



Lamar University
College of Education and Human Development
Department of professional Pedagogy

“Preparing Educators for a Changing World”

The CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK of the Lamar University undergraduate and graduate educator preparation programs illuminates the vision of the faculty. The programs prepare educators for a changing world by requiring as outcomes general education, pedagogical content knowledge, content proficiency, pedagogical strategies, communication skills, values, and analytical abilities. Critical thinking is required for responding to the diverse needs of P-12 students in myriad and changing settings. Lamar University educator preparation students also develop dispositions and habits of mind needed for “self-learning” and “lifelong learning,” that will equip them to encounter problems and change with confidence.

PEDG 5344.48

School Law for Teachers

ONLINE – FALL -- 2017

Course Website: <https://luonline.blackboard.com/>

Instructor: Dr. Cristina Ríos

Office Hours: TUE 1:30 PM to 5:30 PM; WED 1:00 to 3:30 PM; THR 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

E-Mail: Use the **Blackboard e-mail** for communication

Alternate e-mail for **emergencies:** riosc@lamar.edu

Course Description:

This course provides teachers a foundation to understand the legal, ethical, and policy dimensions of education. Emphasis is given to the Texas Education Code, and federal and state statutes, especially special education law.

Prerequisites:

Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet all requirements expressed in the Lamar Graduate Catalog. Any doubt should be reconciled with the Education Advisors.

Required Texts and Readings:

The Educator’s Guide to Texas School Law, (2014) **8th Edition**, Walsh, J., Kemerer, F., & Maniotis, L. UT Press, Austin, TX. ISBN 978-0-292-76084-4 (hereafter **GUIDE**)

<http://utpress.utexas.edu/index.php/books/waled8>

Building the Legacy: A Training Curriculum on IDEA 2004 (hereafter **IDEA**) [link available in Blackboard]

Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators [Link available in Blackboard]

Other required readings will be **available in Blackboard**.

ACCESS TO A HIGH-SPEED COMPUTER INTERNET CONNECTION IS REQUIRED.

(Mobile devices might not open all course material. See computer requirements below)

Recommended Texts:

Using Sources Effectively, (2011) 3rd. Edition, Robert A. Harris, Pycszak Publishing, Los Angeles, CA. ISBN 1-884585-93-0

Public school law: Teachers and students rights, (2014) 7th Edition, McCarthy, M., Cambron-McCabe, N., Eckes, S., Boston: Pearson.

Course Goals, Objectives, and Learning Outcomes:

As a result of active participation in this course it is expected that the student will be able to:

- Describe the basic components of Texas Education Law;
- Articulate and explain the differences of state and federal constitutional, statutory, administrative, and judicial law;
- Define basic legal terminology related to School Law;
- Describe the legal structure of the Texas and local school systems;
- Analyze and discuss legal issues relevant for educators including those related to special education laws, students' rights, discipline, testing, equity, and child abuse;
- Recognize ethical and unethical educator practices based on the *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*;
- Identify and discuss the confidentiality regulations associated with FERPA and the requirements for maintaining accurate student records;
- Explain the importance of adhering to required district procedures and following the faculty handbook;
- Determine when the use of classroom material adheres to copyright and fair use rules;
- Distinguish between plagiarism and copyright violation;
- Determine what the rules of law are in selected Law Cases and assess the impact of the court decision for educators; and
- Apply the knowledge of legal and ethical guidelines to the analyses of possible classroom situations.

Assessment

The listed learning outcomes will be assessed through participation in online activities, assignments, and examinations. All class activities and assessments will be related to the learning outcomes listed above. There will be several assessments and Case Studies.

Course objectives and learning outcomes are based on the relevant standards.

Educator preparation standards addressed:

The course includes the content required by the Texas State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC), recommended by national specialty organizations and supplemented by Lamar University faculty members. The standards of this course reflect the TExES examinations, required for certification. You should become familiar with these expectations, which should guide you in becoming a teacher or a provider of special services in Texas schools. The School Law course specifically addresses the “Legal and Ethical Requirements and the Structure of Education in Texas” as required in the TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standard IV; with special emphasis to the following elements:

TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities -- Standard IV:

The teacher fulfills professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession

Legal and Ethical Requirements and the Structure of Education in Texas**Teacher Knowledge: What Teachers Know**

The beginning teacher **knows and understands**:

- 4.13k** legal requirements for educators (e.g., those related to special education, students’ and families’ rights, student discipline, equity, child abuse);
- 4.14k** ethical guidelines for educators in Texas (e.g., in relation to confidentiality, interactions with students and others in the school community);
- 4.15k** policies and procedures in compliance with Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators as adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification;
- 4.16k** procedures and requirements for maintaining accurate student records;
- 4.17k** the importance of adhering to required procedures for administering state and district-mandated assessments; and
- 4.18k** the structure of the education system in Texas, including relationships between campus, local, and state components.

