**TLL 2415: Instructional Leadership**

Fall Semester 2023

**Dr. Lindsay Clare Matsumura**

Office Hours by Appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course we examine research-based approaches for engaging teachers in processes of continuous instructional improvement centered around high-leverage, equitable teaching practices. Drawing on a synthesis of two decades of research on effective principal leadership, our overarching goals for the course are to give students the knowledge and skills needed to engage teachers in instructionally focused interactions, build a productive school climate, and facilitate professional collaboration.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students (principal candidates) will be able to use a set of practices and tools essential for a school leader to improve instruction and learning. Specifically, upon completion of the course, students will know and be able to:

* communicate a vision of high-leverage, equitable practices in the content areas as a springboard for productive instructionally-focused interactions,
* create norms and routines that support processes of continuous improvement by designing, planning, and leading Learning Walks (collaborative classroom observations),
* establish respectful, collaborative and positive professional learning communities,
* provide evidence-based, actionable feedback to teachers to advance all students’ learning opportunities,
* develop strategies for evaluating and mitigating the potential negative effects of test-based accountability.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Materials required for the course (readings, videos and tools) are provided in the modules.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

At the University of Pittsburgh, the expectation for a 3 credit, 7-week courses is that students devote about 18 hours a week to the course activities. Your active participation is necessary both for your own learning and that of others. Therefore, students are expected to participate in all of the discussions and activities as detailed below.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Discussion board.** Students are responsible for completing the readings, discussion boards and activities within the modules that include, but are not limited to, watching and reflecting on videos, analyzing transcripts, engaging and critiquing two simulations, and practicing a Learning Walk. In addition to posting substantive responses to the discussion questions, every week students are responsible for responding to the other students’ contributions. Postings to the weekly questions are due on **Thursday.** Students have until **Sunday** at 11:59 p.m. to respond to each other’s contributions. Excellent responses concretely reference readings, share insights and questions, and make connections with professional practice. Please see the **Discussion Board Participation and Expectations section** later in the syllabus and the discussion board rubric posted in each module to understand how posts are evaluated.
2. **Practicing a Learning Walk.** You will meet with a small group of colleagues synchronously over zoom to practice the Learning Walk routine using classroom lesson videos available in the module and write a reflection on the experience (Due **September 24** at 11:59 p.m.).
3. **Leading a Learning Walk *or* a Collaborative Professional Learning Community (PLC).** Students will lead a Learning Walk at their internship site or a Collaborative PLC meeting and reflect on the experience (Due **October 15** at 11:59 p.m.).
4. **Communicating Your Vision of Instructional Leadership.** For this assignment, students will write a 10-page paper setting out their vision of instructional leadership (Due **October 15** at 11:59 p.m.).

**IMPORTANT DATES: PLANNING AHEAD**

You will need to schedule two dates early in the semester for the following activities:

* Practicing the Learning Walk routine in an online synchronous meeting with a small group of student colleagues sometime during Module 4 (**September 18-23**). The written reflection for this assignment is due **September 24.**
* Conducting a Learning Walk or a Collaborative Professional Learning Community (PLC) with teachers at your internship site to occur between **October 2 and October 13.** As described in the course introduction, in order to conduct the Learning Walk or facilitate the PLC you will need to work with your internship site principal early in the semester to identify participants who are willing to help you with the assignment. You will need at least 3 teachers and 2 walkers in addition to yourself (3 walkers total) to complete the Learning Walk assignment, and 4-7 teachers if you choose the Collaborative PLC option. The written reflections for the assignment you choose is due **October 15**.

**COURSE EVALUATION**

Grades are determined by the timely and substantive completion of the readings, learning activities and discussion board postings in each module and the written reflections for Practicing a Learning Walk, leading a Learning Walk or Collaborative PLC meeting, and Communicating Your Vision of Instructional Leadership. The criteria for each of these are posted in the discussion board and Assignment sections of the modules.

| **Item Evaluated** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| --- | --- |
| Discussion Board | 30% |
| Practicing a Learning Walk | 10% |
| Leading a Learning Walk or Leading a Collaborative PLC Meeting | 40% |
| Communicating a Vision of Instructional Leadership | 20% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

#### GRADING SCHEMA

Students are welcome to revise and resubmit work for re-evaluation, in consultation with the instructor. Consistently late discussion board posts or late assignments will affect overall grade. Contact the instructor immediately if any problems, confusions, or complications arise, or if you have concerns about your grade.

| **Grades** | **Points** |
| --- | --- |
| A+ | 97-100 |
| A | 94-96 |
| A- | 90-93 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 84-86 |
| B- | 80-83 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 74-76 |
| C- | 70-73 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 64-66 |
| D- | 60-63 |
| F | Less than 60 |

# DISCUSSION BOARD EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

*Adapted from https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1065666/pages/discussion-board-participation-and-expectations*

In this course, students collectively participate in the weekly discussions to enhance and support each other’s learning. Asynchronous discussions support students to develop and clarify their ideas and understanding of the course content through the writing process and expand their thinking through exposure to the ideas and perspectives of other students.

Some characteristics of excellent discussion contributions are outlined below.

* Posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support statements with specific examples, experiences, or references.
* Make certain that all posts and responses address the question, problem, or situation as presented for discussion.
* Show original thinking (i.e., not be a rehash of the posts of other students).
* Discussions occur when there is dialogue; therefore, you need to build upon the posts and responses of other learners in your responses.
* When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).
* Contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

**ONLINE DISCUSSION NORMS**

Please keep the following in mind when posting and responding to the posts of other students in the Whole Group discussions:

* Use appropriate language. Excessive use of “chat” or “instant messaging” jargon is not acceptable for online discussions.
* Inappropriate and/or offensive language, especially comments that might be construed as racist or sexist, are not appropriate and will be dealt with on an individual basis.
* Be careful with humor and sarcasm. One person’s humorous comment can be another person’s hurtful or degrading remark.
* Do not use all caps in an online environment. Using all caps is considered SHOUTING.
* Use proper spelling, capitalization, grammar, usage, and punctuation.
* Remember that there are other human beings reading your postings, so treat everyone with respect. Don’t post anything you wouldn’t be willing to communicate face to face.

