

Summer II 20007 – WMU Campus

9:00 a.m. -3:30 p.m.

Room: 3211 Sangren Hall

Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership

Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-5276

Course Number and Title:

EDLD 6060 System Thinking

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor:

Walter L. Burt, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership
Western Michigan University
3422 Sangren Hall
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
Office: 1.269.387.1821
e-mail: walter.burt@wmich.edu

Office Hours:

Office hours are scheduled each Thursdays from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Additional office hours may be scheduled upon an appointment basis.

Course Prerequisite: None

Course Descriptions:

The purpose of this course is to study and gain an understanding of the organizational processes at work in secondary and postsecondary education institutions, and the skills and tools effective higher educational leaders use in developing learning organizations. Senge has noted that a learning organization is a place in which people continually expand their capacity to create results they truly desire, where new patterns of thinking are nurtured, and where people learn how to work together. In his view, learning organizations are possible because deep down we are all learners (Senge, 1990). Educational leadership is infused with new expectations, responsibilities, and accountabilities when viewed from the framework of systems thinking within learning organizations. This course will examine concepts and ideas such as these and the systemic forces and interdependencies that shape the behaviors of personnel in secondary and higher education systems.

This course has two major interconnected themes: organizational theory related to complex systems and leadership. Course participants will gain a knowledge and understanding of the current theories that help leaders make sense of their complex

educational organizations, and the “tools” (e.g., the five disciplines, systems drawing) that make up the core of a “learning organization.” Applied collectively and continually, the disciplines will allow transformational leaders to develop productive long-term relationships with their colleagues and their communities.

Program Goals:

The program goals addressed in the course are:

1. To provide a theory-based framework for leadership, change processes, and human resource development.
2. To promote student development through activities that focus upon products, procedures, and strategies that link theory to practice.
3. To prepare students for a career in educational leadership.
4. To actively engage students in problem-based learning related to situations encountered by school leaders.

Course Objectives/Outcomes:

The objectives of this course are:

1. To gain an understanding of the theoretical concepts and techniques from the behavioral sciences that can be used to create and sustain a learning organization within the context of community. (NCATE 1.4)
2. To develop a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the “five basic or core disciplines” that collectively form the linkages for systems thinking to occur within a learning organization. (NCATE 6.2)
3. To examine individual value and belief systems (e.g., personal mastery) and their impact on one’s understanding of self, as well as, the educational leader’s role and responsibility. (NCATE 4.2, 4.4)
4. To gain knowledge and understanding of how effective transformational leaders use mission, power, and “authority” when motivating people (e.g., mental models) to reflect upon and address “ripe issues” within school systems. (NCATE 1.4)
5. To gain an understanding of the communication and decision-making processes followed to create and sustain a learning organization (e.g., team learning). (NCATE 6.2)
6. To explore contemporary educational issues or events in terms of trends and patterns (e.g., shared visions) impacting on the renewal of schools and school systems. (NCATE 1.4, 2.4, 10.2)

COE Diversity Statement:

The College of Education maintains a strong and sustained commitment to the diverse and unique nature of all learners and high expectations for their ability to learn and apply their learning in meaningful ways.

Academic Ethics and Integrity:

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Graduate Catalogue that pertain to Academic Integrity. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with the course instructor if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

As stated in the Student Code: "Behavior by any student, in class or out of class, which for any reason materially disrupts the class work of others involved substantial disorder, invades the rights of others, or otherwise disrupts the regular and essential operation of the University is prohibited.". (Some examples of disruptive behavior may include, but not necessarily limited to, the following: repeated and unauthorized use of electronic devices, cell phones and pagers, disputing authority and arguing with faculty and other students, harassment, physical disruption or physical altercations, etc.)

Performance-Driven Leadership Master's Degree Students:

Students admitted to the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership program during January 2001 or later are now part of the new "performance-driven leadership" (PDL) curriculum. Within this program, students are to acquire a Performance-Driven Leadership Handbook (a 3-ring binder available at the Supply Desk within the WMU Bookstore), and to place at least three samples of their work from this course within this handbook. This handbook, including student work products, is to be available for review by course instructors, the student's advisor, and future employers. It will be reviewed during the Capstone Experience course (EDLD 679), and will serve as one method for displaying understanding of course content and activities. A sample syllabus for EDLD 679 can be found at: wmich.edu/tll/syllabi/EDLD679_wegenke.pdf.

Expectations:

The methods of instructions used in this class are based firmly on the assumption that learning depends on the activity of the student rather than on the instructor; that learning the process is as important as the content, that the overall aim is to develop understandings that will be used in performing the various sections that comprise the leadership process, rather than to provide mere knowledge.

