



SCHOOL of EDUCATION
and HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

EDLF 8826: Leadership for Equity and Improvement

version 1.5 [24-06-20: updates to VIG B and related W5-7 course content]

3 Credit Hours¹

Department of Leadership, Foundations and Policy

Summer, 2024

Instructor

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Key Course Dates

Week	Date	Time	Location
Week 1	Saturday, June 1, 2024	9:00 am – 4:00 pm	Northern Virginia
Week 3	Wednesday, June 12, 2024	5:00 – 8:00 pm	Zoom
Week 4	Saturday, June 22, 2024	9:00 am – 4:30 pm	Charlottesville/On Grounds
Week 7	Friday, July 12, 2024	10:00 am – 5:00 pm	Northern Virginia
Week 8	Wednesday, July 17, 2024	5:00 – 8:00 pm	Zoom
Week 9	Saturday, July 27, 2024	9:00 am – 4:00 pm	Northern Virginia
Week 10	Wednesday, July 31, 2024	5:00 – 8:00 pm	Zoom
	Saturday, August 3, 2024	N/A	No Class / Final Due

Sync Classes – Course Zoom URL: [Zoom link](#) (Meeting ID: 948 1039 2197; Passcode: 633756)

¹ Three credit hours are comprised of 32 hours of in-person class time (4 sessions of 8 hours) and 10 hours of online participation, comprising 42 hours of structured contact. In addition to these contact hours, students are expected to spend 21 hours on independent activities (e.g., course readings and preparing assignments) in advance of each of the four in-person sessions, comprising a total of 84 non-contact hours.

+ July 31 is a joint session with EDLF 8820, listed as another date in SIS so it does not cause a conflict.

Course description in COD

The course offers a practice-focused, evidence-based, and critical examination of equity-oriented improvement in educational settings. Students explore equity issues from stakeholders' points of view and draw on principles and approaches of improvement science to develop working theories of change. Critical reviews of existing research and in-class working sessions provide the foundation for students' investigation of an improvement project.

This course is intended for students in the Executive Studies in Educational Leadership (ExSEL) Ed.D. program. Other doctoral-level students can enroll with instructor permission.

Canvas Site

[Leadership for Equity & Improvement \(Su24\) \(UVA Canvas\)](#)

What's the focus of this course?

The most pressing problems of educational practice today will neither be solved by research nor by experience alone. Finding socially-just, equitable and innovative solutions requires skill in systematic inquiry coupled with critical reflection on experience. We will explore systematic ways of articulating your existing experience, developing skills in quality improvement, and honing your critical analysis of others' research to name, frame, and address pressing problems of educational equity. The course will give you foundational skills and tools to develop your expertise as a *scholarly* practitioner, one who is not only deeply reflective about her own experience and a critical consumer of others' research but who is also building secure foundations for carrying out systematic investigation of educational change efforts of one's own.

The purpose of this course is to promote your development as a practitioner-scholar who has the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to use systematic inquiry in effective ways to address complex educational problems and to seek innovative and sustainable solutions. You will be analyzing, critiquing, and proposing changes to a specific equity-oriented educational improvement initiative in your own work setting or in a setting known to you. Typical equity-oriented educational improvement projects are those that center shifts in instructional practices, organizational processes, and/or school and system policies to promote and sustain improved opportunities and outcomes for children from historically underserved and marginalized communities, including initiatives that emphasize:

- Special education
- Advanced academic services
- Math and English language development for English Learners
- School and classroom discipline
- Education of homeless children and youth

The means of critiquing and exploring alternative approaches to your selected initiative will be through the tools and approaches of collaborative continuous improvement. Grunow et al., 2019, define continuous improvement as, “the ongoing disciplined efforts of everyone in the system to make evidence-based changes that will lead to better outcomes, system performance, and organizational learning” (p. 5). The collaborative continuous improvement [aspect](#) of the work aspires to four principles advanced by the Improvement Scholars Network, as articulated by Peurach (2024, p. 10):

- **The practical principle:** Collaborative, continuous improvement is work enacted in local contexts to address local opportunities, needs, and problems that are viewed as important and consequential in the daily lives and daily work of those involved – especially as related to advancing increasing ambitions for educational access, quality, and equity.
- **The technical principle:** Collaborative, continuous improvement is work grounded in rigorous, disciplined, formal methods of producing, using, and refining the practical knowledge, tools, resources, and routines that are needed to address local opportunities, needs, and problems.
- **The organizational principle:** Collaborative, continuous improvement is work enacted in community, in inclusive group and network structures in which diverse local actors collaborate to understand and improve classrooms, communities, schools, and systems.
- **The cultural principle:** Collaborative, continuous improvement is work that’s anchored in norms of:
 - *Appreciation*, and the commitment to identify, value, and build on strengths in people, organizations, and systems.
 - *Criticality*, and the commitment to think critically; to surface and respectfully question the deeply held and often-tacit assumptions of people, organizations, and systems; and to consider and to reconsider ways in which these assumptions enable or complicate pursuing new ambitions for education.
 - *Equity*, and the moral commitment to center fairness and justice in the work and goals of collaborative, continuous improvement, especially for people and groups who have long been excluded and marginalized.

As evident from the statements above, attending to continuous improvement entails both focusing in on specific problems as well as flaring out to understand the wider environment that shapes and provides the conditions for those problems. This perspective encompasses multiple levels of the educational system: classroom, school, school system, and society.

This course encourages you to “learn fast, fail fast, improve fast”.² An essential attribute of productive learning from failure lies in close examination of and reflection on assumptions, a characteristic that Argyris (1977) identifies as “double-loop learning”.³ A second organizing principle of this course is the centrality of *working theory*, in this case a *working theory of*

² Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. p. 173.

³ Argyris, C. (1977). Double loop learning in organizations. *Harvard Business Review*, 55(5), 115-125.

improvement, as a lens that enables (and constrains) our vision around identifying problems of practice, examining the ways that the broader system creates the conditions for those problems, exploring approaches to improvement, and testing change.

