Meeting Day/time:  Mondays 4:30 – 7:10 p.m.  
Location: RobB 205  
Professor:  Anastasia P. Samaras, Ph.D.  asamaras@gmu.edu  
mason.gmu.edu/~asamaras/  703-489-1663  
Office: Arlington I Bldg, Room 323  Office hours: by appt.  

Course Description  
This course introduces you to the self-study research methodology—a cutting-edge approach for enhancing and expanding your dissertation methods. We will investigate questions of practice that are individually important and of broader importance to the education profession and to schooling. The course includes a comprehensive review and synthesis of the self-study literature; complete with guidelines and invitations to practice. We will examine five central areas of self-study research: purposes, foundations, nature, methodology, and support for incorporating self-study into your research. Self-studyship encompasses the work of teachers, administrators, counselors, librarians, teachers, and other community educators working for social justice and educational reform. Applicable to all education majors regardless of program. Open to non-degree candidates at the doctoral level as well.

Course Objectives  
• You will acquire an overview of the Self-Study School  
• You will gain a better understanding of the intersections of yourself and your professional practice and the development of knowledge about these  
• You will explore a variety of contemporary methods for conducting self-study research and with applications to your dissertation  
• You will interpret and utilize self-study research studies  
• You will design and write a self-study paper applying educational research methods to support your research agenda  
• You will refine your research and writing skills
• You will complete a research process portfolio
• You will participate in a community of learners and self-study researchers

Backwards Design Planning—Anticipated professor outcomes include:

 Disorder Students’ understanding and application of self-study methodology to their research interests: Self-study Research Project
 Disorder Students’ charting, experiencing, and peer validating the research process of self-study: Partner Process Portfolio
 Disorder Students’ developing and utilizing a knowledge base of self-study: Reading Revelations, Collaboration, Activities and Attendance/Participation
 Disorder Professors’ self-study of course design and teaching: Self-study with colleague

**Required Course Texts**


**Articles**


**Chapters in:**


Recommended Readings
◆ An extensive resource list on self-study research will be distributed online.
◆ Visit Website: Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices Special Interest Group (S-STEP)  http://www.ku.edu/~sstep/

Course Requirements
1. Attendance is mandatory, as dialogue in this class is essential to the process of our work in self-study. Please notify professor if you must miss a class. There is no way to "make up" for class time that is missed. If you must miss a class, you are responsible for working with colleagues to learn the material you missed and then submitting an essay of your make-up learnings before the start of the next class.
2. You are expected to complete all readings and weekly assignments.
3. You are expected to participate in class discussions with consideration and effort to understand others and to seek to be understood.
5. Turn in assignments at the beginning of class on the date due. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with the professor.

Course Assignments  100% or 100 points
◆ Class Assignments: includes readings, activities, and participation  40%
◆ Partner Process Portfolio  20%
◆ Self-Study Research Paper/Project  40%
◆ See Handout “Course Assignments and Assessments”

GSE Syllabus Statements of Expectations
The Graduate School of Education 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.

Tentative Class Schedule

* = required assignment

January 23
Introduction to Course and to The Self-Study School
*Artifact as Text: Articulating your professional practice and self-study research interests.

Reading Resources:
Overview the International Handbook. Take notes of what interests you.
Overview Self-Study Dissertations: http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/living.shtml
Chapters 8 & 36: International Handbook (IH)
Chapter 9: Hamilton book
Chapter 1: Samaras book
Chapter 1: Samaras & Freese book

January 30
Nature and Characteristics of Self-Study
*Letter 1.
*Read Rilke handout and include his notion of “Loving and Living your Questions” in your Letter 1.
The Role of Critical Friends in Self-Study

Reading Resources:
*Read J. McNiff’s 3 paragraphs on “Critical friends and validation groups” at http://www.jeanmcniff.com/booklet1.html#11d
*Read Ch. 5 Samaras & Freese book
Chapter 3: Samaras & Freese book
Chapter 2: IH

February 6
Purpose of Self-Study
*Jigsaw of readings: Personal, Professional, and Program Development/Educational Reform. Prepare a one-page bullet list of your reading.

Reading Resources:
Chapter 7, 8, 15: Kosnik, Beck, Freese, & Samaras book
Chapters 7, 11, & 15: Hamilton book
February 13

The S–STEP Enterprise: A Meta–Analysis of Self–Study Literature
*Read Chapter 6 IH
*Author Email. Choose a self-study reading related to your research project. Email the self-study author(s) you read. Why did you choose this paper to read? Talk about what you learned; what you want to know more about; and how it relates to your research.

February 20

Foundations of Self–Study
*Visual Proposal Representation of your self-study research project project. Include the connections of your theory to/in practice.

Reading Resources:
Chapter 2: Samaras & Freese book
Chapter 1: IH
Foreword, Introduction, and Chapter 1: Hamilton book

February 27

Self–Study Methodology and Methods
*Letter 2: Include data collection, and method(s)

Reading Resources:
Bullough & Pinnegar article
Feldman article
Whitehead chapter: http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/writings/evid.htm
Chapters 4: Samaras & Freese book
Chapters 4, 20, 21, & 29 IH

March 6

Personal History Self–Study Method: Self, Practice, and Identity
Educated-related life history– in class activity. See Invitation to Practice.

Reading Resources:
Part I and II: Samaras book
Chapter 23: IH

March 12–19  Spring Break
March 20
Collective Self-Study Method
*Reading Resources:*
- Chapters 10-12 Hamilton book
- Chapter 19: IH
- See ref/res chapter in Samaras & Freese book.

March 27
Self-Study, Social Justice, and Diversity
*Proposal Reviewer.* You have been selected as a reviewer for the Castle Proceedings (*Journeys of Hope: Risking the journey of self-study in a diverse world.* D. Tidwell, L. Fitzgerald & M. Heston, Eds., 2004). Select one of the papers and send your review to your class peers who will play the role of editors. A form will be provided.

April 3
Arts-Based Self-Study Method
*Drama:* Be the teacher (or other professional). See Invitation to Practice.
- See ref/res chapter in Samaras & Freese book.

April 10
AERA Conference: No Class
*Use time to Muse in a Gallery of Art Museum*
- *Letter 3*

April 17
Self-Portrait of a Developing Researcher
*Bring your self-portrait.*
*Reading Resources:*
- Chapter 3: Hamilton book
- Chapter 25: IH
- Weber & Mitchell article
April 24
Self-Study and Technology
*Final Self-Study Project Due

Reading Resources:
Chapter 6: Hamilton book
Chapter 7: Kosnik, Beck, Freese, & Samaras book
Chapter 26: IH

May 1
Self-Study for Educational Impact
*Portfolios and Final Self-Study Research Project & Presentations
*Final course evaluation