Developing Purposeful and Coherent Curriculum for Educational Leadership Preparation
University Council for Educational Administration

http://www.ucea.org

This guide was developed and published by UCEA in cooperation with UCEA’s Center for Systematic Program Improvement through Research in Educational Leadership (INSPIRE) (www.edleaderprep.org). The primary purpose of the center is to make available valid and reliable evaluation research tools and methods, a systemic process for collecting and analyzing program and state level data, training materials and opportunities for program faculty and evaluators, and strategies for leveraging data for leadership preparation program improvement. The second purpose of the center is to support a rigorous and longitudinal research program focused on the preparation and practice of educational leaders.

Institute Directors:
   Andrea K. Rorrer
   Michelle D. Young

Institute Associate Directors:
   Cori A. Groth
   Susan Korach
   Diana G. Pounder

Institute Research Associates:
   Erin Anderson
   Yong Mei Ne
   Kathleen Winn

The planner, which is an updated version of Orr, O’Doherty & Barber (2012), draws on the growing body of research concerning leadership preparation program evaluation and development. The guide as well as other resource materials for leadership preparation are available free of charge for review or download from UCEA’s web site: www.ucea.org. Citation for the guide:

UCEA. (2017). Developing purposeful and coherent curriculum for educational leadership preparation. Charlottesville, VA: UCEA.
# Table of Contents

Developing a Purposeful and Coherent Leadership Preparation Curriculum ................................. 4
Central Program Features as Organizing Principles ........................................................................... 6
A Planner for Curriculum Mapping: Worksheets ................................................................................ 8
Worksheet 1: Getting Ready ................................................................................................................ 10
Worksheet 2: Developing Theories of Action .................................................................................... 11
Worksheet 3: Designing Curriculum ................................................................................................ 13
Worksheet 4: Assessing Coherence .................................................................................................. 15
Worksheet 5: Mapping to Standards ................................................................................................ 17
Worksheet 6: Embedding Powerful Learning Experiences ................................................................. 18
Worksheet 7: Charting the Internship Experience ............................................................................. 21
Worksheet 8: Planning for Assessment and Evaluation ..................................................................... 23
Worksheet 9: Reflection ....................................................................................................................... 25
References ........................................................................................................................................... 26
Developing a Purposeful and Coherent Leadership Preparation Curriculum

Research conducted over the last two decades has revealed links between the characteristics of principal preparation programs and graduate career outcomes (Fuller, Young, & Baker, 2011; Fuller, Hollingworth, & An, 2016) and demonstrated relationships between specific program features and the perceived success of school leaders (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007; Leithwood, Jantzi, Coffin, & Wilson, 1996; Orphanos & Orr, 2014; Orr, 2010). According to the growing body of research on leadership preparation, “curricular coherence linking goals, learning activities, and assessments around a set of shared values, beliefs, and knowledge about effective organizational practice” is the central feature of effective educational leadership preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, La Pointe, & Orr, 2010, p. 42).

For the purpose of this guide, curriculum is defined broadly to include the full course of study for a given program and the elements that comprise it, including program philosophy, goals and objectives; learning objectives for discrete experiences, units, modules or courses; course content; pedagogy; and assessment strategies (Kelly, 2009; Osterman & Hafner, 2009; Tyler, 1949). Furthermore, a leadership preparation program’s curriculum includes both formal coursework and field experience, ensuring curricular coherence from the moment a candidate is selected until she or he completes the program (Clark & Clark, 1996; Murphy, 2006; Taylor, Cordeiro, & Chrispeels, 2009; Young, Crow, Ogawa, & Murphy, 2009). A quality leadership preparation curriculum has the following attributes:

- Integrates important disciplinary theories, knowledge and concepts;
- Links disciplinary concepts to field-based experiences and internships;
- Provides a logical array of coursework, learning activities, and program structures;
- Schedules program learning experiences to strategically develop candidate knowledge and skills;
- Frames content around the principles of adult learning theory and links theory and practice; and
- Aligns to research-based leadership standards.

