GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  

EDUC 850  
The Study of Teaching  
Spring, 2010  
Wednesday, 4:30 – 7:10, Enterprise 275  

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Office hours: T/W/Th: 2:30 – 4 (or by appt.)

Course Description: Explores the history and development of the search for teaching effectiveness. The course will trace the various definitions of effectiveness and the methods created to study and determine effectiveness.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the students will:

1. trace the history of research on teaching.
2. compare and contrast the multiple perspectives that researchers have brought to the field.
3. learn to pose researchable questions to advance this literature both substantively and methodologically.
4. continue to improve your writing skills as doctoral students.

Relationship of EDUC 850 to the Ph.D. Program

The content of this course is the foundation for the specialization in Teaching and Teacher Education. It explores the history of the research-base for teaching and for the continued study of teaching and builds a sense of inquiry into the students’ repertoire.

Required Course Texts:


Additional Required and Suggested Readings


**Recommended Text:**


Additional readings posted on blackboard.com

**Some Relevant Websites:**

http://www.aera.net/divisions/?id=76  This is the website for Division K of the American Educational Research Association. Division K is devoted to research on Teaching and Teacher Education.


**Supplies**

Computer with Internet access and current GMU email account.

**CEHD Course Expectations**

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

- **Professional Dispositions**: Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See http://www.gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm for a listing of these dispositions.

- **Attendance**: Attendance is mandatory, as the discussions that take place in this class are essential to achieving the course objectives.

- **Tardiness**: Prompt arrival for the beginning of class is expected.

- **Participation**: Each student is expected to complete all the assigned readings and participate in the discussions. It is expected that each student will be attuned to group dynamics in order to ensure the active participation of all in the class.

- **Absence**: If you must miss a class, you are responsible for notifying me (preferably in advance) and for completing any assignments, readings, etc. before the start of the next class.

- **Assignments**: All assignments must be completed in MSWord and sent to me as an attachment via email prior to class on the date each is due. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with me.
• **University Honor Code:** Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full honor code.

• **Students with disabilities** who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

• **Computing Use:** Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [http://mail.gmu.edu](http://mail.gmu.edu) and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

**Course Delivery**

This course is a doctoral seminar. As such it is expected that you will read in advance of class and continue to try to find the bigger picture as you learn to sort through the findings of one study to the next. In addition to classroom attendance and participation, I expect you to participate fully in whole class and small group discussions, group, pair, and individual projects, internet research, analyses of case studies, and reflections on practice. I will use GMU’s web-accessible Blackboard course framework periodically throughout the course; many of the examples are posted there for you to read in advance of our discussions.

**Course Assignment**

There is only one assignment: a well-integrated research proposal. In this paper, I want you to identify a researchable problem in your area of study, e.g. content area teaching, media and technology, diverse classrooms, etc. and to prepare a literature review of the relevant research that would serve as a proposal to conduct a study. You are not expected to conduct the study, just to gain some deeper understanding of your area as it relates to the study of teaching and to identify the next best research question.

*NB: Two of the citations must be dissertations. In this way, you will see some models of other dissertations so you can get a sense of what goes into preparing your own.*

The format for the entire paper is:

- The nature of the problem/purpose of the study
- What others who have studied this problem have found
- (Locating a gap in the literature) a description of the next study you think should be conducted
- A description of the methods you would use to conduct the study

See the rubric below for how I will be reviewing these papers.

As you review your research studies, please use the following format:

- The nature of the problem
- The subjects/participants studied
- The methods used to conduct the study
- The findings
- The conclusions
I’m using these two formats to help you with your writing as you proceed toward your dissertation. So often the findings from studies are affected by the nature of the first four bullets above. I’m having you “track” these because they are essential to determining whether a study is worth citation in your work.

**Three Tasks**

These tasks are intended to encourage you to think about your perspective and skill as a beginning researcher.

