EDCI 635: Applied Research in Elementary Education  
Spring 2004

Instructor(s): Dr. Beverly D. Shaklee, Professor  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10-2  
Robinson A 316  
(703) 993-2388  
bshaklee@gmu.edu

Gail V. Ritchie, Med, NBCT  
Fairfax County Public Schools  
Gail.Ritchie@fcps.edu

Course Description:

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

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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Required Texts:


Related Texts:


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:

**Discussion:** informed participation in class discussions, “critical friend” analysis of action research components, case studies and review of readings (additional information to be provided). All discussions will be held during class therefore the grade is calculated based on in class participation.

10%

**Due:** Weekly

**Readings/Journal Entries:** each participant will keep a critical reading log of the assigned chapters. In each entry the student will *briefly* summarize the chapter, reflect on salient points in regard to class discussion, other readings and their action research project.

20% = minimum 8 entries for B; maximum 16 entries for A+ (including mechanics, quality and depth of analysis)
Due:  Thursday, February 13 and final copy due Thursday, March 13

Action Research Project: three components comprise the final grade for the Action Research Project.

1. Components of Action Research Proposal (20%): each section is available for discussion on the specified date and a copy of the drafted section is turned into the instructor for review:

   A = 20% (6 of 6) of drafts completed in a timely fashion ready for thoughtful discussion and critique
   A- = 15% (4 of 6) of drafts completed in a timely fashion ready for thoughtful discussion and critique.
   B = 10% (3 of 6) drafts completed in a timely fashion ready for thoughtful discussion and critique.
   C = 5% (1-2 of 6) drafts completed in a timely fashion ready for thoughtful discussion and critique.

   Due Dates: specified in attached schedule

2. Presentation of AR (25%): each participant will present their Action Research to the class and outside guests. Each presentation will use technology and consist of the following elements: Introduction, Inquiry 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 participants will engage in Questions/Answer session from the audience. The presentations will be evaluated on: communication skills, clarity, use of technology, understanding of the process of action research and articulation of the implications for practice.

   Due Dates: April 29 or May 6

3. Final Action Research Paper (35%): each participant 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 will follow APA format.

   Due Date: Friday, May 7th by 5:00 p.m. in Robinson A 319

NOTE: This is an advanced graduate level course, therefore the quality of your work, attendance and informed participation are expected to be of the highest caliber. Unless it is an emergency situation, no absences are excused. Should you need to miss a class it is
your responsibility to inform the instructor ahead of time, turn in your assignments, collect any notes/assignments from a colleague and do your utmost to remain current in the class. Should you need special assistance because of identified learning needs please contact the instructor immediately.

**Honor Code:** To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust and fairness among all member of the George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the even that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or website at [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu) The Honor Code may be found outline at [http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html](http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html).

**Americans with Disabilities:** This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class as identified under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This act prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs or activities of all Stat and local governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has a disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so that arrangements can be made. Please call the Disabilities Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2474). The Disability Resource Center website is at [http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/)