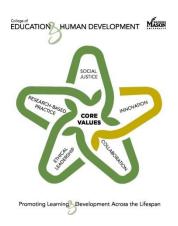George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Teaching Culturally & Linguistically Diverse and Exceptional Learners Program

EDCI 777 -Section DL2 - Research to Practice

3 Credits, Fall 2022
Asynchronous Online - Aug. 22 - Dec. 14, 2022

Faculty
Name: Lorraine Valdez Pierce, Ph.D.
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Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Required Prerequisite: Completion of all other program requirements, including internship courses EDCI 792, 793 or 794 for licensure candidates
Recommended Corequisite: EDCI 776

University Catalog Course Description
Provides culminating experience that synthesizes and applies essential elements of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse and exceptional learners in international contexts.   Emphasizes teacher as change agent through critical inquiry into practice. Promotes collaboration among teachers and school professionals to advance achievement of diverse learners.

For COVID 19 procedures in Fall 2022: Students, please be aware of and follow all policies and procedures for Mason's Safe Return to Campus: https://www2.gmu.edu/Safe-Return-Campus

Weekly Announcements

    Sunday Announcements/Email: Be sure to look for and read the Sunday announcements on our course site on Blackboard (also sent through email) with updates on the course schedule, a preview of the coming week, and plans for upcoming deadlines.

Course Overview

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 usefulness, the assumption implicit in much of the discourse 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 about and the methodologies with which we will engage are those associated with teacher research, also known as **action 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 emerge from their own experiences and observations.

This course is designed to provide teachers with supports for conducting self-assessments and observations of their own teaching, trying out instructional innovations and tools, and helping them reflect on what works in their teaching. Teachers will conceptualize, design, and implement an **original action research project** about their teaching. Each teacher will need to begin the action research project promptly and continue to work on it each week. Course readings, online discussions with course mates, online resources, and instructor feedback are all designed to support each individual in their professional development as a teacher researcher.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via the 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 @gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on Aug. 19.

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

  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

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their Mason email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.

- Students may need a headset microphone for use with Zoom or the Blackboard Collaborate web 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: 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/

Expectations
- Course Week: For this course offered in an asynchronous format, our course week will **begin on Mondays and end on Sundays.**
- Log-in Frequency:
  Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their Mason 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 reading or viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in class 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 on the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is each student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities, and assignment due dates.
- 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 a preferred meeting format 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 that others do not consider them 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. 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

This course is designed to enable candidates to:

1. Formulate an action research question that is relevant to their work setting;
2. Review research and prepare a literature review in support of the research question;
3. Design and conduct an action research project;
4. Use action research as a foundation for professional development, improvement of instruction, and advocacy for students; and
5. Identify approaches for sharing the results of action research.

Professional Standards

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

Mason 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

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 Text

Sagor, R.D. & Williams, C. (2017). *The action research guidebook* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Recommended Texts

Grahn, L. and D. McAlpine. (2017). *The keys to strategies for language instruction*.
        Alexandria, VA: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Putman, S. M. & T. Rock. (2018). *Action research: Using strategic inquiry to improve teaching and learning.*
        Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

 Short, D., H. Becker, N. Cloud, A.B. Hellman, L. N. Levine. (2018). *The 6 principles for exemplary teaching of English learners, grades K – 12.* Alexandria, VA: TESOL International Assn.

Teacher Research Websites

http://www.practicalteacherresearch.com/current-issue.html (Journal of Teacher Action Research)
https://newprairiepress.org/networks/ (online journal for teacher research)
https://www.drawntoscience.org/educators/action-research/ (examples in science, ESL)
http://teachersnetwork.org/tnli/research/ (teacher research)
http://carn.org.uk/?from=carnnew/ (international teacher research)

More Action Research Resources

Each starred (*) textbook below contains at least 2 sample Action Research reports.

Alber, S.M. (2011). *A toolkit for action research*. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield. *(contains lots of sample data collection tools & data analysis display formats)*

*Bradbury-Huang, H. (2015). The *SAGE handbook of action research: Participative inquiry & practice*. London: Sage Ltd.