The content of class discussion is considered to be important as well as the student's own use of resources, his/her interaction with the instructor and with other students, and his/her preparation of individual assignments which force him/her to react thoughtfully to what he/she hears, observes or reads. Preparation for class discussion, participation and the doing of individual assignments are most important. Effective learning depends on extensive use of resources, which must be started early and pursued vigorously.

Attendance in class is considered important, and aside from unusual circumstances, the student is expected to be both present and punctual for each session.

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact Ms. Beth Denhartigh at telephone number 269.387.2116 or email beth.denhartigh@wmich.edu at the beginning of the semester. A disability determination must be made by that office before any accommodations are provided by the instructor.

Required Text(s)/Materials:

The following books are required readings:

Senge, P.M., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., & Kleiner, A. (2000). Schools that learn, New York: Doubleday Dell Publishing.

Kline, P., & Saunders, B. (1998). Ten steps to a learning organization (2nd ed.). Arlington, VA: Great Ocean Publishing, Inc.

Fullan, M. (2005). Leadership & sustainability – system thinkers in action. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Corwin Press.

Role of the Textbooks:

The textbooks represent “tools” that provide useful foundational information to the learner. It is the responsibility of the learner to read the assigned chapters and to incorporate the author's perspective into classroom discussions and written assignments. Presentations and discussions are expected to supplement the reading and thereby deviate from strict adherence to the texts.

Class Schedule of Session, Reading and Activities

Session	Date	Topics and Readings
1	6/28	Class introductions, an introduction to course goals, objectives, expectations and materials. Development of class list-serv and class presentations.

Schools that learn, an introduction to the concept of a learning organizations and the industrial age system of education (Senge, pp. 3 – 27; 101 - 110).

- | | | |
|----|------|---|
| 2. | 7/10 | An introduction to Deming and the Continuous Improvement Model. |
| 3 | 7/12 | An introduction to systems thinking and the disciplines of systems thinking (Senge, pp. 59 – 93; 232 – 265; 153 -205; 271 - 276).

Introducing the Three Little Pigs as Systems Thinkers. |
| 4 | 7/17 | Class presentations |
| 5 | 7/19 | The role of systems thinking and leadership (Senge, pp.411 – 453). |
| 6 | 7/24 | Systems Archetypes – FINAL EXAM |

Course Activities:

Activity 1. Class Participation (Includes Attendance). A great deal of class time will be devoted to discussion. To prepare for class discussion, students should plan to attend regularly, complete the assigned readings, and participate in selected in-class activities. When absent, students are responsible for obtaining class notes and handout materials from another student of their choice.

Activity 2. Team Presentations. Students, where possible, will work individually or in teams of two (2) or three (3) students to prepare and present to the class a chapter review of one of the “ten steps” found in a learning organization. The review will follow those steps presented by the authors Kline and Saunders in their book, Ten steps to a learning organization. Suggested points to cover when leading the class presentation include:

- A written outline of the major themes in the chapter prepared for distribution to others in the class;
- Where possible refer to “the five disciplines” in Peter Senge, et al, Schools that learn, that have applicability to your presentation; and
- A written set of conclusions or recommendations derived after reflecting upon your readings and preparation activities for your presentation. What are the “take-aways” you would like your “class colleagues” to know and be able to internalize from your presentation into their work settings. (NCATE 1.3, 1.5, 6.2)

Activity 3. Performance-Driven Leadership Handbook (New students only). The Performance-Driven Leadership Handbook provides students the opportunity to collect materials that reflect systems thinking theory and practice. Notebooks will be available in the University Bookstore. They will serve as one method for displaying knowledge and understanding of course content and activities. Handbooks, including student work products, are to be available for review by course instructors, the student's advisor and future employers. Each student is responsible for placing samples of his or her own work in the handbook. The Performance-Driven Leadership Handbook is reviewed during the Capstone Experience (EDLD 679) course. (NCATE 1.4, 6.2). Students can go to <http://www.wmich.edu/tll/pdl/courses.html>., then click on EDLD 606 for a copy of the actual Performance-driven Leadership form.

Activity 4. Book Critique. You are to conduct a 5 to 7 page critique of Michael Fullan's book, Leadership & sustainability. If you are in higher education, you may critique the book by Robert Birnbaum, How Colleges Work. Your critique of this book should contain the following subheadings:

1. An overview of the book
2. Implications for the CEO as a system thinker (e.g., school superintendent, college president, etc.)
3. Strength and weaknesses of the book
4. Personal reflections

Please follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th Edition (APA) format when attaching references to your mini-paper. (You may go to <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> for an overview of the APA writing style.)