**STUDENT OPINION OF TEACHING SURVEYS**

Students in this class will be asked to complete a *Student Opinion of Teaching Survey*. Surveys will be sent via Pitt email and appear on your CourseWeb landing page during the last three weeks of class meeting days. Your responses are anonymous. Please take time to thoughtfully respond, your feedback is important to me. [Read more](http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/omet/student-information/) about *Student Opinion of Teaching Surveys*.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

*Academic Integrity*

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh’s Policy on Academic Integrity](https://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the [Academic Integrity Guide](http://pitt.libguides.com/academicintegrity/) for an overview of the topic. For hands- on practice, complete the [Academic Integrity Modules](http://pitt.libguides.com/academicintegrity/plagiarism).

In the event that a student believes that the instructor for this course has not met his obligations as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow the procedure described in the Guidelines (p. 16) by (1) first trying to resolve the matter with the faculty member directly; (2) then, if needed, attempting to resolve the matter through conversations with your program chair (Dr. Tom Ralston). If further assistance is required to resolve the matter, then (3) talk to the TLL Department Chair (Dr. Cassie Quigley).

*Disability Services*

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and [Disability Resources and Services](https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs/) (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, [drsrecep@pitt.edu,](mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu) (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

*Copyright Notice*

These materials may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 17 USC section 101, et seq., in addition to University policy and procedures, prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials. See [Library of Congress Copyright Office](https://www.copyright.gov/) and the [University Copyright Policy](https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Community-Standards/Policy_CS_03.pdf).

**STATEMENT ON CLASSROOM RECORDING**

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.

### INCLUSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University’s Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University’s mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, visit the [Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance web page](https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance).

I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. As the instructor for the course, I am likewise committed to fostering a learning environment that is as safe and inclusive as possible. It is my intention to name and correct as best as possible any actions on my part that fall short of these commitments. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues please let me know. Or if you prefer, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing [titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu). Reports can also be [filed online](https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report/report-form). You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

### OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (ODI)

* [Resources, consultation, and bias incident reporting](https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/)
* [Title IX office, resources regarding sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, and sexual violence.](https://www.titleix.pitt.edu/) Cases of discrimination and harassment based on protected identities should be reported to the Title IX office

### RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

The observance of religious holidays (activities observed by a religious group of which a student is a member) and cultural practices are an important reflection of diversity. As your instructor, I am committed to providing equivalent educational opportunities to students of all belief systems. At the beginning of the semester, you should review the course requirements to identify foreseeable conflicts with assignments, exams, or other required attendance. If at all possible, please contact me (your course coordinator/s) within the first two weeks of the first class meeting to allow time for us to discuss and make fair and reasonable adjustments to the schedule and/or tasks.

See the [Provost’s annual memo](http://www.universityannouncements.pitt.edu/Religious%20Observances%20FY19.pdf) about religious observances.

### EMERGENCIES

Do you have Pitt Police saved on your mobile phone?  911 works, or Pitt Police, 412-624-2121

### YOUR WELL-BEING MATTERS

College/Graduate school can be an exciting and challenging time for students. Taking time to maintain your well-being and seek appropriate support can help you achieve your personal and professional goals. It can be helpful to remember that we all benefit from assistance and guidance at times, and there are many resources available to support your well-being while you are at Pitt. You are encouraged to visit [Thrive@Pitt](https://www.thrive.pitt.edu/" \o "thrive.pitt.edu" \t "_blank) to learn more about well-being and the many campus resources available to help you thrive.

If you or anyone you know experiences overwhelming academic stress, persistent difficult feelings and/or challenging life events, you are strongly encouraged to seek support. In addition to reaching out to friends and loved ones, consider connecting with a faculty member you trust for assistance connecting to helpful resources.

The [University Counseling Center](http://www.counseling.pitt.edu/) is also here for you. You can call 412-648-7930 at any time to connect with a clinician. If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, please call the University Counseling Center at any time at 412-648-7930. You can also contact Resolve Crisis Network at 888-796-8226. If the situation is life threatening, call Pitt Police at 412-624-2121 or dial 911.

Other resources to support student mental health and wellness that are also available at Pitt include:

* Sexual Assault Response: 412-648-7856
* [Care and Resource Support Team](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cars/) (CARS): Email [pittcares@pitt.edu](mailto:pittcares@pitt.edu)

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, please call the University Counseling Center at any time at 412-648-7930. You can also contact Resolve Crisis Network at 888-796-8226. If the situation is life threatening, call Pitt Police at 412-624-2121 or dial 911.

### BASIC NEEDS SECURITY

Some students are unable to afford groceries or access sufficient food to eat every day. Some students lack a safe and stable place to live. Some students experience challenges in balancing school with paid work, childcare, and other family obligations. Those challenges can create considerable anxiety for students and may also affect students’ performance in their courses. Students experiencing those challenges are urged to contact the instructor or the program director (Dr. Tom Ralston) or TLL Department Chair (Dr. Cassie Quigley). Students experiencing challenges with food, housing, work, and/or family obligations are also encouraged to let me know if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to assist you in accessing support. In addition, the University maintains a student food pantry and a resource guide compiled by the University Library System with food, housing, health, employment, health, and other resources.

Pitt Food Pantry: <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/pittserves/sustain/pantry/>

Pitt Resource Guide: <https://pitt.libguides.com/assistanceresources>