



**Your
Education
Ally.**

By Teachers,
For Teachers.

Course Syllabus

Name:

Date:

Today is a Great Day to Learn Something New!

Professional learning to meet your needs.

Engaging and applicable, ELEVATE courses are the core of Teaching Channel. We offer a variety of courses that meet the continuing education needs of teachers from across the country. Teaching Channel courses work perfectly for license renewal needs, working to move up through salary schedules, or for professional learning to support improved student outcomes.

Teaching Channel provides continuing education graduate credit courses that have been approved and endorsed by regionally accredited colleges and universities from across the United States.



Current University Partners (See a current list of academic partners on our website)

Continuing Education courses are approved by our regionally accredited (HLC, NECHE, WSCUC, NWCCU) partners by review of syllabi, content, and coursework expectations.

(Indicate anticipated university/college partner below, if applicable.)

Course Creation and Evaluation:

Courses are created and evaluated by educators with a master's degree or higher in an education-related field and five or more years of classroom experience in PreK-12th grade education. Course evaluators provide personalized, specific feedback for assignments and rubric-based grading aligned with best practices in professional education.

Spring Term

Registrations Accepted
July 16-March 15
Coursework Due*
April 15

Summer Term

Registrations Accepted
December 16-July 15
Coursework Due*
August 15

Fall Term

Registrations Accepted
March 16-October 22
Coursework Due*
November 15

*Or first business day after the 15th if due date falls on a weekend.

Coursework Details

The Rigor of Teaching Channel Graduate-Level Continuing Education Courses.

Professional Learning Model

Our research-based Professional Learning Model is used to design ELEVATE continuing education courses. The model includes five elements used to guide professional learning and to positively impact student outcomes:



Course Content

ELEVATE Courses are self-paced, and per standard practice in the field, each credit carries the equivalent of fifteen hours of content and coursework. Participants explore resources that include a solid balance of research and applicability. All courses feature video clips, research-based articles, and interactive elements to enhance and support learning. To receive credit, participants must complete the following requirements according to expectations outlined in our course rubric:

Response Questions: Connect new learning from course resources to current pedagogy.

Resource Review: Find resources related to the course topic to extend learning and solve problems of practice.

Applications: Complete a variety of assignments encouraging participants to implement new learning in their classrooms or schools.

Reflection: Write a reflection paper that activates critical thinking and inspires the transformation of future professional practice.

Course Name	Effective Communication Strategies for School Leaders
Course Number	OL 5554
Course Credits	3 or Flex Credit

NOTE: This syllabus is an outline of the course requirements and is subject to change; the coursework will be completed and submitted in the online environment where you will have full access to a variety of media, links, and other online tools required to satisfactorily complete this course.

Course Description:

Are you a university, district, or school level leader looking to enhance your communication skills? This course is designed so you can navigate the intricate world of effective communication. Learn about the essential skill set that enables you to connect with both internal and external stakeholders, actively listen to the needs of your school and community, and utilize that valuable information to prepare, respond, and inform. You'll explore the significance of communication in shaping school culture, the power of building trust, and uncover best practices to become a more compelling and impactful communicator. Get ready to discover how to utilize each one effectively, ensuring all in your community feel heard, informed, and well-prepared.

Course Objectives:

1. Use prompts about effective communication for school leaders to describe assumptions and insights of practitioners, researchers, and self, including how the information relates to professional education practice and growth.
2. Determine the correlation between strong communication skills and effective leadership.
3. Analyze how great leaders communicate and listen to build trust and relationships with stakeholders
4. Identify different communication channels and dispersed responsibilities based on needs and anticipated impact.
5. Assess the communication needs and response when schools experience crises, both natural and humanmade.
6. Design a one-page communication plan overview for internal and external stakeholders.

Required Reading:

All articles and other resources are linked in the online environment, within their respective assignments.

