George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development

EDUC 675 Section 001
Teacher Research in Secondary Education

Innovation 317
Fall 2009
Tuesdays 7:20 p.m. - 10 p.m.

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Course Description and Relationship to Program Goals
This course is designed to help beginning teachers understand and apply concepts and principles of teacher research and study of their practice. Students will learn how to identify and use research literature and systematic evidence to improve practice. Emphasis is placed on linking research and practice to make informed instructional decisions.

Pre-requisites: Licensure. To be taken as the last course in the M.Ed. You must have completed ALL of your coursework and internship to take this course.
Co-requisite: M.Ed. Portfolio.

YOUR MEd. PORTFOLIO

YOU are required to attend PORTFOLIO* prep workshops - TBA
Go to the Secondary Education Portfolio website at blackboard.gmu.edu for all info regarding the portfolio and rubrics, etc.

SEED Program – Portfolio Presentation is a mandatory session for the M.Ed. degree. The portfolio grade is P/F and has NO impact on the grade for EDUC675. However, your grade for EDUC675 will not be released until the portfolio receives a grade of 'P'.

A copy of the 'Teacher Research Report' must be included in your M.Ed. Portfolio.

Learner Outcomes:
This course is designed to enable students to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the process and components used in self-study teacher research by conducting and assessing a scholarly inquiry situated in their classroom
2. prepare a research proposal which makes explicit links between theory and practice;
3. examine ethical considerations when conducting teacher research;

4. conduct teacher research which includes: research question(s), research proposal; review of related literature, methods, data collection/analysis, findings, discussion of contributions to students, teacher, and education field; and abstract;
5. participate in "critical collaborative inquiries" to gain multiple perspectives, to gain support in interpreting research, and for validation, and peer review of research;
6. demonstrate integration of national and state standards for content and pedagogy as related to the research question by reflecting on their own teaching practice and its impact on students' learning;
7. demonstrate skills in the application of technology and use of resources in teacher research

Nature of Course Delivery
The course will be taught through a variety of activities to support the development of students' self-study teacher research projects involving: whole class and small group discussions, group, pair, and individual projects, online work, and dialogue and reflections about practice. Web-based documents and correspondence are accessible through a course Blackboard page which students will use regularly throughout the course and which require students to be able to post and access. Computer with Internet access and current GMU email account is needed.

Course Requirements
1. ***Attendance*** is mandatory and a part of your final grade. Please notify instructor ahead of time if you must miss class and work with peers for missed material. A significant component of this course will be class discussions of learning the research process and readings assigned for each week. Successful completion of this graduate level course requires attendance at all classes and active participation in the discussions.

2. ***Readings, Class Activities, and Class and Online Participation.*** You are expected to complete all readings and participate in class and all online discussions with openness, consideration, and effort to "hear for" and "listen to" others as you also seek to be understood. Come to class prepared to contribute your critical reflections on both your own experiences and ideas presented by your critical friends.

3. ***Written Assignments.*** All written assignments are to be word-processed using Times Roman 12 pt font, double-spaced, and submitted electronically on our class **Blackboard drop box at** http://courses.gmu.edu/. Turn in assignments at the beginning of class on the date due. Title each assignment with your last name, and the name of the project/assignment, e.g., Smith.Res.Quest.09.1707. Also bring a copy of the completed assignment to class for discussion.

4. ***Use APA Style.*** All assignments require: American Psychological Association (2009*). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.* American Psychological Association: Washington, DC. (Available as reference at library). *For APA Guidelines online: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

5. ***CEHD Course Expectations***
Professional Dispositions. The Graduate School of Education expects that all students abide by the following: Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. You need to become familiar with the professional dispositions:
http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/professional-disposition

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.

How to Avoid Plagiarism
http://www.collegeboard.com/article/0,3868,2-10-0-10314,00.html

Emergency Procedures
You are encouraged to sign up for emergency alerts by visiting the website https://alert.gmu.edu. There are emergency posters in each classroom explaining what to do in the event of crises. Further information about emergency procedures exists on http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert.

