

*George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning Program*

**EDUC 612
INQUIRY INTO PRACTICE
Fall 2005**

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Office Hours:
Before or after class, and
by appointment

COURSE LOCATION:
Prince William Campus
BRH #248
10900 University Boulevard
Manassas, VA 20110-2203
Phone: (703) 993-8350

COURSE DATES/TIMES:
Tuesdays, August 30 – October 18
4:30 pm – 8 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this course is to provide participants with: a) knowledge about academic research; b) opportunities for experience using research skills; and c) a foundation for implementing reflective, systematic, and thoughtful inquiry into classroom practice. Practitioners explore relevant classroom practice issues through writing, reflections, experimenting with action research strategies, and sharing their work in a collaborative setting. Through the critical reading of action research studies and experimentation with action research strategies, teachers come to recognize the value of action research as a way to make more informed decisions about practice. Practitioners give special attention to cultural diversity and gender issues in both the consideration of research questions, puzzlements, and the conduct of research.

RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

EDUC 612 is the first of five courses in the ASTL Program Core. It lays the foundation through reading, experiential learning activities, and reflective action research exercises for the research projects in both EDUC 613 and EDUC 606 and the future. It is aligned with the following GSE Priorities: Diversity and Equity, Students, and High Standards and Research-Based Practices. EDUC 612 is also aligned with the Propositions established by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, as follows:

- III. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning,
- IV. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience,
- V. Teachers are members of learning communities,
- VI. Teachers account for the needs of culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse learners,
- VII. Teachers are change agents, teacher leaders, and partners with colleagues and families.
- VIII. Teachers use technology effectively to facilitate student learning and their own professional development.

COURSE DELIVERY

To meet course objectives, the delivery of EDUC 612 is accomplished through a combination of experiential learning activities, in-class collaborative work groups, on-line discussion strand postings, and mini-lectures designed to help meet the needs of all learners and learning styles. These include:

- *Presentations* (i.e., mini-lectures/lecturettes, often assisted by Power Point and other visuals);
- *Discussions* (i.e., active involvement of students in learning by asking questions that provoke critical thinking and verbal interaction);
- *Cooperative learning* (i.e., small group structure emphasizing learning from and with others);
- *Collaborative learning* (i.e., heterogeneous groups in an interdisciplinary context);
- *Guest lectures*;
- *Student sharing and mini-presentations*;
- *Blackboard 6™* web-based course management and portal system.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

George Mason University Statement of Professional Behavior and Dispositions, Honor Code, and Policy on Disabilities:

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) in the College of Education and Human Development expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm> 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.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of EDUC 612, practitioners will be able to:

- identify and understand different approaches to inquiry and inquiry into practice,
- identify the theoretical foundations of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies,
- reflect systematically and critically about their teaching practice as members of learning communities,
- provide a rationale for researching their own practice and recognize how action research informs the management and monitoring of student learning,
- identify, comprehend and express the ethical and moral issues connected to research involving students,
- explain the critical importance of considering multiple perspectives,

- respect and celebrate teaching and learning related to cultural diversity in the field of action research,
- generate viable research questions relevant to their classroom practice,
- collect, analyze, and interpret qualitative data,
- demonstrate an emergent knowledge of the use of technology in their professional development and in qualitative research, and
- begin to appreciate the value of the reflective process as a means of documenting growth.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Falk, B., & Blumenreich, M., (2005). *The power of questions: A guide to teacher and student research*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fecho, B. (2004). *Is this English? Race, language, and culture in the classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Mills, G. (2003). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher*. (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hubbard, R.S. & Power, .M. (2003). *The art of classroom inquiry*. Portsmouth, NE: Heinemann.

Romano, T. (2000). *Blending genre, altering style*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

RELATED RESOURCES

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Blackboard Website: <http://blackboard.gmu.edu/> Click on ASTL Fairfax Core 2004. The course syllabus and other related course documents, including daily agendas, related Powerpoint presentations. Announcements will be posted regularly on the opening page of the Core site.

