

POLICY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

ELP 735 (section 630)

Wake Doctoral Cohort



LEARN | EDUCATE | APPLY | DEMONSTRATE |

| SCHOLARLY | ETHICAL | REFLECTIVE | VALUE DIVERSITY | EXPERIENCED

LEAD and **SERVE** constitute the conceptual framework for all programs for professional educators in the College of Education at NC State. They are the touchstones that assure that our students graduate with the following:

LEAD: four forms of knowledge; general pedagogy, content-specific pedagogical strategies, content or discipline knowledge as well as knowledge of the context of education, including foundations, historical perspectives and school settings.

SERVE: elements that show the range of dispositions developed in our candidates; scholarly, ethical, reflective, valuing diversity and experienced in practical application of knowledge.

Course Information

Course Prefix and Title

ELP 735, Section 630

Policy Research in Education

Course Catalog Description

This course will draw on both classic and contemporary materials in educational policy research and will primarily focus on the substance of policy research rather than methodology. It addresses research pertaining to the foundations, implementation and evaluation of policy in all levels and sectors of the educational system. Major attention will be given to education in the United States, with comparative perspectives included.

Number of credits

3 credit hours

Date Syllabus Was Last Revised by Course Action

May 13, 2004

Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites

Prerequisite: doctoral status

Meeting time

Tuesday, 4:30-7:30pm

Class location

Webster Professional Development Center

Instructor Information

Name: Lance D. Fusarelli, Ph.D.

Associate Professor & Director of Graduate Programs

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Email: lance_fusarelli@ncsu.edu or fusarelli@hotmail.com

Office location: 608N Poe Hall

Office phone: 919-513-0507

Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:30-4:30pm (Webster Center) and by appointment

Required Course Materials

- Heck, R. H. (2004). *Studying educational and social policy: Theoretical concepts and research methods*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. ISBN: 0805844619 (paperback)
- Additional required readings will be made available by the instructor

Recommended Text

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Course Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes

Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce doctoral students to the conceptual frameworks, theories, and research methods used to study educational policy, including institutional theory, neopluralist interest groups and advocacy coalitions, political culture, critical theory, feminist, and postmodernist/poststructuralist approaches to policy research. In pursuing this purpose, students will explore both the key issues in American public preK-12 education and the substance and process of educational policymaking—policy actors, agenda setting, policy formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation. Students will be able to identify the key elements of an educational policy, outline procedures for interpreting and evaluating policy research, and analyze the historical foundations of policy.

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Mission

Additionally, this course provides experiences that will help the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies programs fulfill three of our objectives as described in our mission statement. They are:

- ❖ **Analysis**
To prepare students with strong observational, analytical, synthesis, and evaluation skills.
- ❖ **Inquiry**
To prepare students who are able to conceptualize and execute theory-driven inquiry independently.
- ❖ **Communication**
To prepare students who value and are capable of disseminating the findings of their research to multiple audiences.

Standards

This course focuses on three elements of the College of Education's conceptual framework for developing professional educators who LEAD and SERVE and addresses 3 of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards and 3 of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) or the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standards. Students may access the standards at the websites listed below.

North Carolina State University's LEAD & SERVE (updated May 2006)
<http://ced.ncsu.edu/about/leadserve.doc>

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) (published 1996)
<http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/isllcstd.pdf>

The Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) (published January 2002)
http://www.npbea.org/ELCC/ELCCStandards%20_5-02.pdf

The student outcomes for this course primarily address three College of Education framework elements: E, D, and S; ISLLC standards one, four, and six; and NPBEA/ELCC standards one and six. The outcomes and the corresponding standards are listed below.

