Course Overview

Background
Once a world leader in educational performance, the U.S. now faces a national crisis in education. As a whole, the U.S. public education system does not produce students who are ready for college or competition in the global marketplace. In fact, students in the U.S. perform significantly less well academically than their peers from other industrialized nations: Of 35 OECD countries, the United States now scores 31st in math, 19th in science, and 20th in reading, as measured by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2015. This is despite the fact that we spend more per student on education than most other countries. In addition, there is a persistent student achievement gap along income and ethnic lines. Our schools must improve dramatically in order to maintain our position in the competitive world economy.

Over the last decade, a number of results-oriented leaders in states, districts, charter management organizations, and nonprofits have led the reform of U.S. public education. These leaders bring a sense of urgency and new strategies to address current challenges and drive higher and more equitable outcomes for students. Some of the new ideas are proving to be critical levers for change, others face significant resistance or political challenges, and others have not delivered expected results. All hold lessons for how future leaders can contribute to solving one of the most important issues facing our nation: education.

Course Description
This course will focus on the human capital challenge facing K-12 public education in the United States. Teacher and principal effectiveness are the two most important school-based factors impacting student achievement. To ensure all students achieve at high levels, it is critical to have a great teacher in every classroom and effective leader in every school.

This human capital challenge is one of the biggest issues facing public education. Students will examine critical human capital issues and innovative strategies designed to drive higher academic achievement for all students. Students will analyze entrepreneurial solutions to prepare, recruit, select, train, evaluate, and retain effective teachers and school leaders and leadership approaches to bring about systemic change.
**Learning Objectives**

This course is designed with the following learning objectives for students:

- Understand the current and evolving context of public education in the United States
- Examine the key levers for education reform (particularly in the realm of human capital / talent management), innovative strategies, and their results
- Explore how business, leadership, and management practices can increase educational effectiveness and lead to higher student achievement
- Identify how skills and concepts developed through other business school courses are applicable to education

**Required Readings**

The required readings and cases are available on the Canvas Education Leadership course page and in the linked Library Reserves.

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**COURSE PROGRESSION (AT A GLANCE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session # and Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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</table>
| Session 1: Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> | Setting the Stage – The Need for Excellent Education | • Explore current challenges facing U.S. public education  
• Discuss the achievement gap, economic impact, and U.S. ranking among world nations  
• Identify key human capital issues as levers of reform | N/A |
| Session 2: Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> | Managing Human Capital – DC Public Schools | • Discuss Washington, DC – school system focused on human capital as the foundation for its reforms  
• Explore teacher evaluation, rewards and consequences, and the role of labor unions in education reform | Dan Weisberg, Chief Executive Officer, TNTP |
| Session 3: Tuesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> | Building a Teacher Pipeline | • Review importance and effectiveness of teacher preparation programs  
• Explore Teach for America as an innovative approach to recruit, select, and prepare teachers | TBD, Teach For America |
| Session 4: Tuesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> | Principal as CEO and Instructional Leader | • Discuss strategies to recruit, select, prepare, and support school leaders (principals)  
• Explore theories of action to measure performance and hold people accountable for results  
• Analyze one school district’s (Baltimore) approach to supporting principals  
• Identify national efforts to improve principal quality | N/A |
| Session 5: Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> | Choice and Charter Schools | • Examine the role of choice and charter schools in education reform  
• Analyze challenges in scaling one charter management organization (KIPP) | Steve Mancini, Director of Public Affairs, KIPP |
| Session 6: Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup> | District Transformation – Newark Public Schools | • Explore systemic transformation at the district level  
• Analyze how a superintendent used multiple levers to transform a school district & achieve results for students  
• Discuss the opportunities & challenges of implementing rapid, large-scale change to drive student achievement | Cami Anderson, Former State District Supt. of Newark Public Schools |
SESSION DETAILS

Session 1: Setting the Stage – The Need for Excellent Education  
Tuesday, March 20th

This session will set the stage for the rest of the course by exploring the current issues and challenges facing public education in the United States. We will discuss the achievement gap, economic impact of our educational system, and U.S. ranking among world nations. We will analyze three short case studies of turnaround schools and identify factors and conditions that led to their success. After discussing the context and challenges to improving our school systems, we will review course scope and expectations.

Readings:
- School Case Studies:

Session 2: Managing Human Capital – DC Public Schools  
Tuesday, March 27th

We will discuss Washington, DC as a school system that focused on human capital as the foundation for its reforms. Then, we will explore some of the more controversial topics in education – teacher evaluation, associated rewards and consequences, and the role of labor unions in education reform.

Speaker: Dan Weisberg, Chief Executive Officer, TNTP

Readings:
- The Irreplaceables: Understanding the Real Retention Crisis in America’s Urban Schools – Executive Summary. TNTP, 2012.
Session 3: Building a Teacher Pipeline  
Tuesday, April 3rd

In order to ensure an effective teacher in every classroom, we must start by effectively recruiting, selecting, and preparing our teachers. We will review the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs and explore innovative approaches – including pathways such as Teach for America as well as reforms within university programs – to recruit, select, and prepare teachers.

Speaker: TBD, Teach For America

Readings:
• Education Department Releases Final Teacher Preparation Regulations. US Department of Education, October 2016.

Session 4: Principal as CEO and Instructional Leader  
Tuesday, April 10th

In order to provide an excellent education for all students, all schools need great leaders. We will discuss strategies to recruit, select, prepare, and support school leaders who can transition from being managers of the status quo to instructional leaders who are CEOs and agents of change. We also will explore different theories of action to measure performance and hold school leaders accountable for results. After discussing one school district’s approach to supporting principals, we will discuss broader efforts to improve principal quality across the nation.