Dana, N. F. & D. Yendol-Hoppey. (2014). *The reflective educator's guide to classroom research, 3rd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

*Hendricks, C. (2016). 4th ed. *Improving schools through action research.* Columbus, OH: Pearson.

McNiff, J. (2017). *Action research*. London: Sage Ltd.

*Mertler, C. A. (2019). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators. 6th Ed*. Los Angeles: Sage.

*Mills, G. E. (2017). 6th ed. *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, hard copy).

Assignments

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage of Grade
Discussion Board & Assignments	**Weekly**	30%
Action Research Plan	**Wk 3: 9/11/22**	10%
Literature Review	**Wk 5: 9/25/22**	15%
Data Collection Plan	**Wk 7: 10/9/ 22**	15%
Final Action Research Paper	**Wk 15: 12/4/22**	30%

Other Requirements

Online Participation/Attendance Policy

Students are expected to participate in **all** online discussions. Not participating in an online discussion module will be reflected as an absence. **Students with two or more absences will not receive credit for the course**. In case of an emergency or situation that interferes with your participation**,** please send the instructor an email as soon as possible.

Submission Requirements

Written assignments will be submitted to Blackboard by the specified deadline. Each assignment will be uploaded by 11:59 pm EST on the date due. Only Word documents will be accepted for work generated by each candidate. These should be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced with one-inch margins. No cell phone or other photo images of required documents will be accepted.

Resubmission Policy: Course requirements (summative assessments) that have been graded and returned to you with the instructor's feedback will not be considered for re-submission for a higher grade. The Dean for Student & Academic Affairs strongly discourages this practice.

File-naming Protocol: When sending or submitting any draft files or other materials electronically (e.g., email or Blackboard), please ensure that the filename includes *your last name and first initial, the topic or title of the file being submitted in an abbreviated form,* and *the date submitted* as follows:
         MartinezL_ARPlan_Sept 11.2022

Late Work Policy

All work is expected to be of high quality (produced electronically as a Word document) and submitted on the dates due. *Work submitted late may be reduced one letter grade for every day of delay.* When you face circumstances (e.g., illness) 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 at the discretion of each instructor to approve late/makeup work.*

Course Withdrawal with Dean Approval

Withdrawal from a course after the last day for dropping that course requires approval by the student's academic dean and is permitted only for nonacademic reasons that prevent course completion (see Mason catalog). *Students must contact an academic advisor* to withdraw after the deadline. There is no guarantee that such withdrawals will be permitted.

Incomplete (IN)

This grade may be given to students who are in good standing but who are 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 9th week. Unless an explicit written extension is filed with the Registrar's Office by the faculty deadline, the grade of IN is changed by the registrar to an F (Mason catalog). Faculty may grant an Incomplete with a contract developed for the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. The faculty member does not need to allow up to the following semester for the student to complete the course. A copy of the contract will be kept on file in the APTDIE office.

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement:
Every student registered for any TCLDEL course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit the following assessments: International Elementary Internship Evaluation, InTASC Rubric, and the Observer Disposition Assessment to VIA through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessments to VIA (through Blackboard) will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required VIA submission, the IN will convert to a NC nine weeks into the following semester.

GRADING

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 4-pt. Rubric	Grading 100-pt. Scale	Conversion to Mason Grade Points	Interpretation
A+	4.0	=100	4.00	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements
A	3.85	94-99	4.00	
A-	3.7	90-93	3.67	
B+	3.5	85-89	3.33	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
B	3.0	80-84	3.00	
C*	2.0	70-79	2.00	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course
F*	<2.0	<69	0.00	

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

See the University Catalog for details: http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/

Additional Note on Grading: Each instructor's grading policy is based on (a) a professional philosophy that reflects his/her training on assessment and evaluation and (b) prior experience teaching a course. Therefore, instructors should not be expected to assign grades in the same way.

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. See our class Blackboard web site for more information on how to avoid plagiarism.