Student Outcomes and Related Standards

On completion of this course, each student should be able to:

1. Define common concepts associated with the study of educational policy (all topics);
 - CED S-scholarly
 - Outcome Assessment: class participation, questioning, class discussion

2. Describe some of the major federal and state policies, laws, and regulations that are commonly the focus of policy research in education (all topics);
 - ISLLC 4- knowledge- emerging trends that potentially impact the school community
 - NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.1d
 - Outcome Assessment #1: class participation, questioning, class discussion
 - Outcome Assessment #2: policy research paper

3. Explain the key assumptions, variables, and limitations of a variety of methodologies used in the study of educational policy (all topics);
 - CED E-educate with content-specific strategies
 - ISLLC 1-information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies
 - Outcome Assessment: class participation, questioning, class discussion

4. Evaluate educational policy studies that address current issues impacting the school community (all topics);
 - CED D-demonstrate understanding of the educational context
 - ISLLC 4- knowledge- emerging trends that potentially impact the school community
 - Outcome Assessment #1: class participation, questioning, class discussion
 - Outcome Assessment #2: Analysis of case study

5. Identify the key local, state, and federal governmental and nongovernmental educational policy actors in the United States (policy actors);
 - CED D-demonstrate understanding of the educational context
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge –the principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge-the political, social, cultural, and economic systems and processes that impact schools
 - ISLLC 6- the dynamics of policy development and advocacy under our democratic political system
 - Outcome Assessment: class participation, questioning, class discussion

6. Explain the U.S. political system, and describe how the structure of the system influences the development of educational policy (policy actors, issue definition, agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption);
 - CED D-demonstrate understanding of the educational context
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge –the principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge-the political, social, cultural, and economic systems and processes that impact schools
 - ISLLC 6- the dynamics of policy development and advocacy under our democratic political system
 - NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.1b
 - Outcome Assessment #1: class participation, questioning, class discussion
 - Outcome Assessment #2: policy research paper

7. Describe the process for which educational policy is developed in the United States (policy actors, issue definition, agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption);
 - CED D-demonstrate understanding of the educational context
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge –the principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge-the political, social, cultural, and economic systems and processes that impact schools
 - ISLLC 6- the dynamics of policy development and advocacy under our democratic political system
 - Outcome Assessment #1: class participation, questioning, class discussion
 - Outcome Assessment #2: policy research paper

8. Explain the different political conceptual frameworks and theories used to explain policy development in educational policy (policy actors, issue definition, agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption);
 - CED E-educate with content-specific strategies
 - ISLLC 1 –knowledge – learning goals in a pluralistic society
 - ISLLC 1-information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies
 - Outcome Assessment #1: class participation, questioning, class discussion
 - Outcome Assessment #2: policy research paper

9. Write a policy research study (policy actors, issue definition, agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption) and formulate a literature review about policy theories, their application in school settings, and formulate a research design to study policy issues.
 - CED S-scholarly
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge –the principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools
 - ISLLC 6-knowledge-the political, social, cultural, and economic systems and processes that impact schools
 - ISLLC 6- the dynamics of policy development and advocacy under our democratic political system
 - NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.1b
 - Outcome Assessment: policy research paper

10. Explain the factors that contribute to the successful implementation of policies (policy implementation)
 - CED D-demonstrate understanding of the educational context
 - Outcome Assessment: class participation, questioning, class discussion

11. Distinguish among the different purposes and types of policy evaluation (policy evaluation)
 - CED E-educate with content-specific strategies
 - ISLLC 1-information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies

- Outcome Assessment: class participation, questioning, class discussion

13. Using data from the research literature, recommend a specific school, district, or state policy (policy instruments);

- CED S-scholarly
- ISLLC 1-information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies
- NPBEA/ELCC –SBL- 1.1b
- NPBEA/ELCC –SDL – 1.1b
- NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.1a
- NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.2a
- Outcome Assessment: policy research paper

14. Explain any school, district, or state specific factors that will increase or decrease the successful policy implementation and recommend policies, structures, or actions that will improve the likelihood of success for the proposed policy (policy instruments and policy implementation);

