

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE
College of Education
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

COURSE OUTLINE

ELPS 676 SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS

MICHAEL D. EISNER COLLEGE OF EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

The Michael D. Eisner College of Education as a professional school uses a developmental approach to promote reflection, critical thinking, and excellence in an inclusive learning community. Its graduates are well educated, highly skilled and caring persons who are lifelong learners prepared to practice in an ever changing, multicultural world. They are committed to promoting achievement of all students as a primary measure of successful educational practice. Graduates assume service and leadership roles in public and private educational, health, and social programs and institutions. The College establishes and maintains productive partnerships with community schools and agencies. The faculty is committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, service and collaboration with the community and professions. The values for faculty and students that form the foundation of the Conceptual Framework include the following:

1. We value high standards in the acquisition and application of professional knowledge and skills in subject matter, pedagogy, and technology.
2. We value the achievement of students at all levels and promote its accomplishment in accordance with national, state, and institutional standards.
3. We value an inclusive learning community.
4. We value creative, critical and reflective thinking and practice.
5. We value ethical practice by caring professionals.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

The seminar will be devoted to a study of the knowledge, dispositions, and skills needed by administrators in order to understand and respond to diverse community interests and needs; collaborate effectively with families and community members; mobilize community resources to benefit students and families; and interpret the school to the public through a variety of media and modes.

ELPS DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to prepare and inspire educational leaders to maximize student learning and access, link theory to best practice, support collaborative partnerships, and promote culturally responsive leadership in a diverse environment.

PLACE OF COURSE IN THE CURRICULUM

A requirement for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential and the Master's Degree in Educational Administration.

CA. COMMISSION on TEACHER CREDENTIALING (CCTC) STANDARDS for PRELIMINARY ADMINISTRATIVE CREDENTIAL

Each student should be an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by:

1. facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community;
2. advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;
3. ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;
4. collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;
5. modeling a personal code of ethics and developing professional leadership capacity; and
6. understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Learn to value diverse families and community members as partners in education; treat them with fairness and respect; seek to understand and respond to their expectations and concerns; and include them in building a shared vision of learning for all students.
2. Recognize the significance of and develop/enhance your capacity for promoting ongoing, two-way communication and proactive, positive relationships among schools, families, and communities. Know how to model and promote this type of communication and relationship among school and district staff. Recognize the relationship between school-community relations and school climate, employee morale, and student

performance.

3. Develop/enhance skills in effectively communicating information about the school on a regular basis through a variety of media and modes to a variety of publics, including families whose primary language is a language other than English. Understand the power and influence of local media outlets and ways to analyze media reporting.
4. Develop/enhance skills in creating effective plans and programs for school-community relations and school-family-community partnerships that support student success and family well-being, including professional development for faculty and staff. Recognize the role of the site and/or district administrators in the development and monitoring of school-community relations plans.
5. Develop/enhance skills in mobilizing community resources through school-linked support services and partnerships with business, civic, service, government, higher education, and other organizations.
6. Develop/enhance skills in preventing and responding to conflict and crisis in relations among staff, families, and community groups.
7. Apply course concepts, readings, and personal/professional experience to analyze problems in school-community relations.
8. Examine how attitudes towards and interactions with members of diverse racial, ethnic, linguistic, socioeconomic, religious, gender and other social groups may affect school-community relations and equitable access to education.
9. Reflect on how diverse family structures, cultural beliefs, and community values affect the role of schooling in a democratic society and your role/vision as a school leader.
10. Develop a basic understanding of the application of technology to the content of this course, such as electronic newsletters, Internet research, and Power Point presentations to community groups.
11. Reflect on their own ethical standards, as well as the ethical standards of the profession of educational administration and demonstrate understanding of how these apply to the leader's role in the content of this course.

COURSE CONTENT

The following topics and activities are recommended:

- public opinion and public schools
- role of public schools in democratic society
- community mapping, surveys, needs assessment
- public relations (internal and external) and media relations skills, including use of technology to communicate with various publics
- management of conflict, controversy, criticism, and crises in school-community relations
- understanding families and impact of diversity on family life: interviews, observations, home visits
- action planning and program development for family involvement in education,

including a variety of family support services and activities to promote parent participation and engagement in their child's learning

- action planning and program development for community involvement in education, including coordinating services for students and families with community agencies, mobilizing community resources for school partnerships and school-linked support services
- training and shared leadership with staff and parents to promote school-family partnerships
- working collaboratively with parent and community groups and agencies, as well as site, district, and local governing and advisory bodies; conducting effective meetings
- engaging the public in school reform and shared accountability
- student/family community service programs
- parent rights and responsibilities
- role of students, parents, teachers, staff, administrators, and community organizations in promoting positive school-community relations
- impact of local, state, and federal policy, politics, and governmental entities on school-community relations

TEXTBOOKS

Instructors may choose from the following texts. For use of a textbook other than those listed, instructor must obtain approval from Department Chair.

Epstein, J., et al. (2002). *School, family and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Gallagher, D. R., Bagin, D., & Moore, E. H. (2005, 8th ed.) *The school and community relations*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Kowalski, T. (2000). *Public relations in schools*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Company.

Lindsey, R. et al. (2003, 2nd ed). *Cultural proficiency: A manual for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

ADDITIONAL READINGS (see also instructor bibliography)

Chadwick, K. G. (2004). *Improving schools through community engagement: A practical guide for educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Decker, L. & Decker, V.A. (2003). *Home, school, community partnerships*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) at the Harvard Family Research Project: www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/
Hughes, L. & Hooper, D. *Public Relations for School Leaders*. Needham Heights, MA: Pearson Education Company, 2000.

Jordan, C., Orozco, E., & Averett, A. (2001). *Emerging issues in school, family, and community connections: Annual synthesis 2001*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Journal of School Public Relations

Lutz, F.W., & Merz, C. (1992). *The politics of school/community relations*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Muir, K., ed. (1999). *School Public Relations: Building Confidence in Education*. Rockville, MD: National School Public Relations Association, 1999.

School Community Journal

Schorr, L. (1998). *Common purpose: Strengthening families and neighborhoods to rebuild America*. Anchor Books.

Warner, C. (1997). *Everybody's House – The Schoolhouse: Best Techniques for Connecting Home, School, and Community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

GRADING POLICY

The evaluation of student performance will be comprehensive and objective. **Performance-based assessments** will be included as part of the grading criteria. Examples: Students will attend school board meetings and analyze policy and community issues; write media releases and develop surveys and needs assessments; prepare a persuasive presentation on a current school issue for a civic group; create an action plan for parent or community involvement; or develop a school-community newsletter.

The following are ways in which the students' performance can be evaluated in relation to the objectives of this course:

- A. Completion of all assigned reading.
- B. Active class participation.
- C. Student presentations, written reports, reflective journals.
- D. Student participation in discussion, individual and group research projects, case studies, interviews, observations, and other learning activities.
- E. Objective and essay examinations.

Grades will be determined by review and evaluation of the above.

GRADE SCALE

Grade Scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	Below 60

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Cheating, plagiarism, submitting another person's material as one's own, or doing work for another person, who will receive academic credit are all impermissible. The California Code of regulations in Section 41301, Title 5 is listed as an offense for which a student may be expelled, suspended, or given a less severe disciplinary action. (See University Catalog 2002-2004, pp523-524).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & SCHEDULE – see Syllabus.