

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING PROGRAM**

**EDUC 665 DL1 Teacher Inquiry in Practice I (3 Credits)  
Fall 2017**

**PROFESSORS:**

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**PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES:**

- Prerequisites: Admission into the MEd Curriculum and Instruction concentration in Transformative Teaching program; completion of the EDUC 659 Teacher Leadership Course.
- Corequisites: EDUC 663 Culturally Relevant Pedagogy.

**UNIVERSITY CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Builds further understanding of teacher research as teachers form and frame salient questions, examine the existing literature related to their questions, and take actions to improve teaching and learning.

**COURSE DELIVERY METHOD:** This course will be delivered online using synchronous and asynchronous formats via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

**TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with Blackboard Collaborate conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-media-player>
  - Apple QuickTime Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

## EXPECTATIONS:

- **Course Participation:** Active and consistent participation in the course as described in the individual course syllabus is extremely important for online courses. Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Online courses will, at a minimum, have weekly requirements for student participation that can be documented by any or all of the following methods:
  - Submission/completion of assignments as specified by the professors
  - Communication with the professors
  - Active, meaningful, and respectful communication with peers

Remember, this course is **not** self-paced. There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **CLASS SCHEDULE** section of this syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.

- **Log-in Frequency:** Expect to log in to this course **at least 3 times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials. Students must also regularly check their GMU email for communications from the instructors.
- **Course Schedule:** Because asynchronous courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our sessions will generally start on Wednesday and finish on Tuesday. Synchronous meetings will be arranged as needed.
- **Written Assignments:** All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation. (Formal assignments do not include Blackboard discussions, class/course feedback, in-class reflections or journaling) The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style guide should be followed for formal written assignments. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support. Students will do the following:
  - Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
  - Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
  - Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
  - Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.
- **Technical Competence:** Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course.

- **Technical Issues:** Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly.
- **Mentoring/Advising:** If you would like to schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues, and you are unable to come to the Mason campus, we can meet via telephone or web conference. Send an email to your instructors to schedule your one-on-one session and include your preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:** Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. We suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** We will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructors.
- **Accommodations:** Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### **LEARNER OBJECTIVES:**

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Become researchers and reflective practitioners,
2. Plan, carry out, write, and present a classroom research project,
3. Frame research inquiries around moral/ethical purposes and on moral/ethical truths, and
4. Develop a critical perspective on issues related to teaching and learning.

### **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:**

This course fits with the core values of the College of Education and Human Development, which include collaboration, research based practice, innovation, ethical leadership, and social justice.

This course is designed to meet the following professional teaching standards:

- GMU Dispositions for a Career Educator I, II, and III
  - Commitment to the Profession
  - Commitment to Honoring Professional Ethical Standards
  - Commitment to Key Elements of Professional Knowledge
- Teachers College Columbia Teacher Expectations I and II
  - Lifelong Learners
  - Learner-Centered Educators
- NBPTS Propositions 2, 3, and 4
  - Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students
  - Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning
  - Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience

## REQUIRED TEXTS:

Caro-Bruce, C., Flessner, R., Klehr, M. and Zeichner, K. (2007). *Creating equitable classrooms through action research*. CA: Corwin.

Please Note: Additional articles, chapters, PowerPoint presentations, and media will be distributed and/or posted on Blackboard as needed. You should also be doing some background reading on your chosen research topic.

## COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION (ALIGNED WITH OBJECTIVES):

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructors.

### 1. Assignment descriptions

- Class Participation (Assesses objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4)
- Teacher Research Journal Reflections (Assesses objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4).  
This assignment provides you with an opportunity to formalize your thinking and plans around your research project and to allow your mentor to see where you are so that we can offer our support. Throughout the course, you must be engaged in reflection and ongoing dialogue about the research problem and process, drawing on classmates' knowledge and experience to address new and unresolved questions and issues. This work will allow you to generate ideas and to consider and negotiate interpretations of evidence that will result in a fuller understanding of your teaching and your students' learning. Given our ongoing emphasis on critical pedagogy, learner-centered teaching, and culturally relevant pedagogy, you are encouraged to consider incorporating one or more of these approaches as part of your research to improve teaching and learning in your classroom and school. There are seven assigned journal reflections over the course of the semester. Each will have a set of reflection prompts for you to address.

### 2. Assignment and examination weighting (percentages, points)

Class Participation	
Session #5	10 points
Session #6	10 points
Session #8	10 points
Teacher Research Journal Reflections	
Reflection #1	10 points
Reflection #2	10 points
Reflection #3	10 points
Reflection #4	10 points
Reflection #5	10 points
Reflection #6	10 points
Reflection #7	10 points

### 3. Grading policies (and grading scale appropriate for UG or GR level)

#### Grade Distribution

95-100	A
90-94	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
75-79	C
74 and below	F

#### PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

#### CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

#### GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

##### Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

## **Campus Resources**

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.