State and national accrediting organizations require that leadership preparation programs be aligned with explicitly defined leadership standards. Since the late 1990s, the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) were used by most programs, states and accrediting bodies. However, in 2015, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration replaced the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards with the Professional
Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) and an effort was launched to develop the National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards, which will replace ELCC.

While aligned to the PSEL, the NELP standards serve a different purpose and provide greater specificity around performance expectations for beginning level building and district leaders. Whereas the PSEL standards define educational leadership practice broadly, the NELP standards specify what novice leaders and program graduates should know and be able to do as a result of their completion of a high quality educational leadership preparation program. Furthermore, like the ELCC standards that preceded them, the NELP standards were developed specifically with the principalship and the superintendency in mind and will be used to review educational leadership programs through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) advanced program review process. Although programs are not limited to just these standards in defining their program focus and content, most programs must reflect their content alignment in reporting on the program for accreditation review purposes (Young, Anderson & Nash, 2017).

Full-time educational leadership preparation faculty have the greatest control and influence over a program’s curriculum and, thus, its purposefulness and coherence. Although a program’s curriculum includes both formal coursework and field experience, its curriculum is most clearly evident in its courses, particularly the content, instructional strategies, and assessments that are used.

This guide is designed to facilitate curriculum mapping (Jacobs, 1997) or curriculum auditing (English, 1999) for program development, review, and continuous improvement. It outlines both a process and set of tools to aid program faculty in articulating and aligning leadership expectations and their program content and fostering program coherence. The worksheets are a means of collecting curriculum information in ways that enable analysis around questions of standards alignment, content coherence, and relevance to program goals and priorities. The worksheets include suggested discussion questions to add further analysis. Faculty can use this process to guide new program development or to evaluate their existing program for renewal and revision. The worksheets can be used individually or as a set for program study. The worksheets are a means of documenting what is currently being implemented, identifying gaps and areas to strengthen, and reflecting on what the program could be.

The guide unfolds by, first, defining three key features of effective leadership preparation programs, having: a program philosophy that clearly articulates a theory of action, a strong curriculum focused on instructional leadership and school improvement, and well-designed and integrated coursework and field work. Subsequently, the guide provides eight worksheets designed for faculty to use in program self-study and planning. The guide concludes with a recommended timeline for engaging in curriculum review and using the worksheets.
Central Program Features as Organizing Principles

Program Philosophy

A program philosophy serves as more than just a vision statement. Highly effective programs are designed around a clear set of principles about leadership and its development that reflect a theory of action. Darling-Hammond et al. (2010) found, in their study of exemplary leadership preparation programs, that having well-defined and well-integrated theories of action for candidate learning was correlated with the enhancement of adult learning and leadership development and, in turn, produced graduates who were more effective as school leaders, engaged in school improvement work.

Such principles and theories of action together represent a program’s theory of how its preparatory content, pedagogy, and experiences will develop candidates into leaders who can best facilitate quality teaching and learning for all children. As such, they identify the core concepts to be taught, the means by which learning is facilitated, and the nature of field experiences. The theory of action also spells out how these core concepts individually and collectively yield the intended candidate outcomes of quality leadership.

Program Curriculum

A distinguishing program feature is a tight focus on instructional improvement and transformational leadership. This focus, which guides both high-quality coursework and fieldwork, is grounded in a conception of instructional leadership centering on teaching and learning that enables candidates to develop and evaluate curricula, use data to diagnose the learning needs of students, inform teacher mentoring and coaching, and plan professional development. Such a focus also aims to develop transformational leaders who are able to “improve the school as an organization, develop norms and structures that support high quality teaching and learning, enhance the capacity of the faculty to meet the needs of students, and implement reform strategies that will improve student outcomes” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010, p. 54). Finally, such a curriculum would also develop leaders who can foster distributed leadership—as a means of combining instructional and transformational leadership—that enables candidates to build the capacity of teachers and other leaders to share responsibility for developing and supporting a professional culture whose work is focused instrumentally on improving teacher practice and student learning outcomes.
Program Coursework and Fieldwork

By integrating disciplinary theories and concepts with best practices in leadership and school improvement and by linking them to internship experiences, programs can more effectively develop candidates’ knowledge and skills. It is important that programs organize coursework into a logical and developmental array of content and learning activities and use program structures that are informed by adult learning theory principles.