Professional Dispositions
See https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/

Class Schedule

Module & Week #	Topics	Readings/Assignments
Each week you'll be responsible for the assigned readings and Discussion Board assignments, as well as viewing materials and completing assignments in weekly modules on Blackboard. You'll also need to meet weekly deadlines for participation as described in this syllabus.		
1 **8/22 - 28**	What is Action Research? 4 Stages in the Action Research process. Descriptive vs. Quasi-Experimental research. Course requirements. Self-Introductions.	*Sagor & Williams, Ch. 1* *Module #1* *Discussion Board Activities* *Review Syllabus, Course Schedule, & Due Dates*
2 **8/29 – 9/4**	Finding a focus. Identifying and narrowing down a research topic. **Work on Action Research Plan.**	*S & W, Ch. 2* *Module #2* *Discussion Bd Activities*
3 **9/5 - 11**	Refining the focus. Selecting your research topic. The literature review. **Work on Literature Review.** **Due this week: Action Research Plan.**	*S & W, Ch. 3* *Module #3*
4 **9/12 - 18**	Articulating & Drawing your Theory of Action. **Work on Literature Review.**	*S & W, Chs. 4 & 5* *Module #4* *Discussion Bd Activities*
5 **9/19 - 25**	Determining your Research Question. How to write your Research Question. **Due this week: Literature Review.**	*S & W, Ch. 6* *Module #5* *Discussion Bd Activities*
6 **9/26 – 10/2**	Building a data collection plan. Triangulation matrix. Validity & reliability of results. **Work on Data Collection plan.**	*S & W, Ch. 7* *Module #5* *Discussion Bd Activities*
7 **10/3 - 9**	Independent Workdays. Draft your **Data Collection Plan**. *Individual conferences as needed.* **Due this week: Data Collection Plan.**	*Module #7* *No additional readings*
8 **10/10 - 16**	Analyzing your Data. Looking for patterns in the data. **Conduct your action research this week.**	*Module #8* *S & W, Ch. 8 (pages 128 – 154)*
9 **10/17 - 23**	Analyzing your Data. *Individual conferences as needed.* **Conduct your action research this week.**	*Module #9* *S & W, Ch. 8 (pages 155 - 166)* *Discussion Bd Activities*
10 **10/24 - 30**	Turning Findings into Action Plans. Data-based decision making. **Conduct your action research this week.**	*S & W, Ch. 9* *Module #10* *Discussion Bd Activities*

11 10/31 – 11/6	Reporting and Sharing Action Research. Writing an abstract for your final paper. *Individual conferences as needed.* **Conduct your action research this week. Begin drafting final paper.**	*S & W, Ch. 10* *Module #11* *Discussion Bd Activities*
12 11/7 - 13	Writing up your Action Research Paper. **Conduct your action research this week. Work on final paper.**	*Module #12* *Discussion Bd Activities*
13 11/14 - 20	Writing Week. **Conduct your action research this week. Continue drafting final paper.**	*Module #13* *Discussion Bd Activities*
14 11/21 -27	**Thanksgiving Break – Nov. 23 - 27** *Writing Week. Individual Conferences as needed.* **If possible, work on drafting Final Action Research paper.**	*Module # 14* *Discussion Bd Activities*
15 11/28 – 12/4	Finalizing Action Research Paper. Post abstract or visual representation of your project on DB. **Course Evaluation Forms. Feedback Forms. Materials Release Forms.** **Due this week: Final Action Research paper.**	*Module #15* *Discussion Bd Activities*

Note: *Faculty reserve the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students. Discussion Board & Assignments may be added as the semester progresses – see Blackboard for updates.*

Examples of action research projects are presented in our course textbook, on teacher research web sites, and in the books listed on Page 5 of this syllabus.

In addition, the course instructor will make available to you on Blackboard sample projects written by previous students in this course.

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/).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments.
- Questions or concerns regarding the 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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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

Assignment Descriptions

1) Discussion Board & Assignments – due Weekly

Discussion Board (DB) will be an essential, critical part of your learning in this online course. In weekly Discussion Board postings, you will join your online class community in building trust through individual feedback and collaboration. You'll be responsible for responding to the instructor's questions, as well as providing critical and constructive peer feedback, including follow up questions, to others in an assigned small group. In order for you to interact with all students in this course and with teachers having similar research interests, small groups may change as your action research questions become finalized. Since each of you will be sharing various stages of your action research project and waiting for feedback from others, it will be incumbent upon each of you to respond to each other by the deadlines stated on DB.

