

George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Teaching Culturally, Linguistically, Diverse & Exceptional Learners Program  
EDCI 777 6F1- Research to Practice  
Online - Summer 2020  
June 1-August 5<sup>th</sup> 2020

### PROFESSOR

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### Course Description

- A. *Prerequisites:* All other program courses or permission of instructor
- B. *University catalog course description:* EDCI 777 emphasizes the teacher as a change agent through critical inquiry into practice. The course includes an overview of the basic elements of educational research, methods (quantitative and qualitative), questions addressed, design, and data collection and analysis.
- C. *Expanded Course Description:* Teachers are often encouraged to implement “research-based” practices, required to attend workshops where research findings are presented, provided with lists of books that synthesize research, and asked to suggest changes in practice based on the implications of research. Although these practices have their place, the assumption implicit in much of the discourses surrounding educational research is that teachers are *consumers* and/or *objects* of research, rather than *producers* of research. The past decade has seen a growing movement to upend those assumptions through an emphasis on the importance of teacher research. Thus, the research and theory we will read and the methodologies with which we will engage are those associated with “teacher research” (i.e., research conducted by teachers for professional purposes). Teacher research positions teachers as *producers* of knowledge—professionals who can learn about and improve their practice by studying important questions that grow from their own experiences and observations.

This course, and the framework of teacher research, offers a way to systematize our examination of our own teaching practices and our own attempts to become better learners and better teachers. By making our questions more visible to ourselves and to our colleagues, being more rigorous in our gathering of data about the situation and being intentional in our quest to find out how our interventions are working, we become students of teaching and thus learners in the company of our students.

### Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on June 1, 2020. **Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

### Technical Requirements

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

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard’s supported browsers see:  
[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#supported-browsers](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)  
To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:  
[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)

- 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 the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]
- 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: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### Expectations

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Tuesday, and finish on Monday.
- Log-in Frequency:  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.
- Participation:  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:  
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, participants will achieve the following outcomes:

- Formulate an inquiry/action research question that is relevant to their work setting
- Understand the components and tools of data collection and analysis.
- Analyze the use of inquiry/action research as a foundation for professional growth, improvement of instruction, and advocacy
- Identify strategies for sharing the results of inquiry/action research

### Required Texts

Baily, S., Shahrokhi, F. & Carsillo, T. (Eds.) (2017). *Experiments in agency: A global partnership to transform teacher research*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers. (Available on Blackboard).

#### Teacher Research Websites

[http://gse.gmu.edu/research/tr/tr\\_action/](http://gse.gmu.edu/research/tr/tr_action/) (GMU teacher research site)

<http://www.accessexcellence.org/LC/TL/AR/> (teacher research site)

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ntrp/> (UK teacher research site)

<http://www.teacherresearch.net/> (international teacher research site)

### Course Requirements

Each Tuesday, I will be posting an announcement on Blackboard that will also be emailed to you. **These weekly emails are VERY important for your success in the course.** Material will be suggested to you for readings, general observations from your BB posts will be shared, and deadlines and mini-assignments that are part of your grade will be provided. **Please ensure that you are RECEIVING and READING these emails each week.** I am definitely stressing this point because I have found the rare student does neither and then is quite upset that they didn't know what was going on.

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via email. All projects must be typed, in 11- or 12-point font, with one inch margins, double-spaced, in Times New Roman font. Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall points for each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully.

Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, excepting extraordinary circumstances. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please contact me within a reasonable timeframe. Note: I reserve the right to add, alter, or omit any assignment as necessary during the course of the semester.

#### Course Performance Evaluation

##### **Blackboard Participation and Assignments (40 points)**

Each week you will have a specific task assigned to you to work individually, in small groups, or in the whole group. These tasks will be shared (usually) by Sunday and should take 4-5 hours during the week to complete. This is equivalent to CLASS time, for a 10 week course for a three-credit class. This does not include time for you to complete your readings and other graded assignments. Please be aware that time for reading and graded assignments will take additional time. Each task will tell you how many times you will have to log into BB, whom you might be paired with to do collaborative work or other specific tasks/tools that you might need to use that week to make progress in the course.

