

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

UNIT: School of Education

DEPT: Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations

COURSE SYLLABUS

1. **Course Prefix and Number:** *ELC 675*
2. **Course Title:** *Schools as Centers of Inquiry*
3. **Credits:** 3
4. **Course Prerequisites/Corequisites:** For Master of School Administration degree students *ELC ___ Leadership for Teaching and Learning* is a prerequisite.
5. **For Whom Planned:** This is a course taken by many Master of School Administration students. Given space availability, it will be open to graduate students in other programs.
6. **Instructor Information:** Varies
7. **Course Purpose/Catalog Description:** Effective schools function as professional learning communities characterized by a culture of inquiry and collaboration. This course builds the skills of students in facilitating individual and whole school inquiry.
8. **Teachers Academy Conceptual Framework Mission Statement:** *The mission of professional education at UNCG is to prepare and support the professional development of caring, collaborative, and competent educators who work in diverse settings. This mission is carried out in an environment that nurtures the active engagement of all participants, values individual as well as cultural diversity and recognizes the importance of reflection and integration of theory and practice. UNCG's professional education programs are guided by shared commitments to: (a) equity and excellence in teaching, research, and service; (b) professional integrity and ethical deliberation in dealing with students and colleagues (university-based, school-based, and community-based); (c) the construction of a professional knowledge base through collaboration and collegiality; and (d) the dissemination of professional knowledge, skills and dispositions through the preparation and continuing professional development of teachers, principals and other school personnel.*
9. **Course Goals and/or Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes:**
 1. On completion of this course, the student will understand the relationship between inquiry and school improvement.
 2. On completion of this course, the student will have developed skills in school-based problem-posing, data collection, data analysis, and action planning.
 4. On completion of this course, the student will have developed skills in conducting action research, program evaluations/ assessments, and school-level policy analyses.
 5. On completion of this course, the student will know how to use authentic assessment of *the school* as an additional indicator of school performance.

6. On completion of this course, the student will have developed an understanding of how the SACS accreditation process can serve as an inquiry-oriented school improvement process.

10. Teaching Strategies:

Although there will be some lecture and discussion in this course, the course will primarily be a hands-on course. That is, students will be engaged in inquiry exercises and projects both in groups and as individuals for a large portion of class time. There will be regular sharing of student work, with students receiving feedback on progress both from other students and from the instructor. Portions of this course will be web-based.

11. Evaluation Methods and Guidelines for Assignments:

1. School Profile (1/6th of course grade)
2. Action Research Project (1/3rd of course grade)
3. Mini-Program Evaluation plan (1/6th of course grade)
4. Using Existing Research project (1/6th of course grade)
5. Whole School Authentic Assessment Rubric (1/6th of course grade)

The School Profile Project should include:

* A 2-3 page narrative summary of the school profile (see the narrative in the sample profile in Part 1 of the NSSE book for an example).

* 5-8 tables that graphically display school data (see the tables in the sample profile in Part 1 of the NSSE book for an example).

The Action Research Project should:

* Address one of the questions generated from the school profile.

* Data should be collected that addresses the question.

* Data should be analyzed to see what can be learned from it.

* The project should be written up in 5-10 page document and the student should be prepared to discuss it in class.

Guidelines for the other assignments will be discussed in class.

A rubric will be developed for each assignment. Some rubrics may be developed in class as class projects.

12. Required Text(s)/Readings/References:

Required:

Calhoun, E.F. (1994). *How to use action research in the self-renewing school*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Fitzpatrick, K.A. (1997). *School improvement: Focusing on student performance (A comprehensive guide for data-driven and research-based school improvement)*. Schaumburg, IL: National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE).

Additional required readings will be made available to students.

Other Resources:

Anderson, G.L., Herr, K., & Nihlen, A.S. (1994). *Studying your own school*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Haller, E.J. & Kleine, P.F. (2001). *Using educational research: A school administrator's guide*. New York: Longman.

Hubbard, R.S. & Power, B.M. (1999). *Living the questions*. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Noffke, S.E. & Stevenson, R.B. (1995). *Educational action research: Becoming practically critical*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Sagor, R. (2000). *Guiding school improvement with action research*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

13. Topical Outline:

Session 1 Introductions & Course Overview

Session 2 Establishing the Importance of Schools as Centers of Inquiry

Session 3 The Inquiry Continuum, Action Research, the Action Research Cycle, the SACS Process as a Form of Inquiry

Session 4 Developing Questions to Address in the School Profile

 The Role of School Beliefs in Inquiry

Session 5 Data Collection Strategies

Collecting Data to Address our School Profile Questions

Session 6 Data Analysis and Display Strategies

 Analyzing and Displaying Data from School Profiles

Session 7 Generating Issues and Questions from the School Profiles/Developing Action Research Plans

Session 8 Sharing Action Research Plans

- Session 9 Using Existing Research to Inform Programs and Policies
- Session 10 Sharing our Existing Research
- Session 11 Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness: Program Evaluation
- Session 12 Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness: Policy Analysis
- Session 13 Whole School Authentic Assessment
- Session 14 Whole School Authentic Assessment
- Session 15 Sharing Action Research Projects/Action Plans

14. Other Information:

Attendance Policy and Additional Requirements:

Students are expected to attend and participate fully in all class sessions and all web-based discussions and projects. Course attendance and participation in discussion and activities is a responsibility each student has to make the course a meaningful learning experience for self and other classmates. In order for students to participate in class sessions in a meaningful and informed manner, it is important that they read, analyze, and reflect on course readings prior to the class session for which the readings are assigned. Student unable to attend a class session or participate in a web-based discussion or activity should inform the instructor in writing.

Academic Honor Code:

Each student is required to sign the honor statement on all major work submitted for the course. Please review the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy (<http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html>).

15. Recommended Text(s) and/or Readings: A bibliography or list of references highlighting recent scholarship (pedagogy and research) in the subject area

16. Alignment with State and National Standards: Attach a matrix aligning the course goals/objectives with INTASC and/or NBPTS, DPI guidelines or competencies, standards of your professional organization (CEC, NCTM, NCTE, NCSS, NASD, etc.). See the CUI 553 matrix as an example. **If these were included as part of the course goals/objectives listed #9, you do not have to repeat them in a matrix.**