

**NOTE:** Each semester each instructor for the course will provide students with a coversheet that contains the instructor's name, complete contact information (including office hours), class times & location, and due dates for assignments/tests.

CRN #: \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 12/07/11

**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). In addition, the Model Core Teaching Standards of the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) provide support for "Leadership and Collaboration" (InTASC Standard #10). The course offers 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:**

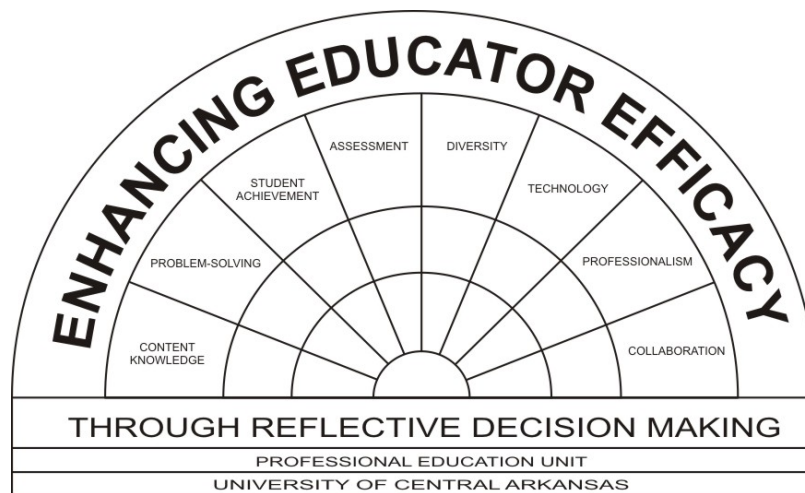
Danielson, C. (2006). *Teacher leadership that strengthens professional practice*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

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 (model) assessment.

**E. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**



The vision of the Professional Education Unit (PEU) at UCA is one of *enhancing educator efficacy through reflective decision-making*. Efficacy is the belief in one’s ability to positively impact the learning of *all* learners, including those with diverse needs. Efficacy deteriorates to the degree educators attribute student failure to external factors, such as the students’ background, culture, parents/guardians, socioeconomic status, and the like. Educator efficacy to affect P-12 learning is enhanced when these educators demonstrate essential knowledge, skills and dispositions drawn from the eight knowledge bases that undergird our programs, illustrated in the visual above. In a synthesized and targeted way, efficacy provides a rationale for the conceptual framework. In the realm of reflective decision-making, efficacy is the *reason why* we reflect—it represents our ownership of the learning environment and achievement of all learners. The degree to which PEU candidates demonstrate efficacy directly correlates to their attainment of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to positively impact the learning of all learners.

**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 enhancing educator efficacy through reflective decision-making?**

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. They will extend their sense of efficacy beyond the individual classroom level.

**F. USE OF TECHNOLOGY:** Candidates will 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. Course materials to supplement instruction will be accessed through a course shell (i.e., Blackboard). Candidates will submit the model assessment through the Chalk & Wire electronic portfolio.

**G. DIVERSITY:** Candidates themselves will examine the impact of diversity on professional (peer) relationships and the process of creating school improvement endeavors. Social realities within schools, particularly the influences of culture, race/ethnicity, linguistics, gender, and socioeconomic status on classroom performance, will be stressed. 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. Contextual factors and social realities relative to diversity will be emphasized in case discussions and class activities.

**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 cultural/organizational factors that influence teacher leadership.

- Demonstrate skills necessary for developing professional relationships needed for teacher leadership.
- Make informed decisions in response 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 field experiences, review of professional literature, as well as individual investigation, 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. (Detailed instructions are attached to this syllabus.) This project will involve the use of data and research and demonstrate the candidate's ability to effect change through collaboration.