Activity 5. Final Examination. The final examination will be an opportunity for the student to express his or her knowledge and understanding of the "basic or core disciplines" found in a learning organization and apply the disciplines to a case study. This case analysis project will serve as your final exam. The purpose of the project is to give you the opportunity to apply the ideas and systems thinking skills discussed in class to a situation grounded in your own professional practice or interests. You will be given a case study outlining a particular problem in a school district and/or organization. With this information, you are to develop, map, and analyze the case study based on an issue currently existing in your work context – administrative, organizational, curricular, assessment, professional development, or policy-oriented, etc., using what you have learned about organizational structures and leadership and systems analysis. This is your opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned in class.

The problem or situation should be fully described and mapped using systems notation. Relationships to other issues or processes in the work context should be described and mapped, and the relationships most relevant to the case highlighted. You will then analyze the case using **three different system models, metaphors, or archetypes** and offer recommendations for how stakeholders in the system could go about addressing the problem. Grades for the paper will be based on demonstrated grasp of the material and proper citation of sources, thoroughness and thoughtfulness of the case analysis, and clarity of writing. Appendix A contains a copy of the rubric that will be used to assess the learner's knowledge and proficiency in analyzing the given case.

SUMMARY OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Learning Description</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
1	Class Participation	6/28 – 7/24
2	Team Presentations	7/17
3	Performance Driven Leadership Handbook	TBD
4	Book Critique	7/19
5	Final Exam	7/24

Assessment for Learning:

The student's grade will be determined as follows:

Participation (including attendance)	10%
Team presentation	30%
Book critique	30%
Final Examination	30%

Grading Scale

95 – 100	A
90 - 94	BA
85 - 89	B
80 - 84	BC
Below 79	C

Incompletes are given only in extreme emergencies (e.g., medical reasons).

Selected References:

- Adams, W. A., Adams, C., & Bowker, M. (1999). *The whole systems approach: Involving everyone in the company to transform and run your business*. Provo, UT: Executive Excellence.
- Aguayo, Rafael (1990). *Dr. deming: The American who taught the Japanese about quality*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Anderson, B. L. (1993, September). The stages of systemic change. *Educational Leadership, 51(1)*, 14-17.
- Betts, F. (1992, November). How systems thinking applies to education. *Educational Leadership, 50(3)*, 38-41.
- Birnbaum, R. (1988). *How colleges work: The cybernetics of academic organization and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishing Company.
- Bohm, D., & Nichol, L. (1996). *On dialogue*. New York: Routledge.
- Brown, D. J. (1991). *Decentralization: The administrator's guide to school district change*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin.
- Capra, F. (1997). *The web of life: A new scientific understanding of living systems*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Carlson, R. V. (1996). *Reframing and reform: Perspectives on organization, leadership, and school change*. New York: Longman.
- Conley, D. T., & Goldman, P. (1994). *Facilitative leadership: How principals lead without dominating*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 279 728).
- Covey, S. R. (1992). *Principle-centered leadership*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Deming, W.E. (1994). *The new economics: For industry, government, education* (2nd edition). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Etzioni, A. (1983). Restructuring the schools: A set of solutions. *Learning, 11(8)*, 86-93.
- Evans, R. (1993, September). The human face of reform. *Educational Leadership, 51(1)*, 19-23.

- Fritz, Robert (1999). *The path of least resistance for managers: Designing organizations to succeed*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Fullan, M. G. (1996, February). Turning systemic thinking on its head. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77(6), 420-423.
- Fullan, M. G., & Stiegelbauer, S. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Glickman, C. D. (1992). The essence of school renewal: The prose has begun. *Educational Leadership*, 50(1), 24-27.
- Handy, C. B. (1994). *The age of paradox*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hansen, D. T. (1995). *The call to teach*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hanson, E. M. (1996). *Educational administration and organizational behavior* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (1993). *Management of organizational behavior: Utilizing human resources* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hodgkinson, H. L. (1991). Reform versus reality. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73(1), 8-16.
- Holzman, M. (1993, September). What is systemic change? *Educational Leadership*, 51(1), 18.
- Hood, P. D., & Hutchins, C. L. (1996, January/February). Research-based development in education. *Educational Technology*, 36(1), 6-13.
- Isaacson, N., & Bamberg, J. (1992, November). Can schools become learning organizations? *Educational Leadership*, 50(3), 42-44.
- LaMorte, M. W. (1996). *School law: Cases and concepts* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Lezotte, L. (1994). The nexus of instructional leadership and effective schools. *School Administrator*, 51(6), 20-23.
- Lynch, J. W. (2000). *Uncommon sense*. Unknown; ISBN: 059509516X.

