

Oakland University
School of Education and Human Services
Department of Teacher Development and Educational Services

EST6500: Collaborative Action Research
Summer 2018

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Email me or text me whenever you need me!!!

Description

Informs practitioners and develops their skills in the use of qualitative and quantitative research to identify best practices and improve their practice at the classroom and school levels. Collaborative, systematic inquiry using the basic principles of research will be used to empower professionals as teachers and leaders.

Required Texts

Mertler, C. (2008). *Action research: Teachers as researchers in the classroom*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Optional Text

Fine, M. (2018). *Just research in contentious times: Widening the methodological imagination*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Central Questions

- a. How can action research contribute to continued teacher and student growth?
- b. How do reflection and collaborative inquiry impact and inform professional practice in education?
- c. How can action research be used as a vehicle for continuous improvement and increased student achievement for all student groups?
- d. What might action research contribute to the prospect of equal access to curriculum and instruction for marginalized groups?
- e. In what ways might action research transform classroom practice and schools?
- f. How does action research serve as a means for empowering individual teachers and students?

Learning Goals

The aims of EST6500 are to develop awareness of the importance of reflective practice and collaborative inquiry. Through demonstrating the ability to think reflectively and act collaboratively, students will gain

an enhanced understanding of the interconnected nature of action research, enhanced instruction, and increased student achievement. Student who have completed EST6500 are expected to demonstrate:

- An understanding of action research and collaborative inquiry as a theoretical frame and as an application to enhance and improve classroom instruction
- An increased awareness of their own educational philosophy, the contexts in which they must work, pedagogical practice and how action research works to bridge those three facets of education.

Course Topics

- a. Introduction to Action Research
- b. Identifying a researchable problem
- c. Research design
- d. Data Collection
- e. Data Analysis
- f. Presenting Research Plans
- g. Results and Action Plan

Course Goal

At the end of this course students will have a fully designed action research project to be conducted in the Fall of 2018. Some students may be ready to conduct their research this summer (2018), which can be accepted based on readiness standards determined in collaboration with the instructor. The final project/paper will have the following components:

- a. Introduction (problem statement, research questions)
- b. Literature Review (from EST6000)
- c. Research Design
- d. Data Analysis
- e. Results and Action Plan

For those students who will not be able to complete their action research study by the end of Summer Session 2, your project/paper will have variations on sections d. and e.

Assignments

Moodle Discussion: Questions essential to your learning will be posted each Thursday (or earlier) on Moodle. Post a response to **two** of the two or three questions available to you. Respond to **two posts of your classmates** with insight and knowledge that contributes to your learning and the learning of others. The purpose of a Moodle discussion is to create new understandings through reflective practice and push your thinking. It is expected that you will promote the development of your academic voice and those of others. These posts should be completed by the following Thursday.

Assigned Reading: Keeping pace with the required reading by following the course schedule is essential to your learning and progress in this course. Your Moodle posts must demonstrate that you have completed the assigned reading.

Action Research Studies: will be posted for your reading to present models of students who have finished similar projects. Reading two studies of your choice and providing an insightful critique/analysis by use of your current knowledge base is a way to enhance your depth of the field. Students will participate by turning in a minimum of a two-page, double spaced critique/analysis of the work of others.

Problem Statement (July 12th): your problem statement should be one half page in length, single space. This is where you professionally identify your burning issue. Another way to think about this is, why do this study? What can you learn? **Most importantly, how your work on this problem improve your teaching practice?** More globally, in what ways might your project impact teaching and learning?

Field Notes from Observations: select a location where you know you can observe for an hour on three different occasions. During your observation(s) you will write field notes about what you observed. A research journal is suggested for your own use, but not required.

Analysis of Field Notes (August 2nd): this is where you will analyze the data (or analyze and construct the data) from your three observations in the field. What did you notice? What might it mean? What have you learned (**a question you should ask after you participate in any activity**).

Research Tools (August 9th): For this assignment, you will develop the research tools to be used in your project. For example: interview scripts, surveys, or a collection of artifacts may be part of your research design. If interviews are to be used, parental permission is required. Examples of consent will be posted on Moodle.

Final Paper (August 23rd)-your final paper will include:

- Introduction (problem statement)
- Literature Review (from last semester)
- Research Methodology (The first core concept of this course.)
- Data Analysis (The second core concept of this course) (**this section will be modified if you are collecting data in the Fall**)
- Action Plan (What will you do with your findings?) (**this section will be modified if you are collecting data in the Fall**)

Your final paper should be between 10-12 pages (double spaced), including your literature review.