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Knowledge Base:

Knowledge base, in part, is affirmed in the writing and research of these references:

- Bull, P., & Waddle, M. (2023). *The Psychology of Political Communication* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Hoesgen, T. (2022). *Elite Communication Skills for Young Professionals: The Ultimate Guide to Get More Respect, Make Your Work Life Easier, and Rapidly Advance Your Career*. Advanced Growth Institute Inc.
- Salem, P. J. (2023). *Organizational Communication Dynamics and Higher Education* (7th ed.). Routledge.
- Tompkins, P. S. (2023). *Practicing Communication Ethics* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Tuhovsky, I. (2021). *365 Days with Effective Communication: 365 Life-Changing Thoughts on Communication Skills, Social Intelligence, Charisma, Success, and Happiness (Master Your Communication and Social Skills)* (R. S. Nuttall, Ed.). Independently Published.
- Weinzapfel, P. (2023). *Closing the Loop: A Powerful and Practical Guide to School-Home Communication*. Hawley Street Publishing.
- Ziegler, B., Ramage, D., Parson, A., & Foster, J. (2022). *Trauma-Sensitive School Leadership: Building a Learning Environment to Support Healing and Success*. ASCD.

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Teaching Channel Course Rubric

All course submissions must meet general graduate level standards through the use of correct grammar, spelling, and mechanics. Each paragraph should be clearly organized and include 5 sentences or more. If work does not meet the above criteria, it will be returned to the student for resubmission.

Rubric	A Grade = Outstanding Performance	B Grade = Target Performance	Below Target Performance
Statement of Intention and Awareness	The evaluator will only review the Statement of Intention and Awareness for a response to each prompt. If a student does not respond to each prompt, the Statement will be returned to the student for resubmission. The student's Statement of Intention and Awareness will be evaluated as part of the Reflection.		
Investigation: Read and Respond	Coursework thoroughly and accurately addresses all question components by summarizing key concepts from readings. In at least half of the responses, the participant also makes inferences related to professional practice or supports answers with professional experiences.	Coursework thoroughly and accurately addresses all question components by summarizing key concepts from readings.	Coursework will be returned to student for resubmission with evaluator instructions if it does not meet target performance.

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Investigation: Resource Review Rubric	A Grade = Outstanding Performance	B Grade = Target Performance	Below Target Performance
Summary of Resource	Coursework summarizes the main ideas presented in the resource and includes at least one instance of critical analysis (i.e. asks questions, looks for gaps in information, disputes contradictions, etc.)	Coursework summarizes the main ideas presented in the resource.	Coursework will be returned to student for resubmission with evaluator instructions if it does not meet target performance.
Relation to Personal Assumptions or Course Content	Coursework provides more than one detailed example of how the resource supports or challenges personal assumptions and/or course content.	Coursework provides one example of how the resource supports or challenges personal assumptions and/or course content.	Coursework will be returned to student for resubmission with evaluator instructions if it does not meet target performance.
Impact on Professional Practice	Coursework provides more than one clear explanation of how the information in the resource could impact professional practice.	Coursework provides one explanation of how the information in the resource could impact professional practice.	

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Application Rubric	A Grade = Outstanding Performance	B Grade = Target Performance	Below Target Performance
Planning, Development and Execution	Coursework shows complete planning, development and/or execution of application, clear articulation of details and inclusion of polished required artifacts.	Coursework shows complete planning, development and/or execution of application and inclusion of required artifacts.	Coursework will be returned to student for resubmission with evaluator instructions if it does not meet target performance.
	Coursework includes creative or innovative application of new knowledge and skills from course content to professional practice.	Coursework includes application of new knowledge and skills from course content to professional practice.	
Written Requirements	Coursework provides clear, logical, and organized responses to any writing prompts in the application. It also includes at least one detailed connection to course objectives, student learning goals or transformation of professional practice.	Coursework provides clear, logical, and organized responses to any writing prompts in the application.	

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Reflection Rubric	A Grade = Outstanding Performance	B Grade = Target Performance	Below Target Performance
<p>Connection to Statement of Intention and Awareness</p>	<p>Coursework includes an evaluation of both learning goals articulated in the participant's Statement of Intention and Awareness from Module 1. Participant includes one future learning goal related to course content.</p>	<p>Coursework includes an evaluation of one of the learning goals articulated in the participant's Statement of Intention and Awareness from Module 1.</p>	<p>Coursework will be returned to student for resubmission with evaluator instructions if it does not meet target performance.</p>
<p>Summary of Learning</p>	<p>Coursework includes three or more detailed connections to specific assignments completed or course content viewed (assigned readings or videos).</p>	<p>Coursework includes two general connections to course content.</p>	
<p>Description of Positive Influence or Transformation</p>	<p>Coursework includes two or more specific ideas for changes in one's professional practice with timelines. OR Coursework includes two or more detailed action steps with timelines for positively impacting other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Coursework includes one general idea for changes in one's professional practice. OR Coursework includes one action step for positively impacting other stakeholders.</p>	

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Module 1

1. Tell us about yourself!

Before we begin with course content, write 1 sentence about yourself. You will be asked to include this background in each of the modules submitted for the course. This provides context for your responses and enables the course evaluator to respond with feedback tailored to your specific role in education. Here are three examples to guide you:

- I'm a 4th grade teacher and teach all subjects.
- I'm a middle school counselor.
- I'm out of the classroom on leave this year, but next year I'll be back teaching 9th grade science.