The School Improvement Project assignment is used as a key assessment in the ASTL program to demonstrate competencies to our accrediting agency (NCATE). Candidates must score a "basic" (2) or above on each element of the scoring rubric before their final course grade is recorded. While the score earned on the initial submission is recorded permanently in the grade book, candidates must resubmit any section on which an "unsatisfactory" (1) was scored. If the appropriate changes are not made by the time grades are due, an X will be posted until the appropriate revisions are made, which must be by the end of the following academic term.

**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 must submit the School Improvement Project via Chalk and Wire as part of their program portfolio. (See Section J. IV)

**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. (See the next paragraph.)

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to **academic integrity** and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the 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 450-3613.

#### **N. Grade Appeals:**

The College of Education's Student Academic Grade Appeal Policy offers additional guidelines from that outlined in the *UCA Student Handbook*. It specifically defines a timeline for the appeal process. A student who wishes to appeal the final grade in a course should follow the guidelines found in the College of Education Student Academic Grade Appeal Policy. This policy is located on the "policies" link of the College of Education website: [www.uca.edu/coe](http://www.uca.edu/coe).

#### **O. Professional and Ethical Conduct Policy:**

Because the standards of the education profession exceed those addresses in other university or college policies, the COE Professional Education Unit has adopted a Professional and Ethical Conduct Policy to address those professional and ethical behaviors. In essence, this policy states that students must adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession for which they are preparing. The policy document provides a definition of professional and ethical misconduct, guidelines for reporting misconduct, and an appeal process. It is located on the "policies" link of the College of Education website.

#### **P. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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## **ASTL 6303: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT DIRECTIONS**

The key assessment for this course consists of multiple steps:

1. Begin by posing questions relative to possible improvement(s) in your school setting to pinpoint specific areas of concern. What challenges do teachers, students, and/or parents in your school setting face? Note: School context plays a major role in determining the nature and focus of your project.
2. Identify a need in your grade level, department, school building, and/or district. To determine and support this need, use existing data (e.g., ACSIP, benchmark scores, TLI historical data, results of surveys already conducted, demographic summaries of students/teachers) and newly collected data (e.g., teacher interviews, surveys, informal/formal meeting agendas & minutes, focus groups, etc.). Construct graphs to visually display the data.
3. Early in the project development process you should dialogue with your administrator to obtain his/her input, advice, and support.
4. Examine teacher leadership as it currently exists in your setting. Use the *Field Experience* questions found in the unabridged syllabus. Look for ways to collaborate and interact with others (e.g., instructional facilitator, teacher team, curriculum coordinator, department head, media specialist, etc.) to facilitate change. Propose a plan that reflects teacher leadership.
5. Design a plan to address the identified need. Formulate goals (i.e., desired outcomes) for your project. Develop appropriate strategies/activities to achieve these goals along with a realistic timeframe for implementation. Align the various aspects of your project to demonstrate your knowledge of educational change.
6. Conduct library research on the topic of your improvement plan. Locate at least 5 current sources in the professional literature. In addition to your references, course readings may also be used.
7. Use all of your information to write a 10-15 page paper (use APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition) that presents your plan of action for school improvement within a framework of professional knowledge.
8. Present your completed plan to the appropriate supervisor/administrator at your school/district and obtain a letter verifying that you met and discussed the proposal.
9. Upload and submit the paper (including the documentation letter) in Chalk and Wire.
10. Present your school improvement project to the class with a 10 minute PowerPoint.

ASTL 6303  
School Improvement Project  
Rubric

<b>Criteria:</b>	<b>Below Basic Inadequate (1)</b>	<b>Basic Acceptable (2)</b>	<b>Proficient Excellent (3)</b>	<b>NBPTS Links*</b>
<b>Data-Driven Basis</b>	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
<b>Alignment</b>	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
<b>Reflective Analysis</b>	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
<b>Implementation Strategy</b>	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

<b>Professional Sources Use</b>	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
<b>Collaborative Process</b>	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
<b>Mechanics</b>	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
<b>Presentation of Plan to Peers</b>	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)**