1. Course Number: 6700  
   Course Title: Legal and Ethical Issues  
   Credit Hours: 3 semester hours  
   Prerequisites: Admission to AESG Master’s Program  
   Corequisites: None


3. Texts/Required Resources:
Copy of School District Policy of the partnered school district in which the candidate plans to conduct field experiences
Copy of Relevant Alabama State Law (Statutes and Administrative Rules) for Operating Schools. Downloaded as needed.

Recommended Text:

4. Course Description:
Ethical and legal provisions for education communities; emphasis on the support of and belief in the cultural value of a diverse and educated democratic society.

5. Course Objectives: based upon standards of knowledge (K), and ability (A)
Alabama State Department of Education Instructional Leadership Standards 290-3-3-.48 (2)(a) through (2)(h).

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

a. (K, A) understand, appreciate, and model appropriate ethics, value systems, and moral leadership with particular attention paid to issues of diversity(2)(h)(i)-(iv); (2)(h)3
b. (K) knowledge of federal sources of law such as the U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, the Due Process Amendments; federal statutes and case law, and the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics(2)(h)1(i-v)
c. (K, A) understand personnel selection, retention, and dismissal(2)(d)2i;(2)(a)1(v);(2)(c)1(i-iv)
d. (K) analyze student rights under state and federal laws and court decisions(2)(h)1(i, ii, iii, iv, v)
e. (K, A) develop and administer policies that provide a safe school environment(2)(g)1(i);(2)(h)3
f. (K, A) demonstrate the ability to advocate for policies and programs that promote equitable learning opportunities for all students(2)(h)1(i);(2)(h)3
g. (K, A) analyze law and educational issues specific to the Alabama K-12 environment(2)(h)1(v);(2)(h)3
h. **(K)** demonstrate the ability to use technology in reviewing the literature and conducting research concerning ethical and legal subject matter(2)(h)2
i. **(K, A)** demonstrate reflective practices expected of administrators concerning discussions of legal issues, cases, personal beliefs, personal and professional ethics(2)(h)1(iv);(2)(h)3

6. Course Content and Schedule:

Topics will include definitions of statute, administrative rules, policy, case law, policy development process with inclusionary practices, policy analysis examination of laws, policies related to school governance, curriculum, instruction, operations, personnel, administration, discipline; discretionary authority; content of state law; content of federal law; legal framework for public education; church-state relations; school attendance; instructional issues; school violence; students' rights; rights of students with disabilities; student discipline and due process; contracts; First Amendment and other constitutional rights; tort liability; negligence; ethics, ethical dilemmas/simulations

**Week 1- Ethics in Education:** Introduction, administration of course requirements, topics for semester discussions, individual assignments and group assignments

**Week 2- Alabama Educator Code of Ethics:** ethical, value and moral codes for leaders

**Week 3- Role of Ethics in Education:** curriculum, instruction, testing and technology

**Week 4- U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, Due Process Amendments, federal and state case law:** effects on school districts and the communities they serve

**Week 5- Federal and State Sources of Law:** Civil rights of employees and students

**Week 6- Specific Sources of Alabama Law:** Constitution, state statutes and case law relevant to education

**Week 7- Educational governance:** relationship between Alabama State School Board and local school district boards/ Field Trip: local/state school board meeting

**Week 8- School Boards:** legislative, executive and judicial functions

**Week 9- Roles of those governing and executing for schools:** School board members, committees and school district personnel

**Week 10- Law, Policies, and Rules:** Personnel: Guest Speaker-Personnel issues

**Week 11- Law, Policies, and Rules:** Students: Guest Speaker-Student law and school discipline hearings
Week 12- Law, Policies, and Rules: Students with special needs and diverse populations/Guest Speaker-Special education

Week 13- Presentation of cases

Week 14- Trends in Law: technology and ethical and legal considerations; discussion of National Technology Standards for Administrators (NETS); accountability

Week 15- Field Experiences Presentations

7. Course Requirements/Evaluation:
The course will use case studies as readings as well as the basis for class discussion and presentation. Students will prepare and present cases for class discussion of important legal issues, relate them, if appropriate, to issues confronted by the partner school district in which they will be interning. The following four (4) activities are illustrative in nature to describe the focus of the course. Students will be expected to make class presentations in each of the four activity areas i.e. Activity 1 through Activity 4. Students will also complete a take home examination which includes case write-ups from each of the four activity areas i.e. Activity 1 through Activity 4.

Activity 1. How to Read a Case.

Alexander and Alexander, Chap 1. The Legal System. The nature of public school law; powers and functions or courts; the role of precedent in judicial decisions; understanding judicial decisions; case or controversy; The American Court System; Process of going to court.

Alexander and Alexander, Chap 3. Role of the Federal Government. General welfare and education; commerce clause and education; US v Lopez; Supremacy clause; sources of the federal role, rights provisions in the Constitution; fundamental rights and education


Activity 2.
Topic: Governance of Public Schools
Open meetings; relevant school district policies from partner district

Activity 3.
Topic: School Attendance
Cases: Wisconsin v. Yoder; Johnson v. Charles City Comm Schools.
Home schooling; other reasons for non-attendance; state laws regarding school attendance.
Activity 4.

**Topic.** The Instructional Program (to include limitation of state power, curriculum and orthodoxy, obscenity and sex; student testing and promotion; withholding diplomas, student testing and promotion, bilingual educational programs, and equal educational opportunities

Cases: Meyer v. Nebraska; BOE of Island Trees UFSD v. Pico; Virgil v. BOE Columbia County, Fla; Mozert v. Hawkins Co. BOE; Brown v. Woodland JUSD

**Field Experience:**
Students will identify a minimum of three (3) cases in which the partner school district was involved and write up three (3) case briefs describing the problem, the steps in addressing the issue, the litigation process, and the outcome of the cases. Students will be prepared to share and use this analysis during class meetings.

**Grading and Evaluation**
Group Preparation and Presentation of Cases (Activities 1-4)........45 points
Take home Examination including case write-ups (Activities 1-4)........40 points
Participation and Active Engagement........................................15 points
Total ..............................................................100 points

**Grading Scale:**
- A = 90 – 100 points
- B = 89 – 80 points
- C = 79 – 70 points
- D = 69 – 60 points
- F = 59 points and below

8. Class Policy Statements:

A. **Class Attendance/Absences:** Class attendance and punctuality are **expected and required.** If assignments are missed, only University-approved excuses as outlined in the Tiger Cub will be allowed. Arrangement to make-up the work must be made in advance. If assignments are missed due to illness, a doctor’s statement for verification of sickness should be given to the instructor the day the student returns to class. Other unavoidable absences from campus and class must be documented and cleared with the instructor in advance.

B. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work due to excused absences.

C. Make-up exams will be given only for University-approved excuses as outlined in the Tiger Cub. Arrangements must be made up in advance. Unavoidable absences for class must be documented and cleared with the instructor in advance.
D. Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternative time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. Bring a copy of your Accommodation Memo and an Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Program for Students with Disabilities at 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

E. Honesty Code: All portions of the Auburn University Honesty Code and the Tiger Cub Rules and Regulations pertaining to Cheating will apply to this class.

F. Professionalism: As faculty, staff and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:
   • Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
   • Contribute to collaborative learning communities
   • Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
   • Model and nurture intellectual vitality

9. Justification:
This course is designed to provide instruction for leaders concerning ethical and legal provisions for education communities. Leaders must be able to clearly communicate to their stakeholders how schools operate and how to monitor and implement local, state, and federal laws.