I. Catalog Entry

EDEL 630: Legal and Ethical Dimensions of School Administration

Prerequisites: Admission to Educational Leadership Program

Credit Hours: 3

Masters degree students (or graduate licensure students) will explore the legal status of public schools in the United States with special reference to ethics and the application of law for the educational benefit of all students. A study of constitutional law and the judicial rulings of the Supreme Court, federal district courts, and state appellate courts will form the basis for exploration of historical precedence in educational law as well as current analysis of trends in legal precedence relating to education. The study of laws and regulations in Virginia are utilized as a construct for understanding issues surrounding implementation of the Standards of Quality and adherence to the Standards of Accreditation.

II. Detailed Description of Content of Course

1. Legal framework of education
   a. State control of education
      (1) Legislative power
      (2) State agencies
      (3) Local school boards
      (4) School-based councils
   b. Federal role in education
   c. Function and structure of the judicial system
      (1) State courts
      (2) Federal courts
      (3) Judicial trends

2. Ethical dimensions
   a. Truthfulness, accuracy, and honesty
   b. Collaboration rather than confrontation to resolve issues
   c. Competence
   d. Open-ness, public accountability
   e. Sharing knowledge and information
   f. Enhanced probability of leadership being successful and good

3. Church-state relations
   a. Equal access for religious expression
   b. Excusal from public school for religious instruction/observances
   c. Religious challenges to public school curriculum
4. School attendance
   a. Compulsory school attendance
   b. Residency requirements
   c. School fees

5. Instructional Issues
   a. The school curriculum
   b. Student proficiency testing
   c. Educational malpractice
   d. Instructional privacy rights
      (1) Student records
      (2) Pupil protection and parental rights laws

6. Students’ rights in matters
   a. Freedom of speech and press
      (1) Unprotected conduct and expression
      (2) Commercial expression
      (3) Student-initiated clubs
   b. Student appearance
   c. Extracurricular activities

7. Student classification practices
   a. Gender
   b. Native language
   c. Age
   d. Ability or achievement
   e. Disability
      (1) Free and appropriate public education
      (2) Development of individualized educational programs
      (3) Placement
      (4) Procedural safeguards
      (5) Related services
      (6) Participation in sports
      (7) Discipline

8. Student discipline
   a. Conduct regulations
   b. Expulsions and suspensions
   c. Disciplinary transfers
   d. Corporal punishment
   e. Constitutional issues
   f. State law

9. Terms and conditions of employment
   a. Certification/licensure/background checks
   b. Employment by local school boards
   c. Contracts
      (1) Term and tenure contracts
      (2) Supplemental contract
      (3) Leaves of absence
d. Personnel evaluation
e. Personnel records
f. Use of copyrighted materials
g. Reporting suspected child abuse

10. Teachers’ substantive Constitutional rights
   a. Freedom of expression
   b. Academic freedom
   c. Freedom of association
   d. Personal appearance
   e. Privacy rights

11. Discrimination in employment
   a. Race and national-origin discrimination
   b. Gender discrimination
   c. Religious discrimination
   d. Age discrimination
   e. Disability discrimination

12. Termination of employment
   a. Due process in general
      (1) Dismissal
      (2) Nonrenewal
   b. Procedural requirements in discharge proceedings
      (1) Notice
      (2) Hearing
   c. Dismissal for cause
   d. Remedies for violations of protected rights

13. Collective bargaining

14. Tort liability
   a. Negligence
   b. Intentional torts

15. School desegregation

16. Personal platform for leadership effort continued including legal and ethical considerations

III. Detailed Description of Conduct of Course

Course readings will serve as a primary content basis for in-class discussions. Case studies and role plays will be used in conjunction with material related to issues involving legal and ethical issues. Twenty hours of structured field experiences with on-site mentor principals and/or supervisors will also be required for completion of the course and will be discussed in class. A variety of written and/or oral assignments (research reviews, reflective writings, narrative responses, journals, formal papers, book talks, court brief analysis) will be used to synthesize and reflect on content. Group and individual tasks will be used to process and reinforce information/skills and for class sharing. Guest speakers will give students opportunities to examine and reflect on the
realities of legal and ethical issues. Lectures by the professor are utilized to supplement and reinforce course readings. Videos, internet searches, and direct utilization of educational technologies will provide additional content for personal reflection and/or class discussion, and to provide additional sources for acquiring related course content.

IV. Goals and Objectives of the Course

Goals, objectives, and assignments in this class address National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standard 1e, 1f, and 1g. The codes included below refer to: Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards (ISLLC); Virginia Department of Education Standards for Administration and Supervision (VAS).

1. The candidate will demonstrate knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations (VAS c.).

2. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge of principles and issues related to fiscal operations of school management (VAS c4 and ISLLC 3).

3. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge of legal issues impacting school operations and management (VAS c6 and ISLLC 5).

4. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge of historically and philosophically grounded philosophy of education that reflects commitment to principles of honesty, fairness, caring, and equity in day-to-day professional behavior (VAS e1 and ISLLC 5).

5. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge in making an intentional and purposeful effort to model professional, moral, and ethical standards as well as personal integrity in all interactions (VAS e4).

6. The candidate will demonstrate knowledge of understanding and application of basic leadership theories and influences that impact schools (VAS f. and ISLLC 2).

7. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge of historical leadership theories including organizational theory, motivational theory, political and social systems theory to practical situations (VAS f2).

8. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge to identify and respond to internal and external forces and influences on a school (VAS f3 and ISLLC 4, 6).

9. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge to identify and apply the processes of educational policy development at the state, local, and school level (VAS f4).

10. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge to identify and demonstrate ways to influence educational policy development at the state, local, and school level (VAS f5 and ISLLC 5, 6).
11. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge of embedded learning strategies for improved student learning totaling at least 120 clock hours (VAS g. and ISLLC 7).

12. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge of experiential activities that complement, implement, and parallel the university curriculum (VAS g1).

13. The candidate will demonstrate necessary knowledge of activities that emphasize student work with practical application that shall take place in the internship, the practicum field experience, as well as throughout the university program (VAS g2 and ISLLC 7).

V. Assessment Measures

All instructors of the course will assess students in the following ways:

- Presentation of the result of tracking one piece of state public education legislation through the process of becoming law. An emphasis will be placed on communication with a state legislator describing the impact of that piece of legislation on public schools including how this policy will impact the district and how this policy/legislation will or will not benefit students and family.

- Present a thoroughly developed analysis of a legal issue surrounding a current policy or practice within a school or district. Utilizing historical information and current legal precedence indicate in detail how the policy or practice is utilized to enhance the educational opportunity of all students (including diverse populations) or indicate in detail how the policy or practice is utilized to reduce the educational opportunity of identified student groups.

Additionally, instructors will choose at least three assessment measures from the following to assess learning in the course:

- Written assignments such as research papers; reflective writings; narrative responses; journal and/or book reviews; court brief analysis; interviews; examinations.

- Student engagement in actively demonstrating skill development through activities such as: in-basket activities; role play; simulations; demonstrations; presentations; group activities; field experiences; case studies.

Technological proficiency must be demonstrated in written assignments, electronic mail communications, and correspondence.

VI. Other Course Information

None