

**Recognizing Realities in the Education of Educational Leaders:
A Model for Learner-driven and Standards Based
Educational Leadership Internships**

Gregory C. Geer, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership
Coastal Carolina University

Abstract

In many professions field experiences apply classroom learning to real-life situations with the oversight of a mentor. For most students becoming qualified to be school building administrators, one field experience takes the form of internships in schools. This component of the educational process for educational leadership has come under criticism (Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Elmore, 2005; Levine, 2005; Southern Regional Education Board, 2005; Illinois State Board of Education, 2006; Murphy, 2006). This article describes the process a professor took when charged with the responsibility of designing and implementing the internship experience for a new Master's degree program in educational leadership. Based upon literature criticizing education leadership programs, their internships, and the author's research and experience, a more flexible, site and intern specific internship model was designed and implemented. The author provides a conceptual framework derived from heautogical principles that internship designers can readily adapt for their own use. Data and comments from both the site supervisors (school principals) and interns are presented. Unexpected positive outcomes for interns and the schools they serve are discussed.

Keywords: educational leadership internships, educational administration, ELCC standards,
field experiences, heautagogy, complexity theory