

**Power and Politics in Educational Leadership**  
**3 credits**

**EDL 823**

**Course Description**

This course provides students with a historical, social, and cultural introduction to the politics of education at the national, state, and local levels. It focuses on the various political contexts in which the superintendent operates and examines the relationships a superintendent has with external stakeholders, state legislatures, community groups, school boards, and teacher organizations. Successful leadership and policy-making requires familiarity with political theory, an understanding that politics is a contested field, and a commitment to the democratic process. The course examines power and politics from an interdisciplinary perspective, ties theoretical study to praxis, and situates the study of the superintendency in its contemporary context, with special attention given to issues that are of current importance.

**Course Structure**

This course is designed for delivery through face-to-face meetings enhanced by learning activities/discussions online. Students are expected to prepare for class meetings, take part in class activities, contribute to discussions, and support other class members. In short, the class will function as a learning community in which every member shares responsibility for the learning experience of the group.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Students will examine competing views of democratic theory.
- Students will understand sociological and cultural notions of power and apply to these concepts to educational politics.
- Students will recognize the role that various groups and institutions have in shaping educational practice.
- Students will know the major political issues facing contemporary educational leaders.
- Students will be able to evaluate educational policy issues from a variety of political frameworks.
- Students will examine the role of power and politics in matters of contracts, negotiations, state mandates, and discipline and termination.
- Students will learn effective communication strategies required for leadership in a democratic society, including strategies for managing the media, coordinating public relations, and maintaining positive relationships with the Board, community members, students and staff.

## Course Requirements

### 1. Participation – 20%

Take part in all class activities. Contribute to discussions and activities, both face-to-face and online, in a way that enhances learning for all class members. You will be required to make postings to our D2L Discussion Board. Postings will focus on assigned readings/readings done on your own and how they relate to your past experiences and future endeavors as a leader. Some discussions will be open to the whole group while others will be structured as small group discussions in order to build smaller learning communities. Discussion topics will be provided with specific posting requirements noted for each discussion topic.

### 2. Policy Analysis Assignment – 40%

Analyze a recent piece of educational legislation that impacts your selected school district. Explain the rationale behind the legislative change, how various stakeholders are affected by it, and how you, as a superintendent, would implement these changes.

### 3. Political Theory Paper - 40%

Select one of the political theories discussed in class or that you found in your readings. Research and explain this theory and its significance, and analyze the impact that it might have on political decision-making, democratic praxis, and institutional reform. Further, examine how your selected theory offers a critique of contemporary political practice and what possible benefits might arise from incorporating the theoretical model into a district's policy-making and governance structures.

## General Criteria for Assessment

- 1. Construction of Knowledge:** Students successfully interpret, analyze, evaluate, or synthesize information.
- 2. Depth of Understanding:** Student understanding of course content is relatively complex and deep, and they demonstrate that understanding through elaborated communication.
- 3. Connection to Practice and Policy:** Students successfully connect course content to educational practice and/or policy. They explore implications that create value and significance for knowledge.
- 4. Clarity of Expression:** Students demonstrate quality work through well-organized, grammatically correct, precise and accurate writing. They reflect thoughtfulness in word choice, sentence construction and composition.

## Course Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage Points
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79

C	74-76
F	73 or below

### **Guidelines for Written Assignments**

Advanced graduate academic work requires competence in written communication to express your ideas clearly and accurately. Therefore, it is expected that students will be able to articulate their positions, reasoning, and queries with clarity, accuracy, and precision in grammatical construction and language use. Students must demonstrate critical thinking in all of their written work. Further, it is imperative that doctoral students draw upon the work of other scholars and appropriately give credit to others through in-text citations.

### **Format Requirements for Papers**

- Use APA (most recent edition) to format course papers.
- Use inclusive language (do not use masculine pronouns when referring to men and women).
- All papers should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins. Times New Roman font (12 point) is standard.
- Number the pages.
- Writing should be appropriately referenced, giving credit to others for their work by providing accurate citations.
- Where appropriate and possible, draw connections between course concepts/readings and specific examples/experiences. The capacity to relate theory with practice is an important component of the course.
- Writing must be grammatically correct and without spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.
- Include a list of references at the end of the paper. This list should include all references cited in the paper, and only those cited in the paper.

### **Guidelines for Online Discussions**

There are three very important rules for using online discussion boards:

1. Remember that the culture of mutual respect that is part of our face-to-face time extends into the virtual classroom environment.
2. Participation is required.
3. Participation alone is not enough. Posts require a thoughtful and meaningful approach. Quality does count. Also important is timing. If you wait until the end of the discussion window time, you are not engaging in the type of discussion required.

See “Guidelines and Rubrics for Online Discussions” (D2L Course Content) for further details.

### **Guidelines for Communication in a Respectful Learning Environment**

- Listen receptively. Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
- Attend to the person who has the floor. No sidebar conversations, gestures, or extraneous activity while another person is talking.
- Communicate honestly. If you have a concern or if you are puzzled – explain how you are feeling and why.

