George Mason University
Graduate Course Approval/Inventory Form

Please complete this form and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses. Complete the Coordination Form on page 2 if changes in this course will affect other units. If no other units are affected, simply indicate “None” on the form. After approval by the appropriate GSE program faculty and GSE Program Development and Evaluation Team (PDET), the Associate Dean for Outreach and Program Development will forward it as an email attachment to the Secretary of the Graduate Council. A printed copy of the form with signatures will be brought to the Graduate Council Meeting.

Please indicate:  ___X__ NEW  ____ MODIFY  ____ DELETE

Local Unit:  Graduate School of Education  Graduate Council Approval Date:

Course Abbreviation:  EDLE  Course Number: 815

Full Course Title:  Conceptual Frameworks in Education Leadership

Abbreviated Course Title (24 characters max including spaces):  Conc Frame in Ed Lead

Credit hours:  3  Program of Record:  Ph.D. in Education

Repeatable for Credit?  
___ D=Yes, not within same term  Up to __ hours
___ T=Yes, within the same term  Up to __ hours
___ N=Cannot be repeated for credit

Grade Type:  
___XGR: graduate grading, normal (A, A-, B+, B, C, F, IN, AB)

Activity Code (please indicate):  
___X_ Lecture (LEC)  ___ Lab (LAB)  ___
___ Recitation (RCT)  ___ Studio (STU)  ___ Internship (INT)  ___ Independent Study (IND)

Catalog Credit Format  
GA(700+)  ___X__

Course Level:  GF(500-600)  

Maximum Enrollment:  25  For NEW courses, first term to be offered:  Fall 2004

Prerequisites or corequisites:  Admission to the Ph.D. in Education Program or permission of instructor

Catalog Description (35 words or less)  Use catalog format and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses:
Introduces students to three different disciplinary perspectives on education leadership and helps students identify and articulate different conceptual frameworks. Designing a conceptual framework that informs research questions is the major course focus.

For MODIFIED or DELETED courses as appropriate:
Last term offered: Previous Course Abbreviation: Previous number:
Description of modification:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:
Submitted by: David Brazer ___________________________ email: sbrazer@gmu.edu
Department/Program: Joan Isenberg ______________ Date: __5/3/04_________________

College Committee: Joan Isenberg __________________ Date: __5/3/04_________________

Graduate Council Representative: __________________________ Date: __________________
**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**Course Coordination Form**  
**Graduate School of Education**

**Approval from other units:**

Please list those units outside of your own who may be affected by this new, modified, or deleted course. Each of these units must approve this change prior to its being submitted to the Graduate Council for approval. Submit a signed form or attach a copy of the email approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit:</th>
<th>Head of Unit’s Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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Graduate Council approval: ___________________________________________ Date: 

Graduate Council representative: ________________________________ Date: 

Provost Office representative: ________________________________ Date: 

_________________________________________________
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS IN EDUCATION LEADERSHIP
EDLE 815 (3 Credits)

General Syllabus

Instructor: S. David Brazer
Phone: 703-993-3634
Fax: 703-993-2013
E-mail: sbrazer@gmu.edu
Office: Robinson, A306
Website: http://blackboard.gmu.edu
Mailing Address: George Mason University
4400 University Dr., MSN 4B3
Fairfax, VA 22030-4444

Schedule Information

Meeting Times: Classes will meet on Mondays from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m., alternating with EDRS 812 (The topics schedule below will be modified to accommodate the extended meeting times for each class session.)

Location: PACE West, Haymarket, VA

Office Hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Course Description

Introduces students to three different disciplinary perspectives on education leadership and helps students identify and articulate different conceptual frameworks used in various publications. Designing a conceptual framework that informs research questions of students’ own choosing is the major course focus.

Student Outcomes

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

1. apply three disciplinary perspectives to issues in education leadership;
2. describe, verbally and graphically, conceptual frameworks used in a variety of publications;
3. develop conceptual frameworks that inform their own original research questions; and
4. formally defend their conceptual frameworks—describing strengths, acknowledging weaknesses, and engaging in question-and-answer.
EDLE 815 is the fourth course in the Education Leadership specialization in the Ph.D. in Education program. It is aligned with the following GSE Priorities: Diversity; Reflective, research-based practice; research and scholarship; and advanced studies. This course also directly addresses the two major Ph.D. in Education Program goals: 1) Improve knowledge and skills useful in current or planned educational and counseling roles; and 2) Improve the ability to analyze current social, economic, political, and ethical issues and concerns in their relationship to various educational and community situations and activities.

