

Syllabus | ED5309-Introduction to School Administration

Fall 2025 8 weeks

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Vision Statement Sul Ross Educational Leadership Program

To provide an exemplary program of work which empowers graduates to be critical thinkers, motivators, and informed decision-makers who will share the responsibilities of shaping the futures of the students they serve with all stakeholders.

Mission Statement Sul Ross Educational Leadership Program

The Sul Ross State University Educational Leadership Program Shall:

1. Prepare graduates to use demographic data as a focal point for change
2. Prepare graduates with the skills needed to be forward-thinking instructional leaders
3. Prepare graduates to research, analyze, and utilize strategies to facilitate student/staff growth
4. Prepare students for projected changes in certification requirements
5. Prepare master's degree students to serve the needs of the educational community

Course Description

Welcome to ED 5309: Introduction of School Leadership. I am thrilled to be with you as you continue your journey toward becoming a principal and instructional leader in our schools.

This course introduces master's-level candidates to the foundational knowledge, dispositions, and skills required of effective campus principals. Students examine improvement science as a framework for continuous school improvement, analyze multiple types of campus data, including perception data, and develop the leadership skills needed to establish and communicate a clear campus vision. Through real-world tasks grounded in their own campus context, students explore school culture, ethical leadership, family and community engagement, and data-informed decision-making.

All major assignments are designed as authentic leadership products that build toward the Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL) and prepare students for the Texas 268 Principal as Instructional Leader Exam. This course aligns to the Texas Principal Standards (TPESS) and the Carnegie Foundation's Six Core Principles of Improvement Science.

There are six modules in this course, organized across eight weeks. Every major assignment asks you to produce something a real principal would produce — not summarize a reading, but act like a leader. You will leave this course with a portfolio of professional artifacts, a personal leadership ethics profile, a stakeholder data portrait, and a communication plan grounded in real campus work.

What Are Anchor Tasks and Performance Tasks?

This course uses two types of major assignments that go beyond traditional papers and reflections.

Anchor Performance Tasks are the centerpiece assignments of a module. They are called "anchor" tasks because

everything else in the module — the readings, the guided questions, the preparatory steps — builds toward them. In ED 5309, your Anchor Performance Task is the Stakeholder Perception Portrait. You cannot complete it well without first designing your survey carefully, obtaining proper approvals, and collecting real campus data. Anchor tasks mirror the kind of evidence you will submit in your PASL portfolio.

Performance Tasks ask you to do something a real principal would do. The Campus Vision Audit, the Communication Plan, the Ethics Profile and Applied Practice, and the 268 Constructed Response Practice are all performance tasks. They are evaluated not just on content knowledge but on the quality of your thinking, the specificity of your evidence, and the realism and professionalism of your product.

Why this matters: Graduate coursework that stays only at the level of discussion and reflection does not fully prepare you for licensure or the principalship. Performance tasks are harder. They take more time. They sometimes feel uncomfortable because there is no single right answer. That is intentional. The 268 exam and PASL both require you to exercise professional judgment under pressure — not recall facts. This course gives you structured, supported practice doing exactly that.

A Note on Improvement Science

You will notice that improvement science — specifically the work of Bryk, Hinnant-Crawford, and Bernhardt — appears in nearly every module. This is intentional. Improvement science is not just a framework you read about in Module 1 and move on from. It is the operating system of this course.

Every time you are asked to define a problem of practice before proposing a solution, that is improvement science. Every time you are asked to state an aim and select measures before building a plan, that is improvement science. Every time you are asked to attend to variation rather than just averages, that is improvement science. By the end of this course, you should be able to think and speak in those terms naturally — because PASL evaluators, 268 exam scorers, and the principals who mentor you during your practicum all expect that fluency.

How This Course Connects to PASL

The Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL) is a required licensure assessment in Texas. It has three tasks:

- Task 1 — Problem Solving in the Field: Identify a school-based challenge, develop and implement a plan, and analyze evidence of impact.
- Task 2 — Supporting Continuous Professional Development: Design and implement professional development and analyze its effect on practice.
- Task 3 — Creating a Collaborative Culture: Facilitate stakeholders in building a collaborative team culture.

