

*University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign - College of Education
Department of Educational Organization and Leadership*

**EOL 543: School Improvement
Fall, 2006**

First Class is Wednesday, August 23

**Remaining Classes are
Mondays 5:30-9:30 p.m.
33 Education Building**

Instructor

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Forward your UIUC email: <http://www.cites.uiuc.edu/email/redirection/index.html>

Office Hours

332 Education

Office hours: Monday 3 – 5

Or by appointment

Recommended prerequisite texts

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (2001). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience and school* (Expanded ed.). Washington, DC: National Research Council.

Loewen, J. W. (1995). *Lies my teacher told me: Everything your American history textbook got wrong*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Scheurich, J. J., & Skrla, L. (2003). *Leadership for equity and excellence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Required texts

Lee, E., Menkart, D., & Okazawa-Rey, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Beyond heroes and holidays: A practical guide to K-12 anti-racist, multicultural education and staff development* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: Teaching for Change.

Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

NSSE. (2002). *School improvement: Focusing on student performance*. Schaumburg, IL: National Study of School Evaluation.

(also can be ordered: 1-800-THE-NSSE or 847-995-9080)

Schmoker, M. (2000). *Results: The key to continuous school improvement* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Recommended texts

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

Schmoker, M. (2001). *The results fieldbook: Practical strategies from dramatically improved schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. A., & Allan, S. D. (2000). *Leadership for differentiating schools and classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Electronic reserve readings

Choices for access: (note: some reserves are listed under the editor's name, not the author's)

1. <http://library.ilcso.illinois.edu/uiu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?DB=local&PAGE=rbSearch>
2. <http://web.library.uiuc.edu/ereserves/coursecount.asp#E>

To save time, money and paper, consider printing two pages onto one: for windows, go to File. Print. Click on box "properties." Select 2 pages per page. Also consider printing front to back.

Course Overview

Welcome to School Improvement! The guiding theme of this class is creating and sustaining healthy, reflective and successful teaching and learning environments for all students and staff. It is designed to provide teachers, reading and content specialists, principals, and other administrators with an introduction to school improvement.

The purpose of this course is for students to understand school improvement research, theories, and practices directed toward preparing all P-12 students to be successful and productive citizens in a complex, democratic and diverse society. We will explore school improvement through multiple perspectives on school improvement purpose, leadership identity, data-based decision-making, organizational learning, organizational change, and systems thinking.

Through assigned readings and discussion, structured activities, individual projects, and collaborative group work both theoretical and practical aspects of school improvement will be considered and developed throughout the course. National Standards for school leaders (ISLLC) and Illinois Principal Standards will be major consideration in the course.

Course Association with Content Area Standards in Educational Administration

This course directly utilizes the following professional content area standards for the preparation of principals and superintendents:

1. Facilitating a vision of educational excellence

This course requires students to study and practice applications of leadership competencies in the planning, development, and maintenance of a productive and inclusive school environment.

2. School culture, learning environment, and instructional program

Through group discussion and written work, students will study the development and maintenance of school cultures and instructional programs and the design of programs for student learning and professional staff growth.

3. Management

This course asks students to explore theories and methods of effective school

management and to design administrative support for a positive teaching and learning environment.

4. Collaboration with families and communities

Through group and individual problem-solving efforts, students practice collaborative administrative roles in communicating with and in working with professional staff, students and families, other members of the school community.

5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in compliance with legal and ethical standards

Class discussion and problem examples require students to examine the determination and application of ethical practices in public school administration.

6. The political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context

This course prompts students to seek comprehension of the social, economic, and political contexts in which public schools function and through course readings and small group work to anticipate and understand the influence of these contexts on public school operations.

Principal Content-Area Standards

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) developed specific area standards, knowledge, and performance indicators for principals. These standards are intended to indicate what principals, who lead public schools in the State of Illinois, are expected to know. Two of the standards were used in formulating this course: Standard 5 and Standard 6. The appropriate knowledge and performance indicators for these standards are listed on the next two pages.