What will we learn?

The overarching goals for the ExSEL Program are the following:

- A. *Cultivate scholarly practitioners who are able to transform the field through inquiry in practice.*
- B. *Integrate practical wisdom with research knowledge to identify, critically analyze, and solve problems of practice.*
- C. *Develop professional knowledge base that integrates practical and research knowledge, connecting theory with systemic and systematic inquiry.*
- D. *Demonstrate capacity for socially-just and equitable innovation and change through the application of professional knowledge base.*
- E. Resolve problems of practice by collaborating with key stakeholders and disseminating solutions in multiple ways.
- F. Serve as stewards of the profession by identifying trends, professional obstacles and the critical changes in leadership that enable the success of educators at all levels, including current and aspiring educational leaders.

This course addresses the first four of these goals italicized above, in particular.

Below are our specific objectives for this course that derive from the overarching goals of the ExSEL program.

- 1. Analysis: You will develop a multi-level analysis of a specific equity-oriented educational improvement initiative in your own work setting or in a setting known to you.
- 2. Critique: You will demonstrate your understanding of the intersections of continuous improvement and equity by drawing on diverse sources of evidence and expertise that include your critical survey of existing research as well as your understanding of the intersections of continuous improvement and equity based on your own experience and the experiences of your peers and colleagues.
- 3. Research: Your exploration of existing research will familiarize you with searching for and identifying relevant research literature, evaluating the quality of the literature you have identified, summarizing that literature, identifying key themes across the literature, and using the thematic review to support the development of your analysis and critique of an equity-oriented continuous improvement initiative in your work setting or a setting known to you.
- 4. Inquiry: In your own work and in your work with fellow students, you will demonstrate ways of using systematic inquiry that span multiple levels of the educational system to understand and tackle complex problems of inequitable educational practices and organizational processes.

How will we learn?

The course seeks to address three “deceptively simple” questions adapted from those posed in what is known as the “Model for Improvement” (Langley et al., 2014).

- What specifically are we trying to accomplish in our efforts to redress systemic inequities?
- What change to the existing system might we introduce and why?
- How will we know that a change is actually an improvement?

We will address these questions through class sessions that take place online and in-person, as well as through independent and collective activities that take place between class sessions. We will tackle both big ideas of the field as well as close examination of specific practices. Our exploration occurs across three phases of the course:

- Weeks 0 to 3: Foundations
 - explores equity and social justice concerns in education and the ways that various approaches to continuous improvement aim to address injustice and systemic inequities.
- Weeks 4 to 8: Improving Classroom Practice and School Organization
 - examines specific approaches to improving classroom practice and the organization of schools and schooling through continuous improvement
- Weeks 9-10: Leading Improvement
 - explores the dynamics of leading equity-oriented improvement initiatives

I make use of a wide range of interactive approaches that are rooted in your own and your colleagues’ experiences and are designed to facilitate connections among educational research and theory, your experiences as an educator, and the practices of educational leadership. I frequently make use of structured interaction (protocols), role plays and case studies to help root your conceptual understanding in lived experience. These interactive methods aim to involve all class members in generative and thought-provoking individual, small group, and whole class learning. Collaboration and peer-support for collective and individual learning require your consistent participation in class and online.

How will we know what we’ve learned?

Assignment #1: Course participation and presence (20 points/20%)

As members of the A&S community, we hold ourselves to standards of professional and personal respect. You are expected to complete all course activities as identified in the syllabus and by the instructor, including replying to course readings, as well as participate and support others’ active engagement as directed for each activity. Online activities provide structured ways for you to advance your thinking by connecting concepts in the course materials with your ongoing professional practice. Please see *Course Participation Policy*, p. 16 below, for more details. Your contributions will be assessed holistically and will include all online (synchronous and asynchronous) and in-person activities, including formative and summative evaluation. Grading: 20 points/20% of final grade. You will be assessed holistically for each of the criteria delineated in Appendix A.1. Due: Ongoing. (Objectives: 3, 4)

Assignment #2: Inquiry Journal (IJ) entries (12 points/12%)

The practice of journaling helps you trace your intellectual wrestling with the ideas you are working with in exploring your setting, readings, class activities and online interactions. Through your VIG activities, you will also be invited to read and comment on the journal entries of your peers. I will occasionally read through and comment on your Inquiry Journal entries; my assessment of your entries and comments on others' entries will be holistic. You will be rewarded for the quality of your exploration and thinking processes and your critical analyses and contributions to others' thinking. Your goal is not to take a stand on a particular issue, but to reflect critically on your processes of wrestling with that issue. You should continue to make entries in your Inquiry Journal throughout the course. At a minimum, you should complete four entries, with comments on others' entries, outlined in the schedule and assignment description (IJ 1-4). Grading: Timely and high-quality completion of the four required entries counts 12 points towards your final grade (3 points each). See Appendix A.2 for specific grading criteria. Due: Various dates; please see schedule. (Objectives: 1-4)

Assignments #3A & #3B: Virtual Inquiry Group (VIG) A & B (24 points/24%)

You will take part in two rounds of VIG activities, each culminating in a workshop presentation of your learning. Over the first two of the four sections of this course, Foundations and Classroom, VIG A focuses on developing your individual analyses of an improvement initiative that concerns equity as it manifests in your setting. During the final two sections, Scaling and Leading Improvement, VIG B focuses on applying the lens of a particular approach to continuous improvement to develop an alternative critique of the improvement initiative you have selected. Each VIG round includes two parts: an initial round of sharing your individual Inquiry Journal posts, followed by peer critique of those posts. Your VIG team will be assessed holistically as a group based on your feedback and support of one another's learning both online and through your in-class group presentation, as evidenced by your reflections on one another's work and your presentation itself. Grading: Each VIG presentation counts for 12% of the course grade, for a total of 24%. See Appendix A.3 for specific grading criteria. Due: Various dates; please see schedule. (Objectives: VIG A – 1, 2; VIG B – 3-4)

Assignment #4: Research Roundup (20 points/20%)

Assignment #4 consists of two parts: (a) a three to four page briefing and (b) documentation of your methods of summarizing the research. The assignment should also include a cover page with a table of contents (not included in page count).

