

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
EDUC 675: “EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH – SECONDARY”
Fall 2010

Professor: **Mary M. Williams, Ed.D.**

Office: Commerce II room112 on University Dr.

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 2-4:00 p.m.

Email: mwilliat@gmu.edu Course website: <http://bb-gmu.blackboard.com>

Phone: 703-993-2133 (do not leave messages, instead use email)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help beginning teachers understand and apply concepts and principles of action research in Secondary classrooms. Students will learn how to identify and use research literature and systematic evidence to improve practice. Emphasis is placed on linking research and practice to make informed instructional decisions. *Co-requisite:* M.Ed. Portfolio
Pre-requisites: Licensure and EDUC674. To be taken as the last course in the M.Ed.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts and processes used in action research by articulating its' role in professional development.
2. Examine ethical considerations when conducting action research.
3. Prepare a research proposal which makes explicit links between theory and practice.
4. Conduct an action research project.
5. Prepare an action research report [using APA format] that includes a rationale, a research question and outcomes, a review of related literature, methodology, data collection/analysis, limitations, an action plan, and future thoughts.
6. Review professional strengths and weaknesses of action research through peer review.
7. Demonstrate mastery of national content and teaching standards by reflecting on their own teaching practice and students' learning.
8. Demonstrate skills in the application of technology and use of resources in action research.

RELATIONSHIP TO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

At the end of this course students will demonstrate mastery of subject area standards identified by their Specialized Professional Association (SPA) in the areas of reflective practice and systematic inquiry. Learning outcomes are referenced to the teaching standards, as outlined by INTASC.

National Content Standards for student's respective discipline: NCSS, NCTE, NCTM, NSTA

National Council for the Social Studies <http://www.ncss.org/>

National Council of Teachers of English <http://www.ncte.org/>

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics <http://www.nctm.org/>

National Science Teachers Association <http://www.nsta.org/>

INTASC: Interstate New Teacher Assistance and Support Consortium

<http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/corestrd.pdf>

RECOMMENDED TEXTs, Materials & Technology

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual (6th Ed.)*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Mills, G. (2007). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher (3rd Ed.)*. NJ: Pearson Merrill/Prentice Hall.

GMU email, Internet access, <http://bb-gmu.blackboard.com>

A standard size POSTER [minimum ~2feet x 3feet]

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT EXPECTATIONS

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all candidates abide by the following:

- Candidates are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Candidates must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.
- Candidates must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
- Students who need assistance with writing should contact The Writing Center at GMU <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- Candidates with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/candidate/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

TEACHING/LEARNING METHOD

This course is student-centered and will be conducted using a project-based approach. Teachers' action research questions and methodology will be the focus of the course and will drive readings, classroom discussions, peer review activities, and the action research project. The purpose of the discussions and peer review sessions will be to support each action research project and provide opportunities to learn about and analyze methods and techniques of action research. Teachers will have the opportunity to construct knowledge and critically reflect on the research process as they complete the AR Proposal and Report, and prepare their professional portfolio for graduation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EVALUATION

Title each assignment with the name of the project/assignment and your initials (e.g., Action Research Question Adam Smith: (ARQuestionAS) or (Weekly Update for 3/17 Adam Smith: WU0317AS). Each student will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

1. Action Research Project (Performance Based Assessment): [75%]

- a. **Action Research Proposal:** The **AR Proposal** will describe the action research project including the following elements: Research Question, Outcomes, Review of Related Literature, and Methodology, including data collection instruments.

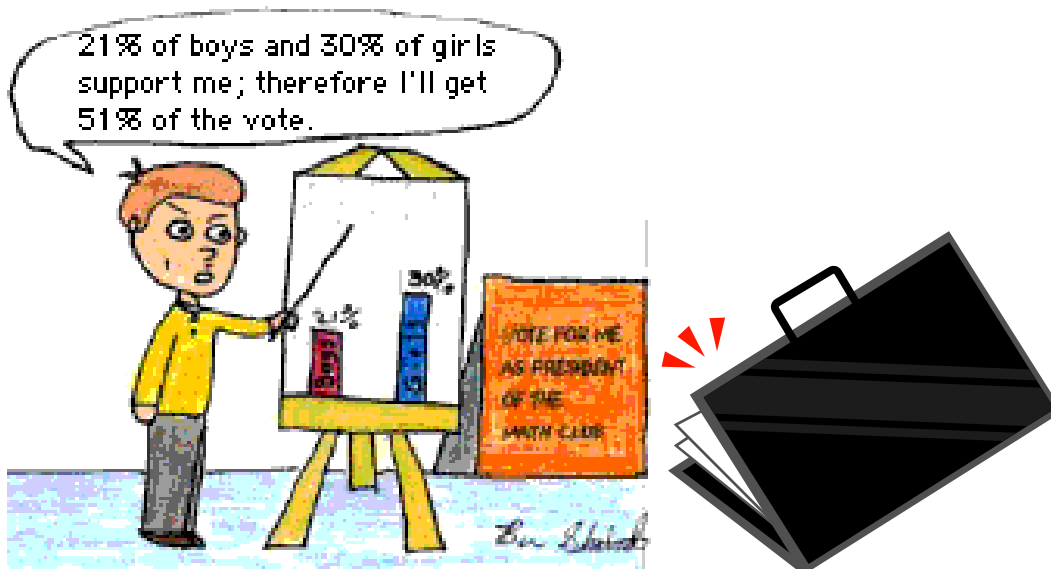
All research projects must include a rationale for triangulation of data collection instruments or sources.

