

Teacher Leadership in Professional Learning Communities

GRADES K–12

Through this graduate-level course, teachers learn how to extend the scope of their influence from working with peers to engaging school and community stakeholders. The curriculum will highlight the processes, benefits, and challenges of building and working in professional learning communities, and will identify issues and address problems that affect student learning and achievement.

COURSE TOPICS

- Introduction to Learning Communities
- Collaborative Culture
- Professional Learning Communities: A Model for Implementation
- Professional Learning Communities for Student Learning and Intervention
- Professional Learning Communities: Results Driven Orientation
- Overcoming Potential Obstacles
- The Broader Context: Technology and Learning Communities

COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, educators will:

- Describe the effect of learning communities on the role of teachers.
- Explain the relationship between learning communities and teacher leadership opportunities.
- Analyze their school using stages of learning community development.
- Discuss the purpose and role of communication in a learning community.
- Examine how incorporating learning communities changes school culture.
- Compare and contrast their school's collaboration with collaboration in a learning community.
- Construct an opinion regarding the need for collaboration that occurs in a learning community.
- Analyze their school's developmental stage related to mission, vision, values, goals, and communication.
- Discuss the use of individualized assessment and common assessment and how to balance the use of these forms of assessment.
- Determine the use of inquiry stance to enhance assessment.
- Analyze their school's developmental stage related to clarity, assessment, and systematic intervention.
- Reflect upon their learning in this course.
- Evaluate forms and use of data.
- Analyze their school's developmental stage related to goal setting and data use to inform decision making.
- Analyze their beliefs on the role of the teacher leader in the change process.
- Summarize their understandings of the goals, purposes, and characteristics of a learning community.
- Synthesize their objective analysis of their school using the Professional Learning Community Continuum and propose suggestions for addressing identified weaknesses.
- Explain the effect learning communities have on school culture and the implications that has for the teacher leader in creating social change.
- Evaluate the role of online learning communities in facilitating collaboration and professional development.
- Reflect on their learning in this course and consider how mentoring, coaching, and collaboration will expand their sphere of teacher leadership influence in their school community.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

COURSE ASSESSMENT

This course provides numerous opportunities to apply research-based concepts and theory to practical teaching situations. Assessment is conducted in the following ways:

→ **Discussions**

Participants engage in discussions that stimulate professional dialogue among colleagues regarding the content presented. Discussion summaries require participants to make connections among key ideas and synthesize their learning through thoughtful written responses.

→ **Activities**

Activities help participants explore concepts and make connections during the course. Some activities are graded assessments; others are ungraded and are preparation for other assignments.

→ **Application Assignments**

Participants personalize course content and plan how they will apply the theories, concepts, and strategies in their teaching practice.

→ **Quizzes**

Several multiple-choice quizzes assess students' knowledge of the theories, concepts, and strategies presented in the course.

→ **Reflection Paper**

Participants summarize their course learning from a more global perspective in a final reflection paper that exhibits the knowledge and insights gained from the course material.

COURSE FORMAT AND MATERIALS

This course is offered in two distance-learning formats: print & DVD and online. Participants choose and enroll in one format.

PRINT & DVD FORMAT

Participants in the print & DVD version of the course receive printed materials to facilitate their learning. This version of the course requires educators to form a study team. The participant must have at least one study partner or peer coach, preferably another educator, to complete activities, engage in discussion, and solicit for feedback. It is not necessary for the study partner to be enrolled in the course. Participants enrolled in the print & DVD version should have Internet access in order to connect with the many Web sites that are offered as learning resources. Assignments are submitted via email. Participants will receive:

- The print study guide
 - *Teacher Leadership in Professional Learning Communities*
- The DVD
 - Laureate Education, Inc. (Executive Producer). (2008). *Teacher leadership in professional learning communities*. Baltimore: Executive Producer.
- The course textbook(s)
 - DuFour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R & Many, T. (2006). *Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work* (2nd ed.). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
 - McLaughlin, M and Talbert, E. (2006). *Building school-based teacher learning communities: Professional strategies to improve student achievement*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- The other required readings

ONLINE FORMAT

Participants in the online version access the course content through an online learning management system. Teachers are required to participate in virtual discussions via a discussion board with fellow educators with whom they interact. Course texts, Web sites, and journal articles help facilitate learning and transfer theory into practice. Video programs feature interviews with nationally recognized education experts. Classroom scenes provide a view into the classrooms of master teachers who demonstrate the strategies taught in the course. The online course includes:

- Access to the online classroom for
 - Teacher Leadership in Professional Learning Communities
- Access to the video programs in the online classroom as well as a back-up DVD
 - Laureate Education, Inc. (Executive Producer). (2008). *Teacher leadership in professional learning communities*. Baltimore: Executive Producer.
- The course textbook(s)
 - DuFour, R., DuFour, R, Eaker, R & Many, T. (2006). *Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work* (2nd ed.) Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
 - McLaughlin, M and Talbert, E. (2006). *Building school-based teacher learning communities: Professional strategies to improve student achievement*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Access to the other required readings

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE COURSE FORMAT:

- Operating system for PC: Windows® XP, Windows Vista®, or Windows® 7
- Operating system for Mac®: OS X or higher
- Processor: 1 GHz, 32/64 bit or higher
- Memory: Minimum 512 MB of RAM; 1 GB recommended
- Browser: Microsoft Internet Explorer® 6.0 or higher; Firefox® 3.6 or higher (also for Mac®: Apple® Safari® 4 or higher)
- Internet connection: Broadband (DSL, cable modem, or similar) required
- Software: Microsoft Word®, Adobe® Flash® Player 7 or higher (free), Adobe® Acrobat® Reader® version 8 or higher (free)
- Monitor resolution: 1280 x 800 pixels or higher

Note: If you are using a Macintosh®, please be sure to download Mozilla® Firefox® 3.6. It's free and the download should take only a few minutes at <http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/all-older.html>.

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EDUCATION EXPERTS

Linda Darling-Hammond, Ed.D.

Dr. Darling-Hammond is the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University, where she serves as principal investigator for the School Redesign Network and is a director of the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute. She was the founding executive director of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, which produced the widely cited 1996 blueprint for education reform, *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*. Dr. Darling-Hammond's work focuses on educational policy, teaching and teacher education, school restructuring, and educational equity. Among her more than 200 publications is *The Right To Learn*, which received the 1998 Outstanding Book Award from the American Educational Research Association, and (as co-editor) *Teaching as the Learning Profession: A Handbook of Policy and Practice*, which was awarded the National Staff Development Council's Outstanding Book Award in 2000.

Richard DuFour, Ed.D.

Dr. DuFour was a public school educator for 34 years. He was principal of Adlai E. Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois, from 1983 to 1991, and superintendent of the district from 1991 to 2002. During his tenure, Stevenson became "the most recognized and celebrated high school in the United States," according to the U.S. Department of Education. Stevenson has been repeatedly cited in the popular press as one of America's best schools and referenced in professional literature as an exemplar of best practices in education. Dr. DuFour has consulted with school districts, state departments, and professional organizations throughout North America on strategies for improving schools. He is the author/coauthor of six books, including *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn*.

Linda Lambert, Ed.D.

Dr. Lambert is professor emeritus at California State University, Hayward, and president of Lambert Leadership Development. She has served as a teacher, principal, district director, and coordinator of leadership academies. Dr. Lambert is the author of *The Constructivist Leader, Who Will Save Our Schools?*, and *Building Leadership Capacity in Schools*. Her major research areas involve constructivist leadership, leadership capacity, teacher leadership, school and system improvement, and women in leadership.



ABOUT CANTER

Canter, a subsidiary of Laureate Education, Inc., is committed to serving the educational community with graduate-level courses that blend research-based theory with practical strategies. Canter began with one groundbreaking guide on managing behavior in the classroom and, more than 35 years later, has helped more than 295,000 educators address the most critical issues in education through proven programs delivered through distance-learning.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information regarding Canter graduate-level courses, visit www.Canter.net or call 1-800-669-9011.

ABOUT PARTNERSHIP

Canter offers its courses in partnership with Walden University, allowing you to benefit from Canter's quality curriculum in a self-paced format, while earning graduate credit from a leading accredited university. The course curriculum is developed and designed by Canter in collaboration with national education experts, while graduate credit is granted through a partnering university that assesses student work. Credit may be applicable for certification renewal and/or salary advancement.* Course credit may be transferable with prior approval from the university providing your advanced degree or planned program.

Walden University

Walden University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association, www.ncahlc.org; 1-312-263-0456. Canter and Walden University are both subsidiaries of Laureate Education, Inc.†

*It is a student's responsibility to check with his/her state/district and evaluate and understand any requirements related to the use of individual courses for any purpose.

†Prospective Washington state students are advised to contact the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at 1-360-725-6275 or prof.educ@k12.wa.us to determine whether Walden's programs in the field of education are approved for teacher certification or endorsements in Washington State. Additionally, teachers are advised to contact their individual school district as to whether this program may qualify for salary advancement.