Adult learning theory suggests that to be transformative, learning experiences must have purposeful content that uses learning strategies to maximize learning, learning transfer, and leadership identity formation (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010; Kaagan, 1998; Mezirow, 1997). “Pedagogies such as case methods, action research, problem-based learning, and journaling support these connections” (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007, p. 109). Adult learners benefit from constructivist, problem-based approaches that make explicit the purpose of learning, acknowledge and build on prior experiences, provide practice in context, support self-directed learning, and require reflection.

Coursework and fieldwork are integrated to expose candidates to concrete elements of real-world practice and develop their ability to understand, analyze, and systematically plan strategies for action. Such integration encourages a more coherent and reinforcing connection between the development of knowledge and skills in coursework and their application and further development in field experience.
A Planner for Curriculum Mapping: Worksheets

Curriculum mapping consists of a series of steps to reflect, document, review, plan and revise curriculum (Jacobs, 1997). It makes use of templates or worksheets to extract information about curriculum elements that can then be reviewed for alignment to standards and the programs theory of action as well as for the relationship among courses or other learning experiences within a program.

The remainder of this guide presents a set of worksheets that support program faculty in their efforts to develop and revise their content and learning experiences as well as to evaluate alignment to and effectiveness of their program theory. The worksheets are organized developmentally, from surfacing a program’s assumptions to reflecting on how such a theory is represented in courses and related experiences. The planner also includes an example of how to develop more powerful learning experiences, and a set of reflective questions. The final worksheet is designed to guide faculty in developing a timeline for their program’s curriculum mapping and review process. In all, the guide includes eight worksheets. They are presented sequentially but are best thought of as an ongoing cycle of inquiry, as shown below.

The Curriculum Mapping Cycle

- Reflecting
- Getting Ready
- Developing Theories Of Action
- Designing Curriculum
- Assessing Coherence
- Embedding Powerful Learning Experiences
- Mapping To Standards
- Charting The Internship Experience
- Planning for Assessment And Evaluation
- Getting Ready
The nine worksheets include:

1. **Getting Ready**: Conducting needs assessments, particularly when working with program partners
2. **Developing Theories of Action**: Surfacing the program theory and assumptions about preparation and candidate outcomes
3. **Designing Curriculum**: Curriculum design tools and the initiation of the curriculum development process
4. **Assessing Coherence**: Creating a coherent leadership preparation program curriculum by mapping courses, readings and assignments
5. **Mapping to Standards**: Mapping courses and field experiences to standards
6. **Embedding Powerful Learning Experiences**
7. **Charting the Internship Experience**
8. **Planning for Assessment and Evaluation**: Planning an ongoing process of program and candidate analysis, development, and evaluation
9. **Reflecting**: Reflecting on developing coherent curriculum and field experiences

It is suggested that faculty members engaged in this process begin and end with Worksheet 9, which outlines overarching reflective questions. Faculty who are beginning a new curriculum might do well to then move to Worksheets 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7. They can follow with Worksheets 4, 5, and 8, to check their work against standards and evaluate the coherence and comprehensiveness of their program content.

Faculty members who are engaged in program review might begin with Worksheets 1, 3, 4, and 6 to outline and assess their current program curriculum. Then they can use Worksheets 2 and 5 as they take steps to improve the power and coherence of program content.

Since most programs are required to be aligned with national educational leadership preparation standards, we incorporate the new NELP standards here. Programs can substitute other standards as pertinent to their program registration and accreditation requirements or theory of action.

Finally, several of the worksheets are designed to facilitate reciprocal analysis and reflection. Some are designed to collect information by course (Worksheet 3) and by internship activity (Worksheet 6). Alternatively, Worksheet 4 is designed to compile both course and internship information by standard to see how comprehensively and developmentally these are addressed.
Worksheet 1: Getting Ready

Assessing Internal and External Program Needs

There are multiple challenges to reform in schools of education, not least of which are competing university priorities, the lack of support for program improvement from within many institutions, new budgeting models, and the fact that university faculty members are held more accountable for scholarship than for learning outcomes and program development (Crow JRLE article here; Young, et al., 2002). It is also important to have a clear understanding of organizational priorities and commitments at the program, department, college and university level. What current programs and activities will continue in their current form? What expectations are in place for new programs? Are they expected to be profit generating? Interdisciplinary? Offered in partnership? Who gives final approval for the program? How are decisions made? Are there any relationships or coalitions that need to be cultivated to ensure approval? These factors, among others, must be taken into consideration in the program planning process as your stakeholder team collaboratively conducts and evaluates results from a needs assessment.

