

Educational Leadership

C o n c e p t u a l F r a m e w o r k

Interdisciplinarity
Reflective Practice
Reasoned Decision-Making
Instructional Leadership
Alternative Conceptions of Leadership
The Pursuit of Social Justice

At the Warner School, we are committed to preparing educational leaders for both public and private schools who promote student learning through the formulation of visions, plans, instructional programs, and management techniques that are marshaled to that end. Our candidates are prepared to both foster and respond to change, while remaining focused on the basic mission of promoting student growth and learning. Our graduates are prepared to act ethically with integrity, fairness, and an awareness of the demands of social justice. More specifically, our programs are characterized by the following elements:

INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Educational leaders need to understand multiple disciplines and their application to the tasks of educational leadership, including: vision formulation and planning; decision-making; establishing the conditions necessary for student learning; communication with multiple interest groups; and, building consensus, managing financial, human, and material resources and services. Therefore, our program is interdisciplinary and research based which often requires more depth than coverage or breadth. Our candidates understand the contexts within which they exercise their skills, and those being prepared for private Catholic schools are prepared to undertake the pastoral role played by the school principal in those institutions.

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Educational leaders need to think broadly about their roles and the goals that they should be striving to realize as educational leaders - whether they serve in positions in the public or private schools. We believe that administrators should be self-reflective and life-long learners who care about integrity, fairness and ethics. Our program encourages candidates to think broadly about the goals and tasks they face as educational leaders and to reflect on their practice.

REASONED DECISION-MAKING

Educational leaders need to have the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for reasoned decision-making. We believe that effective decision-making is central to the achievement of the goals of the school and the achievement of all children. Our programs promote high quality decision-making on the part of our candidates and an appreciation for the value of data and research. Our candidates realize that they are accountable for their decisions, and have the knowledge and skills needed to evaluate the programs they create and help steward.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Student learning and growth is at the very heart of school leadership and the entire educational enterprise. We believe that school administrators must understand curriculum and instruction both from the perspective of teachers and from the larger perspectives that an educational leader must bring to the teaching and learning process. Our graduates are cognizant of what it takes to lead programmatic reform using innovations in curricula, assessment and instruction, and they understand the ways in which systemic reform influences authority relationships and the distribution and the allocation of power. Educational reforms are introduced within their historical, social and political contexts, and throughout their courses, candidates develop the knowledge, skill, and awareness needed to enact them.

ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a holistic concept, and though it can be useful to dissect it into discrete skills, knowledge and dispositions to accomplish certain activities, it is important to think about it in ways that unify all three. We believe that leadership is more than the sum of a discrete set of aptitudes and skills. In our programs, candidates emerge cognizant of different conceptions of leadership and are able to conceptualize themselves as leaders based on their own personal preferred style of leadership.

THE PURSUIT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

School administrators should take on their roles as educational leaders with an awareness and appreciation of the demands of social justice and its various conceptions. The themes of equity and non-discrimination flow throughout all of our courses, and our candidates have the capacity to understand the relevant principles and their application to specific educational problems and policies.