Course Syllabus

EDU 5332 — Educational Research I

Fall 2026 / 8 Weeks / 3 Credit Hours / Educational Leadership Program

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Virtual Office Hours
T/Th, 12:00pm – 4:00pm (CST)
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If inconvenient, contact me to set up an alternative time.

Welcome to EDU 5332 — Educational Research & Data Analysis
In this course, you will develop the data-analysis and improvement-science skills that a campus principal uses to lead continuous school improvement. Using the Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR), your Campus Improvement Plan (CIP), and local campus data, you will work with Victoria Bernhardt's four data types — Demographic, Student Learning (Outcome), Process, and Perception — to define a defensible student-learning Problem of Practice (PoP), conduct a root cause analysis, and build an evidence-based AIM statement and Theory of Action. Several course artifacts are designated PASL Task 1 (Problem Solving in the Field) evidence and must be dual-housed in your personal cloud storage and the SL&L ePortfolio. EDU 5332 is a core course in the M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and principal certification sequence.

Course Description
EDU 5332 prepares aspiring principals to gather, analyze, and act on multiple measures of school data to improve student learning. Candidates learn to navigate the TAPR and Texas A–F accountability system, analyze demographic, student-learning, program/process, and perception data across multiple years, and integrate these data sources to answer Bernhardt's core question: "Why are we getting the results we are getting?" Using improvement-science methods (Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles, fishbone root cause analysis, driver thinking), candidates produce a capstone campus data story that includes an AIM statement and a Theory of Action. Designated assignments serve as evidence for PASL Task 1 (Problem Solving in the Field) and support preparation for the TExES Principal (268) exam. The course grade evaluates the quality, accuracy, and analytical depth of the candidate's data work — it does not guarantee ETS PASL eligibility, approval, or a passing score.

Performance Standards, Goals, and Learning Objectives

- Students will demonstrate the ability to navigate the TAPR and Texas A–F accountability system to extract, disaggregate, and interpret campus demographic and student-learning data across multiple years.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to integrate Bernhardt's four data types to identify a defensible, student-centered Problem of Practice and its contributing root causes.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to apply improvement-science tools — PDSA cycles, fishbone diagrams, and Data Intersection Matrices — to analyze systemic conditions affecting student outcomes.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to align a Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) with identified root causes and to evaluate equity in the campus's improvement strategy.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate a campus "data story" and construct an AIM statement and Theory of Action grounded in evidence.

EDU 5332 contributes to the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)/Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), is aligned to the Texas Principal Certificate Standards (TAC §241.15) and the TExES Principal (268) competencies, and supports preparation for ETS PASL Task 1.

Alignment to PASL Task 1 (Problem Solving in the Field)

This course is aligned to the ETS Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL 368), the Texas principal certification performance assessment, and the Texas Principal Certificate Standards (TAC §241.15). EDU 5332 is a primary PASL Task 1 course: several assignments are designated Task 1 evidence and must be dual-housed in personal cloud storage and the SL&L ePortfolio. The table below identifies each artifact, its PASL connection, the evidence it produces, and the student's responsibility for saving it.

Course Assignment / Artifact	PASL Task Connection	Evidence Produced	Student Responsibility
TAPR Data Analysis Worksheet — Problem of Practice (M2)	Foundational PASL Task 1 evidence — supports Problem Solving in the Field	Disaggregated campus data, achievement-gap analysis, initial PoP statement	Save copy to personal cloud storage
Student Learning Data Presentation (M4)	Required PASL Task 1 evidence	12-slide analysis with longitudinal graphs and subgroup patterns	Dual-save to personal cloud + SL&L ePortfolio
Interview & PDSA Theory of Action (M5)	PASL Task 1 Live Performance Task + Anchor Task	Stakeholder interview notes, IF/THEN/BECAUSE theory of action	Dual-save to personal cloud + SL&L ePortfolio (official Task 1 anchor)
Fishbone Root Cause Analysis (M6)	PASL Task 1 — Problem Solving in the Field artifact	Fishbone diagram, problem/effect statement, root-cause candidates	Dual-save to personal cloud + SL&L ePortfolio
CIP/RCA Alignment + Live Leadership Interview (M7)	PASL Task 1 live leadership evidence	CIP analysis, alignment comparison, interview reflection	Required live component for PASL preparation
Capstone: Extended Matrix, Four-Way Narrative, AIM & Theory of Action (M8)	Synthesis evidence supporting PASL Task 1 preparation	Integrated campus data story, AIM statements, theories of action	Save to personal cloud storage

Alignment to Texas Principal Certificate Standards (TAC §241.15) and TExES Principal (268) Competencies
Course assignments support preparation for the Texas Principal Certificate Standards under TAC §241.15 and the TExES Principal (268) exam competencies. Where a specific competency code is identified in the module materials, it is listed directly; broader alignments are stated conservatively as supporting preparation.