ED 5309 Assignment	PASL Connection
Stakeholder Perception Portrait	Task 1 — identifying a problem of practice through data
PFE Snapshot and Communication Plan	Task 1 — designing and implementing a stakeholder engagement plan

Communication Artifact	Task 3 — evidence of collaborative culture building
Ethics Profile and Applied Practice	Task 1 and 3 — decision-making rationale and stakeholder communication
268 Constructed Response Practice	All tasks — analytical writing and evidence-based reasoning

Action required: Create a folder in your cloud drive (Google Drive or OneDrive) labeled PASL Artifacts before Week 2. Save every graded assignment to that folder. You will return to this folder in future courses and during your practicum as you build your full PASL submission.

How This Course Connects to the Texas 268 Principal Exam

The Texas 268 Principal Exam assesses your readiness for campus leadership across competency domains. The following competencies are directly addressed in this course:

Texas 268 Competency	Focus Area	ED 5309 Assignment
Competency 001 — School Culture	Vision, culture, shared expectations	Campus Vision Audit
Competency 002 — Leading Learning	Data-driven instructional decisions	Texas 268 CR Practice
Competency 003 — Executive Leadership	Ethics, integrity, personal leadership	Ethics Profile and Applied Practice
Competency 004 — Human Capital/Communication	Stakeholder engagement, family communication	Stakeholder Portrait, PFE Plan

The 268 includes both selected-response and constructed-response items. The Module 7 Annotated Outline gives you direct practice with the constructed-response format. The practice quiz at the end of Module 3 gives you early exposure to selected-response item style and distractors.

What You Will Come Away With

Artifacts and Products

- A campus vision analysis and leadership recommendation
- A real stakeholder perception survey, data portrait, and problem of practice
- A 6-week communication plan grounded in actual campus family engagement needs
- A professional leadership ethics profile you can use and refine throughout your career
- A polished communication artifact ready for use with families or staff
- An annotated outline demonstrating your 268 constructed-response thinking

Skills and Dispositions

- The ability to diagnose a school problem using data rather than assumption
- The habit of thinking in improvement cycles — plan, act, measure, adjust
- Confidence applying your ethical commitments to decisions involving competing values
- Skill in communicating with multiple stakeholder groups in a way that is clear, equitable, and trust-building
- Readiness for the analytical writing demands of both the Texas 268 exam and PASL

Professional Identity

This course asks you to begin thinking and acting like a principal before you hold the title. Every assignment puts you in the role. Every product you create is one a real campus leader would produce. The sooner you step into that identity, the more you will get out of the program.

Performance Standards and Learning Objectives

ED 5309 contributes to the following TExES 268 Competencies:

Domain I — School Culture (School and Community Leadership)

- Competency 1: The beginning principal knows how to establish and implement a shared vision and culture of high expectations for all stakeholders.
- Competency 2: The beginning principal knows how to work with stakeholders as key partners to support student learning.

Domain II — Leading Learning (Instructional Leadership)

- Competency 3: The beginning principal knows how to collaboratively develop and implement high-quality instruction.
- Competency 4: The beginning principal knows how to monitor and assess classroom instruction to promote teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

Domain III — Human Capital

- Competency 5: The beginning principal knows how to provide feedback, coaching, and professional development to staff.

Domain IV — Executive Leadership

- Competency 7: The beginning principal knows how to develop relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Competency 8: The beginning principal knows how to focus on improving student outcomes through

collaboration, resiliency, and change management.

Domain VI — Ethics, Equity, and Diversity

- Competency 11: The beginning principal knows how to provide ethical leadership by advocating for children and ensuring student access to effective educators, programs, and services.
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Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain the principles of improvement science and apply them to school-based leadership challenges, including defining a problem of practice, setting an aim, and designing a short-cycle change.
2. Analyze multiple types of campus data — including demographic, student learning, process, and perception data — to identify patterns, equity gaps, and areas for improvement.
3. Evaluate a campus vision statement for alignment with school culture, stakeholder understanding, and improvement goals, and develop a leadership recommendation grounded in evidence.
4. Design and implement a stakeholder perception survey, synthesize findings into a written portrait, and

identify a communication- or culture-related problem of practice.