- Briefing: You will develop a briefing of three to four pages intended for your peers that consists of single-spaced text and relevant figures and tables and two sub-sections.
 - The first sub-section consists of a summary of three to five sources listed in the second section, beginning with a paragraph introduction that frames your perspective on the topic (e.g., which specific areas you are addressing within the broad topic you have selected) and then offering a two to three paragraph synthesis of the research you have selected, including appropriate citations. (See especially [Fang \(2021\), pp. 52-53.](#))
 - The second sub-section consists of an annotated bibliography of the three to five key pieces of research literature (e.g. journal articles, books, working papers) that you have selected to summarize, each of which includes an appropriately formatted (APA)

reference and a paragraph summarizing the reported research. The briefing may also include relevant figures and/or links to additional sources of information.

- Documentation of methods: You will draw from your IJ entries and other sources to compile a concise (two to three page) dossier that presents evidence of your summarizing process. This section should include the following items:
 - A one-paragraph overview of your search process, including specific mention of databases and/or search engines used (e.g., EBSCO host databases, Google Scholar, etc.), including keywords and/or search strings used for retrieval.
 - A screenshot or other evidence of a bibliographic system that you used to keep track of your sources.
 - At least one table supporting your research summary. (See [Fang \(2021\), p. 51 of Chapter 3.](#))

Additional details and supporting materials for the research summary will be provided on the task page for the assignment in Canvas. Grading: The Research Roundup counts for 20% of the course grade. See Appendix A.3 for specific grading criteria. Draft due: July 15, 5 p.m. [start of Week 8 Sync session]; Final due: July 22, 11:59 p.m. (Objective: 3)

Assignment #5: Improvement Review (24 points/24%)

You will write a critically reflective essay that draws on your reading of relevant literature, your journal entries and commentary, your contributions to your VIG, your response to others' posts, and your participation in online and in-person activities and discussions. The essay provides an overview of your work on and learning from your exploration of an equity-oriented improvement initiative and possible alternatives that draw on continuous improvement principles and approaches. This critically reflective essay draws together your multi-level analysis and critique of the equity-focused initiative that you have identified and your critical reflections on the prospects for an alternative approach in your setting that draws on continuous improvement principles and approaches. Grading: The improvement review counts for 24% of your final grade. Draft due: Saturday, July 27; Final due: Sunday, Aug. 3, 11:59 p.m. (Objectives: 1-4)

How will I be graded?

A description of each assessment, relevant criteria, and a checklist or rubric for that assessment can be found in the appendices at the end of this syllabus.

Assignment	Due	Points	% of Grade
#1 – Participation	Ongoing	20	20%
#2 – Inquiry Journal 1. Identifying an initiative 2. Logic model 3. Research roundup draft 4. Improvement Review draft	1. 6/10 2. 6/17 3. 7/15 4. 7/27	12 (total) (3 pts. each)	12%
#3 – VIG Feedback & Presentations A. Analysis B. Alternative Approaches	A. 6/22 B. 7/12	24 (12 pts. each)	24%
#4 – Research Roundup	7/22	20	20%
#5 – Improvement Review	8/3	24	24%
TOTALS		100	100%

Students in Leadership for Equity and Improvement are expected to comply with the course participation policy (please see below) and complete all assignments. You will be graded according to the following scale:

A+=100, A = 96-99, A- = 91-95, B+ = 87-90, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C below 80. No grade credit is awarded for grades below B-. Course grades will be calculated based on the weighting of the assignments shown in the chart above.

What texts will we read?

Required

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (7th ed.). American Psychological Association. (purchase)
Anderson, E., Cunningham, K. M. W., & Eddy-Spicer, D. H. (2024). *Leading continuous improvement in schools: Enacting leadership standards to advance educational quality and equity*. Routledge. [[UVA library e-book link](#)]
Peurach, D. J., Russell, J. L., Cohen-Vogel, L., & Penuel, W. R. (Eds.). (2022). *The foundational handbook on improvement research in education*. Rowman and Littlefield. [FHIRE] (selected chapters available in Canvas)

Recommended (See Canvas site for updated list.)

Research & Writing resources (also see Canvas)

- Edwards, P. N. (2017). *How to read a book*. Retrieved from <http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf>
- Fang, Z. (2021). Skills and Strategies for Academic Writing: Part One. In *Demystifying Academic Writing: Genres, Moves, Skills, and Strategies* (pp. 37-64). Routledge. <http://proxy01.its.virginia.edu/login?url=https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781003131618>
- Galvan, J. L., & Galvan, M. (2017). *Writing literature reviews: A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences*. New York, NY: Routledge. Retrieved 29 April 2019 from <http://search.lib.virginia.edu/catalog/u7224312>
- Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2014). *"They say / I say": The moves that matter in academic writing*. W.W. Norton & Co., Ltd.

Library Guide & Resources

A library guide to resources in the field of Educational Leadership has been developed by the program area to facilitate your access to key journals, handbooks and other reference materials that can expedite your search for relevant resources for this course. Visit this site: <http://guides.lib.virginia.edu/as>. The EHD Librarian, [Ashley Hosbach](#), maintains a list of other library guides on her [profile page](#)

What will we do and when will we do it?

Synchronous classes are highlighted in light gray.

Major assignments are highlighted in dark gray with white type.

