

Rutgers University Graduate School of Education
Ed.D. Program: Teacher Leader Concentration
TEACHER LEADERSHIP: THEORY & PRACTICE

Course # 15:267:622

Fall, 2016, 3 credits

GSE Room 314

Mondays 4:50 – 7:30pm

With the exception of: Wed. 10/5

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Course Overview

“Teacher leadership is big news again. After a lull in the mid-1990s when our attention was focused squarely on standards-based reforms and accountability, we have returned to teacher leadership with full force. Schools and school districts are looking again to teacher leadership as a vehicle for teacher professional development and improvement in school organization and classroom instruction.”

Mark Smylie, University of Illinois at Chicago¹

This graduate seminar explores the theoretical foundations and research that surround the practice of teacher leadership. Teacher leadership increasingly encompasses an array of positions that are (a) non-supervisory, (b) focused on instructional improvement, (c) primarily aimed at teachers’ capacity-building, and (d) typically, but not exclusively, located in schools (Mangin & Stoelinga, 2008). Various labels—coordinator, facilitator, specialist, helper, trainer, lead, master, mentor, or coach—teachers are increasingly sharing leadership with all educators for addressing gaps in educational opportunity and ensuring that all children receive powerful and equitable instruction in our nation’s public schools.

This course will explore teacher leadership as it occurs in relation to teaching and teachers’ work and as it is situated in past and contemporary educational reform contexts. Teachers are, by the nature of their work, leaders within the classroom context. However classroom leadership is oriented primarily toward student learning environments and not on influencing learning opportunities for other adults. As teachers take on leadership roles outside the classroom, they tend to lead less from positions of power and authority, and more from peer or middle level vantage points.

Conversations about teacher leadership necessitate discussions about *educational leadership* with large and conceptions of leadership as distributed across people, situations, and actions. Thus, we will explore perspectives on educational leadership—building a sense of what makes “good” leadership. We’ll also place teacher leadership in organizational context and discuss how work conditions and structural supports can facilitate or inhibit teachers’ ability to effectively

¹ Quote taken from the Foreword in Mangin, M.M., & Stoelinga, S.R. (2008). *Effective Teacher Leadership*. New York: Teachers College Press.

lead in schools. Our examination of teacher leadership will also extend beyond the reading of texts and students will work collaboratively to research teacher leadership, interviewing teacher leaders and analyzing the results in light of the readings.

Specific Course Goals. At the conclusion of this course, students will—

1. Be familiar with the literature (both past and present) on teacher leadership and be able to connect that literature to conceptions of educational leadership and teacher learning.
2. Understand the organizational contexts of teacher leaders' work, including but not limited to: educational reform contexts, the conditions of classroom teachers' work, and the role of other educational leaders in developing and supporting teacher leadership.
3. Synthesize theoretical and empirical discussions about teacher leadership with developing understandings derived from interviews with actual teacher leaders.

Target Audience

This seminar is appropriate for graduate students who are preparing to study teachers' work, teachers as leaders, instructional coaching, or the professional development of teachers. The course is intended to (1) help students become critical consumers of the related literature and (2) become analysts of the phenomenon by examining actual teacher leaders' experiences.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is crucial to your own development and to the progress made by the rest of the class. Please let me know in advance, if at all possible, when you will miss class. More than one absence, or frequent lateness, will result in grade reduction, and more importantly, missed opportunities for you to learn. Students who are absent from class sessions are still expected to electronically submit any assignments due. There is no way to "make-up" class discussions, which cannot be recreated. Attending part of class, if possible, is usually preferable to missing the entire class.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Arriving to class more than 5 minutes after the start of the class session is considered being late. Lateness is disruptive and it impedes your learning. Classes typically begin with announcements and time for students to raise questions and concerns. When students miss this portion of class they miss important information. Three late arrivals are considered equivalent to missing one hour of class. Penalties for chronic lateness will be incurred.

Preparedness and participation:

It goes without saying that completing the reading assignments is a vital part of making this a successful course, both for yourself and for your classmates. Yet, reading is not enough. Participants are expected to come to class prepared to engage in discussions about the assigned readings, to teach and to learn from each other in the spirit of intellectual inquiry and personal growth, and to assist in crafting a dynamic and shared learning experience. As such, preparation for class will extend beyond mere reading or mechanical completion of assignments to include the kind of critical thought and reflection necessary for engaged participation.