2. Statement of Intention and Awareness

At Teaching Channel, we want your learning to be purposeful and applicable to your professional practice. To do that, research says learners must first identify their motivations and goals. Next, learners assess prior knowledge and previous experiences to create deeper connections to the course material.

Using the guidelines below, please address the following in your Statement of Intention and Awareness in a total of two paragraphs or more:

1. Share your motivation for learning about effective communication for school leaders.
2. Summarize your previous knowledge or experience with effective communication for school leaders.
3. List your own two learning goals for the course.

In Module 1, your evaluator will review your Statement of Intention and Awareness to ensure completion. It will be graded within your Reflection Requirement in Module 3, where you'll revisit your Statement of Intention and Awareness to identify your growth and learning from the beginning of the course to the end.

3. Application: Mind Sweep

Great leaders grasp the importance of effective communication and active listening when it comes to building trust and relationships with stakeholders. They don't just talk the talk, they walk the walk! These exceptional leaders employ a wide range of communication strategies to make sure their messages hit home. They keep things crystal clear and concise, speak with empathy and understanding, and choose the right channels to effectively reach interested parties.

These leaders are also expert listeners, paying attention to the concerns, perspectives, and feedback of their colleagues, showing them that they truly care. By really tuning in, these leaders gain invaluable insights, address worries or issues that arise, and adapt their strategies. With their effective communication skills and active listening prowess, these great leaders build unbreakable bonds with people in the community, instilling confidence, aligning interests, and ultimately achieving results.

For this application, review the resources on effective communication for school leaders then participate in a mind sweep to share what you know about effective communication.

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Please review the following resources and complete the application that follows.

- "5 Tips for Improving Educational Leadership Communication," by Matthew Lynch
- "Communications Between Principals and Teachers in Successful Schools," from Remind
- "Effective Communication in Schools," by Tracy Salamondra
- "Best Practices to Improving Communication at Your School," from New Leaders

For this application, conduct a "mind sweep," by writing down everything that comes to mind - from your reading or your past experiences - about effective communication and school leaders. Ponder what makes an effective leader, an effective communicator, and how great leaders communicate and listen to build trust and relationships with stakeholders to get results.

There are no right or wrong answers—simply write down all of the things that come to mind. Then, next to 5 of the ideas from your list, provide a 3-5 sentence explanation about the item to ensure we understand its meaning.

When submitting your work for this module, include a photo of what you wrote down for your mind sweep or a link to the document where you added your ideas and descriptions. If submitting a link to your document, be sure it is set to "anyone with the link can view."

4. Application: Effective Leadership Venn Diagram

Effective communication and leadership go hand in hand; a dynamic duo that lays the foundation for successful leadership. When leaders grasp the power of communication, they unlock a whole world of possibilities, including the building of trust, fostering collaboration, and tackling challenges head-on with clarity and empathy.

In this assignment, take a look at the connection between effective communication and leadership, including essential elements and strategies for positive impact on individuals, organizations, and communities.

Please review the following resources and complete the application that follows.

- "Why Are Communication Skills Necessary for Good Leadership?" from Emeritus
- "What is Effective Communication? Skills for Work, School, and Life," from Coursera
- "Effective Communication," from Help Guide
- "10 characteristics of a good leader," from the Center for Creative Leadership
- "The 8 key leadership skills you need to know in 2023," from the Institute for Management Development

Now, to compare and contrast effective leadership qualities from your resources, reflect on the skills of an effective communicator: ways they are similar, different, and intersect.

To complete this assignment, create a Venn Diagram comparing/contrasting the skills of an effective leader with the skills of an effective communicator. In addition to the four characteristics of effective leadership above, please include one or more details you think should be considered.