- b. **Research Updates:** Once the AR Proposal is approved, **weekly updates** must be submitted each Wednesday during class time. Each update will clarify progress made on the Action Research study since the last report.
- c. **Action Research Report:** Each candidate will write a report that includes the following sections: Cover Page, Abstract, Introduction, Research Question & Outcomes, Review of Related Literature, Methodology [data collection including a rationale for triangulation, analysis of findings including limitations/ethical issues], an Action Plan including implications for practice/further research, References, and Appendices. The action research report must adhere to APA format. (see the **Action Research Report Rubric** attached)

2. Participation, Peer Review, and Presentation: [25%]

- a. **Participation** is defined as full attendance, active participation in class and online discussions and peer review activities.
- b. Demonstration of positive and collaborative dispositions towards colleagues during **peer reviews of AR questions, data collection instruments, review of the literature, and draft AR reports;** along with a willingness to give and receive constructive criticism. (see **peer review criteria** posted on the website)
- c. Each student will present their action research results in the form of a **'poster presentation'**. The presentation must include: 1. the AR question, 2. the data triangulation, 3. major findings, 4. limitations, and 5. action plan.

POSTNOTE: The portfolio is NOT included as part of your grade for EDUC675. However, you MUST successfully complete your portfolio and present it to the Secondary Program Faculty during the semester in which you are enrolled in EDUC675. Your GRADE for EDUC675 will be posted only upon successful completion of the portfolio requirements.



George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Graduate School of Education
EDUC 675 “Research in Secondary Education” aka ‘Action Research’
Fall 2010 Class Agenda [version 1.0*]

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Reading / Assignments</u>
09/01	Introductory Activities, Standards, Action Research Concept & Processes, Course Overview	M 1 Standards/Problem ID
09/08	Problem Statement, Research Question Related Research: AR Review of Literature (RoL)	M 2 Research / Resources
09/15	AR Proposal: Content & Format, APA Style Content/Teaching Standards, RoL Action Research Plan Mapping	M 3, 4, appB AR Proposal [draft in-class]
09/22	Library Research: AR Review of Literature (RoL) Peer Review: References Individual Consultation (online)	M 1, 2, 3 References Weekly Update
09/29	**SEED Program- Portfolio Workshop [7:20pm -] Individual Consultation (in class)	Weekly Update
10/06	Data Collection: Instruments peer review Triangulation, Methodology Individual Consultation (in class)	M 6, 7, appA Data Col Instruments Weekly Update
10/13	Data Analysis, Interpretation, Action Plan Review of Procedures: Final report & presentation	M 3, 6 AR Proposal [final]
10/20	Ethics, Bias, Limitations Data Collection & Analysis Individual Consultation (online)	M 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Review of Literature Weekly Update
10/27	**SEED Program- Portfolio Workshop [7:20pm -] Data Analysis & Interpretation Individual Consultation (in class)	M 8 Weekly Update
11/03	Action Plan & AR Report Writing Individual Consultation (online)	M 8 TITLE of AR Report Weekly Update
11/10	Action Plan & AR Report Writing Integrate Standards / Apply APA Format / Prepare Report	M 8

11/17	‘AR Poster Presentation’ Integrate Standards / Apply APA Format AR Report (draft for peer review)	AR Poster Presentation M App AR report [draft]
11/24	Thanksgiving BREAK	
12/01	**SEED Program – Portfolio Presentation [presentation dates: 11/29+12/01]	Portfolio Presentation Portfolio***
12/10	Action Research Report [final]	AR Report

12/10/10 at 11pm is the **deadline** to turn in any and all course assignments for consideration to be included in this semester’s grade.

*This class agenda (**version 1.0**) is TENTATIVE... Check our website regularly for any new version:
<http://bb-gmu.blackboard.com>

Note: Before coming to class **check the course website** for ANY notice regarding a change in the class schedule.

****SEED Program – YOU are required to attend a PORTFOLIO* prep workshop**
The Portfolio Presentation is mandatory for the M.Ed. degree.
The portfolio grade is P/F and has NO impact on the grade for EDUC675. However, your grade for EDUC675 will not be released until the portfolio receives a grade of ‘P’.

*****A full draft of the ‘Action Research Report’ must be included in your M.Ed. Portfolio**