

ECI 518: Digital Learning Program and Staff Development: Fall 2023

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Instructor Information

Name: Dr. Mark Samberg

Email: mjsamber@ncsu.edu

Mobile Phone: 919.802.8298

Office Hours: By appointment, in person or via phone or Zoom

Preferred Method of Communication: Email, Slack message, or text message

Course Feedback Expectations

Please contact your me via email (mjsamber@ncsu.edu) with any questions about the course project or other assignments. I will strive to answer any emails within 12 hours (M-F) and 24 hours on the weekend, and grade submitted assignments within 7 days of the due date. In addition, students will be provided ongoing opportunities, and are strongly encouraged, to provide course feedback for to help improve the design of current and future course implementations.

Course Information

Credit Hours: 3

Course Meetings and Assignments: All course assignments and forum posts will take place using the Slack platform. Virtual meetings will take place via Zoom.

Course Text

The course text will be located at

<http://courses.marksamberg.com/courses/dlprograms/index.html>. This text is an open-source text and is licensed under Creative Commons (CC-BY-SA-NC) and you are free to copy and remix the content as needed for your notes. While you may work ahead, you should note that I will be making changes to the text throughout the semester until a unit officially goes live.

Many of you are working in instructional technology fields already. If I'm missing a resource, if you have content to contribute, or if a section of the text is unclear or needs additional detail – let me know and I'll add it. If you are familiar with GitHub, [Pull Requests](#) and [Issues](#) are welcome on the [repository](#).

Course Overview

Catalog Description: Study and application of principles related to digital learning program planning, facilities and resource management, and staff development in K-12 settings.

Course Overview/Prerequisites: This course is restricted to students of graduate standing. It is designed to help prepare future technology facilitators and directors to design, develop, and lead school and/or district technology programs across K-12 levels. Some lessons may translate to higher education or industry technology planning, but the majority of readings and resources in this course are geared toward K-12.



Required Materials

Students must have access to a computer with reliable high-speed Internet access to participate in the course. A webcam and microphone are strongly recommended for synchronous meetings.

There are no required texts for this course beyond the course text mentioned above. The only required software will be Google Drive and Google Docs. All students are expected to use their NC State-issued Google accounts for course correspondence and assignments. All course materials will be freely available or accessible via Unity ID and password.

Course Structure

The course will be divided up into 8 units. With exception of the first and last unit, each unit will last two weeks and will follow a similar structure.

Course Readings

Each unit will contain a chapter in the course text. Students are expected to review the chapter, including the links provided within each chapter.

In-Person Sessions and Field Trip

Every other Thursday (dates in the table below), I will hold a virtual meeting via Zoom to discuss the chapter topic in more detail, answer any questions, and provide a chance to interact with your colleagues in the course. Attendance at these sessions is optional but encouraged – over the past few years, these sessions have been a wonderful opportunity to connect with peers in your class and dive more deeply into course material than the virtual format allows.

Attendees at virtual meetings will have one point added to their discussion board score for the week as extra credit.

Mid-semester, I will be scheduling an optional field trip to the NC State University Libraries. The purpose will be to get hands-on experience with makerspaces, virtual reality, and facilities design.

Discussions

Our discussion platform for the course will be Slack, which is an interactive Discord-like app for virtual conversations. Slack is used extensively in the workplace for real-time and asynchronous communication within the workplace. Course participants should interact regularly with Slack and aim to post 2 or 3 times per week. You may post either an original post or a reply to an existing post. I expect both original posts and replies to contain one or more elements from the following:

- Contain reflections on one or more topics from the unit
- Contain references to the course readings (including linked content) and/or other literature
- Include a key takeaway/something you're thinking about/something you're stuck on/a point of disagreement



- Combine the theoretical concepts with your experiences in the field and other relevant outside experiences.
- Combine a participant's post with other knowledge and experience to build conversation or prompt follow-up posts.
- (Respectfully) provide a "devil's advocate" perspective or a counter-argument to provide an alternative viewpoint or to further the discussion.

