

Murray State University
COMMON SYLLABUS

Revised November 5, 2007

DEPARTEMENT: ELC COURSE NUMBER: ADM 779

CREDIT HOURS: 3

I. **TITLE: The Superintendency Practicum**

II. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

An analysis of the role of the school district superintendent in practice with emphasis on changes in society and schools as well as with reference to job responsibilities of the position. Students enrolling in the practicum are expected to spend time interacting with practicing school administrators at school district locations. (Student will be required to take a total of three hours credit.)

III. **PURPOSE:**

Principles, dispositions and skills consistent with the Interstate School Leader Licensure Standards (ISLLC), the Technology Standards for School Administrators (TSSA), the AASA Professional Standards for the Superintendency and the professional Code of Ethics for Kentucky School Certified Staff are incorporated into this course in ways consistent with the purpose of the course and individual student readiness. The unit's theme of the reflective decision-maker is emphasized, as students are required to reflect upon course experiences as part of the learning process and the unit's conceptual framework of educator as leader is addressed as course experiences and the program as a whole are focused upon the development of leaders. NCATE expectations with regard to KERA Initiatives and EPSB themes are incorporated through courses as consistent with the scope of each course. KERA Initiatives: [Core Content, Program of Studies, Learner Goals and Expectation] EPSB Themes: [Gap Closure, Assessment, Literacy]

IV. **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The Superintendency Practicum (ADM 779) is a field-based experience that emphasizes working with school district administrators in areas of school system management and leadership. Developing worthwhile practicum experiences is accomplished by focusing on superintendent's annual work cycle and identifying major activities that arise at different times during the year. Creating a template of activities is useful in aligning Practicum seminar discussions (professional knowledge) with field-based experiences (craft knowledge) and KDE prescribed training (knowledge of specific skills). Seminar discussions scheduled throughout the year to coincide with the changing nature of superintendents' work not only focus on understanding specific job responsibilities but also the pervasive regularities that keep the enterprise on sound footing.

Prescribed KDE superintendent training in the areas of Law, Finance, School-based Decision-Making, Curriculum and Instruction, and Management will be coordinated to coincide both with seminars and field experiences. The strategy of integrating university instruction, school district experiences, and Kentucky Department of Education training adds a unique dimension to the Practicum designed to enhance performance. To fully benefit from this integrated approach requires students to participate in the Practicum for one calendar year.

Practicum activities are designed to provide experiences relevant to building a required certification portfolio that demonstrates formal Knowledge of leadership and management, Dispositions (using that knowledge to reflect on experiences), and Performances (school-based applications) as described in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders adopted by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board in 1998.

Other courses in the certification sequence will be taken concurrently with the year-long Practicum and may enhance opportunities for instructors to link professional knowledge gained in university graduate classes to field-based activities. Designing assignments that link professional knowledge and

field - based experience throughout the certification sequence enhance learning and augment students' ISLLC portfolios.

The primary objectives of this course include:

Acquiring and synthesizing professional knowledge and research that undergirds successful practice in specific areas as a foundation for field-based experiences and KDE training in the areas of: Law, Finance, Site-based Decision Making, Curriculum, Management, and Student Testing.

Observing superintendents over a one year work cycle in field settings to help understand the nature and scope of school district leadership, management, and politics.

Assuming a leadership role in planning, decision making, implementation, and evaluation of selected field-based practicum experiences in a school district setting.

Completing training required by the KDE for superintendent certification.

Using Practicum activities, other course assignments, and related professional experiences to prepare portfolios in compliance with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders adopted by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board in 1998 as recast by the American Association of School Administration Standards for the Superintendency.

V. CONTENT OUTLINE:

Beginning superintendents
Professional socialization of school district leaders
Law
Finance
Site-based Decision Making
Curriculum
Management
Student Testing
District data analysis

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

The Practicum will require you to satisfactorily complete the following assignments. Your grade for the course will be based upon the instructor's and superintendent/Practicum supervisor's judgment regarding the quality of your performance in the areas noted below. The relative weight given to each of these areas in determining your grade is indicated in parentheses. Specific factors and points for each are included in Principal/Practicum Proposal information packet.

District-Community Analysis (Practicum Site) (10%)-
Instructor's Evaluation

Practicum Proposal (description projects) (5%)-
Instructor's Evaluation

Superintendent Shadowing (5%)-Instructor's Evaluation

Practicum Portfolio including 5 products - (Law, Finance, Site-based decision making, Curriculum, and Management) (80%) - Instructor's Evaluation and 29%-
Site-supervisor's Evaluation

VII. FIELD, CLINICAL, AND/OR LABORATORY EXPERIENCES:

Related Training:

Universities will coordinate assessment and training activities available through the Kentucky Department of Education's Superintendent Leadership Development Program associated with superintendent development certification. These activities will be scheduled to correlate with Practicum seminars and coincide with field-based events to enhance management and leadership skills. The required training modules include:

Law

Finance

Site-based Decision Making

Curriculum

Management

Time Frame:

The ADM 779 Superintendency Practicum will be a year-long course.

Release Time:

Practicum students will be asked spend fourteen (14) days in completing related KDE training and additional time in school districts completing

Practicum activities. Although some of these activities may be scheduled during summer sessions, other activities may require release time from employers.