Relation to Standards:
At the end of this course students will demonstrate an understanding and application of subject area standards aligned with the *National Content Standards* and identified by their Specialized Professional Association (SPA); and an understanding and application of teaching and learning standards as outlined by *INTASC.*

National Content Standards for student's respective discipline: NCSS, NCTE, NCTM, NSTA
- National Council for the Social Studies http://www.ncss.org/
- National Council of Teachers of English http://www.ncte.org/
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics http://www.nctm.org/
- National Science Teachers Association http://www.nsta.org/
- http://books.nap.edu/readingroom/books/nses/

INTASC: Interstate New Teacher Assistance and Support Consortium
- http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/corestrd.pdf

Also see:
- The Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120
- National Board of Professional Teaching Standards http://www.nbpts.org/the_standards/the_five_core_propositio

Required Text
Samaras, A. P. (forthcoming). *Self-study teacher research: Studying your practice through collaborative inquiry.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
*This DRAFT book material will be made available to you through Blackboard.

All assignments require: American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual* (6th ed.*)*. Washington, DC, American Psychological Association (Available as reference at library). For APA Guidelines online: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Reading Resources

Teacher Research

Greely, K. (2000). *Why fly that way?: Living community and academic achievement.* NY: Teachers College.

Hubbard, R. S., & Power, B. (1999). *Living the questions: A guide for teacher-researchers.* Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Kagan, D. M. (1993). *Laura and Jim and what they taught me about the gap between educational theory and practice.* NY. State University of New York Press.

Kosnik, C., Beck, C., Freese, A. R., & Samaras, A. P. (Eds.), (2006). *Making a difference in teacher education through self-study: Studies of personal, professional, and program renewal*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer. http://www.springer.com/education/teachers+%26+teaching/book/978-1-4020-8791-2

Leedy, P. D., and Ormrod, J. E. (2001). *Practical research: Planning and design.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

MacLean, M.S. & Mohr, M. (1999). *Teacher-researchers at work.* National Writing Project, Berkeley, CA.

Reason, P. Three approaches to participative inquiry (1994). In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln, (Eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Sage.

Samaras, A. P., Adams-Legge, M., Breslin, D., Mittapalli, K., Magaha O'Looney, J., & Wilcox, D. R. (2007). Building a plane while flying it: Reflections of teaching and learning self-study. *Reflective Practice, 8*(4), 467-481.

Samaras, A. P., & Freese, A. R. (2006). *Self-study of teaching practices primer*. NY: Peter Lang. http://www.peterlang.net/index.cfm?vID=66386&vLang=E&vHR=1&vUR=2&vUUR=1

Samaras, A. P. (2002). *Self-study for teacher educators: Crafting a pedagogy for educational change.* Peter Lang. http://www.peterlang.net/index.cfm?vID=65299&vLang=E&vHR=1&vUR=2&vUUR=1

Samaras, A. P., Freese, A. R., Kosnik, C., & Beck, C. (Eds.) (2008). *Learning communities in practice.* The Netherlands: Springer Press. http://www.springer.com/education/teachers+%26+teaching/book/978-1-4020-8787-5

Thomas, R. M. (2005). *Teachers doing research: An introductory guidebook.* Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

Qualitative Analysis

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Czaja, R., & Blair, J. (1996). *Designing surveys: A guide to decisions and procedures.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (2005). 3rd Ed. *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (Second Edition).* CA: Sage.

Reason, P. Three approaches to participative inquiry (1994). In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln, (Eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. CA: Sage.

Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Quantitative Analysis and Statistics

Bartz, A. E. (1999). *Basic statistical concepts (4th ed)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.
Berk, K. N., & Carey, P. (2000). *Data analysis with Microsoft Excel: Updated for Office 2000.* Belmont, CA: Duxbury.
Cronk, B. C. (2002). *How to use SPSS: A step-by-step guide to analysis and interpretation(2nd ed).* Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.
Jaeger, R. M. (1993). *Statistics: A spectator sport (Second Edition).* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Rovessi, C., & Carroll, D. J. (2002). *Statistics made simple for school leaders.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.
Salkind, N. (2000). *Statistics for people who think they hate statistics.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Research and Writing

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (1995). *The craft of research.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago.
Dahl, K. K. (1992). *Teacher as writer: Entering the professional conversation.* Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Writing a Research in Action Paper

Writinghttp://www.gmu.edu/departments/english/composition/wits/research/index.html