##### **Mini Papers (30 points)**

These mini papers make up the foundation of any action research project. These will be due in Weeks 3, 4, and 6, to tell a cohesive story of what you think is an action research project you would want to undertake. They are due on the dates outlined in the schedule of classes VIA email to your professor. More details will be provided on BB in the weeks leading up to the submission

**PLEASE NOTE\_ this class is a scaffolded class, and the work you are doing online, in conversation with your peers and with me, will help you understand how to move forward. You might want to rush through and get these done quickly – but I will**

strongly encourage you to NOT do that. The course cannot be rushed, and you will have to be patient and remember it is THE PROCESS, not the PAPERS that is important.

1. **CONTEXT MATTERS** - This 4-page paper tells the reader about the context of your most recent teaching environment. Provide the reader with an engaging and thoughtful description of where you taught – the community, the school and your classroom should all be covered in a tight and well-constructed narrative (7 points).
2. **MY CASE FOR STUDY** – This 4-page paper tells the reader what two concerns you have about YOUR teaching. This paper should reflect on what you have found YOU struggle with, what you think YOU could do better, and what impact that might have on the learning of your students. I have highlighted YOU in this because this should not be about deciding what the students should do better (for instance, if homework is a problem, you should not make the case to say “students need to do a better job of turning in homework” but you should be thinking about “how can I think about the usefulness of homework and support my students in their learning at home?” – Do you see the difference? This paper should provide the reader with a seamless transition from your context, to what it is that you would want to understand more about your teaching. (10 points).
3. **STANDING ON THE SHOULDER OF GIANTS** - This 8-page paper can be worked on as you work on the other two papers, as you collect resources about the idea you are interested in. You will craft a synthesis of the literature to start to understand what you are learning about your concerns in the context you are most aligned with. A sample literature review will be provided closer so that you have a model of what is expected (13 points).

### **A research proposal – 15 points**

The goal of action research is to 1) understand your context, 2) analyze your teaching, and 3) use the work of experts (literature) to make a plan to understand how you can transform your own teaching. Using the mini-papers as your foundation, please write a research 10-page research proposal that covers the following sections:

1. Introduction and Context – 1 page that synthesizes mini-papers 1 and 2.
2. Literature – 2 pages that synthesizes mini-paper 3.
3. Interventions – 3-pages that provides the reader with a cohesive plan for what sorts of interventions you will be designing to address the research problem. These interventions are actions you will take in your classroom to improve your teaching. Think of this as a mini-unit plan to address one concern. More details will come during the semester. Think of this as a roadmap to how you will make changes in your classroom. You must have between 4-6 interventions to be planned out over three months.
4. Data Collection – 2-pages that explores what sorts of data will you collect over the duration of the interventions.
5. Reflection – the final two pages covers:
  - a. What do you want to learn from this project?
  - b. How you might analyze the data?
  - c. What concerns you have about any of the topics covered in points 1-4.
  - d. Who else might be interested in learning about your results?

### **Communicating with Stakeholders – 15 points**

Prepare three letters (each 1 page) to the following people:

1. An administrator to ask permission to do this work and how it will support your growth as a teacher leader?
2. A parent to explain why you are doing this project in your classroom.
3. A family member to share with them what all this is about.

### **Assessment and Mastery Grading**

All assignments will be evaluated be holistically using a mastery grading system; the general rubric is described, and a specific rubric provided with each assignment. A student must demonstrate “mastery” of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a “B” level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement—through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work—will she/he be assessed with an “A” level score. With a mastery grading system, students must *choose* to “go above and beyond” in order to earn “A” level scores.

- “A” level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional

relevant component. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers' efforts.

- "B" level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.
- "C" level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- "F" level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible.

Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are passing a course but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 10th week. Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. A copy of the contract should be provided to the TCLDEL office.