In addition to addressing unit and program goals, EDLE 815 addresses the following Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards:

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<tr>
<th>STANDARD</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>DISPOSITIONS</th>
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| 1. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. | The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:  
- Learning goals in a pluralistic society  
- Information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies  
- Effective communication | The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:  
- The educability of all  
- The inclusion of all members of the school community  
- A willingness to continuously examine one’s own assumptions, beliefs and practices. |
| 2. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth. | The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:  
- Diversity and its meaning for educational programs  
- Adult learning and professional development models  
- School cultures | The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:  
- Student learning as the fundamental purpose of schooling  
- Professional development as an integral part of school improvement  
- The benefits that diversity brings to the school community  
- Preparing students to be contributing members of society |
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<tr>
<th>STANDARD</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>DISPOSITIONS</th>
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</table>
| 4. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources. | The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:  
- Emerging issues and trends that potentially impact the school community  
- The conditions and dynamics of the diverse school community | The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:  
- Schools operating as an integral part of the larger community.  
- The proposition that diversity enriches the school  
- Resources of the family and community needing to be brought to bear on the education of students |
| 6. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. | The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:  
- The principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools  
- The role of public education in developing and renewing a democratic society and an economically productive nation  
- The political, social, cultural, and economic systems and processes that impact schools  
- Global issues and forces affecting teaching and learning  
- The dynamics of policy development and advocacy under our democratic political system  
- The importance of diversity and equity in a democratic society | The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:  
- Education as a key to opportunity and social mobility  
- Recognizing a variety of ideas, values, and cultures  
- Using legal systems to protect student rights and improve student opportunities |
Course Materials

Required Texts


Articles on electronic reserve:


Recommended Text


Outside-of-Class Resources

All students are expected to have access to a personal computer and the ability to use basic word processing, e-mail and Web browser programs.

Nature of Course Delivery

Students are expected to be active participants in the class and to help create a unique classroom experience for everyone involved. Brief lectures or presentations help to organize the course, but students are expected to flesh out the basic structure through their participation in classroom discussions, debates, and presentations. Large group and small group formats will be used in the classroom, and students are expected to
participate in electronic discussions via Blackboard. Students will enhance course content through informally sharing their research in a specific topic area.

**Students With Special Needs**

Students who require any special accommodations or those with disabilities that may affect their ability to participate fully in the course are encouraged to work with the instructor to ensure their successful participation.

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all state and local governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2474).

**Course Requirements, Assignments, and Evaluation Criteria**

All students are required to complete all assigned readings prior to the date they appear in the schedule in the “Course Topics” section below. The following writing assignments also appear in Course Topics:

- Research Question and Rationale—15 points
- Idea Paper About Useful Concepts—10 points
- Conceptual Framework—35 points (Note: This is the major performance-based assessment for this course.)

Specific assignment instructions and assessment rubrics may be found at the end of this syllabus.

Letter grades will be assigned according to the weights and grading scale listed below. Students should always bear in mind that grading is primarily the instructor’s judgment about performance on a particular assignment. The intent is to indicate student success in completing the assignment, not the level of effort put into it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Question and Rationale</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea Paper About Useful Concepts</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>35 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework Defense</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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</table>

Class participation has the following components:
➢ Preparation for class, including completing reading assignments on time and thinking about topics to be handled or discussed.
➢ Listening actively and attentively to class members and to instructors.
➢ Making oral contributions in small and large groups—offering original ideas as well as responding to what others have said.
➢ Making thoughtful contributions to Blackboard discussions.

**Students who do not participate in a Blackboard activity and/or are absent for the Conceptual Framework Defense, will not receive credit for those activities.**

**Absence From Class**

Students are expected to attend every class for its entirety. Emergencies sometimes arise, however. Students who need to be absent from class must notify the instructor in advance by telephone or e-mail. Students who miss more than one class, will lose participation points. Students who come to class more than 30 minutes late or leave more than 30 minutes early will lose participation points.

**Grading Scale**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85 – 89 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 84 percent</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>75 – 79 percent</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>74 percent or below</td>
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**GMU Honor Code**

Students are expected to abide by the George Mason University Honor Code. Violations (such as cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarizing, lying, stealing) will be reported to the Honor Committee. Please refer to the University Catalog or [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu) for the full Honor Code. Ignorance of the code is not a defense.