IND = Objectives for asynchronous activity to be undertaken by students as *individuals*

VIG = Objectives for asynchronous & small-group synchronous activity to be undertaken by students as part of an assigned *Virtual Inquiry Group*

Phase	Week	Objectives	Activities	Readings & IJ/VIG deadlines
Getting Ready	Week 0 Orientation & IND async	IND Identifying <i>equity-oriented improvement initiative</i> Inventory sources of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Canvas and Zoom training • Review syllabus • Talk with school colleagues about identifying initiatives related to equity focus. • Inventory available information and expertise related to initiative. 	Available in class on May 11: <i>How to Read a Book</i> <i>Linking Continuous Improvement and Adaptive Leadership.</i>

Phase	Week	Objectives	Activities	Readings & IJ/VIG deadlines
1. Foundations: Continuous Improvement & Equity	Week 1 In-person (MHS) Sat. 6/1 9:00a – 4:00p	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of Foundations, Weeks 1- 3 Inquiry Journal Activity & Refining Equity Focus Preparing for first round of IJ feedback (via VIGs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring equity in education Share ideas around initiatives, inventories of information and expertise Analyzing equity initiatives: Reverse engineering and identifying problem of practice Inquiry journal [IJ] entry #1 [initial sketch to be done during session] 	<i>Part 1: Why Continuous Improvement</i> LCIIS, Ch 1-4 [Canvas]
	Week 3a IND async Mon. 6/10 By midnight	IND – IJ 1 Identifying an Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update inquiry journal entry with initial sketch of initiative and identification of problem of practice Notify VIG colleagues that your inquiry journal is ready for review 	IJ 1 Identifying Initiative post
	Week 3b Sync Wed. 6/12 5:00 – 8:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of continuous improvement approaches in education Draft an evidence-informed logic model that serves as <i>working theory</i> for your initiative analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring continuous improvement in education Defining problem and scope in improvement research Developing a logic model as initial <i>working theory</i> of initiative Prepare for peer review discussion. <u><i>You will need to schedule a 1-hour window to meet online with your VIG colleagues between Mon. 6/13 & Fri 6/21</i></u> 	<i>Problem Identification and Framing</i> LCIIS, Ch 5 Logic models – reading packet in Canvas
	Week 4a IND async Mon. 6/17 by midnight	IND – IJ 2 Logic Model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting logic model in relation to your focal initiative Build a case for change: the “story” of your initiative and framing of an equity-focused problem of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaborate logic model Sharpen problem statement & working theory Notify VIG colleagues that your draft logic model is ready for review 	IJ 2 ‘Logic Model’ post
	Week 4b VIG A sync meeting completed by Fri, 6/21	VIG A – Logic Model Critique colleagues’ logic model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before VIG Meeting: Review colleagues’ IJ entries, including draft logic model During VIG Meeting: Support each other in producing high quality work through critical review. Before 6/21: Reflect on VIG feedback in revisions to your initial analysis 	VIG A Meeting
VIG A Presentations [Assignment #3A] DUE by end of Week 4 session (4 p.m.) on Saturday, June 22				

Cycle of Inquiry	Week	Objectives	Activities	Readings & IJ/VIG deadlines
2. Classroom & School	VIG A Presentations [Assignment #3A] DUE by end of Week 4 session (4 p.m.) on Saturday, June 22			
	Week 4 In-person (EHD) Sat. 6/22 9:00 am – 4:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand multiple uses of theory in collaborative continuous improvement, from theories of action to theories of learning - Apply theories of learning to critically analyze improvement initiatives aimed at ambitious and equitable instruction - Explore theory-based frameworks to critically analyze our selected improvement initiatives - Prepare for locating research evidence related to our initiative & equity focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review of problem identification and logic model analyses ● How theories of learning shape implications for equity and improvement ● Case study: analysis and interpretation of improvement aimed at promoting ambitious and equitable instruction. 	<i>Equitable Learning</i> , FHIRE, Ch 3. <i>Classroom Teaching & Learning</i> , FHIRE, Ch. 7 [Chapters in Canvas]
	Week 5 IND By Mon 7/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore research related to your initiative - Explore an alternative approach to improvement and identify related research - Prepare VIG B workshop presentation 	Prepare for peer review discussion. <u><i>You will need to schedule a 1-hour window to meet online with your VIG colleagues between Mon. 7/1 & Thu. 7/11</i></u>	
	Weeks 6 & 7 VIG sync By Thu 7/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand interconnection of layers in improvement research. - Knowledge of alternative approaches to improvement research - Literature search and identifying key research themes to explore in Research Roundup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-in with VIG – research update & presentation prep ● Exploring multi-level analysis of improvement in educational settings 	VIG B Presentation prep
	Week 7 In-person (MHS) NoVA Fri, 7/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Seeing the system”: Variation and measurement for multi-level system learning and continuous improvement - Examine connections between elements of initiatives and improvement approach - Summarizing research literature related to problem of practice and equity initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● VIG #2 Presentation Workshop & discussion ● Explore research sources related to initiatives and orientation to equity ● Introduction to the Stacey Matrix. ● Overview of data for improvement and practical measures. 	<i>Part II: Enact Continuous Improvement</i> , LCIS, Ch 6 Transforming Education series selection Independent research Chapter 5, <i>Demystifying Academic Writing</i> (Fang, 2021) VIG B Presentation due at end of session

	Week 8 IND Due by Mon 7/15, midnight	IND – IJ3 Research roundup draft - Refine research summaries - Draft documentation of methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft research round-up Notify VIG colleagues that IJ 3 is ready for review 	IJ 3 'Research roundup' post
	Week 8 Sync Wed. 7/17 5:00 – 8:00 pm	- Critique colleagues' ideas for Research Roundup in connection with theory of improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before online meeting: Review colleagues' IJ entries During meeting: Support each other in producing high quality work through critical review Before 7/13: Reflect on VIG feedback in revisions to your Research Roundup	<i>Critical Perspectives on the Contexts of IRE</i> , FHIRE, Ch. 11
	VIG B [Assignment #3B] DUE Friday, July 12; Research Roundup [Assignment #4] DUE Monday, July 22, 11:59pm			

