ Coffee-break meetings with cohort instructors 	www.ashe.ws	11/12/07 (10 am) BB Response
13	Online	<i>Professional Reflection & Peer Critique</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post-conference discussions ▪ Peer critique of analyses 	Exam Prep M: Chap 14	11/19/07 (10 am) BB Response
14	Thanksgiving Holiday: Independent Work			
15	Online	<i>Final Examination: Have we learned the knowledge and skills necessary to be intelligent consumers of educational research?</i>		12/3/07 (10 am) Final Exam BB response
16	Cohort Meeting Dec 7-8 TBA	<i>Grand Finale: What have we learned this semester? What next in our doctoral studies?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EPE 669 project presentations ▪ Reflect forward 		

⁶ Schnorr, R. F. (1990). "Peter? He comes and goes. . . ." First graders' perspectives on a part-time mainstream student. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 15(4), 231-240.

⁷ Walker, E. V. S. (1993). Caswell County Training School, 1933-1969: Relationships between community and school. *Harvard Educational Review*, 63(2), 161-182.

References: General Research Topics

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