- CED D-demonstrate understanding of the educational context
- ISLLC 4- knowledge: the conditions and dynamics of the diverse school community
- ISLLC 6-knowledge-the political, social, cultural, and economic systems and processes that impact schools
- NPBEA/ELCC –SBL- 1.1b
- NPBEA/ELCC –SDL – 1.1b
- NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.1a
- NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.1b
- NPBEA/ELCC –SBL -6.2a
- Outcome Assessment: policy research paper

Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation (10% of grade – 10 points max)

Since this is a doctoral seminar, attendance and participation will be a factor in your grade for the course. Excused absences include both anticipated absences that are detailed in the University policies on attendance (e.g., official university functions, court dates, military duty, personal emergency, and religious observances) and emergency absences (e.g., illness and injury certified by an attending physician, death or serious illness of family member when documented appropriately).

See the University's policy on attendance for additional details:

http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/academic_affairs/courses_undergrad/REG02.20.3.php

When advance notification is not possible, as in the case with emergency absences (e.g., personal or family illness or death), the student should notify the instructor as soon as possible. Students should refer to Academic Policies and Regulations REG02.20.3:

Attendance Regulations

(http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/academic_affairs/pols_regs/REG205.00.4.php) for additional information on excused and unexcused absences.

Note: Due to the somewhat compressed schedule of this course, there will be one mandatory, double-session Saturday class on September 30 from 9:00am-4:00pm in Room 120, Poe Hall.

Any student who misses more than 3 class meetings for any reason (the Saturday session counts for 2 class meetings) will be required to complete an 8-12 page thematic literature review on one of the following policy areas: the role of institutions in shaping public policy; interest groups and advocacy coalitions; political culture, values, and ideology; agenda setting and problem definition; implementation; evaluation; ethics; critical theory and public policy; postmodernism; feminist critical policy analysis; comparative public policy; or policy learning and the use of research in policy studies

Staying Current on Educational Policy Issues and Controversies: Students are strongly encouraged to join one listserv to stay current with education-related issues. Options include but are not limited to: ASCD SmartBrief, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Education Week*. It's much easier to do a dissertation if the research comes to you.

Participation

Woody Allen said that 80% of success is just showing up. That's not true in this class. It is *essential* that you complete all the readings before class and be prepared to answer questions about the readings. Participation is an integral part of this course. Actively participating in discussion (e.g., posing questions, relating personal experiences or insights, working in groups, and devising applications) promotes learning for all students. Your participation is important to your learning as well as to the learning of others.

Leading Class Discussion – Group Presentation (15% of grade – 15 points max)

In groups, students will be responsible for leading class discussion of a research article distributed by the instructor. Be sure to explain the article (its purpose, methods, and major findings) and how it reflects/exemplifies the theory of the week. Please create a 1-2 page handout of key ideas drawn from the article and distribute copies to the entire class (including the instructor).

Major Written Assignments

Analysis of a Case Study: Decentralization (20% of grade – 20 points max) - 4-6 pages

Each student will analyze a case study of a significant school policy controversy that will be distributed in class. You are to write a brief essay detailing the major problems and issues raised by the case. Offer potential solutions or courses of action that need to be taken to address the situation.

Policy Research Paper (55% of grade – 55 points max) – 14-17 pages

Choose an educational policy of interest to you and write a 12-16 page analysis from a policy framework that you find compelling. In addition to your preferred framework, you will be expected to discuss the policy from one other perspective that you might find challenging. For example, assume you were going to discuss the issue of national/state accountability systems for public education, and you have decided that a pluralist model best describes your approach to the concern. You might also want to consider the implications that a race-based framework/perspective might have on how the problem is framed, analyzed, and what solutions are recommended and adopted to address the problem. Finally, sketch out a research or evaluation design (1-2 pages max) that describes how you might study the issue raised in the paper (include a description of data sources and methodology).