STANDARD 5 - Acting with Integrity, Fairness, and in an Ethical Manner

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Knowledge Indicator: The administrator has knowledge and understanding of

- 5A. the purpose of education and the role of leadership in modern society
- 5B. various ethical frameworks and perspectives on ethics
- 5C. the values and challenges of the diverse school community
- 5D. professional codes of ethics

Performance Indicator: The administrator

- 5E. examines personal and professional values
- 5F. demonstrates a personal and professional code of ethics
- 5G. demonstrates values, beliefs, and attitudes that inspire others to higher levels of performance
- 5H. serves as a role model
- 5I. considers the impact of one's administrative practices on others
- 5J. uses the influence of the office to enhance the educational program
- 5K. treats people fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect

- 5L. protects the rights and confidentiality of others
- 5M. demonstrates appreciation for, and sensitivity to, the diversity in the school community
- 5O. examines and considers the prevailing values of the diverse school community
- 5P. expects that others in the school community will demonstrate integrity and exercise ethical behavior
- 5Q. opens the school to public scrutiny
- 5T. demonstrates the importance of equity in a democratic society

STANDARD 6 - The Political, Social, Economic, Legal and Cultural Context

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Knowledge Indicator: The administrator has knowledge and understanding of

- 6A. principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools
- 6B. the role of public education in developing and renewing a democratic society and an economically productive nation
- 6F. global issues and forces affecting teaching and learning

Performance Indicator: The administrator facilitates and engages in activities ensuring that

- 6H. communication occurs among the school community concerning trends, issues, and potential changes in the environment in which schools operate
- 6J. the school community works within the framework of policies, laws, and regulations enacted by local, state, and federal

Expectations

Students are expected to:

1. Attend class. Because of the nature of activities as described below (i.e. group discussions and critique, in-class simulations, and team projects), there are no appropriate ways for you to make work up missed during an absence. You may miss one class at no penalty (but this is not encouraged!). Your second absence will result in reduced class points. You should not enroll in this class if you will miss more than 2 classes.
2. Read and be prepared to discuss and evaluate all materials. You will have a substantial amount of reading expected as a graduate student. At least half of our class time will often be spent discussing readings. You are expected to understand, but not necessarily agree with the authors' main points. Preparation includes, at minimum, bringing notes about the following questions:
 - What new ideas or ways of thinking do the readings invoke?
 - What are the implications of the reading for teaching & learning, your work or school improvement?
 - What are the limitations, contradictions, or ambiguities of the readings?

- What is your critique? What are your questions?
2. Participate actively in class activities (both in and out of the classroom).
 3. Complete four discreet parts of National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) school improvement project framework.
Part I: School Profile
Part IV: Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness
Part V: Action Plan of the SIP
 4. Prepare for a culminating Poster Presentation.

Working Assumptions for the Course

1. Ideas, not individuals are open to challenge. The nature of this seminar will entail substantial discussion and a diversity of ideas. To ensure that multiple voices are heard, all of us must feel safe to express our ideas. You should feel comfortable voicing your opinions and viewpoints. You should also feel comfortable challenging the ideas and thinking of others (and open to others challenging your ideas). However, that challenge cannot disparage the personhood of others. We are here to learn with, from, and about each other. Creating this safe and interactive space provides a rich, engaging and collective learning opportunity which cannot be experienced through individual learning pursuits.
2. Questions represent an opportunity to learn. It is somewhat ironic that as we progress in our educational journeys, sometimes we are more reluctant to ask questions believed to be “unintelligent.” On the contrary, questions are usually an indication of one’s engagement with the subject matter. Do not self-censor because your questions will likely lead to clearer understanding for us all.
3. Participants assume responsibility for their own learning and success. The oft quoted adage “You reap what you sow” is worth repeating here. As with any graduate course that takes learning seriously, this seminar requires a substantial amount of intellectual work. By fully preparing for class, you will optimize your opportunities to learn in your current role and for your future endeavors as an educational leader. Stated differently, use this experience to pursue your own questions and practice interests. No one course can be all things to all students. The expectation is that you take an active or inquiry approach rather than a passive one in your learning. Thus, it is incumbent upon you to “mine” the course for experiences and knowledge that suits your individual needs and purposes. I greatly encourage you to develop collaborative relationships with your cohort to further bolster your and their learning opportunities. This assumption also means that you must make your needs known, and sooner than later (I can’t help you much at the end of the course!). I am very willing and interested to listen to your ideas and concerns.