5. Assess campus family engagement practices using a structured diagnostic tool and design a realistic, improvement-focused communication plan aligned to a priority growth area.
6. Articulate a personal leadership code of ethics and apply it to complex, realistic leadership scenarios that require balancing competing values and communicating decisions to stakeholders.
7. Demonstrate readiness for the Texas 268 Principal Exam by analyzing a school leadership scenario and constructing an evidence-based annotated response aligned to school culture and data-driven leadership competencies.

Job Skills:

Students in the Educational Leadership Program are working towards a degree and/or certificate that will qualify them for administrative positions in the K-12 school system. The job skills taught in this course will enable students to execute the administrative skills outlined in the Principal Standards above.

Required Texts and Resources

1. Bernhardt, V. L. (2025). *Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement* (5th ed.). Routledge.
2. Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2017). *Learning to Improve*. Harvard Education Press.
3. Desravines, J., Aquino, J., & Fenton, B. (2016). *Breakthrough Principals*. Jossey-Bass. 4.

- Hinnant-Crawford, B. N. (2023). *Improvement Science in Education: A Primer* (2nd ed.). 5.
- Texas Principal Standards (TPESS) — link provided in Blackboard.
6. All additional readings, PDFs, and video links are provided in the module.
7. American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Do not rent. Buy and keep throughout the program.
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Assignments and Grades

Assignment descriptions are found in the **Educational Leadership Practicum Handbook** and have been incorporated into this Syllabus. Students should read the Handbook carefully. Assignment requirements are also included in the Blackboard assignment section of the calendar and should be followed carefully.

Grading Policy

Students must complete all Practicum required hours, meetings, and paperwork.

1. No late assignment will be accepted after its due date without prior instructor consent. After 11:59 pm on the date for any assignment due is considered late. If submission is not included by due date, the instructor will assign a grade of "0". Student must contact instructor to submit the late assignment. 10 points will be deducted from the grade for each day late.
2. All citations should be formatted using the American Psychological Association (APA) manual. Papers with APA citation errors will receive a reduction in points or no credit.
3. Extra credit points are not available.
4. **There are no I's (incompletes) for this class unless there are unusual circumstances. No incompletes will be given without the approval of the field supervisor and program coordinator.**
5. There are no optional assignments in this course. All assignments must be completed to pass this class. Even if an assignment is so late that it will receive a "0", the student must turn in the assignment to pass the course (regardless of number of points accrued in the course.)
6. Students who fail to participate in Discussion Board or complete any assignment may not pass this course. 7. Submission of assignments after the Due Date listed in the Course Calendar will result in an automatic "0". It is the student's responsibility to contact the Field Supervisor and make arrangements for a submission.

Grading Scale

- 100-90% equate to an A
- 89-80% equate to a B
- 79-70% equate to a C
- 69-60% equate to a D
- 59-50% or less receive an F

"Cs" are not accepted in this program. Students scoring below a "B" in this course will be required to repeat the course to remain in the Educational Leadership Program. Changing the rotation by repeating this course will likely delay completion of the program as the program is sequential and the rotation must be followed.

Student and Instructor Expectations for Online Course

This class is taught online. Students will need an active Sul Ross account to access the course website through Blackboard. This site will have announcements, calendar, and learning modules, among other things. Students must have a microphone and camera.

Student and Instructor Expectations for Online Learning

Student Expectations of the Instructor:

- The instructor will provide weekly communication through Blackboard announcements, email, virtual office hours, and Zoom sessions.
- The instructor will respond to emails within 24–48 hours during business hours (Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM–4:00 PM CST).
- The instructor will return grades within two weeks of the submission date.
- The instructor will provide clear instructions for all assignments and be available for consultation.