As you read for class, take time to reflect on the concepts presented by the authors and make connections with your own experiences in schools. Reflect on similar and contrasting examples or theories that you have encountered in your professional and academic life. Take notes, write down questions, and "talk back" to the text. This kind of engaged reading facilitates learning. It will also be useful when you participate in class discussion, work in small groups, and complete

formal written assignments. All students will play an active role in shaping weekly instruction through individual and group presentations and discussion. I employ direct instruction (lecturing) rarely, but for the most part view class as a place to explore, analyze, and apply.

Because I spend most of class time on higher order thinking, I do NOT use class time to deliver content. I expect students to come to class having carefully completed the day's reading.

Please be mindful of how you use technology during class time. While it is appropriate to bring your laptop to class sessions and use it during class time, it should not distract you from the course. Surfing the web, tweeting, social networking, responding to email, etc... are not appropriate uses of your computer (smart phone, tablet, etc...) during class time. As a general rule, avoid having your eyes permanently fixed to your computer screen as it gives the impression that you are not invested in the conversation and it is disrespectful of your classmates' contributions. Relatedly, set your phone to vibrate and do not text during class.

There is no formal grade for participation; however, the quality of the ideas you express in your written assignments will be enhanced by regular and active participation.

Time commitment:

Please keep in mind that this is a doctoral level class. Be prepared for a reading and writing intensive experience. A general rule of thumb is to budget 2-3 hours of study time for each credit hour in addition to the time spent in class. This means committing an average of 9-12 hours per week to this course. The exact amount of time you will need depends on your familiarity with the subject, the speed at which you read, your writing and study skills, and the knowledge/grades you aim to attain. The intensive nature of graduate school and students' multiple commitments make effective time management imperative. I suggest blocking out time in your calendar for each of your classes. Scheduling class time and study time will help ensure that you are able to meet the time commitments necessary to be successful.

Please make note of the following scheduling changes:

- Monday's Class on 10-3-16 will be held on Wednesday 10-5-16 instead.
- Class on 10-17-16 will be held online as an "asynchronous" class, meaning I will post the assignments for the week and you will have the week to complete the assignments online on your own schedule/time. More details for signing in etc. to come later in the semester.

Correspondence:

The best way to contact me is through email at tali.axelrod@gse.rutgers.edu. Here is some helpful advice for emailing a professor:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>. Emails from me will be sent to your gse account.

Course Requirements

- 1. Readings and class discussions.** The course readings will be provided electronically via Sakai. Students are expected to read the assigned articles carefully prior to each class and be prepared to discuss them during the class (including leading a class discussion).
- 2. Essay I.** Students will write a formal essay that demonstrates their understanding of the readings as well as their thinking related to teacher leadership. This essay presents an

opportunity for students to develop their reasoning and logic as well as their writing skills and use of APA formatting. Length 4-5 pages. Due: October 9th

3. **Investigating teacher leadership in practice—class research project.** We will investigate the work of teacher leaders by interviewing them and collecting documents related to their work. These data will be discussed and analyzed in class. The steps and assignments related to this class project include:
 - a. Work collaboratively with classmates to develop an interview protocol.
 - b. Locate a teacher leader to interview. If you are a teacher leader, you will be encouraged to select a teacher leader who serves in a role that is different than your own.
 - c. Conduct an audio-taped interview of the teacher leader using the protocol we developed and collect documents related to his/her work.
 - d. Write a 1-page interview memo that captures your reflections and preliminary analysis.
 - e. Transcribe the interview and post the transcription as well as supporting documents online for class access.
 - f. Discuss and analyze the teacher leader data in class and develop a set of topics/themes for further investigation. Students will then continue to think about a particular aspect of teacher leadership through course readings and, possibly their own search of further readings (not required but perhaps useful for some).

4. **Staff Development Training Session**

Working independently or in teams of 2, you will have 30 minutes of class time to conduct a training session with the rest of the class acting as your participants. The training should be on a topic relevant to your practice, however, from a leadership perspective – e.g. if you are a literacy teacher, you could conduct a training for teachers on guided reading; if you are a higher education professional, you could conduct a training for adjunct professors on writing a thesis statement for a college essay. You should draw on the texts for this course to guide your planning and implementation. You may train us on any relevant topic that you would teach to colleagues in your practice, using any materials you choose. Be mindful of keeping your audience engaged in your presentation through interactive methodologies or feel free to use protocols such as the ones we have used in class, the website is found below. Be sure to include some way for participants to demonstrate their learning.

<http://www.nsrffharmony.org/free-resources/protocols/a-z>

Immediately following your training segment, the class will reflect on and debrief their experience as learners.

5. **Final Paper.** Students will write a final paper that reflects their research into teacher leadership and the course readings. You will be evaluated on the quality of your writing and your ability to apply concepts from the readings in your analysis of the empirical data collected for this course. Length: 8-10 pages. Due: December 13th

Additional information will be provided as the work is assigned.

