

## I. Primary Development Phase

### A. Programmatic significance

Description of significance: The proposed TEL application is a technologically delivered instructional process that has vertical and horizontal integration capacity. Once fully developed the proposed technological strategy could affect many courses within a single department curriculum or be applied across a range of fields and disciplines.

Courses affected by TEL grant funds: Current Courses Involved: EdPA 5322: The School Superintendency (participants, 15-20) and EdPA 5080: Women in Leadership (participants, 15-20)

Learning outcomes from project/Objectives of the overarching project:

To further develop Experiential Simulations [ES] that allow participants to examine how others' ethnic, positional, cultural, gender, class, and other characteristics shape their own response/action. To test effectiveness of technology for eliminating barriers created by constructions of difference. To test effectiveness of ES for (a) probing into participants' conceptions/assumptions about power and stereotypes; and (b) reflecting on and transforming communication and decision-making practices to a more participatory and collaborative model.

To test effectiveness of the ES as a delivery system for courses focused on a variety of content areas.

To revise and refine the leadership development model for large-scale application.

To provide development that meets practitioner identified needs, which include interactivity, hands-on-application, technological richness, and linkages between content and practice.

To analyze and present future research and development results to local and national audiences.

To test the use of technology for the effective assessment of participants' online learning.

Description of learning process: The Experiential Simulations [ES]—In order to teach about conceptions of power and their inter- and intra-relationship to constructions of difference and collaborative decision-making in my past courses, I led participants through classroom-based experiences in which participants uncovered their own conceptions of power. In addition, participants were asked to creatively alter their own personal backgrounds (education, family, occupation) in order to escape constructions of difference related to these pieces of background information during classroom time. These classroom activities, while successful at some levels, were limited by the physical presence of the participants. Constructions of difference (gender, race, class, other categories of difference) and assumptions about power are more difficult to unpack and make explicit in order to set them aside.

The generous support of a technology grant (GELT), awarded in spring 02 by CHDE, and a TEL Faculty Fellowship (03) awarded by the DMC, have helped me launch Stage One of development for the technological enhancement of these experiences, providing me with technical and design support. Using standard online course development tools—web site, chat room, threaded discussion, video/audio clips—I developed an instructional plan in which participants, first with real identities masked and later altered completely, met online for the first third of two courses to collaborate on assigned decision making tasks (the simulation).

The ES involve the immersion of participants in an environment in which they are perceived by the others in the environment as having an identity unlike their “true” identify [for example, women may be men; whites may be people of color]. The altered identity reflects a

gender/racial/class/positional identity other than that to which they are accustomed. While interacting with others in this virtual environment, participants “walk in the shoes” of someone who has been constructed differently from themselves. The interactions occur in carefully designed leadership/policy forming situations, intended to illustrate how perceptions and understandings of others’ identity shapes the way leaders enhance or restrict others’ participation in decision making. At the same time, through private communication with me [the instructor], course participants reflect on questions I pose related to identity (gender, race, class, etc.) constructs, power conceptions, and the decision-making processes at play with the group.

## B. Evaluation Plan

The first stage (pilot) TEL is currently undergoing its first evaluation. The project is designed as a research study. The second stage (fall 03) is designed as a quasi-experimental study. The effectiveness of the technology enhancement will be studied/evaluated through analysis of continuously collected data—written responses from participants, text from online activities (synchronous/asynchronous discussions), entrance and exit interviews, videotapes of classroom activities).

## C. Timetable and Budget

**Timeline for Larger Project:** The proposed project (Stages Two A & B & Stage Three) is embedded in a larger research goal—to deliver ES (based on my research on conceptions of power and decision making) within a virtual reality environment.