While posts of affirmations ("I agree", "Me too") are encouraged, they are not considered "responses" for these purposes. The purpose of a discussion is to build conversation and community. You should not rehash discussions in an original post. Either your post continues the conversation (reply) or starts a new conversation on an original topic (new discussion). I expect the same level of thought and detail in both replies and original posts.

The use of direct messaging in Slack is discouraged. Unwanted, abusive, or disrespectful messages will be immediately referred to the University so that appropriate action may be taken.

All posts will be graded according to the same scale. Students are expected to include the same level of detail in both original posts and in replies). **For the purposes of this task, weeks run from Monday at 12:00:00 a.m. until Sunday at 11:59:59 p.m.**

Posts will be graded wholistically across the week as follows:

- 3 Points: Posts include a synthesis of student reflections, literature, and any relevant field experiences;
- 2 Points: The connections between reflections, literature, and field experiences are weak, disjointed, or duplicative;
- 1 Point: Posts lack sufficient detail or contains factual errors;
- 0 Points: Post are exclusively reactions (such as "I Agree" or "Me Too")

In addition to the weekly discussions, you will upload your projects to a slack channel. Projects should be submitted to the project form on or before the due date. Each student will be expected to review and provide feedback to at least one other student on their projects. Grading for these will be binary – either you provide a review to a peer or not.

The #water-cooler channel at the top of the course is for anything else. This could be a place to ask questions of me or your colleagues both about the course material or other things in your school. Think of this as your virtual PLC.

The #office-hours channel is a place to request help and support on course materials or ask questions about the course. If you have questions about a reading or assignment that aren't specific to you, ask them there so that everyone can see the response.

The #weekly-announcements channel will serve as an announcement space for weekly updates and reminders. These will also be sent via email.

[Course Projects](#)



Units 2-7 will have a project designed to provide hands-on experience with the course content. Each unit has 3-5 options for the project you can choose to pursue. You also have the option to pitch your own project related to the unit topic. Pick a project that is interesting to you, leverages your strengths, and helps you be a leader in your workplace. Projects are designed to be conducted in a field-based setting (preferably K-12, but any setting will work) or by contacting friends or colleagues in the field. If this poses a challenge for you, please make sure that you notify me early in the course and I will help support you.

You should choose a project that reflects your professional interests but is not something you have done before. If two students are working in the same place, you should work to choose different projects. **Projects must be submitted to the project Slack channel by the last day the unit is open.** Within one week after submission, you should provide constructive feedback to at least one peer within the project channel. I will also provide feedback privately. You may resubmit your project as many times as you need after the original deadline to earn the grade you want. **There are six projects in the course.** You may skip a project, or I will drop the grade from the lowest project.

Summative Activity

Unit 8 will include a summative activity in lieu of a final exam. This activity will ask you to develop a Philosophy Statement, synthesizing the material from the course and allowing you the opportunity to share with future employers how you would plan to operationalize the course content in your future careers.

Course Objectives

1. Using national and state technology leadership standards as a reference, the student will define expectations of technology director/coordinator/facilitator positions.
2. Students will examine and understand best practices for change management and leading change towards digital learning environments.
3. Students will list common personnel involved in media and technology advisory committees (MTACs), processes informed by these committees, and some of the benefits of distributed leadership for the school technology program.
4. Students will understand the process of developing a vision for a school technology program.
5. Students will describe the benefits of community-involvement in the school technology program and strategies for marketing the program and communicating program progress and headlines to the community.
6. Students will list elements to be considered in budgets for school technology programs, and exhibit competence in planning for the total cost of ownership (TCO) for selected items.
7. Students will describe options for financing and sustaining school technology programs, including federal programs (e-rate), corporate partnerships, grants, and more.
8. Students will list common policies and procedures important to have in place for school technology programs, the federal mandates underlying certain policies (CIPA, COPPA, FERPA), and demonstrate competence in preparing new policy for emerging technologies and tools.