Grading Policies and Assignment Timelines

This is a graded course. The grade will reflect the following distribution across course activities.

- Staff Development Training Session 20% Variable due dates
- Essay I (4-5 pages) 25% October 9th
- Research project: interview 25% Mid-November
- Final paper (8-10 pages) 30% December 13th

Sequence of Class Sessions

The course design includes two parts. In the first half of the course we lay the groundwork for the study of teacher leadership. First, we situate the course with a general discussion about teacher leadership, reading three seminal articles. Then, we examine the two sides of the term, teacher leadership beginning with leadership and followed by an examination of teachers' work. These theoretical concepts form the basis of our discussions and inform how we understand teacher leadership development and practice. In the second half of the course, we examine contemporary teacher leadership in the context of educational reform, emerging roles and contexts for teacher leadership, and organizational support for teacher leaders' work. We conclude the course with a review of recent performance standards and guidelines for teacher leadership development.

CALENDAR: Teacher Leadership			
	Date	Readings	Notes
<p>PART I. LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE STUDY OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP</p> <p>In the first half of the course, we explore teacher leadership in three ways: 1) we read three classic articles about teacher leadership to develop a broad sense of the subject; 2) we examine conceptions of educational leadership to strengthen our understanding of what it means to “lead” education; 3) we investigate teachers’ work and the constraints on that work to understand the conditions that might affect the development of “leadership” in teachers.</p>			
1	9-12-16	<p>Introduction. The first class we will establish class norms and begin to identify our collective knowledge base related to teacher leadership by asking, <i>What pre-existing knowledge do we bring to our study of teacher leadership?</i> We will also review the course structure, requirements, & some basic premises upon which this course rests, including leadership aims and practices as well as the norms and conditions of teaching. These concepts will set the context for learning about teacher leadership.</p>	
		<p>Smylie, M.A., & Denny, J.W. (1990). Teacher leadership: Tensions and ambiguities in organizational perspectives. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i>, 26 (3), 235-259.</p>	<p>In preparation for class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review syllabus & Sakai • Complete profile
2	9-19-16	<p>What do we know about teacher leadership and its development over time? In this session, we will learn how teacher leadership has been conceptualized historically and develop preliminary understandings about teacher leader roles and functions. We’ll discuss trends in the conception and practice of teacher leadership and consider what teacher leaders do as well as what supports or inhibits their work.</p>	
		<p>Little, J.W. (2003). Constructions of teacher leadership in three periods of policy and reform activism. <i>School leadership & Management</i>, 23(4), 401-419.</p> <p>York-Barr, J., & Duke, K. (2004). What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings from two decades of scholarship. <i>Review of Educational Research</i>, 74(3), 255-316.</p>	
3	9-26-16	<p>Educational leadership: What is it and how is it responsive to educational dilemmas? Here we consider conceptions of educational leadership in general, asking how these conceptions inform our thinking about <i>teachers</i> as leaders. Moreover, we will consider leadership in the context of contemporary educational problems including: persistent achievement gaps, increasing cultural and linguistic diversity, and changing strategies for addressing these challenges.</p>	

		<p>Marks, H.M., & Printy, S.M. (2003). Principal leadership and school performance: An integration of transformational and instructional leadership. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i>, 39 (3), 370-397.</p> <p>Gardner, J.W. (2000). The nature of leadership. In <i>The Jossey-Bass reader on educational leadership</i> (2nd Ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (Chapter 2, pp. 17-26).</p> <p>Shields, C. (2010). Transformative leadership: Working for equity in diverse contexts. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i>, 46 (4), 550-589.</p>	
4	10-05-16 Wednesday	<p>Distributed Leadership: How distributed leadership inform our understanding of teacher leadership?</p> <p>Many think that the leadership and responsibility for reaching high quality educational outcomes for all students can no longer be considered the work of the single heroic leader; rather it must be a responsibility that is shared across educators. Moreover, distributed leadership theorists contend that leadership is distributed across people, activities, and available resources (materials, tools), an idea that is especially relevant to teacher leadership.</p>	
		<p>Timperley, H. (2005). Distributed leadership: Developing theory from practice. <i>Journal of Curriculum Studies</i>, 37(4), 395-420.</p> <p>Smylie, M., Mayrowetz, D., Murphy, J., Louis, K. (2007). Trust and the development of distributed leadership. <i>Journal of school leadership</i>, 17, 469-503.</p> <p>Mayrowetz, D. (2008). Making sense of distributed leadership: Exploring the multiple usages of the concept in the field. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i>, 44(3), 424-435.</p>	<p>Essay I due: October 9</p>
5	10-10-16	<p>Organizational contexts of teacher leadership: Teachers' work conditions. The next three weeks, we consider the characteristics of teachers' work and how those characteristics can affect the development and work of teachers as leaders. Teachers' work has traditionally been viewed as residing within the walls of the classroom—as the interactions between a teacher and students. The bureaucratic structure of schools has contributed to a sense of isolation and individualism in classroom teaching and many of these cultural and professional norms persist.</p>	