- Disagree thoughtfully. Respectful questioning and disagreement is not wrong. Scholarly discourse involves and encourages exploration of different perspectives.
- Derogatory comments based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, or nationality are not acceptable.

### **Academic Integrity**

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is committed to a standard of academic integrity for all students. The System guidelines state: “Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others’ academic endeavors.” (UWS 14.01, Wisconsin Administrative Code)

Students are subject to disciplinary action for academic misconduct, which is defined in UWS 14.03, Wisconsin Administrative Code. Students are encouraged to review the procedures related to violations of academic honesty as outlined in Chapter UWS 14, Wisconsin Administrative Code. The System guidelines and local procedures are printed in the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Student Discipline Code 2007-2008 and can be found on the Dean of Students website at [www.uwosh.edu/dean/conduct.htm](http://www.uwosh.edu/dean/conduct.htm)

Specific questions regarding the provisions of Chapter UWS 14 (and institutional procedures approved to implement Chapter UWS 14) should be directed to the Dean of Students Office.

### **Accessibility Statement**

We would like to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let us know if you need any special accommodations. Information will be kept confidential whenever possible. For questions regarding UW Oshkosh policy and available services for students with disabilities, please contact John Palmer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in the Dean of Students Office in Dempsey Hall. [palmerj@uwosh.edu](mailto:palmerj@uwosh.edu) or 424-3100.

### **The Writing Center**

All UW Oshkosh students are eligible for one-on-one conferencing at the Writing Center. Their free, confidential tutoring is designed to help writers work through assignments and gain additional writing skills. Trained peer consultants can assist writers at any stage of the composition process, from brainstorming for topics to fine-tuning a final draft. They help writers with issues like grammar and mechanics by helping them identify their own patterns of error and learning how to avoid those errors. Check their website for more information about services. (<http://www.uwosh.edu/wcenter>). The Writing Center is located in Suite 102 of the Student Success Center, across from Reeve and Polk on Elmwood Ave.

### **Communication**

*Email.* Your UW Oshkosh email account is used by the University and by your instructors to communicate University and course information. Please check your UW Oshkosh email frequently.

*Weather Concerns.* If you are unable to attend class due to hazardous conditions, please notify me via email prior to the scheduled class meeting. In the event that I cannot meet with the class, or most members of the class cannot attend, we will schedule an alternative discussion/learning activity using D2L. Please check your UW Oshkosh email prior to class if you have any questions about the class meeting. I will send an email notice to you no later than 3:30 p.m. if there is an alternative plan for that evening’s session.

**UW Oshkosh**  
**College of Education and Human Services**

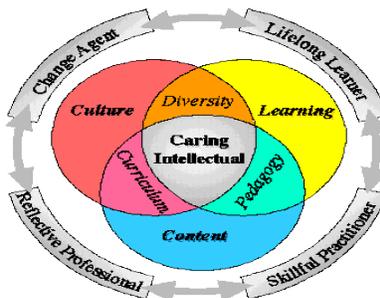
**Edd in Superintendency**

The **mission** of the EdD in Educational Leadership program leading to licensure as a District Administration is to develop educators to assume formal leadership roles in their organization.

The **goals** of the program are to develop the capacity to:

1. envision and guide organizational change;
2. communicate effectively, engage constituents, develop people and build community;
3. advocate equity for diverse populations, and respect individuals;
4. integrate theory, data, research and ethical standards into the context of one's practice through continuous learning.

**The Educator as a Caring Intellectual**



**Program Dispositions**

Throughout this program students will be expected to demonstrate the following dispositions:

- Value change as the source of the opportunity for improvement
- Display the ability to understand people and relationships and be receptive to the ideas of others
- Show a willingness to implement non-discriminatory access, accommodations and assessments.
- Demonstrate empathic understanding of diversity in all domains.
- Reflect regularly upon the philosophical assumptions, ethical principles and rationales that guide one's practice
- Understand oneself as a learner and value learning as a core capacity.

**Wisconsin Administrator Standards for Superintendent (03) Licensure**

Teacher Standards, Vision, Instructional Program, Management, Family/Community Relations, Ethics, and Context Affecting Schools

(Full documentation available at: <http://tepd.l.dpi.wi.gov/epp/licensure-program-guidelines>)

## **Tentative Schedule of Topics**

Week 1: The political context of the superintendent's role

Week 2: External stakeholders; state legislatures

Week 3: External stakeholders; community groups

Week 4: School Boards and teacher organizations

Week 5: Policy making and the democratic process

Week 6: Evaluating educational policy issues via political frameworks

Week 7: The role of power and politics: contracts, negotiations, state mandates

Week 8: The role of power and politics: discipline and termination

Week 9: Effective communication and positive relations building

Week 10: Mastering political skills: networking, negotiating, leading and followership

Week 11: Social and political influences on curriculum

Week 12: Examining current issues

Week 13: Examining current issues