Cycle of Inquiry	Week	Objectives	Activities	Readings & IJ/VIG deadlines
3. Leading Improvement	Research Roundup [Assignment #4] DUE Monday, July 22, 11:59pm			
	Week 9 IND By Sat 7/27, 9 a.m.	IND – IJ 4 Improvement Review Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify alternative approaches based on your analysis and critique of your initiative Create an outline of your final assignment Notify VIG colleagues that IJ 4 is ready for review 	IJ 4 'Improvement Review' post
	Week 9 In-person (MHS) Sat, 7/27	- Case: TBD - Critical perspectives on IRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering alternatives, I: Critical perspectives on Leading CI Research roundup: Compare & contrast in literature reviews VIG collective reflection Review final assignment 	<i>Part III: Leading Continuous Improvement</i> LCIIS, Ch 8-10
	Week 10 Sync Wed. 7/31 5:00 – 8:00 pm	- The emergent organization of equity-oriented improvement - Workshop on final assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop: Improvement review Innovative approaches to equity & improvement at the building and system levels Improvement journey reflection 	"Charting Paths Forward", Ch. 7, <i>Improvement in Action</i> [Canvas] Independent research
	Improvement Review [Assignment #5] DUE midnight on SATURDAY, Aug. 3			

Please note:

This course outline is intended as a general guideline for course content, and I will modify it as needed and as best fits your learning.

What are other matters I need to know about?

INCLUSIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

I recognize and value the many perspectives that students bring to their participation in this course. Many factors—social identities, visible and invisible disabilities, family circumstances, physical location, mental health, access to the internet—all influence the experiences that every individual can have in our learning this and every semester. I am committed to building an environment to support your learning, one in which you will be supported and rewarded for going out on a limb to communicate and defend your ideas.

ANTI-RACIST EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

Attention to equity and the development of our awareness of our roles as educators and educational leaders in perpetuating systemic inequities are foundational perspectives to our practice as teachers and researchers. I acknowledge that racism and white supremacy are baked into both the history of UVA as an institution and the history of higher education as a whole. I believe that our pedagogical philosophies and practices can either reinforce inequities or work to eliminate them. The instructor of this course is committed and actively working to be better, more careful listeners; continuing to learn about the ways systemic injustices disadvantage Black students and colleagues and other students and colleagues of color in and out of the classroom; and advocating for and implementing anti-racist educational practices. I will hold myself accountable, encourage you to help me do so, and invite you to join me in this work.

FLEXIBILITY

There are many unknowns this fall that could impact our course and university. I have already seen a delay of in-person classes to protect the health and safety of our community, and additional delays and disruptions may occur. In our course, flexibility includes negotiable deadlines with as much advance notice as possible, adjustments to workload and work expectations depending on circumstances; modifications to assignments for relevance and feasibility. Flexibility also includes communication. I encourage you to have a plan for communicating with me in case you become ill or need to care for a family member. In the event that I become ill, my first intention will be to cover teaching responsibilities. I will contact a colleague and/or make arrangements with the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Affairs, Dr. Catherine Brighton (brighton@virginia.edu). I will ensure that you are well informed about how the course will proceed. Please pay close attention to email communications and/or Canvas announcements throughout this semester.

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

You will need to have an up-to-date browser, operating system and some additional software on your computer to take this class.

Check this [Essential Computing page](https://virginia.service-now.com/its?id=kb_article&sys_id=2d3b4e8edb8f17806d905638dc96192f) for hardware & software requirements:
https://virginia.service-now.com/its?id=kb_article&sys_id=2d3b4e8edb8f17806d905638dc96192f.

Some of the documents in this course will be available to you in PDF form. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Reader software on your computer, you can download it by going to <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>.

I strongly advise students in fully online class ensure they have a web camera and headset with microphone.

ACCESS

I do not recommend taking this class unless you have regular and reliable access to a computer and that you are able to access the internet via a high-speed Wi-Fi connection between 3-5 times per week.

CANVAS

Courses at EHD are taught in the Canvas Learning Management System. To log onto Canvas, visit <https://educationvirginia.instructure.com/>. You will be prompted to use your NetBadge log in information to access Canvas. For support, see the [EHD Canvas Support](#) page.

TECH SUPPORT

ED Online and Canvas Support are here to help you.

For Canvas questions, call Canvas 24/7 Support at 877-404-4098

For student email questions, contact UVA Central IT 434-924-4357

For all other questions, call or email EdOnline. You will receive a response within 24 hours.
edonline@virginia.edu
434-924-0839

DISTANCE EDUCATION WEBSITE

The School of Education and Human Development is committed to supporting you. Please visit our website to learn about our services and support offerings:

<https://education.virginia.edu/canvas>

SUPPORT FOR ONLINE STUDENTS

For general questions or an initial point of contact the Online Student Support Specialist at edonline@virginia.edu or call 434-924-0839.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Announcements

Announcements will be posted in CANVAS on a regular basis. They will appear on your CANVAS dashboard when you log in and/or will be sent to you directly through your preferred method of notification from CANVAS. Please make certain to check them regularly, as they will contain any important information about upcoming projects or class concerns.

Email

In this course I will use the Canvas INBOX feature (located in the far left navigation menu) to send email for private messages. You can either check your messages in the CANVAS system or set your notifications to your preferred method of contact. Please check your messages regularly. When submitting messages, please do the following:

- Put a subject in the subject box that describes the email content with your name, week and message subject. For example: YOURNAMEWK2ASSIGNMENT.
- Do not send messages asking general information about the class, please post those in the QUESTION FORUM.

- Do not submit your assignments by message.
- Make certain to check your messages frequently.

Questions

In online courses it is normal to have many questions about things that relate to the course, such as clarification about assignments, course materials, or assessments. Please post these in the QUESTION FORUM which you can access by clicking the DISCUSSIONS button in the course navigation links. This is an open forum, and you are encouraged to give answers and help each other.

Discussion

Discussion spaces are a way for you to engage with each other about the course content. Online discussion is most successful when you visit and participate in this space regularly.

Turnaround/Feedback

During the week (M-F) I will check email and monitor the discussion board at least once a day. If you have a concern and send me a message, you can expect a response within two business days. I intend to provide feedback on assignments within one week of submission. If that is not possible, I will let you know in advance.

