

A. COURSE TITLE: ASTL 6303 Teacher Leadership

B. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Candidates examine the roles and challenges of teacher leadership. Candidates explore topics such as characteristics and styles of leadership, functions of leadership, and the influence of teacher leadership on school culture.

C. PURPOSE OF COURSE: During the past decade, new teacher roles have emerged that place teachers as leaders for educational change. Organizations such as the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) advance visions of teachers who support the "growth and development of their colleagues, their school, and their profession" (NBPTS, Standard XI). The course provides a forum for candidates to describe, reflect upon, and synthesize course content and professional experience as they acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for effective teacher leadership at the classroom, building, or district-wide level.

D. REQUIRED TEXT:

Danielson, C. (2006). *Teacher leadership that strengthens professional practice*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

Candidates are required to read recent journal articles to complement the course text. (i.e., *Educational Leadership*, vol. 65, no. 1 and articles placed on reserve by the instructor).

Each student will select one additional book on leadership to read and share with their peers.

Candidates will need a Chalk & Wire subscription for submitting the major course assessment.

E. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: Educators as Reflective Decision-Makers.

Faculty members involved in the preparation of professional educators, as well as professional education candidates, public school representatives, and members of the community share a vision for the Professional Education Unit at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). This vision is one of preparing Educators as Reflective Decision-Makers. The vision encompasses the development of candidates' abilities to examine problems, formulate options, consider decisions, and evaluate outcomes while embracing an awareness of and sensitivity to human diversity. The vision is achieved by candidates' acquisition of reflective decision-making skills through self-understanding, course work, and field and internship experiences.

How do the goals of the program reflect the conceptual framework? The master's in Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning (ASTL) prepares candidates to become highly skilled and articulate classroom teachers. It is designed to enhance and expand existing knowledge, skills, and dispositions of candidates while fostering the development of competencies expected of advanced educators. The program rests on the assumption that accomplished educators engage in reflective decision-making as they assess and extend their own professional practice. In addition to addressing the eight essential elements of the Conceptual Framework, the program incorporates standards and propositions from appropriate national professional organizations and supports the following goals:

ASTL Graduates

- Articulate the rationale for decisions they make regarding professional practice, classroom policies, and school procedures.
- Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to continually conduct research on their own practice and respond to their findings.
- Respond positively to classroom practices that enhance student learning.
- Critically analyze their own classroom practices and appropriately respond to their findings.
- Make informed decisions by reflecting on experiences both past and present to improve teaching practices that enhance student learning.
- Become change leaders for the improvement of their schools.

How does Teacher Leadership address the PEU's Conceptual Framework vision of preparing educators as reflective decision-makers?

ASTL 6303 candidates will engage in problem-solving and use a collaborative approach to develop a school improvement plan. This plan will demonstrate the candidate's ability to reflect upon practices that positively influence school culture and student learning. Furthermore, candidates will model professionalism in their development of exemplary practices in response to unique situations.

F. USE OF TECHNOLOGY: Candidates use technology in multiple ways. For example, they may use the Internet to access on-line journal articles and to search the professional literature in support of course assignments; they may use technology as part of in-class presentations; they may demonstrate the application of technology as used in their own classroom settings. School improvement projects may also target technology as a way to enhance student learning.

G. DIVERSITY: Candidates themselves will provide one aspect of diversity that will be addressed in course study of peer relationships. Furthermore, candidates will bring with them experiences from their own schools that will support course discussion of the influence of diversity on leadership both within the classroom and beyond.

H. COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of the course, candidates will be able to (TPOA – C6, D1, D2, D3, D4, & D7)

- Present a rationale for teacher leadership.
- Analyze organizational factors that influence teacher leadership.
- Demonstrate skills necessary for developing professional relationships needed for teacher leadership.
- Select leadership styles appropriate to leadership situations.
- Analyze change theory and the factors that develop when organizations go through the change process.