Articles

Articles that will be used to support learning in this class may be accessed through the GMU Library E-Reserves. *One of the most direct ways to access the E-Reserves is through the class Blackboard site by clicking on the External Links button.* Follow the instructions provided there for the E-reserves. The course password will be provided in class and posted under the link, as well. The GMU Library may also be directly accessed at: <http://oscr.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/ers/OSCRgen.cgi>

Representative list:

ASTL 2005 Update

- Abi-Nader, J. (1994). A house for my mother: Motivating Hispanic high school students. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 21, 41-58.
- Anderson, Gary L. (1999). Knowledge generation in educational administration from the inside-out: The promise and perils of site-based administrator research. www.aera.net/fivisions.a/aneews/win00-2d.htm.
- Anderson, G., & Herr, K. (1999). The new paradigm wars: Is there room for rigorous practitioner knowledge in schools and universities? *Educational Researcher* 28 (5), 12-21, 40.
- Backman, Carolyn (1994). Finding an effective note-taking system for math students. *Teaching and Change* 2(1), 73-88.
- Baumann, J., & Duffy, A. (2001). Teacher-researcher methodology: Themes, variations, and possibilities. *Reading Teacher* 54 (6), 608-616.
- Cone, J. (1994). Appearing acts: Creating readers in a high school English class. *Harvard Educational Review* 64 (4), 450-473.
- Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1993). Researching change and changing the researcher. *Harvard Educational Review* 63(4), 389-411.
- Fecho, B. (2000). Critical inquiries into language in an urban classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English* 34 (3), 368-395.
- Fendler, Lynn (2003). Teacher reflection in a hall of mirrors: Historical influences and Political reverberations. *Educational Researcher*, 32 (3), 16-25.
- Fordham, S. (1993). Those loud black girls: (Black) women, silence, and gender “passing” in the academy. *Anthropology in Education Quarterly* 24 (1), 3-32.
- Goldston, M., & Shroyer, M., (2000). Teachers as researchers: Promoting effective science and mathematics teaching. *Teaching and Change* 7 (4), 327-346.
- Hermann, K. , Carstarphen, N. , & Coolidge, J. (1997). Meeting the challenges of diversity and conflict: The immigrant student experience. *Teaching and Change* 4 (3), 206-226.
- Hole, S. & McEntee, G. (1999). Reflection is at the heart of practice. *Educational Leadership* 56 (8), 34-37.
- Hollingsworth, S. (1992). Learning to teach through collaborative conversation: A feminist approach. *American Educational Research Journal* 29(2), 373-404.
- Jeffrey, S. G. (1994). Using learning styles to construct cooperative learning groups and develop leadership skills. *Teaching and Change* 1(3), 295-309.
- Johnson, R.W. (Oct. 1993). Where can teacher research lead? One teacher’s daydream. *Educational Leadership* 51(2), 66-68.

Power, B.M. (1997). Passing notes. *Learning* 8, 70-72.

Rodgers, C. (2002). Defining reflection: Another look at John Dewey and reflective thinking. *Teacher's College Record*, 104 (4), 842-866.

Shafer, L. (1995). Anecdotal record keeping: Learning from Rosa, Ahmed, and Zhou. *Greater Washington Reading Council Journal* 19, 16-23.

Seidman, I. (1997). Technique isn't everything, but it is a lot. *Interviewing as qualitative research* (pp. 56-71). NY: Teachers College Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Journals (100 points)

Practitioners will maintain a reflective journal throughout the Core, as explained at the orientation. Teachers will engage in both online and personal reflections (see Schedule) on a weekly basis to support the development of critical reflective practice and deep reflection. Teachers reflect on their learning, their students and/or practice and respond to the readings, research exercises, and discussions. They also reflect on their own reflective practice. They record questions, ideas, and insights. Practitioners share selected excerpts of their choice from their journal orally during class sessions. Systematic and regular journaling will provide evidence of growth and emerging competency as a reflective practitioner and will provide experience in journaling as a data collection source for action research projects.

Due: Each class, oral sharing of personal journal and/or word-processed responses on Blackboard.

2. Research Exercises and Class Participation Activities (100 points)

A. Exercises and reflections done in class describing the conduct, analysis, and interpretation of data obtained through various research strategies.

B. Critical discussion of the methodology of scholarly research studies. Studies may be from required reading, and discussion of methodology approaches from other research studies is encouraged. **Due: In class, as designated.**

3. Multigenre Reflective Practice Paper (100 points)

Teachers use their narratives, research exercises, course materials, and focused journal entries to provide a rationale and foundation for reflective practice research and their potential inquiries in preparation for EDUC 613 and 606. Teachers are encouraged to include genres that they deem relevant to the analysis of their learning and teaching, and for presenting their emergent ideas about themselves as teacher researchers. Examples will be provided in class.

Electronic submission on CD and hard copy

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria for evaluation includes attendance in class, active participation in class and on-line discussions and in small group activities, completion of all readings, exercises, and papers,

active and ongoing engagement with journaling as a growth of reflective practice.

All written work should be carefully edited for standard grammar and punctuation, as well as clarity of thought. All submitted work should be prepared through word processing and reflect APA-style (5th edition).

