MEL 500 Global Teaching and Learning (3 cr.) Educators will understand how to re-align and modify their curricula to facilitate instruction that meets the needs of 21st-century learners. Participants will refine and articulate their roles as educators and change agents in an era of reform. They will explore societal and economic factors driving educational change, identify critical learning and employability skills, and examine innovative instructional approaches that help teachers integrate 21st-century context, content, assessment, and skills into mastery-based lesson plans.

MEL 510 Communication and Negotiation (3 cr.) This course involves a study of verbal and nonverbal techniques that allow clear and direct communication. Students will understand the consequences of poor communication and ways to avoid it through open communication and correcting communication breakdowns. A study of active listening, tailoring your discussion to the audience, and body language will be examined in order to help educators learn to engage effectively with others. Participants will also understand how to set clear expectations and manage language and cultural barriers. The second half of the course deals with negotiation strategies. Participants will learn how to plan their negotiations and learn best practices to counter negative aspects of human interactions, as well as manage team negotiations and help get past impasses and deadlocks.

MEL 520 Education Law and Ethics (3 cr.) School systems are charged with the duty of preparing children to become productive members of society. As such, the number and complexity of legal issues arising in the education context is growing. The legal framework for K-12 education will serve as the basis for this course. It will include such themes as equality of opportunity, affirmative action, race, gender, language and disability discrimination, freedom of expression, loyalty oaths, the constitutionally permissible scope of religion in the public sphere, and constitutional limits on search and seizure.

MEL 525 Psychology of Student Engagement (3 cr.) Participants will demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and application of theories and principles of psychology that enhance student engagement and, thus, student achievement. Areas of emphasis in this course will be human development, learning, memory, motivation, individual differences, instruction, classroom management, assessment, and evaluation.

MEL 530 Transformational Leadership (3 cr.) Participants will analyze leadership styles in order to develop effective, contemporary education-transformation models. They will explore the importance of faculty development, motivating staff and students, and creating dynamic learning environments. They will analyze effective leadership styles and be able to explain the application of transformational leadership to implement innovation. Also emphasized will be research-based leadership strategies to counteract resistance to change, as well as to deal with the political and economic factors affecting change.

MEL 535 Project-Based Learning (3 cr.) Participants will be able to demonstrate an approach to learning in which problems serve as the stimulus for students to gain course concepts and content, as well as metacognitive skills. In this problem-based learning environment, students are charged with a project that involves confronting a problem before they receive all the information necessary to solve it. Students work in teams to define the nature of the problem, to identify what additional resources they need, and to find viable solutions. Faculty members act as facilitators by asking questions and monitoring group processes as students actively pursue viable solutions. Faculty members also guide students to resources. Students must generally re-apply the new knowledge to the original problem and communicate the results of their findings.
MEL 540 School Resource Management (3 cr.) Participants will review and analyze major issues and the means for managing institutional resources in education. Emphasis is placed on fiscal, human, and physical resources. Participants will understand school funding and accounting procedures, as well as examine issues regarding facilities management.

MEL 550 Field-Based Action Research (3 cr.) This course introduces methods of qualitative inquiry and examines the principles of action research, a form of systematic study used to address challenging issues in the classroom, school, or district. Course topics include forms of qualitative inquiry, problem identification, selection of appropriate research methods, collecting and analyzing data, developing an interpretation, and reporting qualitative research. Students will read and evaluate qualitative studies in education, develop a basic fluency with qualitative research methods, and gain hands-on experience in applying such methods through class assignments and a mini-action-research project.

MEL 555 Meeting Unique Learning Needs (3 cr.) Participants will be able to implement teaching strategies designed to create multiple paths that allow students of different abilities, interests, or learning needs experience equally appropriate ways to absorb, use, develop, and apply concepts as part of the daily learning process. Particular emphasis will be place on effective instructional strategies for students with special needs and limited English proficiency. Participants will be able to vary content, process, and process in unit and lesson plans. They will demonstrate proficiency in teaching the same curricula to all students, but individualizing the complexity of the content, learning activities and/or products in order for all students to be challenged and none are left unable to learn.

MEL 560 Data-Driven Decision Making (3 cr.) Improving student learning and achievement can be accomplished most effectively through the use of data analysis to understand student learning needs and to make instructional decisions. Participants will gain knowledge and skill in using data to improve student learning. Educators will learn the importance of using data to plan appropriate instructional experiences and to identify and analyze the measures of data to understand student learning needs. Participants will develop the practice of gathering and analyzing data in a systematic and continuous manner.

MEL 565 Differentiating Instruction (3 cr.) Participants will learn how to identify students’ readiness levels, interests, multiple intelligence profiles, and learning styles. They will design rich, tiered activities and assessments that allow students of all ability levels to learn the same essential concepts in different ways. Students will analyze examples of successful differentiated activities and differentiated instruction in classroom management. Core concepts addressed in this course are: understanding effective differentiation strategies and how to create environments that support the needs of all students in a diverse classroom.

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MEL 570 Residency I (3 cr.) During this course, students are placed in host K-12 schools for approximately 15 hours per week for a total of 200 hours per semester under aegis of an instructional coach who is considered to be a highly effective veteran educator. The student will gain an understanding of the authentic, day-to-day interactions in a real-world setting. Students will develop and evaluate their own professional skills through the opportunity to engage in a project-based learning situation. This experience will allow students to engage in the reflective practitioner process as a result of immersion in the field experience.
MEL 580 Residency II (3 cr.) This is a continuation of Residency I. Students gain even more in-depth experience in a host school, as well as opportunities to practice and reflect on leadership theory as applied to authentic school-related experiences. The student will gain insight and construct meaning regarding the work of leadership in the school setting. Approximately 15 hours per week for a total of 200 hours per semester.

MEL 590 Professional Development Design (3 cr.) Students will research current trends in instructional design. They will work collaboratively in a project-based learning exercise of producing and planning the delivery of a Professional Development Program. The result will be a course portfolio containing workshop materials, instructional strategies research, needs assessment, application skill steps, motivational strategies, workshop proposal, workshop matrix, trainer’s manual, coaching worksheets, and training summary with evaluation.

MEL 600 Systems Thinking for Education Leaders (3 cr.) This course examines the interconnectedness among the elements that comprise the whole system to determine how a change in one area of the system may impact other areas of the system and how that influences the work to be done. Participants will navigate in an online environment, assess prior knowledge of systems thinking, review research and synthesize the commonalities among these works, examine individual systems, analyze and evaluate system components, understand the impact of change, and analyze issues through the lens of systems. They will apply knowledge to improve and solve problems at the school district or building level.

MEL 620 Custom-Tailored, Constructivist Workshop (1-3 cr.) Elective curricula designed to meet the specific needs of professionals, schools, and/or systems using best practices, constructivist theory, and information technology. Involves the integration of research to practice.