Application: What Teachers Can Do

The beginning teacher **is able to**:

- 4.16s** use knowledge of legal and ethical guidelines to guide behavior in education related situations;
- 4.17s** serve as an advocate for students and the profession;
- 4.18s** maintain accurate records; and
- 4.19s** use knowledge of the structure of state and local education systems to seek information and assistance in addressing issues. [Emphasis added]

Find the complete Pedagogical and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) standards at:
www.tea.state.tx.us/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=2147484798&libID=2147484797

Course Outline:

- I. Overview of Education Law, Texas Schools, and Parent Rights
- II. Student Attendance and the Instructional Program
- III. Special Education Law -- IDEA 2004
- IV. Employment Relationship
- V. Personnel Issues
- VI. Expression and Associational Rights
- VII. Copyright
- VIII. Religion in the Schools
- IX. Student Discipline
- X. Privacy Issues: Community, Educators, Students
- XI. Legal Liability

Relevant Cases on the issues covered**Reading Assignments:**

This is an **intensive online class**, requiring a **substantial amount of reading** and research. Reading assignments for each class session are in the posted schedule. Readings are to be completed and ready for online discussion on the dates noted. The readings for this course are certainly not for entertaining. The reading material is vast and requires concentration and time to analyze and comprehend. Legal terminology and references to codes and cases are not always easy to follow. You should dedicate enough time to complete the readings and study the course material. Readings and assignments are due on the specified date in the schedule. You will be required to post entries into a **Learning Journal** in Blackboard.

Participation:

This class **requires** online participation and discussion for the benefit of the individual student and the class as a group. Students need to complete all the online class assignments to receive full credit. Online activities are planned to foster learning and interaction among the class members. All members of the group are expected to contribute in an effective and positive manner to the online class discussions. In addition to posting **your own** entries in **every class discussion**, you should read **ALL** the comments posted by other class members, and answer to at least **two** of their postings in **EACH** discussion. **Points will be deducted for missed participation in the class discussions.** **Respect is required** in all communications. Online class participation and contributions to the learning experience of the group are part of the final grade for this course. Online assignments and guidelines are provided in Blackboard.

Since the PEDG 5344 is a three (3) credit hours course requiring **45 contact hours** plus completion of projects; At the end of the term, you should have worked in the course website for at least 45 hours as recorded by the Blackboard tracking system.

Blackboard has a student tracking system, which tells the instructor how much actual time you spend in each online assignment.

You should log into the course Blackboard website **at least three separate days each week**, during the duration of the course; and you should work in the course assignments in Blackboard a minimum of **three hours each week**. If necessary, you can work during the weekend. The time spent in Blackboard should be comparable to the time you would spend in the classroom in a three (3) credit hours course. Each missing day of the required Blackboard participation and attendance will count as an **absence** and will result in **grade points reduction** in participation.

Upon logging in to Blackboard, you should check for any **announcements, emails**, and new material posted on the home page by your instructor. You should follow the schedule; complete assignments and assessments; and actively **participate in the class discussions**.

Other Activities:

You will be notified of other online activities which will enhance your learning experience. Guidelines for each task will be posted online.

Academic honesty:

Plagiarism on assignments, including copying assignments from other students, the Internet, books and other sources, or using assignments previously used for other courses or any other purpose, will not be tolerated and could result in FAILING the course. Students will be reported for academic dishonesty to the university authorities and treated according to the guidelines established by the university.

The Lamar Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows:

“Plagiarism shall mean the appropriation of another’s work or idea and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work or idea into one’s own work offered for credit.”

Copying material from the internet, other students, or anywhere else and using it in the online discussions, tests, or assignments is academic dishonesty. Assignments and discussion entries MUST be your own design, ideas and words. All the assignments MUST be prepared exclusively for this course.

Students are responsible to understand how to avoid plagiarism and to be familiar with APA citation rules and follow them. **Sources for ALL the materials must be properly cited.** Claims of lack of knowledge or that the submitted assignment was just a draft will not be accepted. Check your assignments carefully before turning them in.

Special Needs Accommodation:

It is the policy of Lamar University to provide equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is located in the Communications building room 105. Any student with special needs requiring accommodation should notify the DRC at 409-880-8347 or drc@lamar.edu. Students that have been assigned academic adjustments and/or accommodations are required to identify their needs to faculty members by presenting an accommodation memorandum from the DRC.