Full Inclusion

I wish to include fully persons with disabilities in this course. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments to enable you to

participate fully. I will try to maintain the confidentiality of the information that you share. Please contact me as early in the course as practicable.

UIUC Academic Integrity Policy

Every graduate student is expected to comply with the academic integrity policy of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Every graduate student should obtain a copy of the booklet entitled *Code of Polices and Regulations Applying to All Students*, which sets forth the official regulations governing all student conduct on the Urbana-Champaign campus. The *Code* also clearly stipulates a graduate student’s rights in the event he or she is charged with misconduct or some violation of University regulations. Rule 33 (www.uiuc.edu/admin_manual/code/rule_33.html) applies to course-based infractions by both undergraduate and graduate students. More detailed information concerning the operation of the procedures in the *Code of Polices and Regulations Applying to All Students* may be obtained from the Office of Student Conflict Resolution, 300 Student Services Building, 610 East John Street, Champaign, IL 61820, (217) 333-3680.

Course Grade

Your grade for this class will be based on the following areas. Rubrics will be provided for written assignments later in the course. Late assignments will be lowered one letter grade.

Class participation

- Attendance, whole group and small group participation 15

Initial Philosophy of School Improvement 5

School Improvement Project

- NSSE Part 1 25
- NSSE Part 4 25
- NSSE Part 5 25
- Poster Presentation 5

Total 100

Assignments turned in late will be lowered one letter grade or 10 percentage points. As we are all busy professionals, you are allowed one absence (this is still not encouraged!) at your professional discretion without penalty. Each absence afterward will result in the lowering of one letter grade.

Course grades are based on the following scores:

100-93 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	< 60 F
92-90 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D	
	82-80 B-	72-70 C-	62-60 D-	

Initial Philosophy of School Improvement

Please note this assignment is due the first class.

Spontaneously create a typed list of answers for the following questions. If possible, complete this assignment before reading course literature. You will use these lists for later reflection on what you have learned in this course. These can be bullet points with little detail. This assignment should not take much time and should not exceed 2 pages. There are no “best” answers. Please create answers for the following questions. Bring one copy for me and keep one for yourself.

- What do you consider to be the most important things students should know and be able to do by the time the graduate from high school? That is, what are your “core” components to high quality student learning?
- What do you consider to be the core components of high quality teaching?
- What do you consider to be the most important aspects or components of the principal’s role in leading school improvement?

The rationale for this assignment stems from research that suggests 1) effective educational leaders have a broad and clear personal vision of what they want students to learn and 2) school improvement efforts should intentionally link back to desired student learning opportunities and outcomes. It also serves as an opportunity for self-reflection and as a starting point for getting to know you as an educational leader.

NSSE School Improvement Plan (SIP)

This assignment will be discussed with more detail in class. Examples of past projects will also be available. What is important now is that you purchase and begin to familiarize yourself with the NSSE book which will provide the framework for your SIP. You can see below that the course is structured to help you complete different sections throughout the semester. The SIP is a thorough, rigorous endeavor that cannot be completed in a last minute effort. (Note: Although we will read and discuss NSSE sections II, III, and VI, you are not required to complete them).

In the past, I have experimented with various approaches to this assignment, each of which has its advantages and trade-offs. Although the school improvement process should be a collaborative effort in practice, my experience has taught me collaborative school improvement efforts in classroom contexts have more cons than pros. Unless you can make a strong case for collaboration (e.g., you work in the same school), this semester you will individually choose a school for your project. I recommend choosing one in which you are currently situated to make this assignment most meaningful. To make the workload realistic, you will *choose one academic student learning area* in need of improvement to develop your SIP.

Course Calendar: Essential Questions and Assignments

Subject to change

Session	Essential Question(s)	Reading	Assignment Due
<i>Introduction</i>			
Session 1 Wednesday August 23	What do these authors assume to be the larger purposes of education? How might different philosophies influence the thrust of school improvement efforts?	Schmoker Foreword, Intro; Marzano 1; NSSE 1; Shields Recommended: Wilber	Initial Philosophy of School Improvement
<i>Using data for school improvement</i>			
Session 2 August 28	How can leaders use data for school improvement?	Schmoker 1-3; NSSE 1 (review) Recommended: Halverson – The New Instructional Leadership	(Start thinking about what data you will collect for your SIP)
Sept 4	No Class: Labor Day		
Session 3 Sept 11 or 18 (I am in process of scheduling research: we will cancel one class between Sept 11 and Nov 6)	How can leaders use data for school improvement?	Schmoker 4 - Conclusion	
<i>Reflections on identity and school improvement</i>			
Session 4 Sept 18 or 25	How does your identity influence 1) how and why you lead, and 2) for whom you lead? What experiences influence your worldview and identity? What is quality teaching for <i>all</i> students?	Lee: 2-6; 7-24; 45-51; 65-66; 77-80; 81-82; 87-90; 93-96; 110; 113; 118-124; 126-130; 132-136; 154-169; choose at least 4 articles 193-337 Recommended: Bennett;	

		Wilber; Lee: 36-44	
<i>Equitable, quality teaching in school improvement</i>			
Session 5 Sept 25 or Oct 2	What is quality teaching for <i>all</i> students?	Marzano 71-122 Last Name A-L Wiggins 1 Last Name M-Z Tomlinson 1&2 Recommended: Harris Interactive (From Teasing to Torment); Ladson Billings	NSSE Part I
<i>An overview of vision and school factors that influence student learning</i>			
Session 6 Oct 2 or 9	How is vision tied to all students? How is vision tied to future citizenship in a diverse & democratic society?	McNamara - Basics of Mission & Strategic Planning; NSSE II; McKenzie; Lee 73-74; review 7-18;	Bring in school's vision, mission statement
Session 7 Oct 9 or 16	What other factors influence school improvement?	Marzano: Sections I, NSSE III & IV;	
<i>School improvement, systems thinking, and organizational change</i>			
Session 8 Oct 16 or 23	What other factors influence school improvement? How do leaders assess instructional and organizational effectiveness?	Marzano III, IV	NSSE Part I Revised
Session 9 Oct 23 or 30	How can systems thinking and organizational learning influence school improvement?	Senge (2 sections); Newmann; Recommended: Argyris; Lee 370-5; 380-392 Wiggins 12	NSSE Part IV
Session 10 Oct 30 or	How can leaders build organizational and teacher capacity?	CHOOSE ONE SET OF READINGS: 1. Capper Chaps 1-5 2. Bredeson 4, 5, 6;	

Nov 6		Recommended: Halverson - Artifacts and Prof. Community Langer CPS PD Planning Guide Bredeson - P Role in PD	
Nov 13	NO CLASS		
Nov 20	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving		
Session 11 Nov 27	How can leaders use educational change for school improvement? How might they evaluate SI?	NSSE V, VI; Horsely; Fullan - Do and Don't Assumptions	NSSE Part IV Revised
Session 12 Dec 1	How can leaders use educational change for school improvement? School Improvement Plan Presentation and Poster Session	Recommended: Fullan Ed Change 2, 3; Kegan	In-Class Poster Presentation
No Class Dec 8			Turn in all NSSE previous work AND NSSE Part V (Action Plan)

Sources and Recommended Readings

- Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1996). *Organizational learning II: Theory, method, and practice*. New York: Addison-Wesley.
- Bennett, M. J. (2004). Becoming interculturally competent. In J. Wurzel (Ed.), *Toward multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 62-77). Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation.
- Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (2001). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience and school* (Expanded ed.). Washington, DC: National Research Council.
- Bredeson, P. (2003). *Designs for learning: A new architecture for professional development in schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Bredeson, P., & Johansson, O. (2000). The school principal's role in teacher professional development. *Journal of Service Education*, 26(2), 385-401.
- Capper, C. A., Frattura, E., & Keyes, M. W. (2000). *Meeting the needs of students of all abilities: How leaders go beyond inclusion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Chicago Public Schools. (2003, December). *School level professional development planning guide*. Chicago: Office of Public Schools.
- Crow, G. (2005, November). *UCEA Presidential address: Democracy and educational work in an age of complexity*. Paper presented at the University Council for Educational Administration, Nashville, TN.

- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. (2005, November). Do and don't assumptions about change. *The Learning Principal*, 1(3), 1, 6-7.
- Halverson, R. (2005, November). *A distributed leadership perspective on how leaders use artifacts to create professional community in schools*. Paper presented at the University Council for Educational Administration, Nashville, TN.
- Halverson, R., Pritchett, R., Grigg, J., & Thomas, C. (2005, September). *The new instructional leadership: Creating data-driven instructional systems in schools* (WCER Working Paper No. 2005-9). Madison, WI: Wisconsin Center for Educational Research.
- Harris Interactive. (2005). *From teasing to torment: School climate in America, a survey of students and teachers*. New York: Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.
- Horsley, D. L., & Loucks-Horsley, S. (1998). Tornado of change. *Journal of Staff Development*, 19(4), 17-20.
- Johnson, R. S. (2002). *Using data to close the achievement gap: How to measure equity in our schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. L. (2001, November). The real reason people won't change. *Harvard Business Review*, 84-92.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into Practice*, 34(3), 159-165.
- Langer, G. M., & Colton, A. B. (2005). Looking at student work: Collaborative analysis of student learning can be the lifeblood of school improvement. *Educational Leadership*, 62(5), 22-26.
- Lee, E., Menkart, D., & Okazawa-Rey, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Beyond heroes and holidays: A practical guide to K-12 anti-racist, multicultural education and staff development* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: Teaching for Change.
- Loewen, J. W. (1995). *Lies my teacher told me: Everything your American history textbook got wrong*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- McKenzie, K. B., Suttmilller, E., Christman, D., Hernandez, F., Capper, C., Dantley, M., et al. (2005, November). *Educating leaders for social justice: A design for a comprehensive, social justice leadership preparation program*. Paper presented at the University Council for Educational Administration, Nashville, TN.
- McNamara, C. (1999). Basics of developing mission, vision and values statements. Retrieved December 5, 2005, from http://www.managementhelp.org/plan_dec/str_plan/stmnts.htm#anchor519441
- Newmann, F. M., Smith, B., Allensworth, E., & Bryk, A. S. (2001, Winter). Instructional program coherence: What it is and why it should guide school improvement policy. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 23(4), 297-321.
- NSSE. (2002). *School improvement: Focusing on student performance*. Schaumburg, IL: National Study of School Evaluation.
- Scheurich, J. J. (1998). Highly successful and loving, public elementary schools populated mainly by low-ses children of color: Core beliefs and cultural practices. *Urban Education*, 33(4), 451-491.
- Scheurich, J. J., & Skrla, L. (2003). *Leadership for equity and excellence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Schmoker, M. (2000). *Results: The key to continuous school improvement* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

- Schmoker, M. (2001). *The results fieldbook: Practical strategies from dramatically improved schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Doubleday.
- Senge, P. M., McCabe, N., Cambron, H., Lucas, T., Kleiner, A., Dutton, J., et al. (Eds.). (2000). *Schools that learn: A fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education*. New York: Doubleday.
- Shields, C. M. (2004). Dialogic leadership for social justice: Overcoming pathologies of silence. *Education Administration Quarterly*, 40(1), 109-132.
- Tomlinson, C. A., & Allan, S. D. (2000). *Leadership for differentiating schools and classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (Expanded 2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Wilber, K. (2000). The amazing spiral. In *A theory of everything: An integral vision for business, politics, science and spirituality* (pp. 1-16). Boston: Shambhala.