Online Resources

George Mason Blackboard site http://courses.gmu.edu

Help with Research http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/Dox/basics.html

Data Collecting Tools, e.g., Survey Monkey http://www.surveymonkey.com/home.asp

National Reports and Test Reporting Centers

- A Nation at Risk http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/risk.html
- The Nation's Report Card/National Assessment of Educational Progress http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/
- National Center for Educational Statistics http://nces.ed.gov/help/sitemap.asp
- TIMSS and PIRLS The International Math and Science Study and International Literacy Study http://www.timss.org/
- Best Evidence/School Reform Reports/School Models. Johns Hopkins University http://www.bestevidence.org/index.htm

National Standards

- National Content Standards, http://nsta.org/ http://ncss.org/ http://nctm.org/ http://www.ncte.org/
- INTASC: Interstate New Teacher Assistance and Support Consortium http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/corestrd.pdf
- The Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120

Virginia State Standards

- Virginia Department of Education http://www.pen.k12.va.us/
- State of Virginia, SOL Resources http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/sol.html
- State of Virginia Standards of Learning Test Information http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/src/SOLassessments.shtml
- FCPS Grading Policy http://www.fcps.k12.va.us/Directives/R2430.pdf

Grades

Please note that B- is not a passing grade in licensure courses. A student who receives an overall grade of B- must repeat the course. Since this is a professional development course (post licensure), high quality work (i.e., "A" work) is expected on all assignments and in class participation. All assignments must be completed. Assignment will be assessed using posted criteria known to the student. For full consideration, all assignments are due to professor *electronically* in the digital drop box prior to the beginning of class on the day they are due, unless otherwise announced.

Grading Scale

Grade	Standards	Grading	Grade Points	Graduate Courses
A+	Substantially Exceeds Standard	99 - 100	4.00	Satisfactory / Passing
A	Meets Standard	93 – 98.9	4.00	Satisfactory / Passing
A-	Meets Standard	90 – 92.9	3.67	Satisfactory / Passing
B+	Approaches Standard	88 – 89.9	3.33	Satisfactory / Passing
B	Approaches Standard	83 – 87.9	3.00	Satisfactory / Passing
B-	Approaches Standard	80 – 82.9	2.67	Satisfactory* / Passing
C	Attempts Standard	70 – 79.9	2.00	Unsatisfactory / Passing
F	Does not Meet Standard	Below 70%	0.00	Unsatisfactory / Failing

Course Assignments and Assessment **100 pts.**

1. Attendance/Participation/Presentation 30%
   Includes Critical Collaborative Inquiries & Weekly Updates
2. Research Proposal formative assessment
3. Teacher Research Report 70%

1. Attendance/Participation (25%)

Attendance at all classes, for the entire class period is a course expectation. Attendance at each class meeting is required and absence will affect your grade. Being on time is also essential and lateness will affect your grade. Participation in discussions, critical friend work, sharing assigned readings, and peer work is a course expectation. Demonstration of positive and collaborative professional dispositions towards colleagues during peer review, along with a willingness to accept constructive criticism is a course expectation.

Minute Exit Folders: At the end of each class, please take a minute and briefly note in your individual file folder *the most important thing you learned in the class and what question(s) remain unanswered. Like you, I still study my practice in order to improve your learning.*

Rubric for Attendance/Participation

Category	*Exemplary 30 pts.*	*Accomplished 27-29 pts*	*Developing 25-26 pts*	*Undeveloped Below 25 pts*
Attendance/ Participation Attendance and participation are critical components of this course. It gives you the opportunity to learn from and contribute to building a positive classroom experience and community. Participants contribute to each others' learning in critical friend work by actively listening, exchanging ideas, sharing learning from reading and websites, and supporting each other's efforts.	Outstanding Participation; participates regularly and actively in discussions and activities. Promotes conversation focused on the topic. Comments demonstrate a high level of understanding and contribution from assigned readings. Listens actively to peers. Prompts peer feedback and input.	Participates in discussions and activities on a regular basis; questions and comments reveal thought and reflection and contribution from assigned readings. Frequently involves peers in discussion.	Doesn't contribute to discussions or activities very often, but generally reveals some thought and reflection and some contribution from assigned readings. Follows rather than leads group activities. Solicits some peer discussion. Misses classes. Is late for class.	Few meaningful contributions to class discussions. Little evidence of participation and contribution from assigned reading. Shows little concern for peers' learning or input. Misses classes and is late for class. Does not make up work.

