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

EDUC 612
INQUIRY INTO PRACTICE
Summer 2010

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Office Hours:
After class, by appointment

COURSE DATES/TIMES/LOCATIONS:
Tuesday, May 25: 5 – 8:30 p.m. Orientation & Class 1: Research I, Rm. 163
June 1, 8, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29 (5 – 8:30 p.m.): Lake Braddock SS, Rm M114 & M117

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,

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- 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
- acknowledge 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.

ADDITIONAL RELATED TEXTS (not required)

Lassonde, C. A., & Israel, S. E. (Eds.). (2007). *Teachers taking action: A comprehensive guide to teacher research.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Mills, G. (2007). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher.* (3rd 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. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

ASTL Community & Course Website: http://mymason.gmu.edu. Click on ASTL Fairfax Core 2010-2011. The course syllabus and other related course documents, including daily agendas, related Powerpoint presentations and announcements will be posted regularly on 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 electronic 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://library.gmu.edu/
Representative list of E-reserves to support teachers' growth of inquiry and professional

development:

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, C. (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.

Brookfield, S. (1995). What it means to be a critically reflective teacher. *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* (pp. 1 – 27). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. (1995). Becoming critically reflective: A process of learning and change. *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* (pp. 28-48). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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.

Dewey, J. (1933). What is thinking? *How we think* (pp. 3 –23)*.* Boston: D.C. Heath & Company.

Dewey, J. (1938). Criteria of experience. *Experience and education* (pp. 33-50). New York: Collier Books.

Dewey, J. (1938). The meaning of purpose. *Experience and education* (pp. 67-72). New York: Collier Books.

Dewey, J. (1944). Experience in thinking. *Democracy in education* (pp. 139-151). New York: The Free Press.

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.

Osterling, J., & Fox, R. (December 2004). The power of perspectives: Building a cross-cultural community of learners. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism 7* (6), pp. 489-505.

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.

Schön, D. (1983). Professional knowledge and reflection-in-action. *The reflective practitioner* (pp. 49-69). New York: Basic Books.

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. **Personal Journals and Shared Reflections (100 points)**
   Teachers in the Core will maintain a reflective journal throughout the Core, as explained at the orientation, and 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 will reflect on their learning, their students and/or practice and respond to the readings, research exercises, and discussions. After recording questions, ideas, and insights, Core teachers will share selected excerpts of their choice from their journals orally during class sessions and online as part of Discussion Forums (If the ASTL site doesn't work as anticipated, we'll use forums on Blackboard; url: http://courses.gmu.edu.) These journal entries will also be included among the data used in teacher research studies for the Core. 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 studies.

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

2. Class Participation Activities (100 points)

A. Exercises and reflections done in class exploring reflective practice, critical inquiry pedagogy, casting questions, and the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data obtained through various research strategies, and the creation of a potential action research study outline.

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)

Core teachers will 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. **Due: No later than Monday, July 29th, Electronic submission on CD, flashdrive, or other electronic storage (hard copy optional). These files will be large, so do NOT attempt to e-mail them.**

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 (6th edition).

EDUC 612 Grading Scale

Rating	Course Points
A+	295-300
A	285 – 294
A-	270 – 284
B+	255 – 269
B	240 – 254
B-	228 – 239
C	210 – 227
F	<209

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Class Topic	Assignments for this Class

Class One
 	
May 25
Core
Orientation
&
EDUC 612
Class One)
 	
5—8:30
PM
	• Part I: Core Orientation (5 – 6:30)
	
	• Part II: Introduction and overview of the Course, EDUC 612, *Inquiry Into Practice* (7:00-8:30 p.m.)
	  * Review of Syllabus
	  * Intro to My Mason
	  * TR Pre-Assessments
	  * Opening Reflection
		Teachers should purchase course texts and individual Core journal

Class Two June 1 5—8:30 PM	• Artifact sharing • Power Point & Reflective practice self-assessment and discussion: What is reflective practice? • Critical Friends Protocol: Beginning to define what it means to be a critically reflective teacher *Finding ways to gain insight into your area of focus for research (fish bowl) • Form Critical Friends Groups (CFGs) *Engage in Critical Friends Protocol • Assign Jig Saw Readings – Dewey, Brookfield, Schön Chapter excerpts • Focused journal entries in personal journal	**Bring** an artifact to class this evening that represents you as an individual **Begin reading** Falk & Blumenreich, Ch. 1, 2, 4 **Read** "Reflection is at the Heart of Practice" by Hole & McEntee **Read:** "Defining Reflection: Another look at John Dewey & Reflective Thinking" by Carol Rodgers Begin **Journal entries** in personal journal – may be based on topics suggested or own choice (see handout)

| Class Three

June 8

5 – 8:30 PM | • Reflective Practice - Continuing discussion & Refining our understanding of what it means to be a critically reflective teacher (jig saw- Dewey, Brookfield, Schön)

• Overview of Teacher Research – its components and process

• What is Teacher Research? Overview of Educational Research and an historical look at Teacher Research

• Understanding the influences literature can have in the teacher research process
*Discuss how theory serves as an analytical and interpretive framework for teachers trying to make sense of what goes on in the classroom.

• Critical Friends Protocol

Opening Discussion of the Multigenre paper: how it can bring into focus who we are as learners, teachers, and teacher-researchers. | **Finish reading Falk & Blumenreich, Ch. 1, 2, 4

Read: "Where can teacher research lead? One teacher's daydream" by Johnson.

Read Jig Saw Chapter excerpts (Dewey, Brookfield, Schön), as assigned.

Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class |
| Class Four

June 15

5 – 8:30 PM | • Deepening our understanding of and engagement in reflection -
Avoiding a "Hall of Mirrors"

• Research questions – casting & development of the question

• Developing YOUR research action plan from question through data analysis

• Critical Friends Protocol

Assign Jig Saw articles for next week | **Read:** "Teacher Reflection in the Hall of Mirrors" by L. Fendler.

Read F & B, Ch. 3, 5, 9, & 10

Post on My Mason: Forum Response One

Begin to think of potential unifying themes/metaphors for your Multigenre Papers

Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class |

Class Five
 	
June 17
 	
5 – 8:30 PM
	• Methodology:
	  *Identifying participants in the study
	  *Identifying data sources
	  *Data collection plans, techniques, & tools.
	  * Importance of triangulation
	
	• In class jigsaw & articles discussion
	--"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
	-- "The Power of Perspectives: Building a Cross-cultural Community of Learners" by Osterling & Fox [E-Reserves]
	
	• A look at ethical responsibilities related to conducting research.
		Read: F & B, Ch. 6
		
		Read: Your Jig Saw Article, as decided in Class Four
		
		Read: Begin to read the Fecho *Is This English?*
		
		Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class
		
		Continue to reflect about potential unifying themes/metaphors for your Multigenre Papers

Class Six June 22 5—8:30 PM	• Fecho Discussion • Observation -- Looking at different ways a researcher can obtain data through observation. *In class observation exercises for analysis and interpretation. Group debrief. Individual reflection. • Gaining an understanding of the importance of having multiple perspectives in obtaining and interpreting data.	**Finish reading**: Fecho *Is This English?* Continue to reflect about potential unifying themes/metaphors for your Multigenre Papers **Post on My Mason:** Forum Response Two Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class

Class Seven June 24 5—8:30 PM	• Supporting Teacher Research with Technology *Inspiration, Power Point, Spread Sheets, Tables, Data Collection Matrices *Data Analysis Software (SPSS & NVivo) • Discussion about interviewing and surveys -- Using structured interview guides and open-ended questions to collect data. • Discussing different strategies for data analysis and relating those to practice. • Continuing to develop YOUR Action Research Study with theoretical framework, data collection plan and plan for analysis • Introduction to the ASTL Professional Portfolio	**Read** "Technique isn't everything, but it is a lot" **Read:** F & B, Ch. 7, 8 , & Appendix 3 (APA Format) 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 8** about the theme of your MG paper Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class **Post on My Mason:** Forum Response Three
Class Eight June 29	• EDUC 612 Course Synthesis: Pulling it All Together and sharing of our emergent Teacher Action Research Plans • Presentations of Multigenre themes and plans • Course evaluations	**Final Multigenre project is due no later than Thursday, July 29, 2010**
July 29	• Submit Multigenre Papers by this date (CD or other electronic storage; hard copy optional) ****DO NOT E-MAIL YOUR PROJECT****	

	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 Online Postings *Learning Outcomes 3, 4, 5, & 8*	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 online. Journal entries synthesize and evaluate description and application to self as a teacher, learner, and researcher; consistently shares relevant passages
Reflection and Research Exercises Outcomes 3,4,5	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 *Learning Outcomes 3, 5, 6, & 7*	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

Designated *Performance-based Assessment* for the ASTL EDUC 612 *Inquiry Into Practice*

	Points	*No evidence* (Little or no evidence)	*Beginning* (Limited evidence)	*Developing* (Clear evidence)	*Accomplished* (Clear convincing and substantial evidence)
Multigenre Paper	100	F: <75	C: 75-79	B: 80-92	A: 93-100
Introduction & Personal Philosophy Statement *Learning Outcome 4*	10	No introduction is included.	Introduction lacks two or more of the key elements.	Introduction lacks one of the key elements.	**Introduction** included that contains all key elements: ***Philosophy/Beliefs statement*** about teaching Introduces the reader to the unifying theme. Provides a ***roadmap*** for the learning journey
Genres—Inquiry *Learning Outcome 4*	30	No description of self as learner, teacher, researcher. No theme is used to weave the genres together.	Two or more elements (learner, teacher, researcher) not developed. Limited use of a theme to weave the genres together.	One element (learner, teacher, researcher) not well developed. Theme is present, but doesn't clearly weave the genres together.	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 *Learning Outcome 4*	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 multiple excerpts from the personal reflective journal
Genres— Technology *Learning Outcome 8*	5	No evidence that technology was used.	Little evidence that technology was used.	Clear evidence that technology was used.	The presentation of the genres demonstrates effective use of ***technology***. Project submitted on CD or via personal web site

Key Events & Application of New EDUC 613 Readings *Learning Outcome 5*	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. Incorporates EDUC 613 readings to articulate who you were/are as a learner and a teacher
Future Research *Learning Outcome 4*	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, emergent/potential ideas for future teacher research (research plan).
Concluding Reflections (included at the end of MG paper) *Learning Outcome 4*	10	Reflection is not included	Reflection does not address what the writer has learned in the MG creation process	Reflection does not connect learning in EDUC 612 and the MG creation process to classroom practice	**Concluding Reflection:** Provides a *reflection* about what the writer has learned in the MG creation process. ***Connects learning to classroom practice***
Referencing *Learning Outcome 4*	10	No evidence of references OR References are not in APA style.	Limited use of Core readings and other current readings References contain APA errors.	Fewer than 6 Core readings and other current readings are referenced, and are not integrated thoroughly. References contain minor APA errors.	The paper integrates a minimum of 6 Core (EDUC 612 & 613) readings and/or other current, authoritative relevant literature that are properly referenced. References are in accurate *APA style.*
Overall Style *Learning Outcome 4*	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.