Module / Assignment	TExES Principal (268) Competencies	Alignment
Module 1 — CSI & Improvement Science foundations	Supports preparation for Domain I competencies	Foundational

Module 2 — TAPR Scavenger Hunt & Problem of Practice	Supports preparation for 268 competencies related to disaggregated data and achievement-gap analysis	Foundational
Module 3 — Longitudinal Demographic Data & Subgroup Analysis	Supports preparation for 268 competencies related to demographic data interpretation	Foundational
Module 4 — Student Learning Data Presentation	Supports preparation for 268 competencies related to student-outcome data analysis	Supports PASL Task 1
Module 5 — Process Measurement & PDSA Theory of Action	Supports preparation for 268 competencies related to instructional-program analysis	Supports PASL Task 1
Module 6 — Fishbone Root Cause Analysis	004C, 008C, 009A	PASL Task 1 artifact
Module 7 — CIP/RCA Alignment & Live Leadership Interview	008C, 009A, 009B, 011B, 011C	PASL Live Performance Task
Module 6/7 — TX 268 Constructed-Response Pre-Writing	Domain I / Competency 004	Exam preparation
Module 8 — Capstone Matrix, Narrative, AIM & Theory of Action	Supports preparation for 268 competencies related to data-driven improvement planning	Synthesis

Required Texts

1. Bernhardt, V. L. (2025). Data analysis for continuous school improvement (5th ed.). Routledge/Eye on Education.
2. Hinnant-Crawford, B. N. (2025). Improvement science in education: A primer (2nd ed.). Myers Education Press.
3. 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. Harvard Education Press.
4. American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ISBN: 9781433805615.

Requirements for Completion

To complete EDU 5332, students must:

1. Complete all module assignments — Submit every required assignment and discussion board described in the module directions, including the Module 8 capstone deliverables.
2. Maintain a campus data set — Identify a campus (or instructor-assigned campus) and collect three years of TAPR data used across Modules 2–6 and the Module 8 capstone.
3. Complete the required live leadership interview — Conduct the Module 7 CIP/RCA leadership interview (or an instructor-approved alternative) that serves as the PASL Task 1 Live Performance Task component.
4. Dual-house designated PASL Task 1 artifacts — Save the Student Learning Data Presentation (M4), Interview & PDSA Theory of Action (M5), Fishbone RCA (M6), and CIP/RCA Alignment (M7) to both

personal cloud storage and the SL&L ePortfolio under EDU 5332, labeled as PASL Task 1 – Problem Solving in the Field evidence.

5. Submit the capstone campus data story — The extended Data Intersection Matrix, four-way narrative, AIM statements, and Theory of Action (M8).

Dual Storage Policy

Any assignment artifact that directly serves as evidence for a PASL task must be dual-housed in both the student's personal cloud storage (OneDrive, Google Drive, or iCloud) and the SL&L ePortfolio. This is separate from general course submission requirements.

- Designated PASL Task 1 artifacts (Student Learning Data Presentation, Interview & PDSA Theory of Action, Fishbone RCA, CIP/RCA Alignment) must be uploaded to the SL&L ePortfolio under EDU 5332 and labeled as PASL Task 1 – Problem Solving in the Field evidence, in addition to submission in Blackboard.
- Excel workbook deliverables (Demographic Data Template, Data Intersection Matrix) are maintained in the student's personal cloud storage and submitted to Blackboard.
- Students are encouraged to keep a personal cloud-storage copy of all coursework, since the Problem of Practice and data artifacts carry forward into later program courses and the PASL portfolio.

PASL Task 1 Preparation Goal

EDU 5332 builds the evidence base for PASL Task 1 (Problem Solving in the Field) by producing multiple designated artifacts — the Student Learning Data Presentation, the Interview & PDSA Theory of Action (Live Performance Task and Anchor Task), the Fishbone Root Cause Analysis, and the CIP/RCA Alignment with live leadership interview. The course grade evaluates the quality, accuracy, and analytical depth of the candidate's data work — it does not guarantee ETS PASL eligibility, approval, or a passing score. The decision to submit PASL 368 is the candidate's and is completed in the practicum sequence.

Assignments and Grades

Descriptions of each assignment and its grading rubric are provided in the course modules on Blackboard. Students should read the assignment directions and rubrics carefully before beginning. The grading policy for this course is as follows: students must complete all required assignments and any PASL Task 1 evidence artifacts designated in the module directions.

Grading Policy

Students must complete all required course assignments and any PASL evidence artifacts designated in the module directions.

1. No late assignment will be accepted after its due date without prior instructor consent.
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 (incomplete) for this class unless you have a serious illness or a family emergency.
5. After 11:59 pm on the date any assignment is due is considered late.
6. There are no optional assignments in this course. All assignments must be completed to pass this class. Even if an assignment receives no credit because it is late, the student must still turn in the assignment to pass the course, regardless of the student's current course average.
7. Students must submit all designated PASL Task 1 evidence artifacts to the SL&L ePortfolio and personal cloud storage as directed in the module instructions.