Critical Collaborative Inquires (CCI)

As part of your course participation, you will have the opportunity to work with a critical friend(s) to catalogue your research. Your work involves weekly updates, sending and corresponding to research memos, sharing how you are integrating standards in meaningful ways, and peer review of your research support. The CCI are designed to co-support each other's research and to provide alternative perspectives on interpretation to increase the validity of your research. CCI involve critical friend research memos.

You will write and receive **critical friend research memos** as way to frame and develop your research project. My students have reported that it is quite beneficial to maintain informal communication and memo writing with critical friends as they continue to teach and develop as professionals. Many of them sustained their work as critical friends and continue to work together on other research projects after our course ended.

Critical friends provide support as well as a feedback loop to improve your practice. It is

colleagues who will help you reframe your thinking about your practice and learning. Use your blackboard space to post and respond to each other's memos in the "Critical Friend" forum under Discussion. Let the professor know of any challenges early. You will find the 3 critical friend memo assignments and examples in the textbook.

Research Updates

Once the Proposal is approved, weekly updates will be submitted which will update and clarify each and every aspect of the Teacher Research study and progress made since the last report.

Draft Literature Review

What the literature reviews adds to your understanding of your topic? (ongoing process)
What common topics and themes have you found in the literature? Use the topics and themes to design your conceptual framework.

2. Research Proposal

Write a research proposal. You may also elect to add a visual representation to your research proposal. The idea is for the visual to help you figure out your "thesis" and not to enter an art show. Approach this assignment from where you are with it and honor its incompleteness as part of the research process. Ask yourself does the written or visual proposal and presentation include or demonstrate:

- **Purpose: A clearly defined focus and purpose**
  What is the problem/issue to be addressed?

- **Rationale: Why you chose to explore this research topic and why it matters to others**
  What is going on your classroom which brings your attention to this problem/issue? What are your hunches about the reasons for this problem/issue? Why are you interested in this topic and why does it matter to you, your students, and the field?

- **Method and Data Sources:** How you propose to go about exploring your inquiry and possible data sources

2. Teacher Research Report (70%)

You are required to write a report that includes the following sections: Rationale/Introduction, Research Question & Outcomes, Review of Related Literature, Method, Context, Data Collection, Analysis of Findings including Limitations/Ethical Issues, and Self-study including Implications for practice/further research. All teacher research reports must adhere to APA format. Your project should be useful to you and your students. A written a report that includes the specific headings and subheading posted on Blackboard. See Criteria for Final Research Report.

Presentation

You are required to present your research project to your peers in an 8 minute presentation that includes a one-page handout of a special research resource for your peers, e.g., a research tool you found, a survey they can adapt in their classroom, technology tool you discovered, student exemplar that highlight the impact of your work, personal reflection to share. Oral presentations need to be professional and stay within the time frame allocated for the presentation and in consideration of peers' presentations.

Performance-Based Assessment of Self-Study Teacher Research Project

Criteria for Evaluating the Research Report (70 Total Possible Points)

Abstract

1. Have you provided a single, articulate, concise paragraph of no more than 150 words
2. Does you abstract concisely describe your purpose, context, method, key findings, and significance?

5 point possible

Rationale

1. Have you clearly and concisely explained why this research is important to you? Have you offered perspectives that shaped this question for you?
2. Did you provide a rationale for why this research is important to your students?
3. Have you addressed the broader educational and social significance of this research?

5 points possible

Statement of the Research Problem/Question

1. Have you clearly and concisely stated the research problem?
2. Have you clearly and concisely state your main research question and any sub questions?

5 points possible

Review of Literature and Conceptual Framework

1. Did you conduct an ongoing literature review which informed your research?
2. Is the review relevant and connected to your study?
3. Is the review adequate, coherent, and analytical?
4. Does the review include references from a variety of sources?
5. Is the review integrated into a conceptual framework with a mapping of the theories, literature, and phenomena that help to inform your study?