It is essential for program partners to get a broader view of the current reality by seeking information from a variety of sources. However, it is also important to accept that your program is unlikely to be able to address all of the needs and ideas that are identified. Surveys and focus groups with district partners and current and former students can enable faculty to gain insight into field needs as well as program strengths and areas of need. The following questions can assist program faculty in identifying program needs:

- What are the specific leadership development needs of educational leaders in partner districts?
- What are candidates’ and graduates’ perceptions of their preparation experiences?
- How well do graduates perform once placed in a leadership position?
- How do districts make decisions about what preparation institutions to partner with?
- How do candidates choose a preparation program?

UCEA’s INSPIRE leadership surveys provide an indepth 360 degree perspective on the program overtime. For less involved needs assessment, UCEA’s Institutional and Program Quality Rubric (Young, Orr, & Tucker, 2012) and/or the Principal Preparation Program Self-Assessment Toolkit (King, 2014) are also helpful open source self-assessments. Once a program has completed a needs assessment results can be examined to determine areas of focus and prioritize the work ahead.
Worksheet 2: Developing Theories of Action

Surfacing the program theory and assumptions about preparation and candidate outcomes

Below are a series of discussion questions to help program faculty surface their program theory and the assumptions underlying the choices made in course requirements, assignments, field experiences, faculty, and assessments. The results should enable faculty to assess the degree of agreement between their espoused and enacted program theory and to evaluate the efficacy of their program theory against research, documented exemplary program models, current trends and priorities in educational leadership, or ideal program models.

- What is the program’s theory of leadership and its influence on school improvement?
- What is the program’s theory of action of how program features and experiences develop leadership capacity?

All programs have choices about content, assignments, field experiences, faculty, and assessment. The choices made reflect a program’s theory of action and the tightness or integration of these choices reflects program coherence. To guide your program in auditing its focus and coherence, consider:

- What content is essential and why?
- What leadership theories undergird program content?
- What leadership standards guide the program and how?
- How are local school and district needs and priorities reflected in the content?
- How do instructional practices are essential and facilitate leadership development?
- What learning experiences are created and how are these developmental?
- How are internships designed and supported to foster leadership development?
- What program supports (such as cohort structure, advisement and alternative delivery formats) facilitate leadership development and how?
- What is the role of assessment in fostering leadership development?
- What are the knowledge, skills, and program commitments of core faculty? How do these inform and align to the program’s focus?
- How does the program recruit faculty, and what values guide faculty recruitment and selection, as a means of pursuing the program’s theory of action?
• What assumptions link these components (i.e., how do these components, taken together, effectively prepare leaders who reflect the program’s core values)?

UCEA offers a rubric on effective program features that is aligned to these questions and provides a means by which programs can benchmark their current programs along each feature (Young, Orr & Tucker, 2011). Some states and regional associations, such as the Southern Regional Educational Association (2002) offer program standards and guidelines as well.
Worksheet 3: Designing Curriculum

Curriculum design tools and initiating the curriculum process

The development and use of a coherent, well-integrated program curriculum can be facilitated through the use of curriculum development tools, like Understanding by Design, which guides developers through an outcomes- and standards-based process. Below is a summary of Understanding by Design and available templates for curriculum work, as well as a set of curriculum design questions specific to the leadership preparation field.

