

Department of Educational Leadership, Research & Technology
Core Comprehensive Examination:
Part One (Leadership Analysis) & Part Two (Research Design)
[insert date]

Welcome to the Comprehensive Exam for the Ph.D. in Educational Leadership. Passage of this exam is a requirement for attaining the degree. This weekend, if you are taking the comps for the first time, you are going to analyze a case and prepare responses to two areas of questions: (1) Leadership Analysis, and (2) Research Design. If you are retaking the comps, then you will be responding to one or both sections of the comps that you had previously not passed.

The respondent is expected to demonstrate higher order thinking that goes beyond mechanically recalling or reporting facts, concepts or theories regarding leadership and research design. The response should demonstrate deep understanding of concepts and theories, and how they relate to the case presented. Underlying theories should be identified, elaborated upon, and connected to the case in a way that provides an explanation and rationale for actions, behaviors, and events described in the case. Citations from the literature and the use of paraphrasing or quotations from major authors to support your explanations are required.

Students in the Higher Education Leadership concentration must prepare their responses using the **Higher Education Case: [insert case name]**, (with the identified leader in the case being **[insert leader name]**).

Students in the K-12 Leadership concentration must prepare their responses using the **K-12 Case: [insert case name]**, (with the identified leader in the case being **[insert leader name]**).

Students in the CTE/Workforce Education and Development or Organizational Analysis will receive both the Higher Education and K-12 cases and may select which case to analyze.

You will be held to the standards noted within the Graduate Catalog regarding “Student Academic Conduct” (pp. 59-61) including academic honesty, cheating, fabrication, falsification, and forgery, plagiarism, and complicity. Via submission of your responses, you are indicating that your response papers are indeed your own original work, and that NO ONE other than yourself will have assisted with any portion of the paper. This means that you cannot discuss the comps case with anyone during the comps weekend, and that no one other than yourself will have written any portion of the response, nor read any portion of the papers as part of the editing process. Any student found in violation of this policy will be dismissed from the doctoral program. The Department reserves the right to use any means to review the submitted documents for plagiarism.

You must e-mail your final paper(s) to Bourgeois@wmich.edu by no later than **11:59 pm on Sunday, [insert date]**. **Two separate document files should be created, and labeled as follows: “leadership #55.doc” and “research #55.doc” (with the # being your assigned student number for these comps)**. All editing must be complete within these documents, and each must have its own cover and reference pages and must contain correct 7th APA formatting (for the cover page, page numbering, heading levels, in-text citations, and reference pages).

Part One: Leadership Analysis

Question 1 for Leadership Section

After reading your assigned case, analyze the case as a whole, discussing the behavior of various key players as appropriate, in reference to what has happened to date and why. Within this analysis, explain and expound upon relevant leadership theories that can be used to explain, understand and even predict what happened to date within this case.

As part of this analysis, you must examine the case and pull from **at least three** of the following perspectives or theories:

- Transformational leadership
- Transactional leadership
- Formal / Structural perspectives
- Collegial / Human Resource perspectives
- Political perspectives
- Cultural / Symbolic perspectives
- Ambiguity perspectives
- Situational / Contingency approaches
- Power, authority and leadership
- Moral/Ethical leadership
- Systems Thinking

NOTE: There are overlaps between these various lenses through which leadership and organizations may be viewed.

Question 2 for Leadership Section

Assume that you are the **identified leader** within this case. Based upon your analysis of the situation in question #1, identify what you would now do and why. Support your proposed actions with relevant theories, and explain why these would be the most appropriate actions to take.

NOTE: In answering both questions you must cite relevant authors and works (at least 10-15) to substantiate your opinions and recommendations.

Part Two: Research Design
(updated 4-19-23; **underlined yellow** is new wording)

Questions for Research Section

Read your assigned case, and identify an issue within the case for which the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data could inform decision making for you as the **identified leader** (in the near or distant future), with potentially publishable results that could also inform others in the field.

Your researchable issue should be one that serves as an example of a larger issue facing institutions regionally or nationally, about which a well-crafted research project would offer greater understanding to scholars and leaders.

Create parts of a research proposal that cover **at least** the following aspects and questions:

1. **Problem Statement:** After summarizing the key issues within the case, identify a key researchable problem as extracted from issues raised within the case that you propose to study. Summarize some previous literature that addresses this problem and use such studies to identify a potential deficiency in the literature surrounding your problem. State the significance of conducting your proposed study for both the case and the broader field of practice and scholarship. Note: it is understood that this will not be a thorough literature review, but instead 3-4 studies that illustrate your use of research literature to help define and justify a research study.
2. **Purpose Statement & Research Questions:** Clearly state your purpose statement, as well as one or more research question(s) most appropriate to address your researchable problem. **If applicable, state one or more hypotheses; if not applicable, please explain why. If you are proposing a quantitative study, be sure to offer at least one research question that would allow you to display your knowledge of inferential statistics in the data analysis section.**
3. **Research Design/Methodological Approach:** Describe the specific research design/methodological approach (e.g., phenomenology, non-experimental survey research) you propose to utilize and why it is an appropriate choice given your research questions. Cite sources that help you explain the critical features of the design and your reasons for using that approach.
4. **Population, Sample and/or Setting:** Identify the overall population to be studied within your research, any sampling that is to be done from this overall population, and your rationale for choosing this population and sample to address your research questions. Explain how you can gain access to this population and/or sample. Include the exact type and number of participants you plan to involve, and the specific criteria to qualify as a participant for this study. In addition, if the population and sample are coming from a particular setting (e.g., state, region, organization), also describe the characteristics of this setting and why it was chosen.

5. **Instrumentation & Data Description:** Identify the specific data to be collected in your proposed study, and what instrument(s) (i.e., data collection “tools”) you will create and/or use to collect such data. Describe any needed pilot testing and protocol development. If you propose a quantitative study, present some sample data you will use and/or a few illustrative survey questions you would pose. If you propose a qualitative study, include some example interview questions, observation plans, data collection protocols, or other instruments you would use. These samples can either be provided in the narrative or within an appendix.
6. **Data Collection Procedures:** Provide a detailed description of the methods and procedures you will use to carry out your research design. There should be adequate details that someone else could actually implement a similar study if they wanted (so think through the details and share them with the reader). If you are proposing a qualitative study, discuss in detail (i.e., using at least three strategies) how you will address the trustworthiness of your data collection processes.
7. **Data Analysis:** Describe the analysis procedure(s) you would use to analyze your data. For quantitative research, describe the statistical procedure(s) you would use for each research question, and why they are appropriate to address your research questions and data; be clear what the key variables are (e.g., independent and dependent variables), and how they will be used in the data analysis. For qualitative research, describe in detail the coding and analysis techniques you would employ, and how you would address trustworthiness issues. Please sure to include sources to support your work.
8. **Limitations and Delimitations:** Identify the key limitations and delimitations of your proposed research study.

Add anything else that would add to the quality of your proposed research study. You must cite relevant authors and works (at least 8-10, using correct 7th ed. APA references) to substantiate various aspects of your proposed study. Also, please be aware that the readers may not be reading your research response immediately following your leadership response. Thus, you should treat your responses as two separate pieces, not one continuous response.