



A Member of the Texas State University System

**Course Syllabus**

**EDL 733: Societal Factors Affecting Education  
Summer II, 2008**

**Professor: Rebecca M. Bustamante, Ph.D.**

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**Office: TEC 319/ (936) 294-4946**

**MW 5:00-8:50pm at the University Center-The Woodlands, Room: 121**

**I. Course Description & Learner Outcomes**

Course Description: This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to examine current historical, political, economic, and cultural factors that impact public education and educational leadership. In addition, the course is designed to increase educational leader awareness, knowledge, and skills in responding to the needs of various cultural groups in a global society. Credit 3. (*SHSU 2005-07 Graduate Catalog*)

Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Discuss issues of diversity as they relate to their leadership practices.
- Define culture and its implications in educational organizations.
- Review relevant theories and research related to societal factors.
- Examine implications of P-20 alignment for college readiness and current workforce trends.
- Understand the role of social and culture capital in accessing educational opportunities.
- Develop a global view of education.
- Reflect on their own world view and work to address their own prejudices.
- Assess organizational culture to determine equity and cultural competence in schools, districts, colleges, and universities.
- Develop data-based action plans to address inequities and promote organizational cultural competence.
- Learn to write case studies.
- Apply various change models and leadership theories to enhance organizational equity.
- Explore social responsibility of educational leaders and institutions.

**II. Readings:** There is no official text that sufficiently represents the course content. Relevant research articles on the various topics presented will be provided by the instructor. Folders of articles will be available electronically on Bb. When an electronic version is unavailable, hard copies will be provided by the professor. All articles should be downloaded and read by the designated class date.

### **III. Course Expectations**

**A. Attendance:** Due to the highly interactive nature of this class, regular attendance and participation in all class meetings is essential and expected. As graduate students, you are expected to be on time and stay in class for the entire meeting session. Attendance is mandatory unless medical or extreme personal emergencies arise. In this case, please notify the professor in advance. Missed assignments must be emailed to the professor and must be received within 24 hours or they will be considered “late” and will affect the final grade.

According to university policy [800401], a student may not be penalized for three or fewer hours of absences (one class) when exams or other assignments have not been missed. However, when a student misses more than three hours of class, the student must complete an instructor-approved make-up assignment and may risk receiving a reduced final grade.

This is a very intense Summer course. If for any reason you believe that you may be unable to attend any class session, you may contract with the professor for a “B” (meets expectations) grade if you have also met all course expectations. A student must both exceed expectations and be present for all Summer class sessions to receive an “A” grade. There may be exceptions when courses overlap and the professor has been advised in advance. In this case, additional projects will be assigned to make up for class hours.

**B. Participation:** All students are expected to fully participate in each class. Specific group norms will be established and should be respected at all times. Norms play an important role in this course since sensitive social and personal issues will be explored and discussed. Be prepared to feel uncomfortable at times, but willing to consistently demonstrate respect for all colleagues and their perspectives on societal topics.

#### **C. Performance Assessments and Grading:**

Grades in this course will be given using contracts that specify specific outcomes and expectations for a “B grade” (\*Meets Expectations) or an “A grade” (\*Exceeds Expectations). You will be given the opportunity to determine which expectations you believe you can meet and contract for the grade that matches those expectations.

***Meets Expectations (B grade) \*These represent the minimum requirements for this course.***

1. Attend every class. Arrive on time and stay for the entire class time. 0-1 excused absence with make-up assignment.
2. Complete all assigned readings prior to class. In-class discussions and written responses will be based on these readings so it is essential that you be prepared. Turn in ALL assignments ON TIME.
3. Participate fully and respectfully in every class session.
4. Complete weekly 1-3 page reading summaries/essays/reflections as assigned. (Questions will be given for each week. For consistency, summaries should follow APA guidelines).
5. Conduct a Culture and Equity Audit of your organization and develop an Action Plan based on your audit findings. (Specific guidelines will be given)
6. Research and present on a controversial contemporary topic impacting educational organizations. This is a group project and topics will be assigned randomly. (Specific guidelines will be given).
7. Write a case study on a “real life” situation that might occur in your organization. Provide research-supported strategies and solutions to resolve your described situation.

***Exceeds Expectations (A grade)***

- Perfect on-time, full class attendance.
- All of the requirements for a B grade must be fulfilled and reflect high quality, doctoral level thinking, writing, and presenting.

**D. Description of Performance Assessments/Assignments**

**Weekly Summaries and Reflections on Readings/Experiences (30 points total-7.5 pts. each)**

You will be asked to write four 1-3 page personal reflection essays or summaries related to the assigned readings, experiences, and class discussions. All articles will be available in folders placed on Bb. While grammar and writing style are not the focus of these essay summaries, graduate-level writing is expected and standard APA guidelines should be

followed. When student essays do not adequately reflect graduate-level writing, students may be asked to rewrite and re-submit their essays.

### **A Culture and Equity Audit and Action Plan (25 points)**

A “culture audit” is a tool for assessing organizational culture by examining policies, programs, practices, artifacts, history, traditions, events, quantitative data, etc. Like a financial audit, it can be used to reveal strengths and weaknesses in the way educational organizations address the needs of diverse groups. Based on this data, action plans for continuous improvement can be developed that can more effectively support the success of all students.