		<p>Hargreaves, A. (1993). Individualism and individuality: Reinterpreting the teacher culture. In J.W. Little and M.W. McLaughlin (Eds), <i>Teachers' work: Individuals, Colleagues, and Contexts</i>. New York: Teachers College Press. p. 51-74</p> <p>Hargreaves, A., & Shirley, D. (2009). The persistence of presentism. <i>Teachers College Record</i>, 111 (11), 2505-2534.</p>	
6	10-17-16 This class will be held online as an "asynchronous" class	<p>Improving outreach and collaboration: How do teacher leaders build ties with families and within communities? Building on last week's discussion of teaching norms that serve to isolate teachers and situate their work in classrooms and with students, this week we examine efforts teachers make to collaborate with families, community members, and other stakeholders to improve the educational system and expand opportunities for student learning.</p>	
		<p>Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium (2010). <i>Teacher Leader Model Standard</i>, 1-60.</p> <p>Collay, M. (2014). Developing leadership identity through critical reflection: voice, knowledge and advocacy. <i>Reflective Practice</i>, 15 (6), 780-792.</p> <p>Gordon, M., & Seashore Louis, K. (2009). Linking parent and community involvement with student achievement: comparing principal and teacher perceptions of stakeholder influence. <i>American Journal of Education</i>, 16 (1), 1-31.</p>	<p>Skim Teacher Leader Model Standards. Read closely p. 14-20.</p>
7	10-24-16	<p>Organizational contexts of teacher leadership: Teachers' work conditions. Building on last week's discussion of teacher leadership that serves to develop shared understandings among colleagues and stakeholders, this week we once again examine norms that afford teachers autonomy and resist efforts to develop peer assessment mechanisms.</p>	
		<p>Valli, L., & Buese, D. (2007). The changing roles of teachers in an era of high-stakes accountability. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 44 (3), 519-558.</p> <p>Yusko, B., & Feiman-Nemser, S. (2008). Embracing contraries: Assistance and assessment in teacher induction. <i>Teachers College Record</i>, 110(5), 923-953.</p> <p>Mangin, M. M. & Stoelinga, S. R. (2011). Peer? Expert? Teacher leaders struggle to gain trust while establishing their expertise. <i>Journal of Staff Development</i>, 32(3), 48-51.</p>	

8	10-31-16	<p>What questions do we have about teacher leadership? Building on our pre-existing understandings and the readings thus far, we will create an interview protocol for use in our empirical investigation of teacher leaders. We will begin this work online in a shared Google Doc where we post possible interview questions. Then, during class time we will continue to develop our common interview protocol.</p>	
		<p>Patton, M.Q. (1990). Qualitative interviewing. In, <i>Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods</i>. Newbury Park: Sage. Chapter 7, 277-367.</p> <p>Brenner, M.E. (2006). Interviewing in Education Research. In J.L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research</i>. New York: Routledge. p. 357-370</p>	<p>In preparation for class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add interview questions to Google
<p>PART II. TEACHER LEADERSHIP, EMERGING ROLES AND FUNCTIONS</p> <p>We spend the second half of the course delving more deeply into teacher leadership in the context of contemporary educational issues and dilemmas—reading about and problematizing emerging roles and functions of teacher leadership. We then turn again to organizational contexts of teacher leadership with a focus on developing and supporting teacher leadership.</p>			
9	11-7-16	<p>Leading from the middle: Contemporary meanings of teacher leadership. Today’s teachers are moving into leadership roles that focus on classroom practice in new and interesting ways. From teacher research to instructional coaching roles, teacher leaders are often positioned as mid-level leaders situated between the classroom and administrative roles in schools and districts. This week we will examine teacher leadership in the context of curricular reform and professional inquiry. We will focus on the complexity and positioning of teacher leadership work within contemporary school and district organizational contexts.</p>	
		<p>Leander, K., & Osborne, M. (2008). Complex positioning: Teachers as agents of curricular and pedagogical reform. <i>Journal of Curriculum Studies</i>, 40(1), 23-46.</p> <p>Paredes-Scribner, S.M., & Bradley-Levine, J. (2010). The meaning(s) of teacher leadership in an urban high school reform. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i>, 46 (4), 491-522.</p> <p>Stoelinga, S.R. (2008), Leading from above and below: Formal and informal teacher leadership. In M. M. Mangin & S. R. Stoelinga (Eds.), <i>Effective teacher leadership: Using research to inform and reform</i> (pp. 10-35). New York: Teachers College Press.</p>	<p>In preparation for class: Interview</p>
10	11-14-16	<p>Teacher leadership roles and functions: Building professional communities and leading teaching teams. Much of what teacher leaders do is professional development work that involves groups of teachers. We turn this week to the subject of professional community and the role of teachers as leaders of these activities. In particular, we will consider the tensions and dilemmas of teacher community and the challenges that these tensions raise for</p>	

