



EDAD 718
Doctoral Dissertation Seminar
Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Mack Hines, Ed.D
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Office Hours: TBD (As needed upon request.)
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Preferred Form of Communication: Email
Communication Response Time: 24-48 Hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, and Supplementary Resources

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Course Description

In this course, doctoral candidates will engage in the process of developing, conducting, and defending an original research dissertation. The dissertation must address a significant problem within the candidate's area of specialization and demonstrate the ability to conduct rigorous academic research. Students will work closely with their advisory committee and adhere to institutional guidelines throughout the process, culminating in a dissertation that contributes to the existing body of knowledge. The dissertation must exhibit superior academic competence and offer a meaningful contribution to the field. This course is designed to support candidates through the stages of research, data collection, analysis, and the final defense. The syllabus and schedule are subject to change based on course progress and faculty availability.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Gain a deep understanding of the dissertation process, including research design, methodology, and academic writing guidelines, through detailed engagement with course materials and faculty guidance.
2. Successfully develop and defend a dissertation proposal that clearly defines the research problem, objectives, and methodology, demonstrating the ability to conduct independent, scholarly research.
3. Navigate the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process with support from the dissertation chair, ensuring ethical and compliant research practices.
4. Conduct research, including data collection and analysis, with precision and adherence to scholarly standards, demonstrating the capacity to produce high-quality, original research.
5. Prepare for and successfully defend the final dissertation, showcasing the research findings, analysis, and contributions to the field through an in-depth oral defense before the advisory committee.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The instructor will create an environment for learning by providing focus and guidance to the content. Assignments are designed to be learning experiences for students, and it is presumed and expected that students will actively participate in the class. As a graduate level course, the instructor expects quality work from each student supported by adequate preparation and involvement. Learning will be achieved through textbooks and other assigned readings, projects, and class interaction.

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students should be comfortable with basic word processing, web navigation, and use of learning management systems (LMS) such as Canvas. Some assignments may require the use of presentation tools like PowerPoint or Google Slides.

Instructional Methods

This course will use a combination of lectures, group discussions, case studies, interactive learning activities, and project-based assignments. Students will work collaboratively to design and critique curriculum models and engage in reflective practices about their learning.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

1. **Active Participation:** Engage fully in class discussions, group activities, and projects. Active participation enhances both your learning and the learning of your peers.
2. **Time Management:** Plan your time effectively. Graduate-level coursework requires significant commitment, so it is essential to keep up with reading assignments, projects, and deadlines. Procrastination can hinder your ability to complete high-quality work.

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3. **Complete All Readings:** Read assigned materials thoroughly before class. Come prepared with questions or insights to contribute to class discussions. The readings will provide the foundation for the topics discussed, and your understanding of them will be essential for assignments.
4. **Collaborative Learning:** Be open to feedback from peers and provide constructive feedback in return. Collaboration is a valuable aspect of learning in this course, and working with others will help expand your understanding of curriculum design.
5. **Engage in Self-Reflection:** Take time to reflect on your learning throughout the course. Consider how the course content relates to your own experiences and professional goals. Reflection will help you deepen your understanding of the concepts discussed.
6. **Seek Help When Needed:** If you have questions or are struggling with course material, reach out for assistance early. Whether it's through office hours, emails, or discussion forums, I am here to help you succeed.
7. **Meet Deadlines:** Timely submission of assignments is critical. Make sure to submit all assignments on time to avoid penalties and to stay on track with the course progression.
8. **Stay Organized:** Keep track of assignments, deadlines, and course materials. Organization will help you manage your workload efficiently and ensure that nothing is overlooked.
9. **Professionalism:** Demonstrate professionalism in all your interactions. This includes respect for your peers' ideas, timely communication, and a commitment to high-quality work.
10. **Embrace Constructive Criticism:** Be open to feedback and use it as an opportunity for growth. Revising and improving your work based on feedback is an essential part of the learning process.

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TExES 268 Principal Standards Addressed
DOMAIN II-Leading Learning
(Instructional Leadership/Teaching and Learning)

Competency 003: The beginning principal knows how to collaboratively develop and implement high quality instruction.

- A. Prioritizes instruction and student achievement by understanding, sharing, and promoting a clear definition of high-quality instruction based on best practices from recent research
- B. Facilitates the use of sound, research-based practice in the development, implementation, coordination, and evaluation of campus curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs to fulfill academic, development, social, and cultural needs
- C. Facilitates campus participation in collaborative district planning, implementation, monitoring, and revision of the curriculum to ensure appropriate scope, sequence, content, and alignment (Backward Design)
- D. Implements a rigorous curriculum that is aligned with state standards, including college and career-readiness standards
- E. Facilitates the use and integration of technology, telecommunications, and information systems to enhance learning

Competency 004: The entry-level principal knows how to monitor and assess classroom instruction to promote teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

- A. Monitors instruction routinely by visiting classrooms, observing instruction, and attending grade-level, department, or team meetings to provide evidence-based feedback to improve instruction
- B. Analyzes the curriculum collaboratively to guide teachers in aligning content across grades and ensures that curricular scopes and sequences meet the particular needs of their diverse student populations (considering sociological, linguistic, cultural, and other factors)
- C. Monitors and ensures staff use of multiple forms of student data to inform instruction and intervention decisions that maximizes instructional effectiveness and student achievement
- D. Promotes instruction that supports the growth of individual students and student groups, supports equity, and works to reduce the achievement gap
- E. Supports staff in developing the capacity and time to collaboratively and individually use classroom formative and summative assessment data to inform effective instructional practices and interventions