Understanding by Design

A commonly used curriculum development and mapping approach is the Understanding by Design approach. According to the developers’ website (Authentic Education, 2011):

Understanding by Design (UbD) is a framework for improving student achievement. Emphasizing the teacher's critical role as a designer of student learning, UbD works within the standards-driven curriculum to help teachers clarify learning goals, devise revealing assessments of student understanding, and craft effective and engaging learning activities. (para. 1)

Developed by nationally recognized educators Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, and published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Understanding by Design is based on the following key ideas:

- A primary goal of education should be the development and deepening of student understanding.
- Students reveal their understanding most effectively when they are provided with complex, authentic opportunities to explain, interpret, apply, shift perspective, empathize, and self-assess. When applied to complex tasks, these "six facets" provide a conceptual lens through which teachers can better assess student understanding.
- Effective curriculum development reflects a three-stage design process called "backward design" that delays the planning of classroom activities until goals have been clarified and assessments designed. This process helps to avoid the twin problems of "textbook coverage" and "activity-oriented" teaching, in which no clear priorities and purposes are apparent.
- Student and school performance gains are achieved through regular reviews of results (achievement data and student work) followed by targeted adjustments to curriculum and instruction. Teachers become most effective when they seek feedback from students and their peers and use that feedback to adjust approaches to design and teaching.
Developing Purposeful and Coherent Curriculum for Educational Leadership Preparation

- Teachers, schools, and districts benefit by "working smarter" through the collaborative design, sharing, and peer review of units of study.

In practice, Understanding by Design offers:

- A three-stage, "backward planning," curriculum-design process anchored by a unit design template;
- A set of design standards with attendant rubrics; and
- A comprehensive training package to help teachers design, edit, critique, peer review, share, and improve their lessons and assessments.

Support materials include the original *Understanding by Design* book (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998), which provides an in-depth look at the Understanding by Design framework, as well as a handbook, a study guide, and a three-part videotape series. For a template, see Wiggins (2005): http://www.grantwiggins.org/documents/UbDQuikvue1005.pdf

Key curriculum design questions are the following:

- What is the program goal and course goal?
- What are the key understandings (e.g., big ideas)?
- What are the essential questions of the field that this course addresses?
- What are students expected to know and be able to do as a result of this course?
- What performance tasks will students do to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding?
Worksheet 4: Assessing Coherence

Creating a coherent leadership preparation program curriculum by mapping courses, readings and assignments

One step to answering the curriculum mapping questions is to map out your program’s courses and internship experiences. This process requires close interrogation of syllabi and learning resources that may reveal areas of close alignment and possible misalignment between prior learning requirements and the program’s espoused theories of leadership. Program faculty should be prepared to review, revise, and when necessary abandon course assignments and other learning experiences that no longer support the program’s theory of action and/or the needs of today’s education leaders.

Below is a table template for mapping courses, the standards, core readings, and assignments. It is followed by a set of reflective questions for faculty to use in evaluating program coherence and alignment to its espoused theories of leadership and preparation. How might this map help to uncover your program’s theory of action and coherence?

Course mapping is an initial step to outline what is currently in place in each program course. More in-depth inquiry and analysis on the developmental nature of the content and the competency development capacity of the assignments are outlined in additional worksheets that follow.

Mapping Courses: Topics, Instructors, Standards, Core Readings, and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Course title</th>
<th>Course instructors</th>
<th>NELP standards 1</th>
<th>NELP standards 2</th>
<th>NELP standards 3</th>
<th>NELP standards 4</th>
<th>NELP standards 5</th>
<th>NELP standards 6</th>
<th>NELP standards 7</th>
<th>Core readings</th>
<th>Core assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions for Discussion

Courses:

• What core content areas are priorities?

Faculty:

• What faculty member teaches the most in the program and what percentage of the courses?
• What percentage of the faculty members are full time clinical or tenure track? What percentage are adjunct?

Leadership Standards:

• Which standards are well covered and which are not?
• To what extent do the courses and assignments build candidate’s understanding of and demonstration of competency in standards (i.e., do several courses all address one standard?)
• Do the courses work together progressively or developmentally?

Core Readings:

• What leadership theories are candidates offered?
• How much of the readings are technical, theoretical, or empirical in nature? How do these relate to the program’s theory of leadership?
• To what extent do readings engage candidates in connecting core research with the leadership skills necessary to support recommended practices?