I. COURSE OUTLINE:

- A. Defining teacher leadership
 - 1. Effective leadership
 - 2. Dimensions of leadership
 - 3. Implications of teacher leadership for schooling
 - 4. Barriers, benefits, and behaviors of becoming a teacher leader
 - 5. Roles, responsibilities, and processes associated with teacher leadership
 - 6. Self-assessment and career stages
- B. Organizational factors that influence teacher leadership
 - 1. Conditions that encourage/constrain teacher leadership
 - 2. Effects of school culture on teacher leadership
 - 3. Creating a vision for improved practice
 - 4. Understanding the change process
 - 5. Making data-driven decisions
- C. Building human relationships for teacher leadership
 - 1. Collegial relationships
 - 2. Being advocates, innovators, and/or stewards
 - 3. Strategies for action
 - 4. Skills for teacher leaders
- D. Domains of Influence/Impact
 - 1. Schoolwide policies and programs
 - 2. Teaching and learning
 - 3. Communications and community relations

J. FIELD EXPERIENCE: Field experiences will occur in the candidate's own classroom/school. Field experience responses will serve as the basis for the candidate's school improvement project and will focus on responding to the following questions/statements:

- **I.**
 - A. What does *teacher leadership in action* look like at your school (How is it defined)?
 - B. What are (have been) the effects of teacher leadership on student learning?
 - C. How are teacher leaders identified, nurtured, and supported at your school?

- **II.**
 - A. Conduct an analysis of the professional culture of your school.
 - B. Provide evidence or examples of how you arrived at your conclusion.
 - C. Is the culture problematic or conducive to student-centered learning? Explain.

- **III.**
 - A. Describe the demographics of the professional and student community at your school.
 - B. How will these demographic factors influence schooling and the types of leadership that teachers can exert?
 - C. What effects have teacher leaders had on student learning?

- **IV. School Improvement Project (100 points)**

Using the information gleaned from activities I, II, and III, candidates will write a 10 to 15 page paper that organizes findings in the context of course content, readings, and professional literature, and develops a tentative plan of action for a school improvement project. The project and findings will be presented to the class. The written paper will be submitted on Chalk & Wire.

K. COURSE EVALUATION:

School Improvement Project:	100 points
Leadership Book Presentation:	50 points
Journal Article Reflections:	100 points
Written Exams:	150 points

GRADING SCALE. A total of 400 points can be earned in the course. Grades will be calculated using the following scale:

A = 93-100%; B = 83-92%; C = 73-82%; D = 63-72%; F = 62% and below

Late work will be penalized by deducting ten percent of the assigned point value for each day late.

Make-up exams will be given at the discretion of the instructor.

Please note: Candidates will submit the School Improvement Project via Chalk and Wire as part of their program portfolio.

- L. ATTENDANCE POLICY:** *Graduate candidates are expected to demonstrate professional behavior and disposition at all times.* Because lecture and classroom discussion / activities are important to the total learning experience, candidates are expected to attend and participate in class regularly. Furthermore, all readings and assignments are to be completed before class. In addition, if a candidate misses a class, the instructor is to be notified as soon as possible (preferably in advance), and the candidate is responsible for submitting assignments on time and for completing all assignments for the next class. A ten percent reduction in the candidate's final average will be calculated for each absence beyond the first. Candidates should note the university's drop date policy that includes notifying the Registrar's Office.

- M. STUDENT HANDBOOK POLICY:** Candidates are expected to follow all policies regarding academic dishonesty, sexual harassment, and academic uses as outlined in the current *UCA*

Student Handbook. Candidates should familiarize themselves with all policies included in the *Handbook*.

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's work, ideas, or expressions whether you do so intentionally or as a result of careless documentation. It is a serious violation and carries severe penalties – failure on the assignment or in the course. Although collaboration is encouraged, any work submitted as part of a course assignment must be the candidate's own work or else referenced using the appropriate reference format (i.e., APA). Please consult the instructor if you have any questions concerning what constitutes plagiarism.

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3135.

N. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Detailed Key Assessment Instructions: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The key assessment piece consists of multiple phases:

Phase One: Each participant investigates the current landscape found within their classroom, school, and district with regards to teacher leadership, professional climate, and demographics. The questions to investigate include:

- 1) Describe and define teacher leadership in action within your school and district.
- 2) How are teacher leaders identified, nurtured, and supported at your school and within your district?
- 3) Conduct an analysis of the professional culture of your school and district – specifically of teacher leaders – through a survey questionnaire. Provide graphs that visualize the data obtained from your analysis.
- 4) Based upon the data gathered from your analysis, is the culture problematic or conducive to growing and sustaining teacher leaders?
- 5) Conduct an analysis of the demographics of the professional community and of the student community at your school and within your district. Provide graphs that visualize the data obtained from your analysis.
- 6) How do obtained demographics of the professional community influence the demographics of the student community at your school and within your district?
- 7) What are or have been the effects of teacher leadership on student learning?