#### **Guidelines:**

#### **Step 1: Data Collection through Culture and Equity Audit**

- a. Demographic study and community analysis
  - b. Equity audit of aggregated data
  - c. Observations of organizational cultural competence as reflected in policies, programs, and practices.
  - d. Data on “insider” view
- a. The demographic study is a 2-3 page description of your school’s history, demographic breakdown (students and teachers), and description of the outer community. Examples of demographic studies will be given in class to guide you.
  - b. Conduct equity and culture audits of your organization. For this class, your equity audit should include aggregated test score data, percentages of students enrolled in GT, AP, Honors, and Special Education by racial/ethnic groups and gender using K-12 AEIS data or, in the case of higher ed., other sources of data that reveal who is enrolled in certain majors, special programs, etc.. This data is best presented in tables and charts. Major discrepancies should be highlighted.
  - c. Be a participant observer in assessing how culturally responsive your organization currently is. You will be given a chart to guide you in walk-through in making observations, reflecting on various policies, programs, and programs, and making anecdotal field notes. A copy of your observational chart and notes must be turned into the professor with your final analysis.
  - d. Use another data collection tool to gain an “insider” (emic) point of view. This can be done through informal interviews, focus groups, or surveys. Your objective is to gain a sense of how others might view your organization. For purposes of this intense course, you do not need to obtain a large random sample. The objective is to gain a sense of what other stakeholders might perceive and begin to consider HOW you might gather this data in the future. For purposes of

this intense course, talk to some people in your organization to get their perspectives. Be sure to include outlier opinions.

## **Step 2: Culturally Proficient Leadership Action Plan**

Once data has been collected and analyzed from your culture and equity audits, you will use this information to identify strengths and weaknesses in your organization's policies, programs, and practices, and create an Action Plan to improve equity and cultural proficiency in your school and school community. Your total action plan should not be more than 8-12 pages, including narrative, graphs/charts/grids, bullet points, and references. The format of the final action plan will be discussed in class but should essentially contain:

- Introduction (1-2 pp.; include organizational/community description/profile)
- Culture Audit Findings (these can be bulleted or in chart form)
  - Strengths
  - Need Areas
- Perceived barriers to implementation.
- Proposed Action Plan to Address Needs and Barriers (chart or bullets with timelines for implementation)
- Plan to Assess Outcomes/Progress.

Examples of action plans will be provided in class.

## **Contemporary Topic Presentations on “Isms” and Education (20 points)**

You will randomly select one of five controversial contemporary topics to research and present on in groups. Each presentation may be from 30-45 minutes and include relevant, current, research-based information on the topic selected. You are encouraged to use visuals, film, research-based articles, etc. Presentations should follow with some types of follow up activity as a review and check for understanding (e.g. discussion questions, case study scenario, reflection). All group members should contribute equally. Colleagues will provide feedback.

## **Case study (25 points)**

Prepare a case study on a real-life situation or dilemma related to promoting organizational cultural competence that promotes academic equity, intercultural understanding, and social responsibility for students, staff, and faculty members. The case should accurately describe a context, specify protagonists, contain dialog or thoughts, and conclude with discussion/reflection questions and research-based recommendations.

The case may be single-spaced and should not exceed 5-8 pages.

**Course Requirements & SHSU Policies see also: <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>**

A. Academic Honesty: Academic work submitted by you (such as papers, assignments, reports, tests) shall be your work alone and referenced in part or in whole to its correct source. Submission of commercially prepared (or group prepared) materials as your own work is unacceptable. Moreover, you shall encourage honesty in others by refraining from providing materials or information with knowledge that these materials or information will be used improperly. Violation of these academic standards may result in program removal or failure. Academic Policy Statement 810213

1. Students are expected to use conventions noted in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th edition, for citing sources.

2. Papers and reports will be submitted electronically and may be evaluated for originality of content and accuracy of quotes and paraphrasing. Plagiarized work will automatically receive a failing grade.

B. Each faculty member will announce to his/her classes the policies for accepting late work. Academic Policy Statement 800401 *The policy for this class is as follows:*

*A. Assignments are due as stated. Late work at the graduate level is considered unacceptable. The student may petition the instructor in writing for consideration of one extenuating circumstance.*

C. Student Conduct: All students shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.

D. Dropping the Class/Withdrawing from the University: If you need to adjust your schedule by dropping this course, please follow university procedures to officially drop the class. If you fail to officially drop the class, a failing grade shall be assigned at the end of the course.

Academic Policy Statement 990407. If a student resigns (officially withdraws) between the 1<sup>st</sup> class day and the 12<sup>th</sup> class day (4<sup>th</sup> class day in the summer) no record of the resignation will appear on the student's academic record. If a student resigns after the 12<sup>th</sup> class day (4<sup>th</sup> class day in summer) but before mid-semester, a record of the resignation will appear on the student's academic record. If a student resigns after eight weeks in the fall or spring or after the first two weeks of a summer session the mark of WP (withdrew passing) or WF (withdrew failing) will be recorded on the student's academic record for each course for which the student was enrolled. To resign (officially withdraw) from the university, a student must either report to the Registrar's Office to complete a Resignation Request or submit a letter stating his or her intent to resign.

E. Students with Disabilities Policy: Please see <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

F. Student Absences on Religious Holy Days: Please see <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

G. University Policies: Graduate students are governed by the SHSU's policies related to student conduct. Any student with questions about grievances, ethical behavior, etc. should review the SHSU Graduate Catalog and the Texas State University System Rules and Regulations. See: [http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf\\_www/aps/stualpha.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/stualpha.html)

H. The Sam Houston Writing Center provides writing and editing assistance. 936-294-3680