Instructor Expectations of Students:

- Successful students will read the syllabus carefully and understand all policies, expectations, and due dates. ●
 - Successful students will complete all coursework by the assigned due date.
 - Successful students will engage actively in the course and communicate proactively with the instructor if challenges arise.
 - Students will use professional, respectful communication in all course interactions.
 - Students will not plagiarize the work of others or submit work from a prior course without instructor approval.
 - Students will plan ahead for technical issues and ensure they can access Blackboard on assignment due dates.
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Learning Environment

Successful completion of an online course requires dedication and constant effort. Do not fall behind in your work! Begin your assignments as soon as possible and get at least one module ahead. This will help you avoid the penalty for late work because there are always unforeseen events that arise. Submit professional quality work. Have someone proofread your submittals and always use the grammar and spell check functions on your computer before submission.

If you are not sure what plagiarism is, please read APA pp. 15-16 and 170, or ask during office hours. But remember, the ultimate responsibility is your own. When in doubt, err on the side of caution.

Internet Web Resources

The sources below are only convenient starting points for your Internet based research. You are expected to locate professional, **peer-reviewed** publications as reference material on papers submitted in this class. Sul Ross Library recommended databases include the following: Academic Search Premier, Dissertation Abstracts, Education Abstracts, Educator's Reference Desk, eLibrary Curriculum, Emerald Management Xtra, ERIC (from EBSCO), Professional Educational Development Collection, WorldCat, WorldCat Dissertation & Theses.

Format Requirements for Submittals

All submittals must be professional papers. Do not submit your assignments in a "homework" or "school assignment" format. Each submittal should be written as if it were an actual professional paper ready for publication or for transmission to the addressed recipient using APA.

A title page is not necessary. *Put a single-spaced heading in the top left corner of the first page only that provides: student name, assignment name and number, submission date.* Also, put your name and the

assignment number in the document's file name.

Correct format: Last name_First name_Assignment name_#_ED5309_Submission Date

Example: Doe_Jane_Module 1_#2_ED5309_06.05.2026

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to

- Turning in work as original that was used in whole or another course and/or professor
- Turning in another's work as one's own
- Copying from professional works or Internet sites without citation

Any of the above offenses will result in a zero for the assignment with no option to redo for credit.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI)

Generative AI tools, especially large language model chatbots like ChatGPT, are widely used today in many contexts. Learning to use AI responsibly and ethically is thus an important concept to engage with thoughtfully in your work as a student and beyond. Students should, however, be aware of the limits of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT:

- The quality of the prompt fed to the chatbot directly correlates to the quality of the generated text you will receive. Making the most of ChatGPT requires being thoughtful about how you write your prompts.
- Fact-check all AI outputs. Assume it is wrong unless you cross-check the claims with reliable sources. The current AI models will confidently reassert factual errors. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions.
- Full disclosure: Like any other tool, the use of AI should be acknowledged. At the end of your assignment, write a short paragraph to explain which AI tool and how you used it, if applicable. Include the prompts you

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used to get the results. Failure to do so is in violation of academic integrity policies. [Click here for information on how to cite AI tools.](#)

- **Caution:** Using an AI-content generator such as ChatGPT to complete an assignment without proper attribution violates academic integrity. By submitting assignments in this class, you pledge to affirm that they are your own work, and you attribute the use of any tools and sources.

The following examples demonstrate **approved uses of AI** in this course. You can take advantage of generative AI to:

- Brainstorm ideas, draft an outline, clarify thoughts, and/or generate keywords.
- Fine-tune, expand, or clarify your research questions.
- Check grammar, writing conversions, and style; help you find an expression.

The use of generative AI tools **is not permitted** in this course for the following activities:

- Using the AI tool to compose a response to a discussion board prompt or to enter content into a chat in a classroom context (e.g., Teams, Zoom, Google Meet).
- Completing your specific task for the assigned group work.
- Copying and pasting entire paragraphs from the AI tool to complete narrative/essay assignments and/or papers.

Course Withdrawal

The Last day to drop a course with a 'W' is **September 10, 2026**. Drops must be processed and in the University Registrar's office by 4 p.m. A “W” on your transcript has no negative effect on your overall GPA. Please understand that dropping a course means you must re-register and pay tuition to take the course for credit. Additionally, dropping a course may affect your financial aid eligibility or probationary status.

