

Western Carolina University
EDSU 630
School Improvement
Fall 2006
Kingston, Jamaica

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IMPORTANT: As soon as you get this syllabus, send me an email [ebmccoy@att.net] so that I can communicate with you before I get there. Thanks.

Conceptual Framework

Western Carolina University has a strong and rich tradition of preparing teachers. That tradition continues today as Western, along with its College of Education and Allied Professions, has evolved into the eighth largest producer of teacher education graduates of the forty-seven teacher education programs in the state of North Carolina.

The College of Education and Allied Professionals fulfills its mission by creating and nourishing a community of learners guided by knowledge, values, and experiences. The guiding principles of this community include the belief that the best education decisions are made after adequate reflection and with ethical consideration related to the interest, experiences, and welfare of the persons affected by the decision; appreciation of and respect for diversity; and the fostering of the responsible use of technology.

Diversity Statement

Western Carolina University defines diversity broadly to include “exceptionalities, race, ethnicity, culture, religious background, gender, linguistic differences, socioeconomic level, and any of the other ways our society defines human and group differences, including age, geography, sexual orientation and national origin.” Accordingly, “a diverse faculty, staff and student body can be a catalyst for diversity of thought.” At the heart of our scholarly work is the appreciation of the distinction between an event and multiple interpretations. One expression of diversity of thought is a community that not only tolerates but also nurtures discussion of such sensitive topics as politics, religion and race.

My being in Jamaica and having an opportunity to teach and work with Jamaican educators continues to be a very rewarding experience as my conceptual understanding of diversity is continually expanded.

Course Description

EDL 630 is school-site management core requirement for Masters of School Administration Degree (M.S.A.). This course emphasizes the development process of

school improvement focusing on school leadership. Concepts of site-based management and other outcome-based models are explored.

Course Objectives and Competencies

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Examine the multiple implications of leadership for school improvement
2. Understand the change process and the aspects of that process that instructional leaders must consider when introducing change.
3. Differentiate the needs of teachers in the instructional process.
4. Describe ways to foster a healthy classroom environment to facilitate learning
5. Describe ways to effectively partner with parents to improve schools
6. Use academic test data for school improvement

Required Reading

❖ First Session:

1. American Psychological Association Style [Recommended]
2. Hyacinth Evans (2001). *Inside Jamaican Schools*. University of the West Indies Press: Jamaica.

❖ Second Session:

1. Charlotte Danielson (2002). *Enhancing Student Achievement: A Framework for School Improvement*. ASCD. Alexandria: VA
2. Robert J. Marzano (2003). *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. ASCD. Alexandria: VA

Class Schedule/Assignments Teaching/Learning Methods

Successful class sessions will depend on the combined efforts of students, the instructor, and any guest presenters to make the material understandable and memorable. Typical teaching/learning methods include: interactive lectures, group discussion, and group and individual presentations.

This course will be conducted as a seminar. Discussion, group work, presentations, etc., It will not be lecture and exam!

Course Requirements

- ❖ **Attendance:** is necessary and expected. Attendance will be taken every class period. Students are permitted one (1) unexcused absence during the semester (e.g., car would not start, had to attend a meeting, etc.). Excused absences include: death in the immediate family, illness requiring hospitalization or visits to the doctor, religious holidays, and attendance at certain university functions.
- ❖ **Class Participation:** Whether in small groups or whole classroom, informed discussion is the core of class time together. Everyone is expected to be prepared and to actively (body, mind, and spirit) participate in class discussions and activities.
- **Discussion Cards (DC):** Using 5" X 8" White Index Cards (Ruled);

For every class meeting, you need to prepare in advance, an index card with the following information. DC may be hand written. Be sure that your name and appropriated date, and chapter appear on your cards. [See suggestion below.]

- **One question** you want to **raise and discuss** based on the readings
- A quote from the reading you would like to **discuss or**
- An **informational fact** that you found interesting and would like to **discuss**.