Your interactions with others should be honest and helpful, supportive without being unkind or personally offensive. You'll be given specific questions to respond to and a deadline by which to provide your feedback to others. You'll also complete assignments on DB based on assigned readings and for formative feedback on your own work. Be sure to check for and respond to multiple questions or prompts on DB each week.

Guidelines for Discussion Board Postings

1. Since each Weekly Module begins on Monday, ***you should begin posting no later than Wednesday evening*** in order to ensure timely feedback to others and to participate in the discussion during the week. ***Your final posting or response to each weekly prompt should be no later than midnight on Saturday night***.
2. Keep your response focused on the question(s) being posed in each prompt.
3. Share your personal and work experiences if they are directly relevant (e.g., teaching or internship experiences, courses in this program, readings).
4. Upload activities wherever they are indicated on DB or in the weekly module.
5. If you need to cite our textbook or other sources, include citations in parentheses and add page numbers when using a direct quotation.

6. Post a minimum of 100 and a maximum of 200 words in your response to each prompt and to each other.
7. Consider Db a safe place for open and friendly discussion of your work and the work of others. Offer supportive, critical feedback to course mates with a positive and kind frame of mind.
8. Your Db postings will be scored every few weeks, with feedback sent to you.

Action Research Project Overview

Teachers will design an *action research project* that is relevant to their present or future teaching positions. You will identify an area of professional growth and possibly a teaching intervention (an evidence-based teaching approach) that has a high likelihood of improving your students' learning, write a literature review and draft a plan for this project. You will describe how you plan to share the results of your study with other teachers.

Both pre- and in-service teachers must complete the project. It is possible to partner with another candidate for the purpose of sharing data and getting feedback on a common topic. However, each candidate in this course must write their own, original action research paper*. The data you plan to collect will depend on your research question, the teaching intervention, and the students. Data sources for this project may include combinations of the following:

1) quantitative analyses – test scores, survey results
2) qualitative analysis – non-numeric data such as interviews & teacher observation notes
3) student work samples - pre- and post-tests, writing samples, audio or video samples
4) visual representations - PowerPoints, images or photos of the classroom

Each stage of the research process will be submitted for a separate score as indicated below in order to make the process manageable for you. This type of scaffolding supports formative assessment and allows the instructor to provide you with actionable feedback to help improve your understanding of each stage.

*Papers or projects submitted for credit in another course cannot also be resubmitted for a grade in this course.

2) Action Research Plan

Begin with a plan. Describe how you found your focus. Describe the problem, situation, or targeted professional learning goal, the level of language proficiency of any language learners involved in your research and their priority learning needs, and the data to be collected. Indicate your role as current or future teacher and total contact hours per week with students. List preliminary sources for your literature review. Draft a research question. Identify at least one teaching skill that you would like to improve in order to become a more effective teacher and promote student learning.

3) Literature Review

Write a review of research that informs and supports the selection of your research topic. Once you identify your research topic and question, use search engines such as Mason Library and Google Scholar to do a focused search for at least 10 sources on your topic, a combination of peer reviewed journal articles, book chapters, books, and online blogs and articles on professional educator web sites (e.g., *Reading Rockets*). You'll need to submit a 5 – 7-page review (double-spaced in 12-point font) synthesizing the main points of each source that supports your research topic. Write an integrated review based on common themes across all sources rather than writing a paragraph describing each source separately (see Bb for how to write an integrated literature review).

4) Data Collection Plan

Describe how you plan to implement your research plan. Identify at least three data sources and formulate a data collection plan, including assessments of student learning, if relevant. Provide a timeline for implementation of your research, with actions to be conducted week by week.

5)
3 Final Action Research Paper

Prepare a synthesis of your literature review, data collection plan, data analysis, and action plan combined for a complete action research report. Describe how you implemented your research and analyze the collected data. Describe how you plan to share your research with course mates and possibly teacher colleagues.