- Mathews, D. (1996). *Is there a public for public schools?* Dayton, OH: Kettering Foundation Press.
- Mohan, M. L. (1993). *Organizational communication and cultural vision: Approaches and analysis*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- O'Neil, J. (1993, September). Turning the system on its head. *Educational Leadership*, 51(1), 8-13.
- Payne, R. K. (1998). *A framework for understanding poverty* (Rev. ed.). Baytown, TX: RFT Pub.
- Rigden, D. W. (1991). *Business-school partnerships: A path to effective restructuring* (2nd ed.). New York: Council for Aid to Education.
- Reeves, Douglas B. (2006). *The learning leader: How to focus school improvement for better results*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Robinson, R. D. (1996, March/April). The learning organization. *Adult Learning*, 7(4), 16-17.
- Rogers, Everett M. (1965). *Diffusion of innovations*. New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Schein, E. (1985). *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing.
- Senge, P. M., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B. J., Dutton, J., & Kleiner, A. (2000). *Schools that learn*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing.
- Senge, P. M., Roberts, C., Ross, R. B., & Smith, B. J. (1999). *The dance of change*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing.
- Starratt, R. J. (1996). *Transforming educational administration: Meaning, community, and excellence*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Steffy, B. E. (1993, September). Top-down – bottom-up: Systemic change in Kentucky. *Educational Leadership*, 51(1), 42-44.
- Taylor, J. R. (1993). *Rethinking the theory of organizational communication: How to read an organization*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

- Tyack, D., & Cuban, L. (1995). *Tinkering toward utopia: A century of public school reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wagner, T. (1993, September). Systemic change: Rethinking the purpose of school. *Educational Leadership*, 51(1), 24-28.
- Weber, M. (1947). *The theory of social and economic organization*. New York: The Free Press.
- Wheatley, M. J. (1999). *Leadership and the new science: Discovering order in a chaotic world*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Yankelovich, D. (1991). *Coming to public judgment: Making democracy work in a complex world*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Yukl, G. A. (1989). *Leadership in organizations* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

EDLD 606: SYSTEMS THINKING ASSESSMENT FORM

Step # _____

Presenters: _____

Elements	Total Points	Your Points
I. Organization a. The presentation was well organized b. Materials were appropriate, clear and concise c. Presenter actively engaged all learners d. Adequate use of technology	25	
II. Presentation a. Used time wisely b. Adequately covered the topic c. Displayed energy and enthusiasm d. Did something fun (creative) e. I got something out of the presentation	25	
III. Student Engagement a. Effectively used strategies to engage all learners b. Was able to motivate learners to participate	25	
IV. Assessment a. Evidence of a design to assess student learning b. Utilized strategies to assess student mastery	25	
TOTAL POINTS	100	

ADDITIONAL REVIEWER'S COMMENTS:

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

EDLD 606 FORMAT FOR WRITING THE FINAL EXAM

Students should address the following components. They are:

1. Overview of the Case with a clear delineation of the problem
2. Systems Archetype(s) At Work – In this regard, describe the recurring pattern in the case and graphically illustrate the problem with attenuating variables.
3. The Solution – Utilizing Senge’s five disciplines of a learning organization, as well as Kline & Saunders’ Ten Steps to a Learning Organization, Michael Fullan’s book on Leadership & Sustainability, etc., please explain how the principal could address the problem described.
4. Personal Reflections – After conducting this analysis, please discuss your “take-away(s) from this learning activity. In other words, what did you learn from this activity that could influence your leadership behavior in an organization.

EDLD 606: RUBRIC FOR SCORING THE CASE STUDY

Category	Total Possible Points	Points Earned
OVERVIEW OF THE CASE STUDY. In addition, provide a clear delineation of the problem	25.0	
SYSTEMS ARCHETYPES AT WORK – Graphically describe the recurring pattern with attenuating variables	25.0	
THE SOLUTION – Utilizing Senge’s five disciplines of a learning organization, as well as Kline & Saunders’ Ten Steps to a Learning Organization, Michael Fullan’s book on Leadership & Sustainability, etc.explain how the principal could address the problem described	25.0	
PERSONAL REFLECTIONS - After conducting this analysis, please discuss your “take-away(s) from this learning activity. In other words, what did you learn from this activity that could influence your leadership behavior in an organization	25.0	

TOTAL POINTS: _____**FINAL GRADE FOR THE COURSE** _____