		the practice of teacher leadership.	
		<p>Craig, C. J. (2009). Research in the midst of organized school reform: Versions of teacher community in tension. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 46 (2), 598-619.</p> <p>Achinstein, B. (2002). Conflict amid community: The micropolitics of teacher collaboration. <i>Teachers College Record</i>, 104(3), 421-455.</p>	<p>In preparation for class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete interview
11	11-21-16	<p>Teacher leadership roles and functions: Building professional communities and leading teaching teams. This week we continue to talk about how teachers can contribute to the development of professional communities. This will include a discussion of mentoring, a prominent teacher leadership activity that is also referenced in readings for other weeks. We will also take time in class to examine the interview transcripts and documents and engage in deductive and inductive analysis. We will search for themes across the data set and begin to identify topics for further research and examination.</p>	
		<p>Nelson, T.H., Slavit, D., Perkins, M., & Hathorn, T. (2008). A culture of collaborative inquiry: Learning to develop and support professional learning communities. <i>Teachers College Record</i>, 110(6), 1269-1303.</p> <p>Cobb, P., McClain, K., de Silva Lamberg, T., & Dean, C. (2003). Situating teachers' instructional practices in the institutional setting of the school and district. <i>Educational Researcher</i>, 32(6), p. 13-24.</p> <p>Stanulis, R. N., & Floden, R.E. (2009). Intensive mentoring as a way to help beginning teachers develop balanced instruction. <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i>, 60 (2), 112-122.</p>	<p>In preparation for class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete memo & transcript
12	11-28-16	<p>Instructional leadership: Coaching. Instructional coaching has become a common approach to formal teacher leader roles. This week we explore the activities that coaches engage and some of the dilemmas for teachers who take on these formal roles. We will consider the effects of coaching on teacher practice.</p>	
		<p>Marsh, J., McCombs, J., Lockwood, J., Martorell, F., Gerwhwin, D., et al. (2008). Implementation of Florida's coaching program: The day-to-day work of coaches. In Authors, <i>Supporting literacy across the sunshine state: A study of Florida middle school reading coaches</i> (p. 81-117), Santa Monica, CA: RAND.</p> <p>Neuman, S. B., & Cunningham, L. (2009). The impact of professional development and coaching on early language and literacy instructional practices. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i>, 46 (2), 532-566.</p>	<p>In preparation for class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit completed transcripts on Sakai
13	12-05-16	<p>The development of teacher leadership: Organizational support for teacher leadership. Teachers do not lead in a vacuum. Their work is situated in organizational contexts and dependent on relations with other professionals,</p>	

		including other leaders—often the school principal or district administration. This week we consider how principals and district leaders can support the development and the work of teacher leaders.
		Matsumura, L.C., Sartoris, M., Bickel, D.D., & Garnier, H.E. (2009). Leadership for literacy coaching: The principal’s role in launching a new coaching program. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i> , 45 (5), 655-693. Gallucci, C., Van Lare, M., Yoon, I., & Boatright, B. (2010). Instructional coaching: Building theory about the role and organizational support for professional learning. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i> , 47 (4), 919-963.
14	12-12-16	Advocating for student learning and the profession: Teacher leaders use their knowledge to advocate for student needs. In supporting effective teaching and increasing student learning, teacher leaders serve as individuals who have influence within the school. This week we will consider the role of teacher leaders in advocacy and access as they secure professional resources to focus on learning effective practices and developing a professional learning community.
		York-Barr, J., Somerness, J., Duke, K., & Ghere, G. (2005). Special educators in inclusive education programmes: Reframing their work as teacher leadership. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> , 9 (2), 193-215. Firestone, W. A. & Martinez, C. (2007). Districts, teacher leaders, and distributed leadership: Changing instructional practice. <i>Leadership and Policy in Schools</i> , 6 (1), 1-33.
15	12-19-16	Exam Day: DO NOT MEET
		FINAL PAPER DUE: DECEMBER 18