Evaluation

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Percent of Grade (Points)</i>
<i>Participation & Attendance</i>	10%
• Frequency (weekly attendance)	5%
• Quality	5%
<i>Leading Class Discussion</i>	15%
▪ Quality of Presentation	10%
▪ Quality of Handout	5%
<i>Policy Research Paper</i>	55%
▪ Literature Review of Research on Issue	15%
▪ Application of Theory #1	15%
▪ Application of Theory #2	15%

▪ Research Design	10%
<i>Analysis of Case Study: Decentralization</i>	20%
▪ Discussion of Major Issues	15%
▪ Resolution/Solution/Recommendations	5%
<i>Total</i>	100%

Grades

Incompletes

Due to unanticipated events, students may not be able to complete the coursework. In these instances, at the discretion of the instructor, students will receive a temporary grade, Incomplete (IN). For further details regarding incomplete grades and other grading policies please consult NCSU Academic Policies and Regulations REG02.50.3: Grading for explanations of other grades (e.g., audit, incomplete, withdrawal/late drop, etc.).

At the completion of this course, your points will be totaled and a grade assigned based on the following scale:

- 98-100% (points) = A+
- 94-97% = A
- 90-93% = A-
- 87-89% = B+
- 84-86% = B
- 80-83% = B-
- 77-79% = C+
- 74-76% = C
- 70-73% = C-
- Below 70% = F

All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and follow the guidelines established in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th edition. Please include the title of the assignment on the cover page. The minimum page number on all written assignments excludes title page and appendices. Do not feel unduly constrained by upper page limits—**feel free to exceed expectations!**

Consistent with established principles of adult learning, students may rewrite any assignments and resubmit for a higher grade. Resubmissions **MUST** be accompanied by the original graded paper. No exceptions. The instructor will not accept rewrites after the last day of class (see date below).

University Policy on Academic Integrity: North Carolina State University policy requires the following statement in the course syllabus: “The act of submitting work for evaluation or to meet a requirement is regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student’s own thought and study, produced without assistance, and stated in the

student's own words, except as quotation marks. References or footnotes acknowledge the use of other sources. Submission of work used previously must first be approved by the instructor." (For additional information, refer to the NCSU Code of Student Conduct available at:

http://www2.ncsu.edu/prr/student_services/student_conduct/POL445.00.1.htm).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students who require accommodations for identified physical or learning disabilities need to contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester, preferably within 24 hours of the first session. The Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) will assist in certifying the disability and structuring the particular accommodations for this course. Additional information is available at: http://www.ncsu.edu/equal_op/dss; (919) 515-7653 (Voice) or (919) 515-8830 (TTY).

Excellent Policy Research Sources:

You may find these sources useful:

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/brookings_papers_on_education_policy/

<http://www.edweek.com>

<http://www.eduref.org/Eric>

<http://olam.ed.asu.edu/epaa>

<http://nces.ed.gov>

<http://www.ecs.org>

<http://www.rand.org>

http://www.cpre.org/index_js.htm

<http://www.appam.org>

Things to think about in this course:

It has been said that there are two things in this world too messy to watch: the making of sausage and the making of policies – this course examines why this is true

“For every complex problem, there is a simple solution. And it is always wrong” – H.L. Mencken

“Fifty percent of the solution to any problem lies in defining it [the problem]” – Dr. Phil