**Course Topics**

**Session 1**

Introductions
Developing a working definition of “conceptual framework”
Graphic representations of conceptual frameworks

**Session 2**

*Eisenhart article*
Our default conceptual frameworks
Contemporary research challenges in anthropology
Sharing research questions and rationales

**Session 3**

*Coleman chapter*
Introduction to the sociology of education
Coleman’s social theory
The concept of authority
Authority relations in your own schools and organizations

**Research Question and Rationale paper due**

**Session 4**
*Phelan et al., chapter 1*
Understanding the conceptual framework and research methodology of *Adolescents’ Worlds*

**Session 5**
*Cuban, Introduction – chapter 2*
Images and roles of teaching
Allocation of public goods
Finance of education

**Session 6**
*Hoy et al. article*
Human Capital
Alternatives (economic and otherwise) to human capital theory

**Session 7**
*Sandefur and Laumann article*
Common themes in sociology, anthropology, and economics to this point

**Session 8**
*Cuban, chapters 3 – 4*
What is leadership?
Analyzing one or more sociological conceptual frameworks
Sharing students’ research interests

**Session 9**
*Phelan et al., assigned case studies*
*Cuban, chapters 5 – 6*
The *Adolescents’ Worlds* case studies: Implications for leadership
When do leaders follow and vice versa?

**Session 10**
How would the sociologist and economist differ from the anthropologist interpreting the school lives of Ryan, Trinh, Patricia, and the others from *Adolescents’ Worlds*?
Sharing students’ research interests

**Session 11**
*Cuban, chapters 7 – 8*
Three kinds of capital: cultural, social, and human
Applying images and roles (from Cuban) to what leaders do

**Session 12**
Articulating conceptual frameworks used in the economics of education
Scarcity, equity, efficiency, and the New Adequacy: Educational leadership implications of the economic perspective
| Session 13 | Picking and choosing: Which concepts inform your research question and why?  
|           | Developing a relationship between conceptual framework and research methodology |
| Session 14 | *Scribner et al.* article  
|           | Research informing practice: What would you say to an educational leader?  
|           | How research goals may drive conceptual frameworks  
|           | The impact of conceptual frameworks on leadership  
|           | Leadership as revolution?  
|           | **Conceptual Framework paper due** |
| Session 15 | Defending your conceptual framework |
Writing Assignments and Assessment Rubrics

RESEARCH QUESTION AND RATIONALE

15 points

This writing assignment has the following goals:

1. To give students the opportunity either to practice developing a research question or to refine a previously developed research question.
2. To provide a foundation for the conceptual framework paper that is the most important product in this course.
3. To give students and faculty the opportunity to experience one another’s writing and feedback.

To complete this writing assignment, follow the steps below:

1. Articulate a specific research question, or set (no more than three) of questions, you would like to pursue for your dissertation research.
2. Identify a relevant set of literature that helps you to articulate your question and provide a persuasive rationale for studying it.
3. Write a paper not to exceed ten pages that explains the following:
   - The general topic area into which your question falls and your purpose in pursuing this research topic
   - The specific question (or questions) you intend to answer
   - Why the question(s) is compelling—i.e., the significance of your question(s)

Your paper should be written persuasively. As with any paper, it requires a thesis that is supported, proven, or demonstrated through its course. The thesis in this case should be a statement about the importance of investigating your research question(s). You will use the literature you have found to support what you wish to say about the research question(s). Your paper will end with a re-statement of your thesis and discussion about the kinds of answers to your research question(s) you anticipate finding.