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GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 451- 500 Points

B = 401- 450 Points

C = 351- 400 Points

D = 301- 350 Points

F = 300 & > Points

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Assignment	Value
Module Discussions	50%
Pillar Project	50%

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

The instructor encourages an open, collaborative, and supportive learning environment where students are actively engaged in the course material. Students are encouraged to ask questions, seek clarification, and share their thoughts and experiences throughout the course. Regular communication with the instructor is essential for success, and students are welcome to reach out via email, phone, or during office hours.

In addition to the formal course interactions, students may schedule individual meetings or consultations as needed to discuss course progress, assignments, or any challenges they may encounter. The instructor will provide timely feedback on

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assignments and will be available to support students' academic and professional growth throughout the course.

To ensure effective communication, students are expected to regularly check their university email and the course management platform (e.g., D2L, Blackboard, etc.) for updates, announcements, and instructor responses. The instructor aims to respond to all student inquiries within 24-48 hours.

Technology Requirements, Course Access, and University Policies

All course sections offered by **East Texas A&M University** are supported through the **myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS)**. Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet all system and browser requirements for Brightspace and any integrated tools used in the course.

System Requirements and Technical Support

- Brightspace platform requirements and supported browsers are available through the **Brightspace Community**.
- Courses using **YouSeeU** or other virtual classroom tools require compatible hardware, software, and reliable internet access.
- Students are responsible for maintaining the technology necessary to participate fully in all course activities.

Access and Navigation

Students must use their **Campus-Wide ID (CWID)** and password to access the course.

Assistance with CWID or password issues is available through the **Center for IT Excellence (CITE)**:

- **Phone:** 903-468-6000
- **Email:** helpdesk@etamu.edu

Reliable access to a computer and internet connection is essential. Personal technology issues do not excuse missed or late coursework. Students are expected to maintain a backup plan for accessing course materials and completing assignments. Possible alternatives include:

- Alternative computers or devices
- Campus computer labs
- Public libraries
- Other reliable technology and internet resources

Communication and Technical Support

Students experiencing difficulty with course content should contact the instructor directly. **Email is the preferred method of communication during the week**, and messages are checked regularly. Students may schedule appointments for meetings by email, and additional contact options may be available when needed.

For technical issues related to Brightspace, students should contact **Brightspace Technical Support** at **1-877-325-7778** or access support resources through the Brightspace Community.

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Course Procedures and Expectations

Attendance and Participation

This graduate-level course emphasizes active engagement and consistent participation. Students are expected to participate throughout each module in activities such as:

- Discussions
- Projects
- Journaling
- Other assigned learning activities

Staying current with the course schedule is essential because learning activities are designed to build upon one another.

Examinations

Examinations assess students' ability to apply course concepts through **analysis and synthesis**. Responses should demonstrate the application of knowledge to leadership scenarios rather than rely primarily on rote recall.

Assignments

Assignment instructions and submission requirements are provided within the weekly modules in D2L.

Unless otherwise specified, written assignments should be submitted electronically through t **D2L Dropbox** using the required file format.

Syllabus Changes

This syllabus serves as a guide and may be revised as needed to support student learning or address instructional needs. Any changes will be communicated to students in advance.

University Policies and Student Responsibilities

Student Conduct

Students are expected to maintain professional and respectful behavior that contributes to a positive learning environment. Expectations are outlined in the **Student Guidebook**. Students should also follow established **netiquette guidelines** when participating in online discussions and other course activities.

Attendance Policy

University attendance policies are governed by **Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01**, which is available through the University website.

Academic Integrity

East Texas A&M University upholds high standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism and unauthorized assistance—is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with University policy.

Separate procedures apply to undergraduate and graduate students, as outlined in official University documentation.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

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The University recognizes that certain uses of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** tools may be permitted at the discretion of the instructor. Any permitted use of AI tools must be clearly documented.

Undocumented use of AI constitutes academic dishonesty. Regardless of whether AI tools are used, students remain fully responsible for the **content, accuracy, originality, and integrity** of all submitted work.

Accessibility and Campus Resources

Students with Disabilities

In compliance with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**, students requiring accommodations should contact the **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**, located in the **Velma K. Waters Library, Room 162**.

Services are confidential and are designed to support equitable access to learning.

Nondiscrimination Statement

East Texas A&M University complies with all applicable federal and state nondiscrimination laws and maintains a learning environment free from discrimination and retaliation.

Campus Concealed Carry

Texas law permits licensed individuals to carry concealed handguns in designated campus locations, subject to applicable University rules and state law. **Open carry is prohibited on campus.**

Violations should be reported to **University Police**.

Student Mental Health Support

The **Counseling Center**, located in the **Halladay Building, Room 203**, provides counseling services, educational programming, and crisis support.

Students have access to **24/7 crisis services** by calling:
903-886-5145

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

The course shell will provide the scope and sequence for weekly activities.

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