Tentative Agenda For Class Meetings

Date	Topic and Guiding Questions	Readings/Assignments
August 22	Policy & policy research What is educational policy? What key assumption guide policy research? Why study policy research?	
August 29	Studying policy Politics and policymaking in education Theoretical frameworks Challenges to conducting policy research Values in policymaking	Heck, Introduction and Chapter 1 Stout, R. T., Tallerico, M., & Scribner, K. P. (1995). Values: The ‘what?’ of the politics of education. In J. D. Scribner & D. H. Layton (Eds.). <i>The study of educational politics</i> (pp. 5-20). Washington, DC: Falmer Press.
September 5	How federalism affects policymaking	Heck, Chapter 2 Fuller, B. (2003). Education policy under cultural pluralism. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 32(9), 15-24. Discussion of Case Study: Does Decentralization Lead to Inequities?
September 12	Problem definition and agenda setting Systems theory Policy stages Implementation and policy evaluation	Heck, Chapter 3 Cooper, B. S., Fusarelli, L. D., & Randall, E. V. (2004). Education policy implementation (chapter 4). <i>Better policies, better schools: Theories and applications</i> (pp. 83-98). Boston: Pearson Education. Group Presentation: Portz, J. (1996). Problem definitions and policy agendas: Shaping the educational agenda in Boston. <i>Policy Studies Journal</i>, 24(3), 371-386. Presenters: Due: Case Study Analysis
September 19	Political culture and policymaking	Heck, Chapter 4

		<p>Fusarelli, L. D. (2002). The political economy of gubernatorial elections: Implications for education policy. <i>Educational Policy</i>, 16(1), 139-160.</p> <p>Group Presentation: Benham, M. K. P., & Heck, R. H. (1994). Political culture and policy in a state-controlled educational system: The case of educational politics in Hawai'i. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i>, 30(4), 419-450.</p> <p>Presenters:</p>
September 26	Punctuated-equilibrium theory Interest groups and advocacy coalitions	<p>Heck, Chapter 5</p> <p>Group Presentation: Mazzoni, T. L., & Clugston, R. M., Jr. (1987). Big business as a policy innovator in state school reform: A Minnesota case study. <i>Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i>, 9(4), 312-324.</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Group Presentation: Mintrom, M., & Vergari, S. (1996). Advocacy coalitions, policy entrepreneurs, and policy change. <i>Policy Studies Journal</i>, 24(3), 420-434.</p> <p>Presenters:</p>
September 30	Institutional theory Rational choice approaches	<p>Heck, Chapter 6</p> <p>Group Presentation: Plank, D. N., Scotch, R. K., & Gamble, J. L. (1996). Rethinking progressive school reform: Organizational dynamics and educational change. <i>American Journal of Education</i>, 104, 79-102.</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Group Presentation: Fusarelli, L. D. (2003). <i>The political dynamics of school choice: Negotiating contested terrain</i> (Chapter 3: Institutional Dynamics), pp. 39-70.</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Library workshop: Literature search—finding materials relevant to the subject being explored ERIC</p>

tour/work session!		JSTOR Web of Science
October 3	How (Maybe Good) Policy Proposals Die: “Pursuing the American Dream: A Case Study of NC H.B. 1183”	Guest Speaker: Dr. Marla Sanders, Teaching Assistant Professor, NCSU Other Topics: “An Insider’s Guide to Surviving the Dissertation Process”
October 10	Critical theory and policy analysis	Heck, Chapter 7 Group Presentation: Young, M. D. (1999). Multifocal educational policy research: Toward a method for enhancing traditional educational policy studies. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 36(4), 677-714. Presenters:
October 17	Feminist policy analysis Postmodern/poststructural policy analysis	Scheurich, J. J. (1994). Policy archaeology: A new policy studies methodology. <i>Journal of Education Policy</i> , 9(4), 297-316. Group Presentation: Marshall, C. (1997). Dismantling and reconstructing policy analysis. In C. Marshall (Ed.), <i>Feminist critical policy analysis</i> (pp. 1-39). London: Falmer Press. Presenters:
October 24	Policy methods and research designs Comparative policy research	Heck, Chapter 8 Fowler, F. C. (1995). The international arena: The Global Village. In J. D. Scribner & D. H. Layton (Eds.). <i>The study of educational politics</i> (pp. 89-102). Washington, DC: Falmer Press.
October 31	Qualitative methods of policy research	Heck, Chapter 9
November 7	Revisiting our conceptual frameworks Can policymakers learn?	Heck, Chapter 12 Due: Policy research paper