Citations must be consistent with APA style and a full list of references must be included at the end of the paper.
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<tr>
<td>Thesis (4 points)</td>
<td>The thesis is clear, analytical, and focused on the importance of</td>
<td>The thesis is apparent, though not entirely clear. It may be</td>
<td>The paper lacks a clear thesis.</td>
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<td>studying the research question(s). It requires demonstration through</td>
<td>more descriptive than analytical.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>coherent arguments. The thesis appears as the last sentence of the first</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paragraph.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Question (4 points)</td>
<td>The research question is easily understood and may be answered through</td>
<td>The research question is difficult to understand and/or may not be</td>
<td>The research question is poorly conceived and impractical.</td>
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<td>accepted data collection and analytical techniques. The research question</td>
<td>answerable. It is not entirely clear how the research question addresses</td>
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<td>does an excellent job addressing the general topic area.</td>
<td>the general topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question Support (5 points)</td>
<td>The author weaves together an explanation of the question’s background,</td>
<td>Significance is not persuasively demonstrated, though it is somewhat</td>
<td>The question is not well supported either in terms of its significance</td>
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<td>persuasive arguments regarding the significance of the question, and the</td>
<td>apparent. The relationships among background, questions, significance,</td>
<td>or its relationship to chosen topics.</td>
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<td>implications of answering it.</td>
<td>and implications are not entirely clear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar, Mechanics, and APA</td>
<td>The paper contains few errors and is consistent with APA style.</td>
<td>The paper has several errors.</td>
<td>The paper has numerous errors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>style (2 pointS)</td>
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IDEA PAPER ABOUT USEFUL CONCEPTS

10 points

This writing assignment has the following goals:

1. To give students the opportunity to organize their thoughts regarding related concepts that both inform their chosen research questions and suggest helpful pathways for research methodology.
2. To help students make a first attempt at articulating a conceptual framework that could be used in their dissertation proposals.

This paper requires students to identify a theoretical foundation that provides the basis for studying their research questions. To complete this paper, students should follow the steps below:

- Identify, from the relevant literature and your own professional experiences, the most useful concepts for studying your research question. Be sure that you have adequate citations for each of the concepts, or that you are clear about the concepts you have developed on your own.
- Clarify how each concept you intend to use informs your research question(s) and where you have conceptual blanks— aspects of your question that lack an adequate theoretical foundation.
- Write a paper not to exceed six pages that begins with a thesis that describes which concepts are useful and why and the ways in which the concepts are related to one another. Be sure to include in your summary section which areas require more conceptual development on your part (if any). Your paper must include a first attempt at a graphical representation of your conceptual framework. This paper differs from others in that it will have a summary rather than a conclusions section.

Citations must be consistent with APA style and a full list of references must be included at the end of the paper.
### IDEA PAPER ABOUT USEFUL CONCEPTS ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

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<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis (2 points)</strong></td>
<td>The thesis is clear and covers in general the major conceptual areas and their relationships the author intends to discuss.</td>
<td>The thesis is apparent, though not entirely clear.</td>
<td>The paper lacks a clear thesis.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Concept Descriptions (3 points)</strong></td>
<td>All body paragraphs are linked directly to the thesis. Each paragraph follows logically from the one before. The body develops and weaves together the concepts that will ultimately form the author’s conceptual framework (next paper).</td>
<td>The body of the paper contains worthwhile information, but not all of it is linked to the thesis. The relationships among concepts may not be clear.</td>
<td>The body of the paper is not directly related to the thesis. Concepts discussed are unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graphic Representation (2 points)</strong></td>
<td>The graphic representation is tightly linked to the verbal description of relevant concepts and their relationships. Graphics are clear and easily understood and/or clearly explained in the text.</td>
<td>The graphic representation is related to the body of the paper but contains ambiguity, conceptual gaps, or inaccuracies.</td>
<td>The graphic representation is either missing or unhelpful.</td>
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<td><strong>Summary (2 points)</strong></td>
<td>The summary draws together the main ideas of the paper. It follows logically from the body of the paper. Although it does not introduce new ideas, it may take familiar ideas and put them together in new and more compelling ways.</td>
<td>The summary follows logically from the body of the paper, but may leave out some important ideas or may have irrelevant portions.</td>
<td>The summary is either missing or does not appear to be related to the body of the paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar, Mechanics, and APA style (1 point)</strong></td>
<td>The paper contains few errors and is consistent with APA style.</td>
<td>The paper has several errors.</td>
<td>The paper has numerous errors.</td>
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</table>
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

35 points

This writing assignment has the following goals:

1. To help students decide which concepts have greatest potential to address their research questions.
2. To help students develop a conceptual framework that can be used in their dissertation proposals (very likely with some modification in EDUC 998).
3. To help students identify promising methodological approaches to their research questions.