**Task #1:** For this first assignment, I would like you to give me a statement of the problem about which you want to know more. It must be a problem that focuses on the study of teaching in any of its various forms. I don’t expect you to break new ground, but do expect you to be grounded in extant literature. *Due: March 24*

**Task #2:** For this second assignment, I would like an annotated bibliography of the studies you are considering for your final paper. *Please use the following format:* Author (last name first). (date). Title. Publication information, e.g. journal with volume and number; or for a book location and publisher; or URL and date retrieved, and then four to six sentences describing the reference. Refer to APA guidelines. *Due: April 7*

**Task #3:** A Proposal for a Study of Teaching. A well-integrated review of the literature in support of a researchable problem. The real goal of this task is to give you a chance to go beyond writing another paper, and to get you closer to the actual task of identifying a good problem and writing up the literature to make your case for conducting the study. This is a proposal with an introduction, a statement of the problem, a literature review, and a proposed method with instrumentation for studying the problem. *Due: May 12*

**Tentative Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Introductions, syllabus, background for the course&lt;br&gt;Art or Science?</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Positivism, Nate Gage, and the foundations of research on teaching&lt;br&gt;Read Gage, pp. 11-40&lt;br&gt;Read Floden on e-reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Can teaching be measured?&lt;br&gt;Read Hattie, pp. 1-38&lt;br&gt;Read Fenstermacher and Richardson on blackboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Quantitative or Qualitative?&lt;br&gt;Read Gage, pp. 41-60&lt;br&gt;Read Crawford &amp; Impara on e-reserve&lt;br&gt;Read Eisenhart on e-reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event/Assignment</td>
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| 17   | Good People are Good Teachers: Teacher Personality  
Read Hattie, pp. 108-128  
Read Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk, and Hoy on blackboard  
Read Goddard and Goddard on e-reserve |
| 24   | Curriculum  
Read Hattie, pp. 129-160 |
| March 3 | Maybe it’s the Methods Teachers Use  
Read Hattie, pp. 200-235 |
| 10   | Spring Break |
| 17   | What Teachers Do: Teacher Behavior  
Read Gage, pp. 61-84  
Read “Time and Learning” on blackboard  
Read Rosenshine and Stevens on electronic reserve |
| 24   | What Teachers Do: Teacher Behavior  
Read Brophy and Good on electronic reserve  
Read “Teacher Praise” on blackboard  
**Task #1 due today** |
| 31   | Summarizing Teacher Behavior  
Read Hattie, pp. 161-236 |
| April 7 | It’s the Decisions They Make: Teacher Thoughts  
Read Clark and Peterson on e-reserve |
| 14   | You Can’t Teach What You Don’t Know: Teacher Content Knowledge  
Read Gage, pp. 85-99  
Read Shulman on e-reserve  
Read Wilson, Shulman, and Richert on e-reserve  
**Task #2 due today** |
| 21   | You Have to Study the Students!  
Read Hattie, pp. 72-107  
Read both Sanders documents on blackboard  
Read The Widget Effect on blackboard  
Read Amrein-Beardsley on blackboard |
| 28   | Maybe the School Influences Student Learning  
Hattie, pp. 61-71 |
Well, actually, its multivariate, but we need new hypotheses
And new forms of research
Read Seidel and Shavelson on blackboard
Read Nuthall on blackboard

Presentation of papers

Final papers due
### Rubric for Judging Research on Teaching Proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Accomplished</strong></th>
<th><strong>Basic</strong></th>
<th><strong>Unsatisfactory</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The problem/research question</td>
<td>The problem is clearly stated and it significance to the field is discussed</td>
<td>The problem is clearly stated, but the significance is neither discussed nor does it place the problem in the context of the literature</td>
<td>The problem statement is a collection of global assertions and its significance is neither discussed nor related to the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>The literature review</td>
<td>The literature review is well-integrated with the logic within each set of studies tight and the transitions from one set of studies to another drawn clearly</td>
<td>The literature review is “reportorial” i.e., a mechanical listing and description of each study, but unable to create a coherent “whole” that is tightly supportive of the problem/question</td>
<td>The literature review is vague with global citations that don’t describe the studies with enough clarity for the reader to see the argument for the study build from one study to the next</td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposed subjects</td>
<td>The subjects are consistent with previous research and are appropriate for the problem under study, or if the subjects represent a new group, the rationale for their inclusion is clearly made.</td>
<td>The subjects are consistent with previous research and are appropriate for the problem under study.</td>
<td>The subjects are inconsistent with previous research or no explanations are offered for studying a different set of subjects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposed methods</td>
<td>The methods are consistent with previous research and are appropriate for the problem under study, or if the methods introduce a new strategy, the rationale is made clear.</td>
<td>The methods are consistent with previous research and are appropriate for the problem under study.</td>
<td>The methods are inconsistent with previous research or no rational is offered for introducing a new strategy.</td>
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