## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will examine current research and theories on educational change. Students will learn how to evaluate school programs for continuous improvement, including curricular development and instructional practices, professional development, athletics, co-curricular activities, technology, support services, and community involvement. Qualitative, quantitative, and technological methodologies will be examined as means of evaluating and collecting data to support curriculum changes and program improvement. Students will extend and reinforce their knowledge, skills, and competencies related to professional and educational practice through identification and preliminary research of an authentic school-based problem that provides a basis for conducting an action research study.

### New Jersey Standards

All work in this course relates to all New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders [NJPSSL](http://www.state.nj.us/njded/profdev/profstand/) and focuses primarily on addressing 1, 2, 5 and 6. The specific standards and components that relate to this course are listed after the section in this syllabus “Course Evaluation.” A complete list of all New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders is available at http://www.state.nj.us/njded/profdev/profstand/

### NJPSSL Standard One

School administrators shall be educational leaders who promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
NJPSSL Standard Two
School administrators shall be educational leaders who promote the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

NJPSSL Standard Three
School administrators shall be educational leaders who promote the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment.

NJPSSL Standard Four
School administrators shall be educational leaders who promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

NJPSSL Standard Five
School administrators shall be educational leaders who promote the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.

NJPSSL Standard Six
School administrators shall be educational leaders who promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context.

The New Jersey Core Content Curriculum Standards (NJCCCS), which are integral to curriculum developed for schools in New Jersey, are available at http://www.state.nj.us/njded/cccs/.

The School of Education at FDU is an active partner with New Jersey Department of Education in aligning professional practice with the NJ PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS through its courses. The NJ CORE CURRICULUM CONTENT STANDARDS are an integral part of the process of educational leadership and are utilized as an important element in the development of school leaders.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the successful candidate will:

1. Define the rationale, need, and value for educational change drawing from the research and literature on educational change;
2. Understand and apply the various models for continuous improvement and systemic change, relative to curriculum development and program improvement;
3. Understand and apply comprehensive assessment strategies in the evaluation of school instructional and non-instructional programs; and
4. Identify and select an authentic school-based curricular/program problem, supported by data as an area of needed change, and be able to apply the principles of action research to prepare a proposal of a model for a study.

Essential Questions

- Why do school districts need to change?
- How does educational change impact curriculum development and program improvement?
- What needs to occur in a school district to demonstrate a positive relationship between “deep” change and program improvement/curricular development?
- Why do some well-intentioned change in curriculum and programs fail to improve and increase learning?
- What is the distinction between what causes change and how to influence those causes.
- What are effective ways of bringing about meaningful and sustained changes in education?
- What role does data play in change? What role does research play in change?
- How does a teacher, supervisor or principal affect “deep” change?

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS


Highly Recommended: Not required


Course Requirements:

To successfully complete this course, candidates will have to have access to a computer where he/she can use the Internet and where he/she can receive and send e-mails with attachments. Students are expected to have a sufficient
degree of facility with computer technology so that it can be used as a tool to enhance learning experiences. In addition, the following are required for the successful completion of the course:

1. **Principal Interview** regarding change initiative connected to curriculum or educational program
2. **Essay on Deep Change**—a formal paper to follow APA style—using theoretical basis for your essay
3. **Systems Map** for 2 Curricular or Program changes;
4. **Proposals for Studies** of 2 Curriculum or Program changes—problem, rationale, questions and sources of data; and
5. **Class participation** and **Professional Dispositions** and preparatory readings and assignments for all classes.

**Tasks/Assignments:**

**Principal Interview:** Interview your building principal regarding a curricular or program initiative change that has been instituted within the last year or so. The interview will be based on questions designed in class that help you understand the rationale for the needed change (including but not limited data that was used to determine the need for the change), the plan used to bring about the change (resources, timelines, involvement of stakeholders, professional development, etc), the effectiveness of the change (data collected to document the effect of the change, did culture change occur? etc). Based on information gathered from the interview, design a short presentation on the focus of the change and its effectiveness and present the strengths of the plan and change and the weaknesses of the change and plan. **Due: session 5.**

**Essay on Deep Change:** This is a formal paper of not more than 8 pages double spaced on how you would effect deep change relative to three components or dimensions at stake in implementing any new program (revised curriculum, teaching strategies and alterations of beliefs) see Fullan chapter 3. This paper needs to have a theoretical basis, using ideas and concepts from the course readings to support your ideas about bring about deep educational change. The writing rubric will be used to evaluate this paper. **Due session 8.**

**Systems Maps for two Curricular or Program changes:** Consider a current curricular or program innovation/initiative that will be carried out in your school or district in the next year and design a systems map that demonstrates all of the areas effected and to be considered during the initiation, implementation and institutionalization phases of the change process. Inspiration is a good program for the design of the systems map, but other programs can be used or you can design you own from a draw program on your computer. **Due session 10**

**Proposals for Studies for two Curriculum or Program changes:** Using the innovation or initiative from the systems map, write a proposal for studying the effective of this innovation/initiative. The proposal will follow the elements discussed regarding action research: rationale for this initiative, problem statement, and design of a triagulation matrix of the initiative to be implemented. **Due session 12**

**Portfolio Requirements:**
- Essay on Deep Change
- Systems Map of Curricular or Program Changes
- Proposal(s) for Studies
- Reflection

**Additional Resources**


Martin Ryder University of Colorado at Denver School of Education. Action Research
http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~mryder/itc/act_res.html


Course Evaluation

Principal Interview………………………………………………15 pts

Formal Essay on Deep Change………………………………30 pts

2 Systems Maps of change initiatives…………………10 pts

2 Proposals for Studies………………………………………30 pts

Class Participation/Professional Dispositions………………15 pts

Grading Scale

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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The minimum passing grade for the graduate programs is a C.