This paper requires students to write a conceptual framework very similar to what will appear in their dissertation proposals and dissertations. Students are expected to:

• Write an introduction that articulates the research question(s) to be explored and leads into the conceptual framework.
• Write a thesis that takes a position regarding the most powerful family of concepts (e.g., policy implementation) that provides a theoretical foundation for studying their research questions.
• Argue persuasively (using appropriate literature citations) for the validity of the specific concepts used and their appropriate relationships for studying the specific research question—i.e., construct a verbal conceptual framework.
• Provide a graphic representation of the conceptual framework that gives the reader a clearer understanding. (This must be integrated with the text of the paper.)
• Conclude with a restatement of the thesis and a brief explanation of the research methodology(ies) most compellingly suggested by the conceptual framework.

The paper should be no longer than 20 pages and must conform to APA format.
## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

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<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction and Thesis (3 points)</strong></td>
<td>The introduction provides a smooth transition from research question to conceptual framework. The thesis is clear and analytical in nature. The thesis makes obvious to the reader which concepts (at least generally) the author will use and why.</td>
<td>The introduction may be somewhat confusing. The thesis is apparent, though not entirely clear. The thesis may not be sufficiently analytical.</td>
<td>The paper lacks a clear thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body Paragraphs (12 points)</strong></td>
<td>All body paragraphs are linked directly to the thesis. Each paragraph follows logically from the one before. The body progressively clarifies the author’s conceptual framework and uses relevant literature persuasively.</td>
<td>The body of the paper contains worthwhile information, but not all of it is linked to the thesis. The progression of paragraphs may be confusing or illogical. The conceptual framework and its rationale are not entirely clear.</td>
<td>The body of the paper is not analytical and/or does not elaborate on the thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graphic Representation (9 points)</strong></td>
<td>The graphic representation is tightly linked to the verbal description of relevant concepts and their relationships. Graphics are clear and easily understood and/or clearly explained in the text. Ideally, the graphics enhance the verbal analysis.</td>
<td>The graphic representation is related to the body of the paper but contains ambiguity, conceptual gaps, or inaccuracies.</td>
<td>The graphic representation is either missing or unhelpful.</td>
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### Conclusion (9 points)
The conclusion of a conceptual framework must reiterate the main points and draw the reader into thinking about methodology.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The conclusion appears obvious based on the body of the paper. The methodological approaches suggested follow in a compelling manner from the arguments in favor of the theoretical approach to the research question(s).</td>
<td>The conclusion appears somewhat disconnected from the body and/or is not entirely persuasive with regard to methodology.</td>
<td>The conclusion does not follow logically from the body and/or the implications for methodology are unclear.</td>
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### Grammar and Mechanics (2 points)
The paper contains few errors.

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<tr>
<td>The paper contains few errors.</td>
<td>The paper has several errors.</td>
<td>The paper has numerous errors.</td>
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MEMORANDUM

To:       Julie Kidd and PDET
From:     David Brazer
Re:       New course proposal
Date:     April 28, 2004

I am submitting to PDET a new course proposal for EDLE 815—Conceptual Frameworks in Education Leadership. The syllabus and course approval form are attached to the same e-mail as this memo. I want to explain a bit about the development of this course.

When I arrived at GMU in 1999 there was only one course offered in the Education Leadership specialization in the Ph.D. in Education Program: EDLE 895—Emerging Issues in Administration and Supervision. Our students were counting licensure and master’s courses for their specialization, despite the fact these courses do not provide content or assistance that contributes to their dissertation research.

In the past three years I have worked with colleagues (most notably Denny Dunklee and Jim Upperman) to articulate a course sequence appropriate for the Education Leadership specialization. As part of that process, the three of us developed a three-course foundations sequence that was approved by PDET and Grad. Council during the 2002 – 2003 academic year with the course numbers EDLE 801, 802, and 803. In addition to teaching students about educational foundations from a leadership perspective, the courses help students develop research questions and literature reviews to support them.

After implementing the foundations course sequence, a serious gap that remained was students’ exposure to theoretical or conceptual frameworks. Consequently, I worked with Steve Constantino last year to develop a course that would introduce students to multiple conceptual frameworks and help them to develop their own. We team taught the course last summer with a high degree of success. This past fall I brought the syllabus to the EDLE faculty and Ph.D. in Education Committee for review and comment. Both groups approved the course for submission to PDET.

With the addition of EDLE 815, we will have an Education Leadership specialization that includes foundations, multiple perspectives, policy (EDUC 870), and emerging issues. Students will have access to content about education leadership at all levels and they will have the opportunity to develop research questions, literature reviews, and conceptual frameworks focused on leadership topics. In short, they will be well prepared to enter into the proposal writing process when they complete the Education Leadership specialization.

I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.