Phase Two: Each participant will use the information gained from Phase One to construct a 10-15 page paper, also using professional journals and other supporting literature to develop a plan of action for a school improvement project. This project will identify an area of need that was highlighted during Phase One, and one that the participant feels keenly aligned with in regards to teacher leadership and its impact on student learning. Formatting of the paper will follow the 5th Edition of APA.

Phase Three: Each participant will present his or her completed school improvement project to a building administrator and/or to a district administrator. At the time of the meeting, each participant will have the administrator(s) complete a letter of documentation stating that the participant did, in fact, meet and discuss the ideas grounded in data and research.

Phase Four: Each participant will present to the ASTL 6303 class his or her school improvement project, beginning with Phase One and ending with Phase Three. The presentation will be in the form of a PowerPoint, with appropriate copies being provided for class members and for the instructor.

ASTL 6303
School Improvement Project
Rubric

Criteria:	Below Basic Inadequate (1)	Basic Acceptable (2)	Proficient Excellent (3)	NBPTS Links*
Data-Driven Basis	Shows weak or no evidence of collecting and using field data as the basis for improvement plan	Shows partial evidence of collecting and using field data to develop improvement plan	Shows significant evidence of collecting and using field data (e.g., survey & graphs) to develop improvement plan	P3.S3 P5.S4
Alignment	Goals are vague and/or unrelated to data; Plan lacks correlation with findings; Action plan is not logically connected to context	Goals are data-driven; Provides partial evidence of correlating findings and project goals; Action plan is related to context	Stated goals are data-driven; Offers strong evidence of correlation between findings and project goals; Action plan is logically related to context (i.e., data & demographics)	P1.S3
Reflective Analysis	Demonstrates little or no evidence of analysis, evaluation, and reflective insight regarding the role of teacher leaders in school improvement; Lacks evidence of collaboration with others to improve learning	Demonstrates some evidence of analysis, evaluation, and reflective insight regarding the role of teacher leaders in school improvement; Offers evidence of collaboration with others to improve learning	Demonstrates strong evidence of analysis, evaluation, and reflective insight regarding the role of teacher leaders in school improvement; Offers clear & convincing evidence of collaboration with others to improve learning	P4.S3 P5.S1
Implementation Strategy	Demonstrates little or no understanding of the change process; Implementation strategy is missing or incomplete.	Demonstrates some understanding of the change process; Includes a timeframe, mentions a few stakeholders, and partially describes activities/strategies	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the change process by describing appropriate stakeholders, providing a realistic & meaningful timeframe, and detailing several activities/strategies	P4.S3 P5.S3

Professional Sources Use	Demonstrates little understanding of current research relative to school improvement; Includes 1-2 references; Makes weak connections to course concepts; Demonstrates no ability to synthesize ideas	Demonstrates partial understanding of current research relative to school improvement; Includes 3-4 relevant and current references; Makes some connections to course concepts; Demonstrates limited ability to synthesize ideas	Demonstrates significant understanding of current research relative to school improvement; Includes at least 5 relevant and current references; Makes frequent connections to course concepts that are clear & appropriate; Demonstrates ability to synthesize ideas	P4.S1 P4.S2
Collaborative Process	Includes no documentation of partnership efforts and/or evidence of shared discussion of working with others	NA	Provides appropriate documentation of shared discussion of the proposed plan as supporting evidence of partnership efforts & working with others	P5.S1 P5.S2 P5.S3
Mechanics	Demonstrates minimal competence in expressing thoughts; Does not follow APA format	Presents thoughts & ideas in an organized manner; Mostly uses proper grammar, spelling, & punctuation; Follows APA format inconsistently	Presents thoughts & ideas clearly and interestingly; Consistently uses proper grammar, spelling, & punctuation; Adheres to APA format correctly	NA
Presentation of Plan to Peers	Oral presentation exhibits little or no evidence of effective instruction that keeps peers motivated, engaged, and focused	Oral presentation exhibits partial evidence of effective instruction that keeps peers motivated, engaged, and focused	Oral presentation exhibits strong evidence of effective instruction that keeps peers motivated, engaged, and focused	P3.S1

***P=Proposition; S=Standard (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards)**