Computer Skills and Technology:

COMPUTER SKILLS REQUIRED

Students taking this course **MUST** be skillful in the use of MSWORD, and all its features; know how to handle PDF documents; and Power-point presentations; download and upload documents to Blackboard; post messages in Blackboard; participate in online discussions, etc.

COMPUTER AVAILABILITY & TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students taking online courses are responsible for having access to a computer, with appropriate memory and software, including Adobe Reader (.pdf), Microsoft Word, Power Point, Firefox browser, Flash Player and a high-speed internet connection capable of viewing online videos. The Lamar computer labs are available, in case of an unforeseen emergency, and you should know the labs schedule. **You should be aware that some hand held devices might not open all of the course material.**

You are responsible for maintaining a valid **Username** and **Password**. **Remember that passwords periodically expire. Personal computer problems or expired passwords are not valid reasons for lack of participation; or for missing deadlines or exams.**

TUTORIALS & TECHNICAL SUPPORT

All students taking this course are required to take the Blackboard tutorials provided by the Lamar University Center for Distance Education and become familiar with the Blackboard system. Any technical questions not addressed in these tutorials should be directed to the staff in the Center for Distance Education.

If there is need of technical assistance with Blackboard, you should call the Blackboard Help Desk Phone: **(409) 880-7849 or (409) 880-2222**, and **not** the instructor. Technical help with Blackboard after hours (5 P.M. - 8 A.M.), on weekends, or on holidays, is available at **1-866-321-7170** (toll free). The website of the Lamar University Center for Distance Education has contact information for technical support at <http://luonline.lamar.edu/blackboard-support/index.html>

E-mail and Blackboard:

Blackboard has an e-mail for use by the students and the instructor. The Blackboard e-mail will be the official method of communication for this class. You should check **BOTH** your Blackboard e-mail and your My.Lamar e-mail daily.

Class Rules and Online Behavior:

Online communications and behavior in the course must conform to the university policy. Only students properly enrolled in the class are permitted to participate. Class members, and the professor are considered part of a learning team; all online interactions should be made with the proper respect. In accordance with administrative policy, sexual harassment is reprehensible and will not be tolerated by the university.

Official Enrollment and Withdrawal:

It is your responsibility to make sure that you are officially enrolled in this course. If you decide to withdraw from the course you **MUST** do it officially, and **BEFORE** the last day to withdraw without academic penalty. Failure to do so in time may result in a failing grade, in accordance with Lamar policy.

Syllabus subject to change: Students will be informed of any syllabus changes.

Grading:

Your online class participation, completion of online assignments including self-assessments, Case Studies, Learning Journal and Final Case Studies, constitute your final grade. Points are assigned for each assignment and activity. All work must reflect a high level of quality. Any work reflecting less than a high level standard or submitted late may receive a lower grade. Incompletes will **NOT** be given for incomplete work. Incomplete work will result in an “F” (Failing the course).

WARNING: LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL RESULT IN REDUCED GRADE OR ZERO.

Prepare your assignments in advance and submit them a couple of days **before** the deadline. If you decide to wait until the last moment, you are taking the chance of missing the deadline and perhaps failing the course.

Four (4) points will be deducted for missing participation in a blog [**not** posting an entry **and** at least **two** interactive comments]. Missing participation in more than **five class discussions** [blogs] may result in failing the course. You can participate as long as the blog remains open. Blackboard will automatically close the blogs after the posting period.

Grading scale:	
A	= 90 -- 100
B	= 80 -- 89
C	= 70 -- 79
D	= 60 -- 69
F	= 59 OR LESS

GRADING POINTS:	
Online Participation	0 – 30
Includes:	
➤ participation in discussions,	
➤ attendance,	
➤ self-assessments, etc.	
Learning Journal	0 – 10
Case Studies [10 each 4x10=40]	0 – 40
Final Case Studies	0 – 20
Total	100

Note: The syllabus and the schedule are subject to change

University Emergency Procedures

Emergency Procedures

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus; instructions for severe weather or violence/active shooter, fire, or chemical release can be found at:

<http://www.lamar.edu/about-lu/administration/risk-management/index.html>.

Following are procedures for the first two:

Severe Weather

- Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
- Seek shelter in an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building.
- Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors.

Violence/Active Shooter (CADD)

- **CALL** - 8-3-1-1 from a campus phone (880-8311 from a cell phone). Note: Calling 9-1-1 from either a campus phone or cell phone will contact Beaumont City Police Dispatch rather than University Police.
 - **AVOID**- If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
 - **DENY**- Barricade the door with desks, chairs, bookcases or any other items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it is safe.
 - **DEFEND**- Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack.
- Academic Continuity Statement – the following is required:

In the event of an announced campus closure in excess of four days due to a hurricane or other disaster, students are expected to login to Lamar University's website's homepage (www.Lamar.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely.