Educational Leadership
Learning and Curriculum Department
EP7300 - The Superintendency and School District Leadership
Fall Term 2013

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Course Delivery: Hybrid

Catalog Description

In-depth studies of essential knowledge bases and best practice skills required to effectively execute the responsibilities of the district level administration, including the roles of the public school superintendent and assistant superintendent. Attention will be given to balancing three sometimes conflicting roles: instructional, managerial, and political, in an era of standards-based accountability.

Course Overview

The objectives for this course are aligned to the 2011 Educational Leadership Program Standards.

The student will...

1. clearly articulate their leadership philosophy. (ELLC 5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5)
2. clearly articulate the rationale for developing a shared vision and mission for a school district. (ELLC 1, 1.1)
3. demonstrate ability to gather, analyze and use data to inform decision-making. (ELLC 1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.2)
4. utilize a process of data inquiry to guide the development of a district strategic plan that is focused on improving the effectiveness of the instructional program. (ELLC 1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2, 2.3, 2.4, 3, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5)
5. demonstrate a strategy for assessing the climate, culture, politics, and organizational structures of a school district. (ELLC 1, 1.2, 1.4, 2, 2.1, 3, 3.2, 4, 4.1, 4.2, 6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3)
6. explain a strategy that they would employ to build collaborative relationships, with key district constituents and individuals, that benefit the curricular and co-curricular programming of the district. (ELLC 3.4, 4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 6, 6.1, 6.2)
7. demonstrate approaches for collaboratively working with others in order to strengthen the educational experiences of learners. (ELPS 2, 2.1, 3.4, 4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 6.2)
8. clearly articulate a systematic and respectful approach to implementing a change initiative in a school district (ELLC 1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.4, 4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3)
9. demonstrate understanding of the major historical, philosophical, ethical, social and economic influences impacting contemporary education. (ELLC 6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3)
10. prepare and defend a personal code of ethics appropriate to the superintendency and/or district-level leadership role. (ELLC 5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5)
11. design and implement a process for hiring and retaining highly qualified administrative and instructional personnel. (ELLC1, 1.1, 2, 2.3, 2.4, 3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)
ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Throughout the course our learning will be framed by the following essential questions:

- What makes a leader a leader?
- Why do we follow leaders?
- How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?
- How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
- How do we mitigate the conflicts between our obligations as school leaders and our moral obligations as educators and members of the community?
- How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
- Who’s vision and mission is it really?
- Is resistance real?

Textbook List/Bibliography/Recommended Reading/Resources

Required Textbooks:


NB: The Kowalski text is available through the Lamson Library as an ebook. The link is provided in the electronic version of this syllabus. All other required texts have been placed on reserved in the Lamson library for the duration of the course offering. The Bolman and Deal that is on reserve is an earlier edition.

Recommended Textbooks:


Additional Readings:

Additional readings are identified under the topics section of this syllabus and are posted in the course Moodle 2 site.
### Professional Standards, Course Goals/Objectives, and Assessment

In this section the instructor outlines the major assignments that students are required to complete in the course. The name or title of the assignment is sufficient; the full description can be provided further along in the syllabus. If any assignments do not address State or ISLLC Standards, they should not be included in this chart but further along in the syllabus.

This section includes the learning goals and/or objectives developed for the course. When appropriate, these should address the professional standards in terms of “knowledge, skills and dispositions” (cf. NCATE 2008 Unit Standards) and must be cross-referenced with appropriate STATE and/or ISLLC standards, or other relevant standards and the program hallmarks.

It is essential that the standards are identified in writing, not just by their number/letter designation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Standard(s) Assessed</th>
<th>Assessment Tool</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy of leadership and statement of personal ethics</td>
<td>Objectives 1 and 10</td>
<td>2 page reflective paper in APA style that includes:</td>
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<td>• The student’s clear definition of leadership and description of what their definition will look like in practice.</td>
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<td>• Clear articulated code of personal ethics that addresses: political, social, and instructional issues.</td>
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<td>Writing Rubric posted in Moodle under course resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discovering the Role of Superintendent Project</td>
<td>Objective 9</td>
<td>See Topic 3 for full description of project.</td>
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<td>Writing and Discussion Rubrics posted in Moodle under course resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyze and refine the vision and mission statements of a district</td>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>2-3 page, not including appendices, critical paper in APA style that includes:</td>
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<td>• A clear rationale of the benefit of a shared vision and mission for the district of interest.</td>
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<td>• A student developed clear and succinct definition, supported by text, of vision and</td>
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<td>Analyze a school district using the Bolman and Deal (2013) lenses</td>
<td>Objective 5</td>
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<td>4-5 page analytical paper in APA style that includes:</td>
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<td>• Defining the frames: Clear identification of each frame that includes an operationalized definition of each frame that is supported by the text and at least one example from the district of interest.</td>
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<td>• Analysis of organization: Clearly and succinctly describe the presence and influence of each frame in the district of interest and the impact of each.</td>
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<td>• Frames as resources for initiative implementation: Clear articulation of implications of each frame in implementing a district level change initiative. Must include how the frame either</td>
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<td>mission.</td>
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<td>• Clear and succinct description of the strengths and weaknesses of vision and mission statements of interest that includes implications for professional practice and student achievement.</td>
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<td>• Clear and succinct identification of suggestions for improvement or refinement of vision and mission statements.</td>
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<td>• Appendices: A. Original vision and mission statements of interest B. Revisions of vision and mission statements that are based on analysis.</td>
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Writing Rubric posted in Moodle under course resources
| Hiring Process Project: Design and implement a hiring process for school leaders and teachers | Objectives 3, 6, 7, and 11. | A clearly articulated hiring process that includes:  
- Who will be involved with a rationale for why they will be involved.  
- Process timeline  
- Recruitment strategies  
- Decision making process  
- Screening process  
- Interview process and protocol  
- Final candidate selection process  
Posting in Moodle regarding pilot of interview process and protocol.  
Writing and Discussion Rubrics posted in Moodle under course resources |
|---|---|---|
| Entry Plan | Objectives 3, and 7 | A clear and succinct 2-3 page plan in APA style that includes:  
- Process and rationale used for developing the plan.  
- Clear identification of activities and processes to be implemented as part of entry.  
Writing Rubric posted in Moodle under course resources |
| Strategic Plan (See more complete description under Topic 10 below.) | Objectives 3, 4, 5, and 8 | Strategic plan that addresses all the elements outlined under Topic 10.  
Executive summary presentation of developed strategic plan.  
Writing Rubric posted in Moodle under course resources |

**Content of Course Which Addresses Technological Standards/Competence**

This course will be managed through Moodle 2, which means that students will be required to work in an online learning environment. Through that platform students will be expected to gather and share information. Students are also expected to utilize technological resources when presenting their work in class. Additionally,
scholarly work is expected in this course and students will be expected to conduct research, collaborate, and access library resources through online technologies.

**Evaluation Plan/Grading Scale**

The final grade for this course will be calculated based on the following:

- Philosophy of leadership and statement of personal ethics – 5% of grade
- Discovering the Role of Superintendent – 20% of grade
- Entry Plan – 5% of grade
- Analyze and refine vision and mission statements – 10% of grade
- Analysis of school district via Bolman and Deal (2013) lenses – 20% of grade
- Hiring Process Project – 20% of grade
- Strategic Plan Project – 20% of grade

**NB:** Work that is handed in after due dates without good cause and with prior approval of the instructor will not be eligible for full credit.

**Grading Scale:**

- 94-100 = A
- 90-93 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 84-86 = B
- 80-83 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 74-76 = C
- 70-73 = C-
- 0-69 = F

**Incompletes:** An instructor may decide to enter a grade of incomplete (IC) on a student’s record if unusual circumstances prevent completion of the course on time, and a minimal portion of the total class work needs to be completed. The course must be completed by the date specified by the instructor which cannot exceed one year beyond the original term of course completion. If the course is not completed by this date, the grade specified by the instructor will be recorded. If no grade is specified, a default grade of F will be recorded. The instructor is responsible for documenting and notifying the student of the work to be completed and the deadline. A student may not graduate with an incomplete on his or her transcript.

**Course Calendar/Agenda**

1. **Topic 1: Following the Leader: Why do we follow leaders? (September 24)**

   We will begin our learning together by activating the fundamental function of developing a community that is focused on the mission and vision of the organization. Additionally, we will begin to explore the concept of leadership through these essential questions:
   - What makes a leader a leader?
   - Why do we follow leaders?
   - How do we mitigate the conflicts between our obligations as school leaders and our moral obligations as educators and members of the community?

   Our work this week will address the following course objectives: 1 and 10.