NETIQUETTE

When posting on the discussion boards and Zoom it is important to understand how to interact with one another online.

Best practices:

- If you would not say something in person, then do not say it online.
- If you would not share something in public, don't share it with your classmates.
- Respond to others promptly and thoughtfully.
- Respect individual's privacy and do not share class discussions outside of the virtual classroom.
- Respect the opinions of others.
- If you are uncomfortable with another person's post or language, reach out to your instructor for assistance.

NOTES REGARDING COMMUNICATION WITH FACULTY:

Members of the University Faculty are required to report bias and threats made to students or by students. If you disclose information regarding violence or assault to me, whether it be in person or part of an assignment (reflection paper, diary, journal, etc.), I am required to report it to the Title IX Office and the *Just Report It* system. Just Report It (JRI) <http://justreportit.virginia.edu/> is the University's online system for reporting:

- Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Violence
- Bias and Discrimination/Harassment
- Hazing
- Clery Act Compliance (by CSAs)
- Interference with Speech Rights

If a report is made, you will be contacted and offered support if you desire. You are not required at that time to report anything or accept any assistance. The system is designed to support you. You may access [Confidential Resources](#) if you wish to discuss a concern or incident without reporting to the University at this time. Information you share with Confidential Resources will not be disclosed to University officials or any other person except in extremely [limited circumstances](#).

COURSE PARTICIPATION POLICY

As members of the A&S community, I hold ourselves to standards of professional and personal respect. This includes, but is not limited to the following practices:

- Attend all class sessions unless previously arranged with the instructor.
 - It is possible to be physically present for class but not engaged in the learning. Attendance includes both your physical and mental attendance.
 - This is also true for online, synchronous sessions. Please give the same mental attendance to your instructors and colleagues as you would in an in-person session.
- Arrive to class and submit work in a timely manner such that everyone is present and prepared to begin sessions and discussions on time
 - *Face-to-face Sessions*: Please arrive for class sessions such that you are prepared to start class on time. This may mean arriving several minutes early.
 - *Synchronous events*: Please connect at least 5 minutes before class, connect your headset, check your video and microphone, and turn on your camera.
 - *Asynchronous activities*: Please complete all tasks on time such that your colleagues can review and respond to your work.
 - A. Respectfully communicate both in-person and digitally.
 - B. Prepare completely prior to class (readings, assignments, presentations, etc.) such that everyone can fully engage with and deepen their understanding of the course concepts.
 - C. Engage fully in group discussion and activities
 - Participate actively in group discussions and activities with an open mind to new ideas and perspectives, especially during unfamiliar activities.
 - Contribute equitably to group assignments.

In addition, you are expected to complete all online activities as identified in the course outline, including replying to course readings, as well as contribute comments and read others' comments as directed for each activity. Online activities provide structured ways for you to advance your thinking by connecting concepts in the course materials with your ongoing professional practice. Your contributions will be assessed holistically and will include all in-class activities.

I regularly elicit formative feedback, and you will have an opportunity to complete a final course evaluation which provides summative feedback to me and EHD about my performance and your learning in this course. Both formative and summative feedback are important parts of my learning in order to support your learning. Your reflections will offer you a chance not only to

consider your own engagement in your learning and that of your colleagues, but also to put forward suggestions to me and my colleagues to better facilitate our learning and ongoing development of courses. Session participation includes taking part in providing formative feedback and summative evaluation.

LATE WORK POLICY

***Late work will not be accepted.** Assignments will not be available after the deadline. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please contact me by private message before the assignment is due to make alternate arrangements.*

DROP or WITHDRAW FROM A COURSE

All distance education courses currently follow EHD Policy:

<https://education.virginia.edu/drop-withdrawal-and-refund-policy-grounds>. In order to avoid getting an W or F for the course, it is your responsibility to officially withdraw from the class prior to the deadline.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

According to the UVA Honor Committee, “All students at the University of Virginia are bound by the Honor Code not to commit Academic Fraud, which is a form of cheating. “Consequently, it is required or implied that all work conducted by students conform to the following honor pledge: “On my honor as a student, I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” If you are not familiar with or require further information about the honor system, please see <http://www.virginia.edu/honor/>.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students with special needs requiring accommodations should present the appropriate paperwork from the Student Disability Access Center (SDAC). It is the student’s responsibility to present this paperwork in a timely fashion and follow up with the instructor about the accommodations being offered. Accommodations for test-taking (e.g., extended time) should be arranged at least [insert preferred # of days] days before an exam. SDAC is located in the Department of Student Health and can be contacted at 243-5180/5181.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The University of Virginia is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students, while acknowledging that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students’ academic performance. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 434-243-5150 Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm and after-hours including weekends and holidays. For a comprehensive list of services provided by CAPS including individual therapy, group therapy, crisis services, and Outreach and Consultation, visit <https://www.studenthealth.virginia.edu/caps>.

For a list of online resources students may access independently, visit <https://www.studenthealth.virginia.edu/caps-online-resources>.

For a list of mental health resources for students currently living out-of-state and learning exclusively online, visit <https://www.studenthealth.virginia.edu/CAPS-living-outofstate>.

For access to community mental health referrals, visit
<https://www.studenthealth.virginia.edu/community-referrals>.

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM RECORDING POLICY

If I need to record synchronous, virtual class session during the semester, I will adhere to the EHD Classroom Recording Policy. To review the school's recording policy, please visit:
<https://curry.virginia.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/currypolicies/Classroom%20Recording%20Policy%2005-04-18.pdf>

Where can I find the Assessment Checklists and Rubrics?

Please see the following Appendices!

APPENDIX A.1 - Participation

Assignment #1: Participation (20 points/20% of final grade)

Please see description under *Course Participation Policy*, in the syllabus.

Name: _____ Total Points _____ of 20 points, evaluated holistically.