[Suggestion: As you read the chapter, jot down any questions you have and other interesting points. Transfer question and points of interest [quote or informational fact] to your index card. Write your reflection from your question and/or point of interest.

Discussion Card Specifics

The purpose of the **DC** will be for students to communicate with the professor and class, areas of interest based on what they have read. It also solicits responses about a particular topic, from other students in the class. In the event that a student misses class, it is expected that they will submit the **DC** at the next class session.

The DC will require that all students participate in class discussions, and refrain from private conversations when other members of the class are speaking. The professor or the chapter facilitator will determine who has the floor. After this has been determined, it is the responsibility of all to listen to the person speaking. In the event this condition for class protocol is not established and maintained, then the format of the class will be lecture and exam.

IMPORTANT: It is your responsibility to get one of your items on the floor for discussion. Record interesting comments related to your discussion items on the back of the card. **DO NOT ASK QUESTION THAT CAN BE ANSWERED BY CONINUNING TO READ OR SIMPLY READING THE CHAPTER! We will cover two or more chapters per class session. Cards will be collected at the end of each class session.**

- **Facilitation discussion of assigned chapter(s) in textbook(s)**
- **Chapter Reflections:**
 - Chapter reflections related the Evans book may be presented on the third day of the course and throughout the first session. All chapter reflections are due Monday, November 3, 2006.
 - Chapter synopsis/reflections related to the Danielson's and Marzano books may be submitted starting Tuesday, October 31 and throughout the course. All chapter synopsis/reflections are due on Tuesday, November 7, 2006.
 - Compare and Contrast one chapter each from Danielson's and Marzano's books.
- **The Topic Report/Professional Reading/Presentation:**
 - **Two Topic Reports:** General information on the school improvement process in Jamaica that would add to the knowledge base

Or

- **One Professional Reading/Presentation [Synopsis & Reflection on any school improvement subject related to Jamaican education]. This reflection can come from the reference list of all required reading and other sources. Must submit written copies (typed) using APA style.**

Session I: October 26, 2008

- The first two day will be spent on **APA Style** and Writing Reflections/ Synopsis/Topic Reports
- Read Evans' *Inside Jamaican Schools* and write reflections on three [chapters 1-6] or four [chapters 1-8] of the eight chapters. Do not summarize the chapters; just reflect on what is said and the implications for Jamaican education. This should be done before the start of class. Limit of two typed pages (double-spaced).

Session II: December 2, 2008

Read Danielson's *Enhancing Student Achievement: A Framework for School Improvement* and Marzano's *What Work in Schools: Translating Research into Action* and:

1. write a synopsis and reflection for what you perceive to be the most important chapter in each book. Both of these books should be read during the break. Limit of three typed pages (double-spaced).
2. Compare and Contrast one chapter from each book. Limit of three typed pages (double-spaced).

Tentative Schedule of Activities/Assignments

Session I: October 27, 2008 – November 5, 2008

(I will add the names of chapter facilitators)

Session/ Topic	Chapter/Activity	Facilitator(s)	Presentations
Day 1	APA Style/Writing Summaries/Synopsis Ch. 1 School & Schooling		
Day 2	APA Style/Writing Summaries/Synopsis Ch. 2 Theoretical Perspectives		
Day 3	Ch. 3 Inside Classrooms		
Day 4	Ch. 4 The Curriculum & Teaching		
Day 5	Ch. 5 Streaming & Its Effects on Students		
Day 6	Ch. 6 Language in the Classroom		
Day 7	Ch. 7 Gender in the School Setting		
Day 8	Ch. 8 Toward Better Schools for All Putting it All Together		

Note: Presentations will start on the third day so come prepared to present at least one topic or reflection.