Core Assignments:

• What skills do core assignments develop?
• How are candidates asked to measurably demonstrate competency?
• How do these relate to the program’s theory of leadership and its development?
Worksheet 5: Mapping to Standards

**Mapping standards to courses and field experiences**

Key to effective programs is clearly articulated alignment to core standards. Using the table below, list the courses that correspond most strongly to developing each standard. Unlike Worksheet 3, the purpose of this worksheet is gathering evidence for a holistic review of how each standard is reflected in courses and field experiences. This includes estimating the number of hours that candidates typically spend on that standard area and the type of internship activities that they complete, to enable program faculty to evaluate the depth to which each standard is developed in the program and the level of application for candidate competencies.

The NELP standards offer suggestions on knowledge, skills and competencies associated with each standard. It is suggested that program faculty review the individual items beneath each standard and other applicable state or national standards, rather than only address alignment with the six core standards generally. Note: Technology standards for teachers and educational leaders and state-specific leadership standards have been adopted by some states. Programs may also wish to incorporate additional standards in this analysis process.

Mapping to Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>List courses in which standards-related leadership skills are strongly developed</th>
<th>Estimate # of Internship hours devoted to leadership development by standard</th>
<th>List typical internship activities that are strongly related to this standard</th>
<th>Identify how candidate’s progress toward standard is assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Worksheet 6: Embedding Powerful Learning Experiences

One means of developing leadership in our programs is to ensure candidates engage in “powerful learning experiences.” The University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA), through their Developing Leaders to Support Diverse Learners curriculum project, developed a definition of a powerful learning experience (Young, 2015). According to their definition, the key features are as follows:

- Authentic, meaningful, relevant, and problem-finding
- Involves sense-making around critical problems of practice
- Explores, critiques, and deconstructs from an equity perspective (race, culture and language)
- Requires collaboration and interdependence
- Develops confidence in leadership
- Places both the professor and student in a learning situation
- Learners are empowered and responsible for their own learning.
- Shifts perspective from the classroom to school, district, or state level
- Has a reflective component

Begin by mapping out and evaluating the program’s core assignments and learning experiences against these nine features.

Mapping Powerful Learning Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Course title</th>
<th>Core assignments/learning experiences</th>
<th>Assessment of these as powerful learning experiences (how well does each assignment reflect the 9 criteria? Where are gaps or missing features?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Next, evaluate these assignments or learning experiences by considering the following questions:

- To what extent are the core program assignments powerful learning experiences?
- How well do these experiences reflect your program’s theory of action and leadership assumptions?
- How have you assessed the efficacy of each powerful learning experience?
- How have you assessed students on the transformational quality of each powerful learning experience, while in the program? After program completion?
- What could be done to improve the “power” of these assignments?
- What other assignments or learning experiences could be more powerful?
- Which stakeholders can be engaged to assist in the development of powerful learning experiences?

Finally, think about ways in which these learning experiences can be improved or new experiences developed. Below is a template for developing or revising a core learning experience or assignment as a powerful learning experience. Use the template to map out each assignment or learning experience. Use the nine features as a guide on where and how to increase the “power” of each as transformative learning experiences.
### Powerful Learning Experience Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Action Statement: (&quot;If ..., then ...&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose/Learning Outcomes (What will participants know, be able to do, apply as a result of this process?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment to Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Description of Final Product, Project, or Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Lesson Components or Processes (Steps to achieve learning outcomes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation to Internship or Field Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Component (In what ways will learners assess their own growth and draw upon deeper understandings?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Method (How will successful completion be determined? Who will be involved: instructor, district personnel, other?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources, Materials, Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course/Content Connections (What courses or content will this powerful learning experience enhance?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Worksheet 7: Charting the Internship Experience

A quality, rigorous internship that is aligned to the program’s coursework and supervised by experienced and effective school leaders is “critically important to helping principal [candidates] learn to implement sophisticated practices” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010, p. 17). Such internships are characterized by:

- Ongoing reflection, supported by an experienced and effective supervisor and/or mentor
- Projects meaningfully related to the complex, and integrated nature of principal work (rather than discrete tasks or activities not centered on improving instructional practice)
- Integration with coursework, strengthening transfer of learning from classroom to application in the field of knowledge and skills
- Alignment with guiding standards and program values
- Ongoing, individualized assessment to support development

The purpose of this worksheet is to look at the curriculum in the internship experiences and evaluate its alignment to the program theory and core content. Faculty would begin first to map out the core internship projects and experiences considered essential to leadership development, considering how these relate to the standards, the relevant coursework strands, and specific course assignments embedded in the internship.