	Meets/Exceeds expectations (18 – 20 points)	Partially meets expectations (16 – 17.75 points)	Does not meet expectations (0 – 15.75 points)
Engagement	Consistently demonstrates strong determination in the pursuit of solutions, monitors his or her level of involvement, and develops and uses a number of strategies to keep self on task.	Consistently shows determination in the pursuit of solutions and uses strategies to keep self on track.	Sporadically shows determination in the pursuit of solutions and makes minimal use of strategies to keep self on track.
Connections	Integrates others' thoughts and/or facilitates building knowledge for all class members.	Makes connections with others' ideas (readings, experiences, other class members and instructor) in a meaningful manner.	Does not make connections or provides superficial response.
Professionalism	Always demonstrates commitment through thorough preparation; always arrives on time; frequently asks and listens to input from fellow class members.	Rarely unprepared; rarely arrives late; occasionally solicits colleagues' perspective.	Often unprepared; occasionally; arrives late; rarely solicits colleagues' perspective.

APPENDIX A.2 – Inquiry Journal (IJ)

Assignment #2: Inquiry Journal (12 points total [3 points each*4 entries]/12% of final grade)

The practice of journaling helps you trace your intellectual wrestling with the ideas you are working with in exploring your setting, readings, class activities and online interactions. Through your VIG activities, you will also be invited to read and comment on the journal entries of your peers. I will periodically read through and comment on your Inquiry Journal entries; however, my assessment of your entries and comments on others' entries will be holistic. You will be rewarded for the quality of your exploration and thinking processes and your critical analysis and contributions to others' thinking. Your goal is not to take a stand on a particular issue, but to reflect critically on your processes of wrestling with that issue. You should continue to make entries in your Inquiry Journal throughout the course. At a minimum, you should complete the four entries, with comments on others' entries, outlined in the schedule and assignment description in Canvas (IJ 1-4).

#2 – Inquiry Journal			
1. Identifying an initiative	5. 6/10	12 points total (3 pts. each)	12%
2. Logic model	6. 6/17		
3. Research roundup draft	7. 7/15		
4. IR draft	8. 7/22		

Requirements and Grading:

- Post **one original entry to each prompt** as described in the activity description that will be available on Canvas. Post a **minimum of one critique** to each of your VIG members' entries by the indicated date for entries 1-4.
- Entries have no prescribed look or length.
- Your four entries and critiques of others' entries will be holistically assessed using the rubric below. Late postings or lack of postings will result in deductions despite the quality of other postings.

All postings must be made by 11:59 p.m. on the day indicated in the course schedule.

Assignment #2: Inquiry Journal (12 points total [3 points each]/12% of final grade)

	Meets or Exceeds Expectations (2.75 – 3 points)	Partially Meets Expectations (2.25 – 2.5 points)	Does NOT meet Expectations (0 – 2 points)
Substantive Contribution	Information clearly relates to the equity topic and adds interesting or relevant information with specific details.	Information relates to the equity topic. Provides some support and specificity in response but may lack depth.	Information has little or nothing to do with the topics under discussion. Information lacks credibility.
Critical Thinking	Enhances the critical thinking process consistently. Offers evidence of insightful interpretation and analysis.	Critical thinking and reflection are occasionally demonstrated (as appropriate). Clarity of expression evident.	Response lacks depth and/or clarity.
Connections	Integrates others' thoughts and/or facilitates building knowledge for all class members.	Makes connections with others' ideas (readings, experiences, other class members and instructor) in a meaningful manner.	Makes bare minimum of attempt to connect with others' ideas, including readings, experience, class members' contributions.

APPENDIX A.3 – Virtual Inquiry Group (VIG) Rounds A & B

Assignment #3: Virtual Inquiry Group Rounds

24 points total [12 points each]/24% of final grade – Assessed collectively (all members of the group receive the same number of points)

You will take part in two rounds of VIG activities during this course:

#3 – VIG Feedback & Presentations		24 points total (12 pts. each)	24%
C. VIGNite	C. 6/22		
D. Learning Journey	D. 7/27		

Each round builds from the independent work you are doing in your Inquiry Journal. Your VIG group will provide feedback to one another on your Inquiry Journal entries, and you will report to the rest of us about what you learned in the process of your work together. You will do this by preparing a presentation to the rest of us that you will present in either an in-person or sync session. Presentations follows a generic structure: (a) Overview; (b) Identification of ‘positive deviance’; (c) Lessons learned; (d) Burning questions. Details of each VIG round will be posted in Canvas, along with a template Google Slide deck for your presentation.

Your VIG team will be assessed holistically as a group based on your facilitation and support of one another’s learning both online and through your in-class presentation, as evidenced by your reflections on one another’s work and your culminating group presentation.

Assignment #3A or #3B

Virtual Inquiry Group (VIG) Discussion & Presentation

24 points total [12 points each]/24% of final grade – Assessed collectively (all members of the group receive the same number of points)

	Meets or Exceeds Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does NOT meet Expectations
Quality of Discussion (6 of 12 points)			
Substantive contribution (2 pts possible)	Generative discussion related to equity problems of practice; adds interesting or relevant information with specific details.	Discussion clearly relates to problems of practice. Provides some support and specificity in response to others; may lack depth.	Discussion has little or nothing to do with the topics broached. Generative contributions are minimal.
Critical thinking (2 pts possible)	Enhances the critical thinking process consistently through reflection and by making connections.	Critical thinking and reflection are occasionally demonstrated in responses (as appropriate). Some connections are made.	Does not participate in discussion or provides a partial response.
Connections (2 pts possible)	Integrates others' thoughts and/or facilitates building knowledge for all class members.	Makes connections with others' ideas (readings, experiences, other class members and instructor) in a meaningful manner.	Makes bare minimum of attempt to connect with others' ideas, including readings, experience, class members' contributions.
Quality of Presentation (6 of 12 points)			
Organization (2 pts possible)	Well organized presentation that includes all elements identified in the assignment description: (a) Overview; (b) Identification of 'positive deviance'; (c) Lessons learned; (d) Burning questions. Main points easily identified and supported with smooth transitions between points.	Presentation includes all elements identified in the assignment description but may lack clarity at some points.	Disorganized presentation with missing elements. Main points are not identifiable or supported. Transition between ideas is not clear or logical.

