EDCI 635: Applied Research in Elementary Education
Spring 2006: Mondays 4:30 – 7:10, Kings Park ES Media Center

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Course Description:

This course utilizes the action research process to help educational practitioners plan and complete an action research study related to their current teaching assignment. Furthermore, the course examines the social, cultural and ethical issues of conducting research with students.

Course Goals:

Students will:

1. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of research studies within various paradigms, including action research, using measures of rigor;
2. propose and complete an action research project that includes an overview, contextual statement, review of the literature, methodology, data analysis, conclusions, reflections and relationship to practice;
3. make explicit links between theory and practice in their own action research;
4. examine ethical considerations when conducting research with children including their own project;
5. explain the critical importance of considering multiple perspectives using different approaches to inquiry; and,
6. demonstrate leadership in conducting class discussions and presenting their action research projects to others.

Standards:

Learning outcomes are referenced to the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Core Propositions and the International Education Technology Standards for teachers.

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<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>NBPTS Core Propositions</th>
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Required Text:


Related Text:


Course Delivery:

The delivery of EDCI 635 is through experiential learning activities, informed participation and discussion, in-class collaborative work and mini-lectures to accomplish the course activities. Participants will also conduct an action research project in their current teaching assignment and, present their findings to a group of “learned others.”

Course Requirements:

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<td>Discussion</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings/Journal Entries</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action Research Presentation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5/1 or 5/8</td>
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<td>Action Research Final Paper</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5/15</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Discussion**: Weekly discussions in class will be graded on informed participation in class discussions, “critical friend” analysis of action research components, case studies and review of readings. All discussions will be held during class and the grade will be based on participation.

**Readings/Journal Entries**: Each student will keep a critical reading log of the assigned chapters. In each entry the student will briefly summarize the chapter, and reflect on salient points in regard to class discussion, other readings and their action research project. Each entry should address the following points, “Here’s what, So what, Now
what.” (All 10 entries required for maximum 20 points, minimum 5 entries required for 10 points including quality, depth of analysis, and mechanics.)

**Action Research Study:** Three components comprise the final grade for the Action Research Project.

1. *Drafts of Action Research Proposal (20 points):* A draft of each section of the action research study will be available for class discussion on the specified date and a copy of the section turned into the instructor for review:

   - 20 points = 6 of 6 of drafts completed for thoughtful class discussion and critique
   - 15 points = 4 of 6 of drafts completed for thoughtful discussion and critique.
   - 10 points = 3 of 6 drafts completed for thoughtful discussion and critique.
   - 5 points = 1-2 of 6 drafts completed for thoughtful discussion and critique.

2. *Presentation of Action Research (25%):* Each student will present his/her Action Research to the class and outside guests. Each presentation will consist of the following elements: Introduction, Research Questions, Methodology, Findings, and Implications for Practice. Each presenter will provide an executive summary and a brief list of important resources. Following the presentation the presenter will engage in a Question/Answer session with the audience. The presentations will be evaluated on: clarity, understanding of the process of action research, articulation of the implications for practice, communication skills, and use of technology.

3. *Final Action Research Paper (35%):* Each student will write a report which includes the following sections: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Analysis (with accompanying samples/examples), Findings, Implications for Practice, and Reflections. (Additional information will be provided). All papers must follow APA, 5th edition, format.

**GSE Syllabus Statements of Expectations:**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.
Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://mail.gmu.edu and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

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 or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Approved by GSE faculty, March 2004

General Requirements

1. Class attendance is both important and required. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, you must contact the instructor via phone or email. Students with more than two absences may drop a letter grade or lose course credit.

2. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, please speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.

3. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is critical for you to keep up with the readings and to participate in class.

4. According to university policy, all beepers and cell phones should be turned off before class begins.

Grading Scale:

A+ = 98-100
A  = 94-97
A- = 90-93
B+ = 85-89
B  = 80-84
C  = 70-79

F = Did not meet course requirements