Personal Time Commitment:

Practicum students will be expected to commit adequate time needed to complete a demanding schedule of field-based activities and seminars. Over the course of the Practicum year students should expect to spend approximately 300 hours in Practicum activities. Students will spend 150 hours in field-based activities, completing one assignment for each of the five (5) KDE training areas: (1) Law, (2) Finance, (3) Site-based Decision Making, (4) Curriculum and (5) Management. Students will also spend 25 hours in classroom seminars over three semesters. In addition, students will spend 14 days (approximately 100 hours) completing the five KDE training modules. Finally, students will spend three days (25 hours) shadowing the superintendent and collecting data on the district school.

Superintendent Practicum Site:

It is advised that Practicum students seek out an exemplary school district administrator to serve as the practicum site supervisor. The site supervisor will work with the student and instructor in defining opportunities to learn and apply management and leadership skills, defined projects, and participate in ongoing work.

Supervision of the Practicum:

University Instructor: The instructor in the ADM 779 **The Superintendency Practicum** will assist the student in clarifying questions regarding the characteristics of desirable practicum experiences, organizing the Practicum experiences, and preparing the Proposal and the Portfolio. The instructor may meet with the student and site supervisor during the Practicum experience. The instructor will provide informal evaluations of the student periodically in the practicum experience and a final evaluation at the end of the practicum experience.

Site Supervisor: The Superintendent Practicum Site Supervisor should be an exemplary Superintendent in the individuals district of a district other than the one in which she/he is currently employed. The role of the Site Supervisor and expectations for their involvement in the Practicum will be described and included in the directions for completing the Practicum Proposal (Part II).

District-Community Analysis (Practicum Site): A key element in managing and leading a school district is understanding the characteristics of students, staff, and the community served. Thus, an important initial task will involve **collecting and analyzing school-community data** for your school district practicum site. The parameters for this activity are more fully described in the Practicum Proposal section of the Syllabus.

Formal Superintendent Interview:

The key to providing a worthwhile practicum experience for aspiring school district leaders is understanding the nature of the work of exemplary superintendents. The goal of this formal interview is to listen carefully to what these individuals say about the nature of their work, the problem that seem most irritating, and identifying areas in which they needed more extensive preparation before assuming a district level administrative, and how these insights may improve professional preparation programs. This study is divided into two phases. Phase I calls for in depth interviews with individual superintendents in rural, suburban, and urban schools. Phase II entails sharing results of phase one data collection with colleagues in the Practicum seminar.

Superintendent Shadowing:

It is more important to understand the multiple and diverse influences on superintendents' work and how they take these factors into account when leading schools. While formal interviews may help to understand their ideas of effectiveness in a wide variety of areas, shadowing may provide greater insight into how circumstances, pressures, and ambiguity influences finding solutions to problems that affect school districts.

This initial glimpse of the complex nature of the superintendency may be expanded and enriched by observing a superintendent in action. To obtain first-hand knowledge of a principal's work you will be asked to shadow a superintendent in a school district for several days over the course of the Practicum year. During this shadowing exercise you will be asked to keep copious notes of their activities and actions including direct quotations of conversations whenever possible. This shadowing exercise will have two parts: Part I is the observation and Part II is an interview with an interview with the superintendent regarding activities and actions observed. In completing Part II, you may want to focus on several events and probe more deeply into reasons for actions taken.

Developing and Completing Projects (5): Each student will be expected to develop five (5) **different** products. These products or processes must be at a high professional level and will be left with the school district. Completing these projects for the school district will in some small way reward participating Site Supervisors for time spent working with Practicum students. The projects must be developed in cooperation with participating superintendents in areas that coincide with the five areas of KDE Training. Completed projects will serve as Portfolio entries and exhibit evidence of **Knowledge, Dispositions and Performances (ISLLC Standards)**.

Proposal for the Superintendent Practicum Experience:

The student will prepare a practicum proposal (See Practicum Proposal handout). These activities are organized under the ISLLC Standards for School Leaders adopted by the Kentucky Professional Standards Board in 1998. The proposal should be developed in consultation with the site supervisor and a preliminary Proposal should be reviewed by the instructor before being submitted for approval.

Practicum Approval: After submitting the preliminary proposal for review by the site supervisor and the instructor the student should submit the final copy for approval/signature of the site supervisor and the

instructor. This document will guide the students work during the practicum. The instructor and the site supervisor must receive a photocopy of the signed Proposal.

Certification Program Portfolio: The Portfolio will be structured according to the class handout and entries will conform with ISLLC Standards. The Certification Program Portfolio should include activities completed for ADM 779 Practicum, other Educational Administration classes in the certification sequence, as well as other professional experiences.

VIII. RESOURCES:
None

IX. GRADING PROCEDURES:

General Marking System: A grading curve will not be used to determine letter grades.

A = 90-100 represents **exceptionally high achievement** as a result of aptitude, effort, and intellectual initiative.

B = 80-89 represents a **high achievement** as a result of ability and effort.

C = 70-79 represents **average achievement**.

D = 60-69 represents **below average achievement**.

E = 0-59 represents unsatisfactory performance and indicates failure in the course.

X. ATTENDANCE POLICY:

This course adheres to the policy published in the MSU Graduate Bulletin.

XI. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Cheating, plagiarism, (submitting another person's material as one's own, or doing work for another person which will receive academic credit) are all impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copy of examinations, assignments, reports, or term papers, or the presentations of unacknowledged

material as if it were the student's own work. Disciplinary action may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the faculty member who teaches the course in which the cheating took place.

XII. TEXTS AND REFERENCES:

Chapman, C. H. (1997). *Becoming a superintendent: Challenges of school district leadership.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill. ISBN No. 0-13-398173-8.

Instructor (1999). Superintendent practicum readings.

XIII. PREREQUISITES:

None