

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
School of Education and Human Services
Department of Teacher Development and Educational Services

EST6500 – TAUGHT AS EST6970
Collaborative Action Research
Winter 2018

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.

INSTRUCTOR: Carolyn O'Mahony

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REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS OR READINGS

Sagor, R. (2010). *The action research guidebook: A four-step process for educators and school teams*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Select one:

Pahomov, L. (2014). *Authentic learning in the digital age: Engaging students through inquiry*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Hall, P. & Simeral, A. (2015). *Teach, reflect, learn: Building your capacity for success in the classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

On-Line Resources:

Themes in Education: Action Research:

www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/themes_ed/act_research.pdf

Action Research International: <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/arihomet.html>

Infed: Action Research: <http://www.infed.org/research/b-actres.htm>

CENTRAL QUESTIONS

- a. How do reflection and collaborative inquiry impact and inform professional practice in education?
- b. How can action research be used as a vehicle for ensuring continuous improvement and increased student achievement?

- c. How does action research serve as a means of empowering individual teachers and students?

LEARNING GOALS FOR CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

The aims of EST6500 are to develop awareness, insight, and understanding of action research and collaborative inquiry as a means of fostering reflective practice and to reinforce the interconnected nature of action research, enhanced instruction, and increased student achievement. Students 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 between those four facets of education

COURSE TOPICS

1. Introduction to Action Research
2. Identifying a researchable problem
3. Representing problems in multiple ways
4. Data Collection
5. Data Analysis
6. Presenting Research Plans
7. Critiquing Research Plans
8. Presenting Action Research Results

ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion Forum: In each session participants will respond thoughtfully to a question or prompt posted by the instructor. This question or prompt may come from the readings or other materials posted by the instructor. Students may post a new thread, or respond thoughtfully to another student's thread ("I agree" or "ditto" etc. is not considered a thoughtful response). This activity is intended to promote positive interdependence among cohort members, shared responsibility for learning, and a structured means by which students share questions from the readings, ideas, and experiences. Students are expected to post within that week in order to receive credit for the assignment (10 points per session for a total of 100 points).

Problem statement: Each participant will clarify their driving action research problem.

Reflective Interviewing Assignment: Using the Moodle chat function, in pairs or groups students will conduct reflective interviews in order to clarify the research focus each person has.

Graphic representation of the problem: Students will create a graphic representation of their problem.

Specific Research Questions: Students will develop and articulate the specific research questions that will guide their action research projects.

Data Collection Plan: Each student will work through a plan for collecting data for the action research project.

Data Analysis Plan: Each student will develop a tentative plan for how data will be analyzed once it is collected.

Action Research Plan Presentation: Each student will share their Action Research Plan as a written paper.

Research Design Feedback: Each student will analyze and offer constructive feedback on the research design of other students' projects.

Culminating Project: Presentation of Action Research: Each student will share either their Action Research Plan, as both a written paper and as a visual presentation suitable for sharing with colleagues, or their completed Action Research Project.

FIELD EXPERIENCE

Participants are expected to complete all course activities, access course information via Moodle, communicate regularly with the instructor and class participants, and utilize materials on the course web site (Moodle). A component of the course assignments requires that students have access to K-12 students in school settings. Students are also expected to seek immediate help in addressing any difficulties they encounter, including those related to technology access, so as not to preclude progress in the course.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Participants can expect to engage in cooperative learning activities, small group discussions, large group discussions, problem solving, interviews, peer-teaching, individual and cooperative reports and papers, critical reviews and performance tasks.

Additionally, students will be engaged in a number of writing intensive activities and presentations related to the course objectives.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

- a. Both the content and the quality of your writing are important. Make sure that your work is proofread carefully (reading a paper aloud to yourself is an effective strategy for this).
- b. Students are not to assume that just doing the assignments entitles them to the grade. Rather, each assignment must be of high quality. Thus, students may be asked to re-do any assignments of mediocre or poor quality.
- c. Students are always welcome to discuss your ideas and topics with the instructor before starting work on any assignment to clarify expectations
- d. All assignments are expected to be the individual student's original work and writing. Any quoted material should appear in quotations and be properly cited and referenced with page numbers (APA style). This means that work from other students should also

be referenced. Paraphrased material should be referenced using APA style. Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious at Oakland University. All allegations of academic misconduct will be reported to the Dean of Students and, thereafter, to the Academic Conduct Committee for adjudication. Anyone found guilty of cheating in this course may receive a course grade of 0.0, in addition to any penalty assigned by the Academic Conduct Committee. Please refer to pages 21-38 of the 2009-2011 Oakland University Graduate Catalog to read the full Academic Conduct Policy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Your performance in this course will be graded using the University’s 32 point scale, 1.0-4.0. Your earned total points will determine your grade in this class. Students who complete each assignment should not assume that full credit will be given. The quality of the assignments will be considered (e.g., well-organized and neat presentation, correct spelling, meeting deadlines and expectations, and degree of insight displayed in the completed assignment will be considered in the evaluation of each assignment.

Points

Discussion Group Participation	100
Initial Problem Statement	20
Reflective Interviewing Assignment	20
Graphic Representation of the Problem	20
Specific Research Questions	20
Data Collection Plan	20
Data Analysis Plan	20
Action Research Plan Presentation	60
Peer Critiques of Action Research Plans	20
Final Action Research Project	100

*Grades will be calculated as a percentage. The grade reported to the Registrar is based on the earned percentage of possible points as shown below:

A		B		C			
Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade	%	Grade	%
4.0	99-100	3.5	89-90	2.9	77-78	2.4	71
3.9	97-98	3.4	87-88	2.8	75-76	2.3	70
3.8	95-96	3.3	85-86	2.7	74	2.2	69
3.7	93-94	3.2	83-84	2.6	73	2.1	68
3.6	91-92	3.1	81-82	2.5	72	2.0	67
		3.0	79-80				

COURSE EVALUATIONS

At the end of the course, evaluations can be completed confidentially by going to <https://www2.oakland.edu/secure/evals/student/> and entering your Grizzly ID number and password. You will be asked to rate the course and the instructor on 21 items. Written comments are also encouraged. A summary of the results is not available to the professor until after final grades have been submitted. Your feedback is taken seriously, and you are encouraged to be honest in your evaluations.

RECOMMENDED JOURNALS

American Journal of Educational Research

Action Research

Action Research International <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/arihome.html>

Curriculum Inquiry

Educational Action Research <http://www.triangle.co.uk/ear-o.htm>

Educational Leadership

Educational Researcher

Harvard Educational Review

Journal of Curriculum Studies

Journal of Curriculum & Supervision

Journal of Educational Thought

Journal of Teacher Education

Networks <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~ctd/networks/>

Teachers College Record

The Action Research Electronic Reader <http://www.cchs.usyd.edu.au/arow/reader/index.htm>

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Educational Research Association

American Educational Studies Association

National Association for Multicultural Education

WEB-BASED RESOURCES

Action Research at Queen's University

<http://educ.queensu.ca/~ar/>

Action Research at Bath University (UK)

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/>

Action Research: A Brief Overview.

<http://users.andara.com/~jnewman/ARoverview.html>

Action Research Electronic Reader

<http://www.beh.cchs.usyd.edu.au/~arow/Reader/>

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: A Teacher / Action Research Site

<http://users.andara.com/~jnewman/>

An On-Line Journal for Teacher Research

<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~ctd/networks/>

Action Research Resources

<http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/sawd/ari/ar.html>

The Teacher Inquirer (BC Teachers' Federation)
<http://www.bctf.bc.ca/inquirer/>

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

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