SRSU Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website.

Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are in the student handbook.

Distance Ed (Web-based-course) Non-Participation Statement

Policies in effect for on-campus, traditional classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including Web-base and ITV courses. The university allows a maximum of 20% absences in a course before an instructor may drop a student for excessive absences with a grade of “F. In distance education courses, this policy is interpreted as non-participation; once a student has been documented as non-participating. Non-participation and inactivity may include not logging on to the course, not submitting assignments or participating in other assigned activities as scheduled, or communicating with the instructor by phone, email, and/or not following the instructor's participation guidelines stated in the syllabus. Non-participation is equivalent to a student being absent in a regular classroom. Given this equivalency, *non-participation can be defined as a student not submitting assignments and not communicating with the professor*. Attendance for fully online classes is determined by the last participation in a course assignment or activity. Students will be notified if they are falling behind, not submitting work, not attending class, or failing assignments. Attendance policy information may also be found in the Student Handbook and Information concerning SRSU Online Distance Education Guidelines. In the Educational Leadership Program, the 20% absence threshold will be determined by the following timeframes for non-participation.

- 16-week course: 3 weeks (21 consecutive days) of non-participation
- 8-week course: 1.5 weeks (11 consecutive days) of non-participation
- 4-week course: 1 week (7 consecutive days) of non-participation

Any student dropped for excessive absences will receive either an “F” or a “W” depending upon the faculty member’s discretion. Attendance policy information may also be found in the ***Student Handbook and Information concerning SRSU Online Distance Education guidelines.***

Libraries

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library’s website, library.sulross.edu/. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

Counseling

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](https://www.timelycare.com/sulross). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Students With Special Needs

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU’s Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we’ll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email mschwartz@sulross.edu or contact Alejandra Valdez, at 830-758-5006 or email alejandra.valdez@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Supportive Statement

My goal is to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don’t hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Course Schedule

Modules	Items to Submit	Due Dates
Module 1: Intro to IS, CSI, and Principal Domains	<i>Assgn 1: Required Readings/Video</i> <i>Assgn 2: Quiz</i> <i>Note: Create your PASL Artifacts folder in Google Drive or OneDrive this week.</i>	Assign 1 - No Grade Assgn 2 - August 26 Before 11:59pm
Module 2: School Vision & Culture	<i>Assgn 1: Communicating your Vision</i> <i>Assgn 2: Discussion Board Reflections</i> <i>Assgn 1: 268 Domain 1 Quiz</i>	Assign 1 -August 31 Assgn 2 - Sept 2 Assign 3- Sept 2 Before 11:59pm
Module 3: Stakeholder Portrait	<i>Assgn 1: Required Readings</i> <i>Assgn 2: Discussion Board-Think Like a Principal</i> <i>Assgn 3: Stakeholder Portrait Survey, Plan, & Approval</i> <i>Assgn 4: Stakeholder Portrait: Anchor Performance Task</i> <i>Assgn 5: 268 (Domains 1 & 5) Quiz</i>	Assign 1 -n/g Assgn 2 - Sept 6 Assign 3- Sept 7 Assgn 4-Sept 16 Assign 5- Sept 17 Before 11:59pm
Module 4: Parent Family Engagement in Action	<i>Assgn 1: Discussion Board</i> <i>Assgn 2: PFE in Action-Snapshot, Plan, & Artifact</i> <i>Assgn 3: 268 (Domains 1 & 4) Quiz</i>	Assign 1 -Sept 20 Assgn 2 - Sept 27 Assign 3- Sept 28 Before 11:59pm
Module 5: Ethics and Culture	<i>Assgn 1: Code of Ethics</i> <i>Assgn 2: Ethics in Contexts Performance Task</i> <i>Assgn 3: Discussion Board-Ethical Leadership Reflections</i>	Assign 1 - Oct 4 Assgn 2 -Oct 7 Assign 3- Oct 8 Before 11:59pm
Module 6: TX268 CR	<i>Assgn 1: Tx268 CR Annotated Outline</i>	Assign 1 - October 12 Before 11:59pm