Grading Scale

Percentage	Grade
100–90%	A
89–80%	B
79–70%	C
69–60%	D
59% or less	F

"C's" 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. Repeating this course will delay completion of the program as the program is sequential.

Blackboard and Online Access
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 will meet via Microsoft TEAMS. Students must have a microphone and camera.

Learning Environment & Grading Policy
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 required. Please follow APA cover page formatting for all papers. When the assignment states how many pages, the cover page and reference pages should be included in the total.

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)
The University does not recommend or endorse any specific AI tools or resources. Students should be aware that many generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) store user input and may use this data to train future models. For this reason, students should never upload or share personal, confidential, or identifiable information — such as names, ID numbers, health data, or assignment submissions containing such details — into any generative AI platform. When using AI tools, students should verify whether the tool complies with student privacy standards as indicated by the University. Faculty may recommend specific tools that better align with institutional data privacy policies, but ultimate responsibility for data protection rests with users. Students are encouraged to use faculty-recommended platforms when engaging in coursework involving generative AI.

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 used to get the results. Failure to do so is in violation of academic integrity policies.
- 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 a 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 conventions, 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 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 [Insert official university withdrawal date]. 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.

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-based 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 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 this course, the 20% absence threshold is determined by the following timeframes for non-participation. This course is 8 weeks, so the applicable threshold is 1.5 weeks (11 consecutive days) of non-participation.

Non-Participation Timeframes (20% Threshold)

Course Length	20% Non-Participation Threshold
8-week course	1.5 weeks (11 consecutive days) of non-participation
16-week course	3 weeks (21 consecutive days) of non-participation
4-week course	1 week (7 consecutive days) of non-participation

Diversity Statement

My goal as instructor is to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that health concerns or unexpected life events could 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 an inclusive 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 do not hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

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.

Students With Special Needs

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the 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 Schwartze Grisham, M.Ed., LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor), SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator, at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email mschwartze@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.

Course Schedule (8 Weeks)
The schedule below is a milestone table for Blackboard. Continuous requirements — maintaining your campus TAPR data set, dual-housing designated PASL Task 1 artifacts in personal cloud storage and SL&L, and submitting Blackboard deliverables — apply across all 8 weeks.

Week	Module / Focus	Activities & Readings	Milestone / Deliverable
1	M1: Intro to CSI & Improvement Science	Bernhardt Ch. 1–2; Hinnant-Crawford Ch. 1–2; CSI framework; four data types	Discussion Board 1: Using Data for Continuous School Improvement
2	M2: Exploring the TAPR	TEA TAPR & A–F Accountability videos; ESC Region 13 growth article; TAPR navigation	TAPR Scavenger Hunt; TAPR Data Analysis Worksheet — Problem of Practice (foundational PASL Task 1 evidence — save to personal cloud)
3	M3: Demographic Data	Bernhardt Ch. 3; longitudinal demographic analysis; 3-year TAPR trends	Longitudinal Demographic Data Template (.xlsx); Subgroup Spotlight Analysis
4	M4: Student Learning Data	Bernhardt Ch. 5; Hinnant-Crawford Ch. 4 & 7; Bryk et al. Ch. 1–2; STAAR analysis	Student Learning Data Presentation (12 slides) — REQUIRED PASL Task 1 evidence (dual-save to personal cloud + SL&L); Discussion Board
5	M5: Program & Process Data	Bernhardt Ch. 4; Hinnant-Crawford Ch. 4, 5, 8; process measurement; PDSA cycles	Process Measurement Planning Table; Interview & PDSA Theory of Action — PASL Live Performance Task + Anchor Task (dual-save to personal cloud + SL&L); Discussion Board
6	M6: Intersection Pairing & RCA	Bernhardt Ch. 7; Hinnant-Crawford Ch. 3; data intersection; root cause analysis	Data Intersection Matrix (2 pairings); Fishbone Root Cause Analysis — PASL Task 1 artifact (dual-save to personal cloud + SL&L); TX 268 CR pre-writing notes
7	M7: CIP/RCA Alignment & Live Leadership Interview	CIP structure and review; aligning root causes to campus plan; equity check	CIP/RCA Alignment Paper (Parts 1–4) + required live leadership interview — PASL Live Performance Task; capstone preparation
8	M8: Capstone — Campus Data Story	Extend intersection matrix; four-way causal narrative; AIM statements; theories of action	Extended Data Intersection Matrix (3–4 cells) + Four-Way Narrative; AIM Statement & Theory of Action (IF/THEN/BECAUSE); Discussion Board: Leading with Data