EDUC 612 Grading Scale

Rating	Course Points
A+	296-300
A	285 – 295
A-	270 – 284
B+	255 – 269
B	240 – 254
B-	228 – 239
C	210 – 227
F	<209

COURSE SCHEDULE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Class Topic</i>	<i>Assignments For this Class</i>
Class One August 30 (Core Orientation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Orientation • Introduction/overview of EDUC 612, <i>Inquiry Into Practice</i> • Pre-Assessment 	Purchase course texts and individual reflection journal Blackboard activity
Class Two September 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Educational Research and an historical look at Teacher Research • Understanding the influences literature can have in TR process *Discuss how theory serves as analytical and interpretive framework for teachers trying to make sense of what goes on in the classroom. • Define critically reflective teacher *Finding ways to gain insight into your area of focus for research *Focused journal entries • Critical Friends Groups (CFGs) 	Bring an artifact to class this evening that represents you as an individual Read Falk & Blumenreich, Ch. 1, 2, 4 Read “Reflection is at the Heart of Practice” by Hole & McEntee Begin Journal entries in personal journal – may be based on topics suggested or own choice (see handout)

<p>Class Three</p> <p>September 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective Practice - Continuing discussion & Critical Friends Protocol • Overview of TR project – its components and process • Research questions -<i>Brainstorming & Framing Your Question</i> • Importance of multiple perspectives <p>Discussion of the Multigenre paper: how it can bring into focus who we are as learners, teachers, and teacher-researchers.</p>	<p>Read “Defining Reflection: Another look at John Dewey & Reflective Thinking” by C. Rodgers</p> <p>“Teacher Reflection in the Hall of Mirrors” by L. Fendler.</p> <p>Read F & B, Ch. 3, 9</p> <p>Read: “The Power of Perspectives: Building a Cross-cultural Community of Learners” by Osterling & Fox</p> <p>Post on BlackBoard</p>
<p>Class Four</p> <p>September 20</p>	<p>Developing research action plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Identifying participants in the study *Identifying data sources *Data collection plans, techniques, & tools. <p>In class jigsaw, --“Using Learning Styles to Construct Cooperative Learning Groups and Develop Leadership Skills,” [E-Reserves] --“Anecdotal Record Keeping: Learning from Rosa, Ahmed, and Zhou,” [E-Reserves] --“Gimme That School Where Everything’s Scripted!” http://teachersnetwork.org/aboutus/kappanpaez.htm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys & Interviews • Ethical responsibilities related to conducting research. 	<p>Read F & B, Ch. 5, & 6</p> <p>Read: Your Jig Saw Article, as decided in Class Three</p> <p>Read: “T-R Methodology: Themes, Variations & Possibilities” by Baumann Duffy</p> <p>Read: “Where can teacher research lead? One teacher’s daydream” by Johnson.</p> <p>Begin to think of potential unifying themes/metaphors for your Multigenre Papers</p> <p>Maintain Journal entries in personal journal to share in class</p>
<p>Class Five</p> <p>September 27</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Teacher Research with Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Inspiration, Power Point, Spread Sheets, Tables, Data Collection Matrices *Data Analysis Software 	<p>Read: Begin the Fecho “Is This English?”</p> <p>Maintain Journal entries in personal journal to share in class</p> <p>Continue to reflect about potential unifying themes/metaphors for MG Papers</p> <p>Post on BlackBoard</p>
<p>Class Six</p> <p>October 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fecho Discussion • Observation -- Looking at different ways a researcher can obtain data through observation. 	<p>Read: Complete the Fecho “Is This English?”</p> <p>Read “Technique isn’t everything, but it is a lot”</p>

	<p>*In class observation exercises for analysis and interpretation. Debrief.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing different strategies for data analysis and relating those to practice. • Identifying themes through coding • Identifying important findings and implications for the future. • Importance of triangulation • Sharing ideas for Multigenre Paper Themes & possible TR topics 	<p>Read: F & B, Ch. 7, 8, 10 & Appendix 3 (APA Format)</p> <p>After reading the two MG example papers on BB and looking at the exemplar copies provided in class, prepare your outline ideas to share in class today about the theme of your MG paper</p> <p>Maintain Journal entries in personal journal to share in class</p> <p>Post on BlackBoard</p>
October 11	No Class- Fall Break	Work on Multigenre paper BlackBoard Posting
<p>Class Seven</p> <p>October 18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration of Learning: Sharing our Multigenre Papers • Course Synthesis: Pulling it All Together • Submit Multigenre Papers (Hard Copy and CD or personal web site) <p>Course evaluations</p>	

Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning Program
EDUC 612 RUBRICS

	Points	No evidence (Little or no evidence)	Beginning (Limited evidence)	Developing (Clear evidence)	Accomplished (Clear, convincing and substantial evidence)
		F: <30 (<75)	C: 30-34 (75-79)	B: 35-41 (80-92)	A: 42-50 (93-100)
Journals and Blackboard Postings <i>Learning Outcomes 3, 4, 5, & 8</i>	100	Does not make entries in journals and/or does not share select passages	Maintains journal on most days. Journal entries are descriptive only; sometimes shares relevant passages	Maintains journal regularly. Journal entries analyze and apply descriptions to teaching, learning and research; often shares relevant passages	Maintains both personal & word-processed journal entries regularly, and makes required postings on BlackBoard. Journal entries synthesize and evaluate description and application to self as a teacher, learner, and researcher; consistently shares relevant passages
Research Exercises <i>Outcome 3,4,5</i>	50	Does not participate	Sometimes participates and contributes to group process and products	Often participates and makes many useful contributions to group process and products	Always participates and plays an integral role in group process and products
Oral Participation <i>Learning Outcomes 3, 5, 6, & 7</i>	50	Does not participate in discussions or in-class exercises. Minimal to no participation in final community synthesizing reflection time	Sometimes participates in daily cohort discussions and exercises; minimal participation in final community synthesizing reflection time	Often participates in daily discussions and exercises; makes some useful contributions during the final community synthesizing reflection time, but is not fully engaged	Always participates in daily discussions: pairs, small groups and/ or whole class; provides many useful contributions and is fully engaged during the final community synthesizing reflection

	Points	<i>No evidence</i> (Little or no evidence)	<i>Beginning</i> (Limited evidence)	<i>Developing</i> (Clear evidence)	<i>Accomplished</i> (Clear convincing and substantial evidence)
<i>Multigenre Paper</i>	100	F: <75	C: 75-79	B: 80-92	A: 93-100
Introduction & Personal Philosophy Statement <i>Learning Outcome 4</i>	20	No introduction is included.	Introduction lacks two or more of the key elements.	Introduction lacks one of the key elements.	Introduction contains all key elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy/Beliefs statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduces the reader to the unifying theme. ▪ Provides a roadmap for the learning journey. ▪ Provides a reflection about what the writer has learned in the MG creation process. ▪ Connects to classroom practice what was learned in the MG creation process.
Genres—Inquiry <i>Learning Outcome 4</i>	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No description of self as learner, teacher, researcher. ▪ No theme is used to weave the genres together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two or more elements (learner, teacher, researcher) not developed. ▪ Limited use of a theme to weave the genres together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One element (learner, teacher, researcher) not well developed. ▪ Theme is present, but doesn't clearly weave the genres together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides a clearly developed learning journey presenting self as learner, teacher, and emergent researcher. ▪ There is a theme that weaves the genres together and makes the paper flow.

Genres— Quantity <i>Learning Outcome 4</i>	5	Paper contains two or fewer genres.	Paper contains three genres.	Paper contains four genres.	Paper contains at least five genres, one of which is excerpts from personal reflective journal
Genres— Technology <i>Learning Outcome 8</i>	5	No evidence that technology was used.	Little evidence that technology was used.	Clear evidence that technology was used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presentation of the genres demonstrates effective use of technology. • Project submitted on CD or via personal web site
Key Events <i>Learning Outcome 5</i>	15	No description of key events/people.	Limited description of key events/people.	Description of key events/people who shaped you.	Paper creates a focus around key events/people who shaped you.
Future Research <i>Learning Outcome 4</i>	10	No future teacher researcher ideas are included.	Ideas for teacher research are vague OR not adequately included.	Includes ideas for future teacher research, but ideas lack focus and/or clarity.	Paper includes explicitly stated potential ideas for future teacher research.
Referencing <i>Learning Outcome 4</i>	10	No evidence of references OR References are not in APA style.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited use of course readings and other current readings ▪ References contain errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Course readings and other current readings are referenced. ▪ References contain minor errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The paper integrates Core readings and other current, authoritative relevant literature that are properly referenced. ▪ References are in APA style.
Overall Style <i>Learning Outcome 4</i>	5	Contains many grammatical errors or error patterns.	Lacks in grammatical or stylistic form OR contains many errors or error patterns.	Grammatically and stylistically well written, but contains some errors or error patterns.	Grammatically and stylistically well written with few errors or error patterns.