   **Reading:**
   - Collins – Chapters 1 and 2
   - Kowalski – Chapters 8 and 11

   Posted on Moodle


Assignment

Reflective Paper: Based on our conversation and your readings for this week reflect on yourself as a leader and respond to each of the following:

- What makes you a leader of others?
  - Articulate your personal philosophy of leadership
  - Craft a statement of your personal and professional ethical and moral obligations as a leader.

Due October 1, 2013

II. Topic 2: Lions, Tigers, and Bears, Oh My! The political, social, and instructional implications of the role.

(October 1)

Our learning in this week will focus on the political, social, and instructional implications of the roles of superintendents and other school district leaders. We will consider how each individually and collectively influence the various roles in practice. Our inquiry will be focused by the following essential questions:

- How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
- How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
- Who’s vision and mission is it really?

Our work this week will address the following course objective: 9

Reading:
Kowalski – Chapters 5, 6, and 7
Tyack and Cuban - Preface and Chapters 1 and 2

III. Topic 3: Looking more deeply at the role of superintendent (October 8)

This week’s exploration will happen in the field and through the online learning environment. Our learning will focus on developing a deeper understanding of the role of the superintendent in school districts and be guided by these essential questions:

- What makes a leader a leader?
- Why do we follow leaders?
- How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?
- How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
- How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
- Who’s vision and mission is it really?
Our work this week will address the following course objective: 9

Reading:
Kowalski – Chapters 1-3, and 12
Tyack and Cuban - Chapters 3-5

Posted on Moodle:

Assignment

Discovering the Role of the Superintendent Project
Interviews: Conduct interviews with the superintendent/assistant superintendent and a variety of district leaders and school constituents in order to develop an understanding of the perceived and actual role of the superintendent. Through your interviews seek to understand what the issues and concerns are of district leaders and constituents in their role in the district and how they see the role of the superintendent related to those. Each student is expected to share their most significant findings on Moodle, as well as why they believe the findings to be significant. In addition, each student is expected to respond to at least one post from at least one other student in the class.

Critical paper – Based on your readings in weeks 2 and 3 and your interview data please respond to each of the following:
• Based on your research operationalize the role of superintendent as you currently understand it. Use your interview data, readings, and any other research to support your definition.
• In your opinion what phenomenon or structure represents the most significant influence on the role of superintendent? Defend your position with the text, quotes from your interviews, and any other research.
• Why do constituents follow the superintendent?
• In an ideal world, how should the role be shaped? How would that change your operational definition of the role?

Due October 22, 2013. Please submit your paper to me as an email attachment.

IV. Topic 4: Oh The Places You’ll Go: Vision and our mission to realize them (October 15)

This week we will focus on vision and mission and why it is critical to effectiveness to have a single vision and mission in an organization. Our work this week will be guided by the following questions:
• How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
• Who’s vision and mission is it really

Our work this week will address the following course objectives: 2, 6, and 7.

Reading:
Collins - Chapters 3, 4, and 5
Assignment

**Critical paper:** Analyze the current mission and vision statements for your current district and school. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the statements? Based on your analysis refine the statements.

Due October 29

V. **Topic 5: No Guts No Glory! Mining for truth and planning for finding the mother load** *(October 22)*

Our learning this week will be focused on the data inquiry process as a tool for decision making, supporting substantive change, and engaging constituents in the process of school/district improvement. The following essential question will focus our work: How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?

Our work this week will focus on the following course objectives: 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8

**Reading:**
Bolman and Deal - Chapters 1-5
Collins - Chapters 6-8

**Assignment**
**Data in our schools:** Please post to Moodle examples of data walls, data rooms, or other examples of making data accessible to constituents that is happening in your school/district.

VI. **Topic 6: Rose colored glasses and other lenses to look through** *(October 29)*

This week our learning will happen in the online environment as we begin to look deeply at our district organizations and develop a tool for guiding an analysis of organizations that will support the initiation and implementation of change efforts. Our learning will be focused by the following essential question:

- Is resistance real?

Our work will focus on the following course objectives: 5

**Reading:**
Bolman and Deal - Chapters 6-14

**Assignment**
**Getting a handle on the frames:** Post examples from your district in Moodle of each of the four frames. Each student is expected to post at least one example of each frame and to respond to at least one posting from another student in each of the frames. In your posts begin to consider the implications of the example to a change initiative. What's the value of the frame to change? What are your concerns? How will you use the frame to your advantage? How will you need to mitigate the frame? What questions do you have about the frames?

**Analytical Paper:**
Analyze your current district through the Bolman and Deal model. Prepare a report of your findings.