Mapping Internship Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary internship projects/experiences</th>
<th>Course alignment with internship experiences</th>
<th>Course assignments embedded in internship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflective Questions

- What are the core internship assignments or experiences?
- With what standards are these aligned?
- What courses are linked to these internship experiences? How explicitly are these linked?
- What course assignments are to be field based? How are these related to standards and other internship assignments?
- To what extent do these assignments extend the leadership development goals and objectives of the program?
- Taken together, how do these internship experiences reflect the overarching program theory?
Worksheet 8: Planning for Assessment and Evaluation

Curriculum development and revision should occur on a regular basis to align program purposes and content to new developments in the field; refresh content, readings, and learning experiences; and check on potential program drift that can occur over time. We recommend that faculty develop a timeline for periodic review with proscribed objectives for each stage. The following template can be used. A sample timeline that addresses the suggested process and includes program evaluation is provided as well.

Sample Program Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Surface program theory and assumptions and declare a theory of leadership</td>
<td>Develop and deploy district partners’ needs assessment(s) and identify representative stakeholders. Investigate new field developments.</td>
<td>Develop and conduct program evaluation to ascertain impact on leadership and school practices as well as student and teacher outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Explore Understanding by Design, adult learning theory, and relevant research on leadership development</td>
<td>Begin revising courses, content and related experiences</td>
<td>Review theory of leadership in light of program evaluation and ongoing research on leadership and effective practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Map current curriculum, learning resources, and internship requirements to determine program coherence and alignment to standards.</td>
<td>Develop powerful learning experiences to be embedded in coursework. Continue course revision. Engage partner districts to review course syllabi and learning experiences for input and direction.</td>
<td>Repeat curriculum mapping and program coherence process to ensure alignment to candidate learning needs, standards, and any program revisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Timeline Planning Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Worksheet 9: Reflecting

Faculty reflection questions concerning the development of coherent curriculum and field experiences

As faculty work through the curriculum development or revision process, it is important to stop and reflect upon the program’s stage of development and the process itself. Below are some discussion questions for such a reflection.

- What is your current stage of curriculum/program development or revision?
- Which faculty members have the time, capacity and research interest to engage in and sustain this work?
- Who in your schools, districts and broader college or university community could inform your curriculum development or revision work?
- How could more intentional partnerships with local schools and districts add to the program’s theory of leadership development, content, and instruction?
- What challenges exist in fostering program coherence around key leadership theories and assumptions?
- What challenges are anticipated in the curriculum development or revision work?
- What questions do you have so far?
- Where would you like guidance?
- What are your next steps?
References


The Center for Systematic Program Improvement through Research in Educational Leadership (INSPIRE)

High quality leadership preparation is essential to educational reform and improved student achievement. To support high quality leadership preparation, the Institute for Systematic Program Improvement through Research in Educational Leadership (INSPIRE) provides:

1. Survey and evaluation research for program benchmarking and analysis of program features, graduate career and leadership practices, and related school and student outcomes.
2. A systematic process for collecting and analyzing state data on degrees and certification, career advancement, and school progress by graduates.
3. Technical assistance and support for leadership preparation programs, including regional train-the-trainer opportunities to increase evaluation capacity locally.
4. A sustainable system for evaluation research to support program improvement.
5. Policy analysis and policy development support.

The INSPIRE Leadership Center is supported by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) and the Utah Educational Policy Center. To learn more about the INSPIRE Institute and the services available, please visit our website at http://www.edleaderprep.org

University Council for Educational Administration
Quality Leadership Matters since 1954

The University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) is an international consortium of research universities that offer doctoral and masters programs in educational leadership and management. UCEA has a single standard of excellence for membership: Superior institutional commitment and capacity to provide leadership for the advancement of educational leadership preparation, scholarship, and practice consistent with UCEA's established mission. To learn more about UCEA, please visit our website at www.ucea.org.