Use of APA is expected in all assigned writing for this course.

Due Dates

Keeping pace with the assigned readings, writings and Moodle discussion is the best way to promote your own learning, improvement of your teaching practice, and successful completion of EST6500. Thursday will be an important day in this course to keep you on track. Do not hesitate to contact me via email, text, or phone should any clarification be needed on any assignment. If you experience any extenuating circumstances do not hesitate to contact me to make other arrangements that support your situation.

Performance Assessment

Both the content and the quality of your writing are important. Make sure that your writing is carefully proofread. A peer editor may be something to consider before turning in your writing. If assignments that have been submitted are not of high quality, students will be asked to re-do the assignment before instructor feedback (**and before moving forward with your project**).

All assignments are expected to be the individual student's original work and writing. Use of **proper APA** formatting is expected in this course including proper use of direct quotes and paraphrasing. Plagiarism is considered serious at Oakland University. Academic misconduct will be reported to the Dean of Students and, thereafter, to the Academic Conduct Committee. Please refer to the Oakland University Graduate Catalog to read the full Academic Conduct Policy.

Students are always welcome to discuss your ideas and topics with the instructor before starting work on any assignment to clarify expectations.

Grading

Your performance in this course will be graded using the University’s point scale: 0.0-4.0. Your earned total points will determine your grade in EST6500. Students should not assume full credit will be given for each assignment. The quality (e.g., well-organized, correct spelling, meeting deadlines and expectations, and degree of insight displayed) in completed assignments will be considered in the evaluation of each assignment.

| Assignment | Percent |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Moodle Discussion X 8 | 10% |
| Problem Statement | 10% |
| Field Notes | 10% |
| Analysis of Field Notes | 10% |
| Research Tools | 20% |
| Final Paper | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

Grading for Moodle posts will be based on levels of reflection and critical thinking evident in your writing. Continuing the theme of your literature review and infusing it throughout your work demonstrates layers of depth and understanding of the field you are researching. Demonstration of your learning throughout the semester will guide your writing and research design.

Course Grades

Your grade for the course will be determined according to the table (below)

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 95% - 4.0 | 78.5% - 2.9 | 62% - 1.8 |
| 93.5% - 3.9 | 77% - 2.8 | 60.5% - 1.7 |
| 92% - 3.8 | 75.5% - 2.7 | 59% - 1.6 |
| 90.5% - 3.7 | 74% - 2.6 | 57.5% - 1.5 |
| 89% - 3.6 | 72.5% - 2.5 | 56% - 1.4 |
| 87.5% - 3.5 | 71% - 2.4 | 54.5% - 1.3 |
| 86% - 3.4 | 69.5% - 2.3 | 53% - 1.2 |
| 84.5% - 3.3 | 68% - 2.2 | 51.5% - 1.1 |
| 83% - 3.2 | 66.5% - 2.1 | 50% - 1.0 |
| 81.5% - 3.1 | 65% - 2.0 | <50% - 0.0 |
| 80% - 3.0 | 63.5% - 1.9 | |

Course Evaluations

At the end of this course, evaluations can be completed confidentially by going to <http://www2.oakland.edu/secure/evals/student/> and entering your Grizzly ID number and password. You will be asked to rate the course on 21 items. A summary of the results is not available to the professor until after final grades have been submitted.

Relevant Professional Associations

- American Educational Research Association
- American Educational Studies Association

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
National Association for Multicultural Education

Relevant Journals

American Journal of Educational Research
Action Research
Action Research International
Curriculum Inquiry
Educational Action Research
Educational Leadership
Educational Researcher
Harvard Educational Review
Journal of Curriculum Studies
Journal of Curriculum Theory
Journal of Curriculum & Supervision
Journal of Educational Thought
Journal of Teacher Education
Teachers College Record
The Action Research Electronic Reader

Web-Based Resources

Action Research at Queen's University
<http://educ.queensu.ca/~ar/>

Action Research at Bath University
<http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/>

WEB Links to Participatory Action Research Sites
<http://www.goshen.edu/soan/soan96p.htm>

Ontario Educational Research Council
<http://www.oerc.cyberus.ca/>

Educating as Inquiry
<http://users.andara.com/~jnewman/>

An On-Line Journal for Teacher Research
<http://www.utoronto.ca/~ctd/networks/>

The Ontario Action Researcher
<http://www.unipissing.ca/oar/oarhomePAG>