Engagement with Topic (2 pts possible)	Use of a variety of elements to involve the audience. Such elements might include, but are not limited to, professional or personal experience related to the topic, humor, or enthusiasm.	Some elements are employed to engage the audience with moderate success.	Minimal use of elements (professional or personal experiences related to the topic, humor, etc) to involve the audience.
Knowledge of Topic (2 pts possible)	Presenters demonstrate a solid understanding of the selected topic in the presentation itself as well as in addressing all of the audience's questions with full and accurate explanations and elaborations--or clear acknowledgement of the limits of their knowledge.	Presenters demonstrate adequate understanding of the topic. May not be able to address all questions from the audience and/or may be unaware of limits of their knowledge.	Presenters' understanding of selected topic is superficial and/or confused based upon content of the presentation and/or the lack of ability to directly and accurately address the audience's questions.

APPENDIX A.4 – Research Roundup

Assignment #4: Research Roundup (20 points/20%)

Assignment #4 consists of two parts: (a) a three to four page briefing and (b) documentation of your methods of summarizing the research.

- Briefing: You will develop a briefing of three to four pages intended for your peers that consists of single-spaced text and relevant figures and tables and three sections.
 - The first part consists of a summary of three to five sources listed in the second part, beginning with a paragraph introduction that frames your perspective on the topic (e.g., which specific areas you are addressing within the broad topic you have selected) and then offering a two to three paragraph synthesis of the research you have selected, including appropriate citations.
 - The second part consists of an annotated bibliography of the three to five key pieces of research literature (e.g. journal articles, books, working papers) that you have selected to summarize, each of which includes an appropriately formatted (APA) reference and a paragraph summarizing the reported research. The briefing may also include relevant figures and/or links to additional sources of information.
- Documentation of methods: You will draw from your IJ entries and other sources to compile a concise (two to three page) dossier that presents evidence of your summarizing process. The dossier should include a cover page with a table of contents (not included in page count) and should include the following items:
 - A one-paragraph overview of your search process, including specific mention of databases and/or search engines used (e.g., EBSCO host databases, Google Scholar, etc.), including keywords and/or search strings used for retrieval.
 - A screenshot or other evidence of a bibliographic system that you used to keep track of your sources.
 - At least one table supporting your research summary. (See [Fang \(2021\), p. 51 of Chapter 3.](#))

Additional details and supporting materials for the research summary will be provided on the task page for the assignment in Canvas.

Grading: The Research Roundup counts for 20% of the course grade. See Appendix A.3 for specific grading criteria. Draft due: July 15; Final due: July 22, 11:59 p.m. [start of Week 8 Sync session] (Objective: 3)

Assignment #4: Research Roundup (20 points/20%)

	Meets or Exceeds Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does NOT meet Expectations
Briefing (10 of 20 points)			
Organization (3 pts possible)	Well organized briefing that includes all elements identified in the assignment description: (Front) Overview, Research synthesis; (Back) Annotated bibliography with 3-5 key references and paragraph summaries. Main points easily identified and supported with precise referencing.	Briefing includes all elements identified in the assignment description but may lack clarity.	Disorganized briefing with missing elements. Main points are not identifiable or supported.
Knowledge of Topic (4 pts possible)	Briefing is highly relevant to the topic. Key resources identified offer a rich entry point into understanding the topic. Concise and accurate explanations and connections and/or clear acknowledgement of the limits of available knowledge.	Briefing demonstrates adequate understanding of the topic. May be unaware of limits of their knowledge.	Briefing reflects superficial and/or confused understanding of topic. Lack of ability to directly and accurately provide an overview of research.
Style (3 pts possible)	Briefing is easy to read and grammatically correct. No errors in content or spelling. Accurately follows APA guidelines.	May be some errors but these do not detract from meaning.	Briefing is not readable. Briefing contains grammatical errors, inaccuracies in referencing, and/or typos that distract from the content.
Documentation (10 of 20 points)			
Search process (3 pts possible)	Well organized, concise and accurately described search process that includes specific mention of databases and/or search engines used, including keywords and/or search strings.	Handout includes all elements identified in the assignment description but may lack clarity.	Disorganized handout with missing elements. Main points are not identifiable or supported.

Bibliographic system (3 pts possible)	Illustration (e.g., screenshot or image) clearly and concisely portrays the bibliographic system or systems and provides interesting information along with appropriate details and supporting information.	Description relates to a specific bibliographic system or systems in place. Provides some illustration and specificity but lacks depth and detail.	Description has little or nothing to do with a particular bibliographic system. Little or no illustrations or details provided.
Research summary (4 pts possible)	Tables clearly support synthesis included in handout and identify main themes across research literature as well as concise account of key descriptive details and brief summaries of sources.	Tables connect with handout summary but themes identified in summary may not be readily apparent from tables themselves.	Little or no effort to provide evidence of use of tools to support synthesis of literature.

APPENDIX A.5 – Improvement Review

Assignment #5: Improvement Review (24 points/24%)

DUE: Saturday, Aug 3, 11:59 p.m.

You will write a critically reflective essay that draws on your reading of relevant literature, your journal entries and commentary, your contributions to your VIG, your response to others' posts, and your participation in online and in-person activities and discussions. The essay provides an overview of your work on and learning from your exploration of an equity-oriented improvement initiative and possible alternatives that draw on continuous improvement principles and approaches. This critically reflective essay draws together your multi-level analysis and critique of the equity-focused initiative that you have identified and your critical reflections on the prospects for an alternative approach in your setting that draws on continuous improvement principles and approaches. Grading: The improvement review counts for 24% of your final grade. See Appendix A.4 for specific grading criteria. Draft due: July 27; Final due: Aug. 3, 11:59 p.m. (Objectives: 1-4)

[Rubric forthcoming]