Due November 12

VII. **Topic 7: All aboard! Climb on the implementing organizational change train.** *(November 5)*
This week we will continue our discussion of the frames. We will continue to consider the question, Is resistance real? and additionally will again consider:

- Why do we follow leaders?
- How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?

Our work will address the following course objectives: 5, 6, 7, and 8.

**Reading:**
Kowalski – Review Chapter 8, Read Chapter 4
Bolman and Deal: Chapters 15-20

**VIII. Topic 8: The wheels on the bus go round and...wait who belongs in that seat?! Hiring and keeping the right people for the organization. (November 12)**

This week we will return to the online environment as we develop a hiring process for recruiting and hiring highly qualified and skilled principals and teachers that will be an asset to students and the organization in general. Our learning will be focused by the following questions:

- What makes a leader a leader?
- Why do we follow leaders?
- How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?
- How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
- How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
- Who’s vision and mission is it really?

Our work this week will address the following course objective: 3, 6, 7, and 11.

**Reading:**
Collins – Review Chapter 3
Kowalski – Chapter 10

Posted on Moodle


**Assignment**

**Hiring Process Project:** In your collaborative groups design a hiring process for school leaders and teachers. The posting for your position will be shared with teacher and principal practicum students and you will be selecting candidates for interviews and interviewing candidates during the week of November 18.

**IX. Topic 9: Planning an elegant entry, it’s a good thing. (November 19)**

This week we will begin to synthesize our learning as we consider the transition into a superintendency. Our inquiry will be focused by the following essential questions:

- How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?
- How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
• How do we mitigate the conflicts between our obligations as school leaders and our moral obligations as educators and members of the community?
• How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
• Who’s vision and mission is it really?
• Is resistance real?

Our work this week will focus on the following course objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10

Reading:
Kowalski – Chapters 13 and 14

Assignment

Entry Plan: Your district has just appointed you as superintendent. Based on the work you have been doing in this class, create a comprehensive entry plan for your new position.

IX. Topic 10: Last stop! Or is it? Sharing our learning and looking ahead. (November 26)
During our last session we will share our learning in this class and discuss next steps in developing our practice as district leaders. Our work this week will be focused by the following essential questions:
• How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?
• How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
• How do we mitigate the conflicts between our obligations as school leaders and our moral obligations as educators and members of the community?
• How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
• Who’s vision and mission is it really?

Our work will be focused on the following course objectives: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Reading:
Posted on Moodle
Ullman, E. (2012). How to be an effective leader during times of change. Education Updates. 54(10). pp. 1, 4-5.

Assignment
Strategic Plan Project: Based on the work you have done in this class. Create and present a strategic plan for implementing a substantive change in your current district. The intended audience for your work is your superintendent or district leadership team.

Include the following in your plan:
1. Statement of problem with supporting data
2. Description of proposed initiative including how the plan will be communicated to constituent groups
3. Statement of organizational strengths, supported by data, that will be resources for implementing the initiative. How will you capitalize on the identified strengths?
4. Statement of expected challenges, supported by data, to implementing the initiative. How might you mitigate identified challenges?
5. Action plan for implementing the initiative. Your action plan must include:
   a. strategies,
   b. time line for implementation,
   c. role responsible for implementation of strategy,
d. beginning, mid-point and completion benchmarks for implementations,

  e. resources needed for implementation of the strategy; and,

  f. organizational strengths and challenges that may impact the strategy.

6. Evaluation strategy for your plan

Presentation: Present to your colleagues a 5-10 minute executive summary of your final project. Your presentation may in whatever format you feel comfortable (i.e. Power Point, Prezi).

We will utilize an abbreviated consultancy protocol to provide you with feedback for refinement of your final paper. Please think about any specific questions about your work you would like the group to provide input into or give feedback.

*Presentation is due on November 26. Final strategic plan is due by November 29.*

**Instructor Additions**

It is expected that all students will be present and actively participate in all class meetings, discussions, and activities. Additionally, all students are expected to demonstrate appropriate interpersonal and communication skills, both written and oral, throughout this course and their career in the Educational Leadership Program.

**Assessment Rubrics**

Rubrics for this course are posted in the course Moodle 2 page.

**Conceptual Framework**

**PSU College of Graduate Studies Program Hallmarks**

**Leadership and Advocacy**

Throughout this course we will develop our practice as leaders and advocates of school districts through reflection and discussion of the following five essential questions:

- What makes a leader a leader?
- How is strong leadership provided while simultaneously empowering those closest to the action?
- How do we mitigate the conflicts between our obligations as school leaders and our moral obligations as educators and members of the community?
- How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
- How are the purpose, vision, values, and goals of an organization clarified and communicated through our actions as leaders?
Reflection and Innovation

Throughout this course students will be challenged to reflect on their existing beliefs about leadership, the role of superintendent, and the influences of the political, social, and instructional demands on the role. We will also seek to identify the potential in the role for guiding substantive and meaningful change in schools.

Scholarship and Application

Throughout this course we will engage in scholarship through the acquisition of new knowledge and the authentic application of what we’ve learned.

Professionalism and Service

During this course service will address the professionalism and service hallmark through the following:

- Analysis and suggestions for revision of their district’s vision and mission statements
- Analysis of their district’s climate, political, and organizational structures
- Development of a strategic plan for a needed substantive change in their district.

Additionally, students will provide service to our colleagues in the principal leadership program and/or undergraduate colleagues that are currently completing student teaching experiences by providing them opportunities to experience an interview process relevant to the roles to which they aspire.

Global Awareness and Social Responsibility

Throughout this course we will develop our sense of global awareness and social responsibility as it relates to the role superintendent and district leadership through reflection and discussion of the following four essential questions:

- How do we mitigate the conflicts between our obligations as school leaders and our moral obligations as educators and members of the community?
- How do the political environment, social structures, and instructional reform initiatives shape district leadership roles?
- Who’s vision and mission is it really?
- How beneficial to the organization is it to only have individuals on committees and teams that are supportive of us leaders?

University Policies and Procedures

- **ADA Policy**: Plymouth State University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you should contact the PASS office in Lamson library (535-2270) to determine whether you are eligible for such accommodations. Academic accommodations will only be considered for students who have registered with the PASS Office. If you have a Letter of Academic Accommodation for this course from the PASS office, please provide the instructor with that information privately so that adaptations can be made to meet your needs. Course materials
online comply with the Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications Standards in accordance with ADA Section 508.

- **Academic Integrity**: Academic integrity is the foundation of the pursuit of knowledge. All members of the academic community are expected to be dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge in an honest, responsible, respectful, and ethical manner. Every violation of academic integrity is an affront to the academic community. Violations of academic integrity make fair evaluation impossible and cast doubt upon the seriousness with which students accept the responsibility of acquiring an education. Members of the academic community are expected to report all instances of those violations of academic integrity that come to their attention. Both faculty and administration consider it their duty, as guardians of academic standards and intellectual honesty, to enforce the academic integrity policy by prosecuting all cases of violation of academic integrity to the fullest extent. Students are urged to consider that it is the toleration of violations of academic integrity, and not the reporting of it, that is dishonorable. Please refer to the Graduate Catalog for more information and the entire policy.

- **Sensitive Materials**: Material in this course, in some instances, may be sensitive or emotionally provocative. As you review the syllabus, or at any time during the course, please let your instructor know if you anticipate, or are having, a problem with any assignment or classroom activity. We can then discuss how this assignment or activity is necessary for meeting course competencies and whether an alternative assignment or activity can be considered. We can also discuss campus resources that you may find helpful in dealing with your concerns.

- **Plymouth State University Curtailed Operations Information**: Plymouth State University normally remains open through inclement weather. Because most students live within minutes of the campus, every effort is made to avoid an official closing. There may be times, however, when an emergency or extreme weather conditions necessitate a general closing of the University.

  Please sign up for PSU Alert Emergency Text Messaging at: plymouth.edu/alerts

  Following are the PSU curtailed operations and/or class cancellation notification procedures: In the event of severe weather or an emergency, the University Administration will do all it can to decide on and post notifications of class/event cancellations and/or facility closures by 6:00 a.m. for classes running during the day. For canceling evening classes, the decision is usually made and communicated no later than 3:00 p.m. Every effort will be made to make the decision as early as possible. If you are wondering, call the storm line (603-535-3535) or check the PSU website.

  Use your own judgment about travel during inclement weather; the best choice is the one that keeps you safe. Notify your instructor(s) if you have to miss a class.

- **Lamson Library and Learning Commons**
  Access to the IT Help Desk is available at 603-535-2929. Log in to MyPlymouth to access all of the Lamson Library and Learning Common resources and services. The Writing Center and the PASS office are located in the lower level of Lamson; the Help Desk in on the Main Floor.