Readings:

Session 5: Choice and Charter Schools  
Tuesday, April 17th

This session will examine the role that charter schools play in the changing landscape of education reform and the challenges involved in scaling high-performing schools. Students will learn about school choice, review data on student learning in charters, and focus on scaling effective charters.

Speaker: Steve Mancini, Director of Public Affairs, KIPP
Readings:

• The Role of Charter Schools in Improving Education. RAND Corporation, 2009.

Optional:


Session 6: District Transformation – Newark Public Schools
Tuesday, April 24th

Our final session will explore systemic transformation at the district level. This session provides an opportunity for students to explore how one superintendent used multiple levers to transform a school district and achieve results for students. We will have a candid conversation about the opportunities and challenges of implementing rapid, large-scale change to drive student achievement. We will examine the opportunities and challenges at the district level, the impact of politics and defenders of the status quo, and the leadership moves a superintendent made in an effort to lead, scale, and sustain significant changes.

Speaker: Cami Anderson, Former State District Superintendent of Newark Public Schools

Readings:

• Case: The Trading Post is Closed: Cami Anderson in Newark Public Schools. Lynn Jenkins & Dan Katzir, Stanford Graduate School of Business, Case L-27, 04/07/2015.
COURSE STRUCTURE

This course has two distinct components: 1) classroom discussions and 2) a team-based paper.

Classroom Sessions: The class meets weekly for 6 sessions of 3 hours and 15 minutes each. Class sessions include a combination of case-based discussions and expert speakers to help students learn about real organizations, leaders, the challenges they face, and the strategies they employ to address those challenges.

Case studies and/or guest speakers will form the primary basis for classroom discussion and assignments. Most cases or speaker presentations will be supplemented with research publications, technical notes, news clips and/or videos to deepen students’ understanding of the context and issues. Experts who visit the class as guest speakers will give students’ exposure to leaders in the field and provide opportunities for candid conversations about what is and is not working and why.

Team-Based Paper: Students will work in teams for the duration of the course to write a paper analyzing a current human capital challenge in education reform. This project is designed to give students an opportunity to define a current human capital challenge faced in the education sector, research current state and innovative practices related to that issue, apply conceptual frameworks covered in classroom discussions, and recommend strategic solutions. Students may research a particular reform, offer a diagnostic evaluation of an issue in a particular school system, or provide advice to policy-makers moving forward.

A list of potential topics will be shared with students at the beginning of the course, though teams may work on a topic of their choosing, pending instructor approval. Teams will consist of three to four students. Students will submit preferences of both topics and team members, and the instructor will create teams based on those preferences.

EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING POLICY

Students will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Attendance and Participation: 35%
- Weekly Surveys: 30%
- Final Paper: 35%

Attendance and Participation Expectations:
- Attend all classes (points will be deducted for unexcused absences)
  - Arrive on time
  - Bring your nameplate and clicker to every class
  - Engage actively throughout
  - Stay for the full duration of the session
- Lead and actively participate in classroom discussions – Effective class participation includes:
  - Significant contributions to class discussion, including building on each other’s comments
Critical thinking skills – evidence of case analysis, deep understanding of the readings, and ability to identify implications of the readings for the case/issues discussed in class

Ability to take a stand – share your perspective on cases/various education reforms and provide evidence to support your position, expect cold calling

Willingness to test new ideas and push the class discussion forward

Ability to link course concepts from readings and prior classes

Effective introductions and thoughtful questions of guest speakers

Weekly Surveys (30%)
In order to prepare for each class discussion, students will read materials and complete a weekly survey by 5:00 pm on Monday before each class. Survey responses play a key role in determining the structure, focus, and facilitation of each session, so it is important to complete surveys with thoughtful responses and on time.

Weekly Surveys and Assignments Expectations:
• Complete weekly online surveys
• Submit each survey by 5:00 pm on Monday before class (late surveys will be worth half credit)
• Complete all readings in advance of the relevant session
• Respond thoughtfully to assignment questions
  o Answer every question
  o Take a stand on issues and provide evidence for your position
  o Submit questions for upcoming guest speakers
• Provide feedback on class facilitation and guest speakers (feedback is for course improvement and will not be graded)

Final Paper (35%)
Each team (3-4 students) will submit a 10- to 15-page paper that defines a current human capital challenge faced in the education sector, researches current state and innovative practices related to that issue, applies conceptual frameworks covered in classroom discussions, and recommends strategic solutions.

Final Paper Expectations:
• Write a high-quality report that demonstrates a deep understanding of the topic and implications for the education field
• Partner with a team to analyze and make recommendations based on the topic
• Apply course concepts to inform your analysis and recommendations

Timeline and Deliverables:
• **Wednesday, March 28th at 11:59 pm** – Final paper preferences survey due to indicate your preferences of topics and team members
• **Tuesdays, April 3rd and 10th** – Mid-course check-in with project teams before and after class
• **Friday, April 13th at 11:59 pm** – Detailed paper outline and draft bibliography due and uploaded to Canvas
• **Friday, April 27th at 11:59 pm** – Final paper due and uploaded to Canvas

Support:
The instructor will schedule times before or after class to meet with teams to discuss progress and challenges. Teams are encouraged to schedule additional time with the instructor or TA as needed.