## 663/665 Class Schedule

**The two courses are integrated for the fall semester**

Sessions	Readings & Assignments
<p><b>Session 1 (2 weeks)</b></p> <p><b>Dates:</b> Sept. 6 – Sept. 19</p> <p><b>Topics:</b> Introduction to Culturally Relevant Teaching (CRT); Overview of the Conceptual and Theoretical Literature; Learner-centered teaching connections to CRT; Teacher Research</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch: the video overview of the fall semester</li> <li>2. Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brown-Jeffy &amp; Cooper article</li> <li>● Teaching Tolerance Critical Practices for Anti-Bias Education</li> <li>● Banks – Chapter 10: Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum Reform</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Participate in Discussion #1: Readings (See Discussion folder for guidelines)</li> <li>4. Begin to peruse the “Race: The Power of an Illusion” website to aid in your planning of your CRT Project and in preparation for a discussion in Session 4</li> <li>5. Complete <b>Teacher Research Journal Reflection #1</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Session 2 (2 weeks)</b></p> <p><b>Dates:</b> Sept. 20 – Oct. 3</p> <p><b>Topics:</b> Exploring culturally relevant teaching; Teacher Research</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Gay chapters 7 &amp; 8</li> <li>2. Participate in Discussion #2: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy –Teacher Identity &amp; Teacher Voices</li> <li>3. Complete <b>Teacher Research Journal Reflection #2</b></li> <li>4. <b>Due: CRP project reflection #1</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Session 3 (2 weeks)</b></p> <p><b>Dates:</b> Oct. 4 – Oct. 17</p> <p><b>Topics:</b> CRT; Teacher Research</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Scherff &amp; Spector chapters</li> <li>2. Bb Collaborate Session #1 – CRP project check in and bridge CRP into equity focused research</li> <li>3. <b>Complete Teacher Research Journal Reflection #3</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Session 4 (2 weeks)</b></p> <p><b>Dates:</b> Oct. 18 – Oct. 31</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Caro-Bruce chapters 1, 2 &amp; 13</li> </ol>

<p><b>Topic:</b> Teacher Research</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Participate in Discussion #3: Race: The Power of an Illusion</li> <li>3. Complete <b>Teacher Research Journal Reflection #4</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Session 5 (2 weeks)</b>  <b>Dates:</b> Nov. 1 – Nov. 14  <b>Topic:</b> Teacher Research</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Caro-Bruce chapters (choose two)</li> <li>2. Bb Collaborate Session #2 in Mentor groups</li> <li>3. Complete <b>Teacher Research Journal Reflection #5</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Session 6 (2 weeks)</b>  <b>Dates:</b> Nov. 15 – Nov. 28  (Includes Thanksgiving recess  Nov. 23 – Nov. 26)  <b>Topic:</b> Teacher Research</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read Caro-Bruce chapters (choose two)</li> <li>2. Participate in Discussion #4 on Research</li> <li>3. Complete <b>Teacher Research Journal Reflection #6</b></li> <li>4. <b>Due: CRT project reflection #2</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Session 7 (1 week)</b>  <b>Dates:</b> Nov. 29 – Dec. 5  <b>Topic:</b> Teacher Research</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete <b>Teacher Research Journal Reflection #7</b></li> <li>2. <b>Due Dec. 5th: CRT project on VoiceThread</b></li> </ol>
<p><b>Session 8 (1 week)</b>  <b>Dates:</b> Dec. 6 – Dec. 12  <b>Topic:</b> CRT</p>	<p><b>Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete Feedback in VoiceThread on CRT project</li> <li>2. Complete end of semester reflective feedback</li> </ol>

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

## ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

The PBA will be assessed according to the professional standards and the specific assignment guidelines using the following rubric:

### Teacher Inquiry in Practice I *Assignment rubric*

CRITERIA	Beginning (Does not meet standards) <b>1</b>	Developing (Meets standards) <b>2</b>	Accomplished (Exceeds standards) <b>3</b>	Exemplary (Exceeds standards) <b>4</b>
<b>Imagination and Creativity</b> (GMU I, TC II)	Beginning to take risks beyond what is familiar	Generates multiple possibilities before attempting to solve problems creatively	Creative problem-solving technique includes multiple possibilities, research, divergent and convergent thinking, and tenacity	Metacognitive and innovative thinking and practice derived from creative problem solving that sparks more questions, possibilities, and creativity for self and students. Overcomes social and material obstacles
<b>Theorizing/Praxis</b> (GMU I, TC II, NBPTS 3)	Beginning to question own thinking about pedagogy <i>or</i> practice	Questions own thinking about pedagogy <i>and</i> practice	Consistently questions own thinking about pedagogy and practice w/ students and families, seeks research texts and studies, and applies theories to shape practice	Metacognitively synthesizes own and others' theories, hypotheses, and research and connects them to practice and uses practice to test theory
<b>Content Depth</b> (GMU III, TC II, NBPTS 2, NETS-T 1,2,3,4,5)	Demonstrates uneven skill and knowledge about the disciplines and practices that you present	Demonstrates skill and knowledge about the trends, theories, <i>or</i> disciplinary practices in education	Demonstrates skill and knowledge about the trends, controversies, theories, <i>and</i> disciplinary practices in teaching and effectively applies skills and	Demonstrates critical metacognition about skill and knowledge on the trends, trends, theories, and disciplinary practices in teaching and learning and effectively applies skills and knowledge to create critical,

			knowledge to create critical, imaginative, and creative thinking for all students.	imaginative, creative, and relevant multicultural curricula for all students.
<b>Research skills and impact on practice (GMU II, TC 1, NBPTS 4)</b>	Demonstrates minimal understanding of the research process and potential impact on practice.	Demonstrates clear understanding of the research process and potential impact on practice.	Demonstrates clear understanding of the research process and potential impact on practice; demonstrates imaginative, creative, and critical thought about some aspect of the research process.	Demonstrates clear understanding of the research process and potential impact on practice; demonstrates imaginative, creative, and critical thought in all aspects of the research process.
<b>Literature Review</b>	No literature review included	At least five relevant sources are reviewed; however there is little synthesis of information from the sources	At least seven relevant sources are reviewed and there is adequate synthesis of information from the sources	More than seven relevant sources are reviewed and there is a sophisticated synthesis of information from the sources with strong connections to their own research project
<b>Elements of the Research Report</b>	Fails to address all required elements of the research report	Minimally addresses all elements of the research report	Adequately addresses all elements of the research report	Thoughtfully and thoroughly addresses all elements of the research report