Please submit your completed compare and contrast activity with your Module submission.

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Module 2

1. Tell us about yourself!

Provide a one sentence or longer explanation of your role in the field of education.

2. Application: Communication with Social Media

We all know managing a school comes with a myriad of responsibilities and the need to cater to a diverse range of school and community interests. Talk about a juggling act! That's where effective communication swoops in like a superstar to save the day!

Social media has emerged as a game-changer in communication, offering everyone, but also school leaders the opportunity to bridge gaps, foster collaboration, and make a real impact.

Please review the following resources and complete the application that follows.

- "Social Media is Essential for Communicating with Students," by Dr. Crechena Wise
- "How Social Media is Reshaping Today's Education System," by Lori Wade
- "How Has Social Media Emerged as a Powerful Communication Medium," from University Canada West
- "The State of School Home Communications: What Works to Engage all Families," by Dr. Chad Stevens, Cathy Kedjidjian, and Dr. Jim Roberts

Communicating and building relationships with educators makes our careers meaningful! We grow personally and professionally through sharing strategies, supporting one another, and nurturing relationships. And, because digital tools are at our fingertips, communications can be simple.

For this application, if you are new to social media, pick one social media platform and create a Twitter, Instagram, or TikTok account where you share communication strategies for school leaders (you can do this publicly or privately). You can also create a mock account where you decide on a social media app, a name for your social media account, and share information in the same style on a Word document.

These articles provide suggestions for getting started:

- "Guide to Using Twitter in Your Teaching Practice" from KQED
- "How and Why Are Educators Using Instagram," from the National Institutes of Health
- "8 Strategies for Using TikTok for Learning," from TeachThought
- "Keeping You and Your Students Safe on Social Media," from Common Sense Education

After creating a *Twitter, Instagram or TikTok account, please submit the following with your Module coursework:

- Share the account with us so we can follow you!
- Write a one-paragraph or longer summary about how you will use the social media platform to refine your communication skills.

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

If sharing a link, be sure the share settings are set to, "anyone with the link can view."

**Option: if you are not comfortable with creating a social media account, in 2 paragraphs, please share what would help you to engage with social media, and how you would be able to use the platform of your choice to enhance communication skills in your position.*

3. Application: Community Dialogue

When crises hit, school leaders need to be communication super heroes and heroines, no capes required! They have to assess the communication needs immediately and respond with lightning speed and precision, because it's about keeping everyone safe, healthy, and ensuring that education train chugging along smoothly.

This application explores the crucial role of communication when schools find themselves in the middle of a crisis. You can become the ultimate crisis communication champ, and ensure you can handle anything that comes your way!

Please review the following resources and complete the application that follows.

- "K12 Crisis Communication: What Does it Look Like Now?" by Casey Thompson
- "What Principals Need to Know to Respond to a Crisis," by Mario Jackson
- "Leadership in Times of Crisis," by Zara Adams
- "Communicating in a Crisis," from School CEO
- "Supporting Teachers During Times of Crisis," by Jorge Valenzuela

Using the strategies and information you learned in the course, compose a hypothetical dialogue between you and a school community group (parents, teachers, staff, or students) where you communicate the passing of the beloved school librarian.

The dialogue should be 2 paragraphs or more.

Please submit the dialogue with your Module submission. If sharing a link, be sure the share settings are set to, "anyone with the link can view."

4. Application: Communication Plan

Let's talk about the "secret sauce" that builds strong relationships and creates a thriving educational community: effective communication. And to make sure your communication game is on point, you need a plan!

This overview will outline all the key strategies, channels, and objectives you need to connect with stakeholders both inside and outside your school, with transparency, collaboration, and making sure everyone's on the same page.

Please review the following resources and complete the application that follows.

- "What is a Communication Plan and Why is it Important," from Network for Good
- "Steps to Creating an Effective School Communications Plan," by Jay Cooper
- "Creating a School Communication Plan," by Nick LeRoy
- "Creating Your School's Communication Plan," by Bonnie Leedy

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

- “School Safety Communications Planning Guide,” from the National Center for School Safety

To complete this application, create and submit a communication plan you would like to put in place before the next school crisis/major issue.

- First, create an outline that includes what you hope to accomplish with this communication plan, in a total of 2 or more paragraphs in length.
- Next, create a one page communication plan that you’d like to implement for the next school year

Please submit your response with your Module coursework.