Grades:

- Weighted grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and F. (Grades of C- or D are not acceptable grades in graduate programs.) The minimum passing grade for the graduate programs is a C.

- Incompletes (not a grade but a temporary status): STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO COMPLETE ALL WORK IN A COURSE IN THE PRESCRIBED TERM. A student has the added responsibility to notify the course instructor of circumstances that will prevent the student from completing the required coursework on time. An incomplete should be given only in exceptional or emergency circumstances at the discretion of, and after consultation with, the instructor. The students will have through the third week of the next full semester (fall or spring) to complete the requirement for the course or the incomplete automatically will change to a failure. If appropriate, the instructor can request an extension of the incomplete, which requires the approval of the school director and the college dean.

- Change of Letter Grades: “No instructor shall change a grade from one letter grade to another based upon submission by the student of additional work unless the same opportunity has been made to all other students in the class.” A change of grade is always legitimate and appropriate when the recorded grade is the result of an error by any university employee.
COURSE SCHEDULE

SESSION #1
Course overview
Change: What does it mean and what feelings does it elicit?
Who Moved My Cheese? “Do you recognize self? Others?”

SESSION #2
Overview of graphic organizer—Using Data for Alignment and Achievement (UDAA)
Assignment: Submit a copy of vision/mission of your school

SESSION #3
What does culture have to do with Change? Does your school’s culture reflect mission/vision.
Fullan claims “deep change” requires “re-culturing.” Personally reflect on external and internal sources that influence educational change.

Creative Tension—Senge—What is it and its relationship to change? Using UDAA, consider school mission/vision and the “reality” of the school.


Writing to Learn: Write a paragraph or two in your own words regarding what you understand Fullan to mean by “subjective meaning” and “objective reality.”

SESSION #4
Mental Models, and Learning Communities
“Subjective meaning” and “Objective Reality” explore the connection to Senge’s mental models
Fullan argues, “Changes in beliefs and understandings are the foundation of achieving lasting reform.” Personally reflect on Living Systems Theory—Big Ideas from article

Students/class develop questions to conduct Principal Interview on change initiative. See Performance Task #1. (Link interview as a source for data collection if investigating (researching). Students should read chapter 5 in Fullan prior to conducting the principal interview.


Session #5
Initiating Change
Implementing Change
Institutionalizing change
Personally reflect on the change process.
Change Theorists ideas
Action research and School Improvement—fig. 3.1 Sagor: think “how does this reflect Senge’s ideas regarding a learning community?”

**Readings:**

**Session #6**

Personal reflection on readings: How do the ideas in the articles “fit” with those of Fullan and Senge?

Reflections on findings and analysis of “change innovation” based on principal interview

Begin reflection on selection of focus
- Answer the question from the UDAA graphic organizer: “What are all the things anyone might say could be improved in our school?”

- Select one area of change for improvement, — what is the purpose for the change? What evidence suggests that this change is needed? Why change?

**Readings:**
- Sagor, Richard *Guiding School Improvement With Action Research*, chapters 5 & 6, pp 47-75

**Assignment:**
Find out what innovations, school/district initiatives for curricular/program improvement are planned for the next year or two in you district/school. Compare it to the list developed from answering, “What are all the things anyone might say could be improved in our school?” Is there any congruency?

**Session #7**

Senge’s work and systems thinking (relate to Fullan chapter 5)
- Students create a systems map related to some innovation or change for educational improvement.

Defining an area of focus
- Share school/district initiatives and congruency with answers from the question, “What are all the things anyone might say could be improved in our school?” (This should be a school/district initiative.)

Mental Models/assumptions about the areas of focus
- Students identify their assumptions (mental model) about their chosen area of focus

Focus on interest, purpose, and ongoing research process

**Readings:**

**Session #8**

Role of teachers as agents of change
Role of principals in the change process

Personal Reflection: What is the relationship between action research and “learning enriched schools”? (Fullan, p.127)

Collecting Data and Information: Where’s the data? Brainstorm all possible sources of data to determine the “reality” of that to be the focus of change: data sources for the current status; data sources to determine effect of change. (Use Sagor chapters 8 & 9 as resource in class).

**Readings:**

**Assignment:** Formal paper due. See Performance task #2
Session #9
Students and Change—personal reflection on Fullan’s reading
Identify some problem of students—draw a systems map that demonstrates cause/effect or feeding the problem.
Student learning as Bull’s Eye for change (School’s vision)
Stating the research problem
Qualitative studies
Methodological Triangulation (use Sagor’s chapter 9 as source)
Using the student problem identified above- research problem and design a matrix for sources of data collection.

Readings:

Assignment:
Based on the matrix, design one of the tools (questionnaire, survey, etc..) for data collection you indicated you would use in the matrix.

Session #10
Reducing Resistance to change
Literature Review—identify areas of literature to review for their area of focus

Readings:

Assignment:
Systems Map see performance task #3

Session #11
Government and educational change
Using data for alignment and achievement diagram—
Review of problem statements, triangulation matrix

Reading:

Session #12
Discussion on Professional development and change
Consider action research as professional development—revisit the idea of learning communities
Self-reflection as a means of professional development in learning communities

Review the proposal—problem statement, triangulation matrix, literature review. See performance task #4

Session #13
Student presentations of work with personal reflection.

Session #14
Student presentations of work with personal reflection.

Session #15
Review and culmination of Change. Write reflection of professional change during the semester, write a reflection of professional dispositions during the semester.

This syllabus is subject to change as the need arises. Students will be given ample notice of any changes in assignments and due dates.
Updated May 2007