9. Students will identify elements of a technology-friendly infrastructure, to include efficient networks, intentional physical spaces, and ergonomic furniture selections and arrangements.
10. Students will describe popular technology equipment (computers, tablets, projection systems) suitable for classrooms of different age groups and different content areas and demonstrate the ability to make informed and wise hardware selection decisions within a limited budget.
11. Students will list potential benefits and challenges of bring-your-own-device (BYOD) policies.
12. Students will describe the many integrated elements of a comprehensive school information system, including student data and personalization plans, course management, and information dissemination.
13. Students will describe a full range of options for acquiring instructional resources, from commercial software to open-source repositories to teacher archives, and more.
14. Students will use criteria to review instructional resources and demonstrate the ability to make informed and wise selection decisions within a limited budget.
15. Students will identify challenges and needs for a school technology program to serve the unique learning needs of all students.
16. Students will describe strategies for ensuring adequate user support, as well as demonstrated pitfalls when user support falls short.
17. Students will describe common steps in planning for staff professional development, including needs assessment, and list a variety of professional development strategies or models used by others in support of school technology programs.
18. Students will classify professional development as direct/face-to-face (coaching, training, PLCs) or indirect/remote (online, PLNs), and describe benefits and drawbacks of each approach.
19. Students will list common steps in evaluating school technology programs, including potential sources of data, and common reporting formats to communicate progress and future steps to be taken.
20. Students will understand how the COVID-19 pandemic changed the landscape of digital learning in the K-12 learning environment.

Course Agenda

Dates	Unit	Major Focus	Topics for Unit Will Include	Due Dates
Aug 21- Aug 27 Virtual Meeting: August 24 7:00PM	1	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of Digital Learning Programs Cornerstones of Digital Learning Programs Digital Learning in North Carolina 	Slack posts: Aug 27
Aug 28- Sep 10 Virtual Meeting: August 31	2	Leadership of School Technology Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a vision for digital learning programs Distributed or Shared Leadership Models School/District Technology Planning 	Slack posts: Sep 3/Sep 10 Project: Sep 10



7:00PM			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTAC • Marketing and Communication • Policies and Laws impacting Digital Learning and IT in K-12 • Program Evaluation 	Project Feedback: Sep 17
Sep 11 Sep 24 Virtual Meeting: Sep 14 7:00PM	3	Digital Content and Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER vs. Purchased materials • Creative Commons licensing and Copyright concerns • Content Procurement • Systemic approaches to teacher-created materials • Digital accessibility (UDL and WCAG guidelines) • Technical considerations for digital content 	Slack posts: Sep 17/Sep 24 Project: Sep 24 Project Feedback: Oct 1
Sep 25- Oct 8 Virtual Meeting: Sep 28 7:00PM	4	Technology Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-user devices • Teacher devices • Classroom setups • Makerspaces • Wifi and networking • Technical support 	Slack posts: Oct 1/Oct 8 Project: Oct 8 Project Feedback: Oct 15
Oct 9- Oct 22 Virtual Meeting: Oct 12 7:00PM	5	Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD models • Personalized Learning • Whole-group/small-group training • Coaching and PLCs • Credentialing and badging • Informal PD and PLNs 	Slack posts: Oct 15/Oct 22 Project: Oct 22 Project feedback: Oct 29
Oct 23- Nov 5 Virtual Meeting: Oct 26 7:00PM	6	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-12 Budgets in North Carolina • Historical funding of school technology programs • Federal and grant funding for technology • E-Rate • Lease vs. Purchase • Identifying TCO and replacement cycles 	Slack posts: Oct 29/Nov 5 Project: Nov 5 Project Feedback: Nov 12
Nov 6- Nov 19	7	Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a cybersecurity plan • Cybersecurity best practices 	Slack posts: Nov 12/Nov 19



Virtual Meeting: Nov 9 7:00PM			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of technology in building physical security • Incident prevention • Incident response • E-Discovery, public records laws, and retention schedules. 	Project: Nov 19 Project Feedback: Nov 27
Nov 20- Dec 5 Virtual Meeting: Nov 30 7:00 PM	8	Putting it all together...		Final activity: Dec 13 Project Regrades: Dec 7

Grading

Your course grade will be calculated based on the following weights:

- 25%: Average of discussion grades
- 65%: Average of project grades
- 10%: Summative Activity

Grading Scale: A+ (97-100), A (94-96), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B- (80-83), C+ (77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73), D+ (67-69), D (64-66), D- (60-63), F (59 or less)

Within the first week of the course, I will share a Google Doc with each of you individually where I will record your grades and feedback for the semester. This will automatically calculate your final grade and allow you to track your progress at any time.