#### **Assignments/Possible Points**

Blackboard Participation and Assignments	40 points
Mini-paper	30 points
Research Proposal	15 points
Stakeholder letter	15 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>

### **GRADING POLICY**

At George Mason University course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is a measure of quality. The university-wide system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade	GRADING	Grade Points	Interpretation
A+	=100	4.00	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements
A	94-99	4.00	
A-	90-93	3.67	
B+	85-89	3.33	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
B	80-84	3.00	
C*	70-79	2.00	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course
F*	<69	0.00	

Note: "C" is not satisfactory for a licensure course; "F" does not meet requirements of the School of Education

### **Professional Dispositions**

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

[Additional course or program specific language may be added.]

### **HONOR CODE & INTEGRITY OF WORK**

**Integrity of Work:** TCLDEL students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (<http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>). The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated as such.

**Violations of the Honor Code** include:

1. Copying a paper or part of a paper from another student (current or past);
2. Reusing work that you have already submitted for another class (unless express permission has been granted by your current professor **before** you submit the work);
3. Copying the words of an author from a textbook or any printed source (including the Internet) or closely paraphrasing without providing a citation to credit the author. For examples of what should be cited, please refer to: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>
4. You may also not "reuse" fieldwork hours. Each placement must have 20 documented hours that are solely for each course that you are in; you may be at the same site, but the same hours may not be counted towards the same course.

## LATE WORK POLICY

At the graduate level all work is expected to be of high quality and submitted on the dates due. *Work submitted late will be reduced one letter grade for every day of delay.* Because we live in uncertain times, if you have any extraordinary circumstances (*think* flood, earthquake, evacuation) that prevent you from submitting your work in a timely manner, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible after the circumstances occur and make arrangements to complete your work. *It is up to the discretion of the instructor to approve the late/makeup work.*

## NETIQUETTE

As we will be working together in an online environment, netiquette will be significantly important in terms of creating a community of thinkers and learners. Netiquette is a way of defining professionalism through network communication; it is a way to foster a safe on-line learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual.

For our class, here are the netiquette guidelines for working and communicating online:

- Do not use offensive language.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express even your minority opinion.
- Think before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- When in doubt, always check with your instructor for clarification
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.

## 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 <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).

### Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk2o should be directed to [tk2ohelp@gmu.edu](mailto:tk2ohelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk2o>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

**Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

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

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please also note the prompts outlined here will change as the course progresses. Please refer to BB For the weekly prompt

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
<b>Week 1</b> June 2-8	Getting to know each other and our understanding of research Contextualizing our classrooms and understanding action research	Baily et al, 2017 – Chapters 1-3
<b>Week 2</b> June 9-15	Finding our focus Ethics and Assumptions	Zeni, 2015 (See BB) Websearch reading/activity
<b>Week 3</b> June 16-22	Understanding the role of literature	Davis et al 2018 Aidinopoulou, 2020 <b>Mini paper 1 – due June 22</b>
<b>Week 4</b> June 23-29	Action research planning – What is your intervention??	Baily et al, Group 1 – Section 1 Group 2 – Section 2 Group 3 – Section 3 <b>Mini paper 2 – due June 29</b>
<b>Week 5</b> June 30-July 6	Action research planning – Designing and planning your intervention and understanding data collection	Group 1 – Section 2 Group 2 – Section 3 Group 3 – Section 1
<b>Week 6</b> July 7-13	Cycling through AR – an iterative process.	Selection of Articles from Networks. Details will be provided. <b>Mini paper 3 – due July 13</b>
<b>Week 7</b> July 14-20	"Implementing" your action and data collection	Gordon & Solis, 2018 Wolkenhauer et al 2017 <b>Mini-proposal peer reviews next week so you should have something ready by the 20<sup>th</sup>.</b>
<b>Week 8</b> July 21-27	The impact of action research	Jacobs & Crowell, 2018 Selected articles TBA
<b>Week 9</b> July 27-August 3	Final week	<b>Mini-proposal due July 30<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Letters due August 5 (three letters in one document)</b>