If sharing a link, be sure the share settings are set to, “anyone with the link can view.”

5. Investigation: Resource Review

To complete the Resource Review, identify two resources related to (but not directly from) the course content to enhance your professional practice, and deepen your understanding of the course content.

Resources may include blog posts, podcasts, websites, videos, documentaries, films, articles, books, or journals, published within the last five years. To find a resource, we suggest a web search (Google) using terms or ideas from the course you’d like to learn more about, or that relate to your specific professional learning needs.

Please provide the resource title, author, copyright or publishing date, and URL (if applicable). Then, in two paragraphs or more per resource, respond to one or more of the following:

- Share information about how the resource information could impact your professional practice
- Explain how each resource supports or challenges your professional assumptions
- Summarize any questions that remain, i.e.: gaps in information or contradictions

To meet “A” criteria as outlined in the course rubric, for each resource, include two or more different examples of how the resource supports or challenges assumptions, *and* explain two ways this resource will impact your professional practice.

Module 3

1. Tell us about yourself!

Provide a one sentence or longer explanation of your role in the field of education.

2. Synthesis

Professional learning is essential for teachers to continue growing and improving their practice. Now, it's time to put your learning into action with a culminating project. This project is an opportunity for you to utilize the knowledge and skills you've acquired throughout the course to create something practical for your classroom or school. Teaching Channel wants you to culminate this course through an application that's relevant, applicable, and useful. Please select and complete one of the following options:

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Option A: Plan an Initiative

Develop a plan to incorporate a paradigm shift, a specific educational model or a growth initiative into your classroom, on your team, or in your building. You may use Google Slides, Google Docs (for a narrative)—whatever works best for you. Please include each of the following in your 2 page or more plan:

1. Goals – what will the end results be?
2. Allies and Resources – who and what could help you reach your goals?
3. Communication – how will you engage with all stakeholders
4. Roadblocks and possible solutions
5. Timeline for implementation

Examples:

- Training for school leaders on the relationship between effective communication and effective leadership
- Professional development for teachers on effective communication
- Create a training program for new teachers in your district on crisis communication
- Revamp your school's communications plan

Option B: Design a Presentation

Create a 30 min or more presentation for an audience of your choice, based on your learning in this course. Please include the following in your presentation:

1. One slide identifying your audience and how the presentation will benefit the group
2. Three or more concepts or ideas to be addressed in the presentation
3. Speaker notes embedded in the slides (or in a separate document)
4. One or more interactive activity (e.g. discussion prompt, jigsaw, gallery walk)
5. An explanation of next steps, such as additional trainings, resources, and/or collaborations

Please submit your presentation with your coursework submission.

Examples:

- Explain the rationale for implementing a crisis communication plan
- Rally your colleagues to get excited about effective communication with families
- Introduce your colleagues to effective leadership strategies

Option C: Develop a Unit of Study

This option presents you with the opportunity to significantly enhance an existing unit of study or create a brand new one, comprised of 5 or more lessons. For this option:

1. Describe the student goals/objectives of the unit
2. Using our template, please include enough detail to ensure full understanding of the program or unit of study. Could a colleague teach this from your explanation, without preparation from you?
3. Embed links to lesson resources (e.g. websites, videos, readings) within the template
4. If you are revising an existing unit, please describe the areas you've enhanced or extended the original lesson(s)

Please submit your template with your coursework submission.

All coursework is to be completed in the Teaching Channel online environment.

Examples:

- Incorporate new communication strategies into an existing communication plan used in your school
- Create a new student group addressing leadership training and effective communication
- Recommendations for improvement regarding an existing school leader's communication style

3. Reflection

In 2 or more double-spaced pages (12pt font), synthesize your learning by summarizing how your learning in this course has evolved your professional practice. To meet "A" criteria as outlined in the course rubric, your reflection should include:

- A comparison of your learning goals from your Statement of Intention and Awareness in Module 1 with your new learning, to assess how you've grown.
- One key takeaway from your learning.
- One future learning goal related to course content.
- Three or more detailed connections to specific course applications, information from readings, and other completed course activities.

And your choice of *one* of the following:

- Two or more specific ideas for changes to your professional practice with timelines for implementing changes.
- Two or more detailed action steps you'll take to positively influence others (students, parents, colleagues, administrators, community members, etc.), including implementation timelines.