10 points possible

Research Method

1. Have you described your research context; community, school, and classroom context?
2. Have you included demographic information of participants?
3. Did you include your reflection of the problem? e.g., behaviors observed, possible causes?
4. Have you explained the reasons for your pedagogies based on your noticing of your classroom and the literature reviewed?
5. Have you described in detail what data you collected, how you collected it, and when you collected it, including data generated from your pedagogies and strategies?
6. Does your data include a variety of sources from multiple sources?
7. Did you include a timeline for the data you collected and your planned interventions?
8. Did you explain how you analyzed your data and include a complete data audit trail?
9. Have you included and explained the role of your critical friends in your data interpretations?
10. Did you explore using visuals and technologies for analyzing and displaying your findings in a coherent manner?

15 points possible

Findings

1. Did you circle back to your research question(s) to relate your findings?

2. Are the findings thoroughly and adequately presented?
3. Is there convincing evidence to support your themes?
4. Is there connection and coherence among the separate themes?
5. Did you share your findings with your critical friend?

10 points possible

Discussion and Implications

1. Have you explained the possible implications to your students' learning?
2. Have you explained the possible implications of to your understanding of teaching?
   Have you offered a self-assessment of how you addressed the self-study methodological components using the Five Foci chart?
   Have you discussed how you reshaped your practice from the feedback of critical friends?
   Does your discussion include evidence of your deep reflection and self-study of teaching?
   Revisit your original research questions. Take a retrospective journey and reflect back on the "self" or your role and the conscious (and perhaps at the time unconscious) consequences of your actions in the process of studying your teaching practice.
3. Have you adequately explained the possible implications to the education field?
4. Have you adequately explained the possible implications of your study to national and state education standards?
5. Have you discussed any limitations and identified future research possibilities?

10 points possible

References and Appendix

1. Did you follow the APA style for the report, references, citations, and appendix?
2. Are references current and from different sources?
3. Have you provided a complete list of all print and non-print (internet) references?

5 points possible

Organization

1. Does the report include a cover page, title, author's name, course, professor, and date?
2. Is your report well organized, grammatically correct, coherent and complete?
3. Does the report have your distinctive focus and voice? Have you used professional language?, i.e., no jargon Have you written in an accessible style and presentation?
4. Are all references cited in the research report included in the references?

5 points possible

Grading Scale:

***Exemplary*:** 70 points. Exceeds meeting criteria, multiple sources of evidence that substantially exceeds requirements.

Accomplished: 63-69 points. Provides convincing evidence of sound work, substantially meets requirements.

Developing: 58-62 points. Provides basic and somewhat convincing evidence that moderately meets criteria. Consider revision.

***Undeveloped*:** 57 points and below. No evidence or little evidence of meeting the criteria.

		literature? Use the topics and themes to design your conceptual framework later. Read: Chs. 9 & 10
6 10/6	ANALYSIS WORKSHOP	**POST Draft Data Sources & Pedagogies = Critical Friend Research Memo 2 & Response** Read Ch. 11
10/13	NO CLASS HOLIDAY Columbus Day Recess	**NO CLASS** (Mon classes meet instead of Tues classes this day only)
7 10/20	VALIDATION WORSKHOP	Begin analyzing data **POST Draft Data Analysis = Critical Friend Research Memo 3 & Response**
8 10/27	WRITING WORKSHOP	Read Ch. 12
9 11/3	ONLINE CF WORK Individual Consultation online	**POST: First Draft to CF and Response** Read Ch. 13
10 11/10	FINDINGS WORKSHOP	Bring draft to class on jump drive
11/17	ABSTRACT WORKSHOP Connections to Standards for Portfolio	Bring: Abstract Draft Read: Conducting Effective Presentations http://www.aera.net/meetings/Default.aspx?menu_id=22&id=299&terms=making+presentations+effectively&searchtype=1&fragment=False
12 11/24	ONLINE CF WORK Individual Consultation online	**POST Project Title** **Attend to any Needed Follow-ups with CF** Read "In Closing"
13 12/1	SEED Portfolio Presentations	Portfolio Review Days 12/1 and 12/3
14 12/8	Self-Study Teacher Research Project Conference Making research public and Further Research	**POST Research Project Papers in Drop Box** **Bring: Printed copy of Research Project** **Bring: Handout for Presentation** Final Course Evaluations