Session II: December 2, 2008 -- December 10, 2008

**Tentative Schedule of
Activities/Assignments**

Session/Topic	Chapter/Activity	Facilitator(s)	Presentations
Day 1	Chap 1 What We Want		
	Chap 2 What We Believe		
	Section I: School-Level Factors		
Day 2	Chap 3 What We Know		
	Chap 4 What We Do		
	Section I: School-Level Factors		
Day 3	Chap 5 School Organization		
	Chap 6 Policies & Practices		
	Section I: School-Level Factors		
Day 4	Chap 7 Policies & Practices		
	Chap 8 Linkages Beyond the School		
	Section III: Student-Level Factors		
Day 5	Chap 9 Aligned Curriculum		
	Chap 10 Assessment		
	Section II: Teacher-Level Factors		
Day 6	Chap 11 Team Planning		
	Chap 12 Learning Support		
	Section IV: Implementation		
Day 7	Chap 13 Teaching		
	Chap 14 Action Planning		
	Section IV: Implementation		

Note: Presentations will start on the first day of Session II so come prepared to present at least one topic or reflection.

Research Topics for Both Sessions

Whenever possible relate topic to Jamaican education.

- ❖ Schools and Schooling
 - School Organizations
 - Policies and Practices Affecting Students
 - Policies and Practices Affecting Staff
 - Linkages Beyond the School

- ❖ Theoretical Perspectives: Approaches to Understanding and Studying Schools
 - School Organization
 - Aligned Curriculum
 - Assessment
 - Team Planning
 - Learning Support
 - Teaching
- ❖ Streaming and Its Effects on Students
- ❖ Language in the Classroom
- ❖ Gender in the School Setting
- ❖ Toward Better Schools for All
 - Action Planning
- ❖ Any topic on school improvement
- ❖ Any topic from the required reading

Evaluation Procedures

- ❖ Attendance/Participation 20% (12.5 points X 8 class sessions 100 pts.)
- ❖ Discussion Cards 20% (100 pts.)
- ❖ Chapter Reflections 20% (100 pts.)
- ❖ Two Topics Reports/Presentation 20% (100 pts.) OR/
- ❖ One Professional Reading/Presentation 20% (50 pts X 2 = 100 pts.)

Grading Scale: 400 Points Possible

- ❖ 360 – 400 = A [90-100]
- ❖ 320 – 359 = B [80-89]
- ❖ 280 – 319 = C [70] **Not Recommended**
- ❖ **BELOW 280 = D Not an Option**

References

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- Miller, E. 1990. *Jamaican society and high schooling*. Kingston, Jamaica, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research.
- Miller, E. 1991. *Men at risk*. Kingston, Jamaica: Jamaica Publishing House.
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- Pollard, V. 1987. *Past-time expressions in Jamaican Creole: Implication of teaching creole*. PhD dissertation, University of the West Indies, Mona.
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- UNESCO. 1996. *What makes a good teacher? Children speak their minds*. Paris: UNESCO.

Important links: All links relate to Jamaican Education

- ❖ <http://asp2.wlv.ac.uk/cidt/JAASPpubs.html>
- ❖ <http://asp2.wlv.ac.uk/cidt/PDF/changingthefuture.pdf>
- ❖ <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE47/english/Natreps/reports/jamaica.pdf>
- ❖ <http://www.moec.gov.jm/projects/pesp/components.htm>
- ❖ <http://www.moec.gov.jm/regions/index.htm>

Active Role in Leadership in Sustaining School Reform

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Leadership/index.html>

Trends and Issues: The Role of School Leadership

http://eric.uoregon.edu/trends_issues/rolelead/selected_abstracts/instructional_leadership.html

Policy on Academic Honesty

The University policy on academic honesty and plagiarism is spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students are expected to be academically honest. In addition to the specific offenses listed in the Student Handbook, it is not appropriate to submit a paper, project or other work for this class that was completed for another class. If you would like to further develop a topic on which you have previously worked, please submit a copy of the original work along with your proposal and indicate how the project for this class will differ from the original.