

**The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations**

**ELC 694: Cultural and Political Dimensions of Schooling
Course Syllabus: Fall 2017**

Class Meeting Schedule

Web/Lecture with Meetings on
Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:50 PM
October 17 – November 28, 2017

Class Location

Kiser Middle School
716 Benjamin Pkwy
Greensboro, NC 27408

- 1. For Whom Planned:** This is a required course in the Principal Preparation for Excellence and Equity in Rural Schools (PPEERS) program for the Master of School Administration degree.

- 2. Instructor Information:**

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- 3. The Collaborative for Educator Preparation Conceptual Framework:**

The mission of professional education at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is to ensure “Access to Opportunities through Teaching, Learning and Caring.” This requires excellence in all our programs through alignment to state and national standards; explicit connections among research, theory and practice; candidates’ acquisition of the knowledge, skills and dispositions of their disciplines; detailed evaluation of our candidates’ continual professional growth; collaboration among stakeholders; ongoing self-study; and an overriding commitment to fostering beliefs and actions that promote education for all. Toward these ends, our Unit and programs focus on six areas: leadership, professional knowledge, professional practice, educational environments, data-informed decision-making, and professional growth to support the learning of all children in the context of 21st century complexity and dynamic change.

- 4. Course Purpose:** This course explores the influences of broad cultural and political forces on schooling and how these trends impact the work of practicing school administrators, particularly with regards to demographic change, democratic schooling, academic achievement gaps and educational equity. This course also helps students to identify and critique cultural perspectives and political analyses of school communities and overviews strategies for enacting transformative leadership in school settings.

- 5. Course Objectives and Learning Targets/Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student/principal practitioner will

- Identify and critically reflect on how his/her cultural backgrounds inform his/her ideology, commitment and evidences of leadership related to culturally responsive practice;

- Analyze and evaluate theories and strategies related to implementing culturally responsive practice (based on historical, social, and cultural contexts, scholarly arguments, the democratic objectives of U.S. public schools, and national and regional demographic change);
- Understand the values of equity and social justice, democracy, caring and educational quality (articulated in the ELC Department Statements of Commitments) and how these values are visible or invisible in the daily practice of schooling;
- Understand the impact that some major cultural and political trends have on education and use that knowledge to assess his/her political, social and cultural competence and develop practical ways to leverage these skills for managing the myriad of competing demands on school administrators;
- Understand the impact of some major cultural and political influences on schooling and be able to use that knowledge to conduct a sociocultural analysis of educational policies and practices in their assigned school and district settings;
- Understand the need for and articulate a vision for advancing educational equity via his/her leadership.

Course Guiding Questions:

- What cultural forces and trends influence learning and schooling?
- How are the values of equity, social justice, democracy, caring and meaningful learning reflected (or denied) in schools, in regional and local communities and in broader society?
- What social and cultural histories/identities are important in education?
- What political forces help shape rural schooling contexts?
- How can graduate students/principal interns move forward as scholars and leadership practitioners to serve as positive, educational change agents?
- What political and social skills/savvy are needed for practicing school administrators to successfully lead schools today?

6. Teaching Strategies and Class Format:

Class Meetings

Class meetings will incorporate mini-lectures, large- and small-group discussions, cooperative learning, technology use, inquiry-based instruction, case studies, reflective writing exercises and project-based learning presentations.

Class Meeting Schedule

This class is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, October 17, 24, and 31 and November 7, 14, 21 and 28. Students are expected to attend all class meetings.

Web-based Sessions

This course will also consist of web-based sessions or interactions on Canvas to include instructor commentary regarding student readings, writings, discussions, products and/or film analysis. Students are expected to actively and substantively engage in online discussions on class meeting content and web-based activities, readings, writings, film analysis and student product analysis, as well as individualized inquiry related to course topics/content.

Web-based Learning Sessions

Web-based learning will be facilitated through asynchronous sessions. Students may participate in active learning, researching, discussing, reading, writing, posting, critiquing and reflecting online throughout the week at their convenience, but final postings are due Monday by 11:59pm.

6. Submitted original work conforms to the guidelines of the *Style Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*. All written work should be word-processed or typed according to a double-spaced, single-sided, 12-point font, and one-inch margin format.
7. Submitted work must uphold the [University Academic Integrity Policy](#). All UNCG policies regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism will be observed and enforced, and any student who violates these policies will be reported to the appropriate university official. Students are required to submit original work that contains full, appropriate citations and bibliographies.

Major Assignment One (2 Parts): 50% of total grade

School Community Awareness Case Analysis & Analytical Profile of School's Cultural and Political Contexts

This assignment will be one electronic portfolio licensure submission requirement.

Throughout this assignment, students will read and complete critical personal reflection geared towards raising one's awareness about her/his cultural background, beliefs, experiences, biases and needed areas of growth using the Terrell & Lindsey (2009) course text.

A. Community Awareness Case Analysis (Due – October 24)

1. Students will interview, visit, and observe at least four community sites located near their school community that their school's students and families frequent and/or rely upon. Such sites can include faith-based organizations, community recreation centers, libraries, locally-owned restaurants and businesses, social service agencies, etc. Students will include at least one diverse community site of the four that is not akin to their own culture.
2. Students will complete a community awareness portfolio demonstrating their knowledge surrounding their school community and the learning about the community's resources, limitations and needs. The student will gain knowledge of the school community through data analysis, observation, interviews and/or visitations. The portfolio can be a reflective journal, photo journal and/or multimedia presentation. Social artifacts from each community site visit must be included in the portfolio (e.g., documentation of hours of operation, organizational brochures, menus, list of services provided, fee schedules, photographs, video, copies of historical documents, clientele, etc.)

B. Analytical Profile of School's Cultural and Political Contexts (Due – Nov. 7)

1. Students will study the cultural and political contexts of their principal internship site. Students should begin by learning about the current cultural demographics and community background of the school and then investigate what shifts in demographics and cultural contexts have occurred over the past two decades and why. In addition, students should analyze school discipline records for suspensions based on race, gender, primary language spoken, disability, etc. Students should also analyze student identification and placement in advanced courses based on race, gender, primary language spoken, disability, etc. Subsequently, students should identify the vital decision-makers in their school setting who shape the school's political climate (e.g., grade level leaders, department chairs, School Improvement Team (SIT) chairs, influential parents, community members, school/district administrators, school board members, etc.)