### Stages of Larger Project:

*Stage One* (fall 03) (pilot study) conduct a pilot study aimed at the development, evaluation, and implementation of web-based ES. **This stage has been Completed.**

**\*Stage Two A (spring-summer 03): (analysis of Stage One data), analyze evaluation data (student feedback, text from only discussions, videotapes of classroom activities); refine and adjust simulations for future use (fall 03); present model to colleagues (national, state, local); write up findings for conference presentations at conferences and for publication.**

**\*Stage Two B (fall 03): (quasi-experimental research stage) implement project (in two courses) using the refined and adjusted simulations based.**

**\*Stage Three (spring 04-spring 05): (mentoring others; piloting simulations in other courses; possibly implementing other iterations of the simulations)**

*Stage Four* (spring 04-spring 05 and beyond): (analysis of Stage Two B data), analyze evaluation data (feedback from participants, text from discussions, videotapes of classroom activities); refine/adjust for future use; present model to colleagues (national, state, local); write up for presentations/publication.

*Stage Five* (spring 04 and beyond): (development of components) develop web-based components that will facilitate others’ use of the experiential simulation process (overarching website to teach faculty and others to use the process; web-based pre-class training components for participants; development of web-based training manual)

*Stage Six* (spring 06 and beyond): (use of data for more development; possible software development) enhance and translate the ES developed through this project with the use of virtual reality technologies appropriate for various types of distance learning coursework/other situations. (More than one stage.)

**\*Stage Two A & B and Stage Three are the stages for which funding is requested.**

### **Budget:**

<b>Project Funds: Description &amp; Justification</b>	<b>Expense</b>
GA time (data analysis & management, N6 software, write ups)	
1 @ 25% for spring 05	\$4900
Tech support (extracting data, website enhancement, revisions)	

Editing, html) 85 hours @ \$40 an hour	3400
Video/Audio production	1700
TOTAL	\$10,000

Department Cost Sharing	Expense
11.5 % of faculty non-teaching time	
181 hours @ \$41.02 an hour	\$8424.
Benefits 34.1 %	2517
TOTAL	(approximate) \$10000

Mentee Funds	Expense
Tech support (web page development; some video production; ITV work)	
62 hours @\$40 an hour	\$2500
TOTAL	\$2500

#### D. Collegiate and Department Support

The mission of CEHD and in turn, EdPA, is simple: *Learn. Teach. Lead.* An innovative teaching and learning process aimed at developing participants' deep understandings of power, constructions of identity, and collaborative decision-making—for whatever leadership role (broadly cast) they may inhabit—is highly supportive of our collective mission. Indeed, it also supports this year's focus on *civic engagement* by providing experiences that help participants' "see" their own internal barriers to intercultural understanding, openness, and sensitivity.

#### II. Mentorship Phase (sustainability) (March 2004-February 2005)

Mentorship can take multiple forms. My plans include the following:

**University Outreach:** The concept of masking identity (in various ways) has other possible applications for international course work and meetings, multicultural competence concerns, and settings where language mastery is a barrier for some. Further, in a time when at a distance coursework and interaction is failing to deliver some of the intangible qualities of engaged face-to-face learning, ES has the capacity to deliver "real" experiences for participants via technology.

**Work with UM faculty and staff:** This model can be applied in wide variety of content areas as well as in development programs for faculty and staff. After implementation and refinement, the model will be shared with colleagues for potential use in other courses and with other groups interested in its application. In particular, I plan to work with two professors in EdPA [Karen Seashore, Michael Paige]. Karen wants to use the simulations in an international cohort leadership class, and Michael would like to use ES in a class focused on multiculturalism—with the possibility of pre and post testing to determine if ES has an effect on participants' intercultural sensitivity. I have also been asked to deliver the women in leadership course via ITV to the Rochester campus.

**Publication/Presentation Outlets:** Eventual research findings and analysis will be published in scholarly (*Educational Administration Quarterly*, *American Educational Research Journal*) and other appropriate journals (technology) and presented at appropriate conferences (such as American Educational Research Association, University Council for Educational Administrators, American Association of School Administrators) and in local (e.g.. TEL Fellow) and national workshops.