Course Policies

Late Assignments

Late assignments for discussions will not be accepted. Late submissions for projects will be reduced 5 points per day until submitted. Accommodations for late projects can be made, but you need to contact me as early as possible.

Code of Conduct

It is expected that all students participate in course activities in a professional manner. All students in the course are free to express their ideas and opinions without fear of reprisal. While healthy discussion is encouraged, any bullying, personal attacks, harassment, disrespect, offensive language, or trolling will not be tolerated and will be referred to the University for disciplinary action.

This course will encourage discussion about experiences in schools and districts, students are expected to respect the confidentiality of their peers and the experiences being discussed. Violation of this confidentiality will not be tolerated.



University Policies

Academic Integrity

Students are required to comply with the university policy on academic integrity found in the [Code of Student Conduct](#). Therefore, students are required to uphold the university pledge of honor and exercise honesty in completing any assignment.

Please refer to the [Academic Integrity](#) web page for a detailed explanation of the University's policies on academic integrity and some of the common understandings related to those policies.

Students may be required to disclose personally identifiable information to other students in the course, via electronic tools like email or web-postings, where relevant to the course. Examples include online discussions of class topics and posting of student coursework. All students are expected to respect the privacy of each other by not sharing or using such information outside the course.

Students are responsible for reviewing the NC State University PRR's which pertains to their course rights and responsibilities:

- [Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy Statement](#) and [additional references](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Grades and Grade Point Average](#)
- [Credit-Only Courses](#)
- [Audits](#)

University Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to provide equality of opportunity in education and employment for all students and employees. Accordingly, the university does not practice or condone unlawful discrimination in any form against students, employees or applicants on the grounds of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. Further, North Carolina State University regards discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation to be inconsistent with its goal of providing a welcoming environment in which all its students, faculty, and staff may learn and work up to their full potential.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with the [Disability Resource Office](#) at Holmes Hall, Suite 304, Campus Box 7509, 919-515-7653. For more information on NC State's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the [Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation \(REG02.20.01\)](#)

Trans- and Non-Binary Inclusivity

In an effort to affirm and respect the identities of transgender students in the classroom and beyond, please contact me if you wish to be referred to using a name and/or pronouns other than



what is listed in the student directory. Please also share your preferred name and/or pronouns in the Unit 1 Introductions channel. All students will be expected to use the preferred names and pronouns for their colleagues.

FERPA Notice

Under the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and NC State's FERPA regulation (http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/student_services/REG11.00.1.php), a student's education records are protected from disclosure to third parties. Because of the public nature of Web-based assignments in this course and due to the possibility that some student assignments may be viewed by third parties online, we are required to collect your e-signature acknowledging your awareness and acceptance of this course format. Please enter your e-signature on the form provided on this Web page: <http://tinyurl.com/cv5nmrp>

Course Evaluations

ClassEval is the end-of-semester survey for students to evaluate instruction of all university classes. The current survey is administered online and includes 12 closed-ended questions and 3 open-ended questions. Deans, department heads, and instructors may add a limited number of their own questions to these 15 common-core questions.

Each semester students' responses are compiled into a ClassEval report for every instructor and class. Instructors use the evaluations to improve instruction and include them in their promotion and tenure dossiers, while department heads use them in annual reviews. The reports are included in instructors' personnel files and are considered confidential.

Online class evaluations will be available for students to complete during the last two weeks of the semester for full semester courses and the last week of shorter sessions. Students will receive an email directing them to a website to complete class evaluations. These become unavailable at 8am on the first day of finals.

Contact ClassEval Help Desk: classeval@ncsu.edu

[ClassEval website](#)

[More information about ClassEval](#)

Syllabus Modification Statement

Our syllabus represents a flexible agreement, outlining the topics covered and the order they will be covered in. This syllabus may be modified over the course of the semester based on the needs of the class and external factors. All syllabus modifications will be subject to review and feedback from students one week before they are finalized.

