**EDCI 777 – 003
Research to Practice – Capstone Course
CRN 21359
Spring 2010
Wednesday 4:30 – 7:10 pm
Robinson Hall B105**

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Office location	**A 323 Robinson Hall,**
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the capstone course for the M.Ed. in Multilingual/Multicultural Education, and, as such, represents the culminating experience in this graduate program. Course participants – M.Ed. candidates -- will actively engage in action research on a topic that is related to multilingual/ multicultural education and report on the outcomes of their study. Students are encouraged to identify and research a problem relevant to their professional practice. Students will design and conduct action research projects to better understand and improve issues such as classroom management, teaching strategies, learning outcomes, school improvement, curriculum, and professional practice.

Action research is a qualitative approach to research that involves reactionary reflections and self-study with the support of a researcher who may be a more knowledgeable peer or expert. The classroom researcher describes her/ his practice-based reality, reflects upon it, analyzes that reality and through research and study of theory, devises an action plan that is applied to the improvement of teaching and learning. In this way, practice becomes a dynamic process in which reflection and practice interact to produce positive change.

A. **Prerequisites**:

    a. Admission to Graduate School of Education in CIMM, CISL, or CIFL program.

    b. Completion of ALL other courses in these programs*. Possible exceptions:* Concurrent enrollment in EDRS 590 or elective or permission of instructor.

B. **Course description from the University Catalog**

Provides culminating experience that synthesizes and applies essential elements of second language teaching and learning. Emphasizes teachers as change agents through critical inquiry into practice. Promotes collaboration between ESL and grade-level teachers to advance the achievement of English language learners and language minority students.

C. **Nature of course delivery**

EDCI 777 includes multiple instructional strategies. Individual session formats will vary and may include lectures, small group/ large group discussions, hands-on activities, interactive work, student presentations, and cooperative learning.

D. **Rationale**

    As a capstone course, EDCI 777 aims to have M.Ed. candidates synthesize, evaluate, and reflect on the essential elements of what they have learned in the M.Ed. program and apply these elements to their own teaching. If M.Ed. candidates are not currently in the classroom, they will be asked to collaborate with a teacher who is.

    In this course, M.Ed. candidates become part of a learning and research community by sharing with others what they have learned and by applying this research to practice.

    A major focus of the course is the nurturing and development of teacher-leaders through critical inquiry into educational practices that have an impact on culturally and linguistically diverse students. This inquiry will have as its purpose to help increase

student learning and achievement among English language learners, language minority students, and foreign language learners.

E. **Overview Course**

Essential elements of this course include reflection on teaching; collaboration; action research through fieldwork, problem-solving and innovations in teaching; applications of technology; and development of presentation skills.

M.Ed. candidates will collaborate with peers to identify a research question in curriculum, instruction and assessment and design an Action Research Project (ARP) that investigates the question. The ARP and the presentation of the project will make use of technology to facilitate learning, as well as professional development. M.Ed. candidates are especially encouraged to develop instructional and assessment models to be shared with other teachers, including general education, and grade-level teachers who may be relatively unfamiliar with second language teaching approaches. M.Ed. candidates will experiment with action research approaches that address a real-life need demonstrated by an actual group of teachers and/or students.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The M.Ed. candidate will…

1. Understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry and structure of action research within the framework of applied research;
2. Engage in critical reflection to identify educational concerns relevant to their professional practice;
3. Develop a proposal to conduct an *Action Research Project* (ARP) - on a problem at and educational site that will result in improved student achievement;
4. Conduct research (Action Research Project) that will strengthen knowledge, skills and dispositions;
5. Collaborate with the university faculty advisor and the administrative practitioner mentor in selecting and conducting the project;
6. Engage in creative, critical, reflective thinking and practice;

7.   Develop professional presentation skills using technology.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Sagor, R. (2005). *The action research guidebook: A four-step process for educators and school teams.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press/Sage.

CEHD Syllabus statement of expectations/ behaviors/ attitudes

All students must abide by the following:

1.   Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/professional-disposition for a listing of these dispositions.

2.   Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/

3.   Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html

4.   Students 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 http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS,

PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT,

AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

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A. Requirements –

1. Action Research Project (ARP)

Action Research Projects can be conducted in 2- or 3-member teams. MME faculty strongly recommends that Pre-Service teachers work with In-Service teachers in order to enhance their learning.

        1.A Research Q & Data collection proposal   30%   On or before

1.B Data analysis	35%	On or before
2. ARP Presentation		
	35%	Last class

B. Performance-Based Assessments - This course includes two performance-based assessments. After implementing each of two lesson plans in their teaching context, students will write an evidence-based action research paper, presenting both quantitative and qualitative data, samples of student work, and a comprehensive analysis of data with reflections for improving practice. The two action research papers constitute the performance-based assessments for this course.

C. Criteria for evaluation - Assessment of each performance assessment is guided by a rubric.

D. Special Attention
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- Please turn off cell phones and/or pagers in the classroom.
- Please activate your GMU account. All correspondence will be through your account and TaskStream.
- All notices regarding whether class will be cancelled or delayed will be posted via appropriate university sources.
- Any exception to the established guidelines for attendance, tardiness, and late assignments will be made only with pre-approval of the professor.
- Attendance: Missed Classes

    Due to the collaborative nature of the class sessions, the reflective nature of the course assignments, and the interrelated and cumulative sequence of activities, students are required to be present at each class. Each absence will result in a grade reduction. For example, one absence will lower a grade from an "A" to an "A-". The second absence will lower the grade from an "A" to a "B+". The third absence will lower the grade from a

"B+" to a "C". More than three missed classes will result in a failing grade for the course.

- Tardiness: Students are expected to arrive on time. After two late arrivals (10 minutes) to class, each subsequent late arrival will result in a grade reduction. For instance, a third late arrival will lower the grade from an "A" to an "A-". The fourth will lower the grade from an "A-" to a "B+"; and so forth. Class attendance will be documented at each class session.

- Late Assignments:

  If class must be missed, when possible, prior to the absence the student must contact the professor and submit any work that is due during your absence at the next class meeting. All assignments are due on the assigned date. Late assignments will receive a 20% penalty for each missed deadline.

- Collaboration:

  Collaboration is a cornerstone for this course. Students are expected to participate in a lively, professional, punctual, and equitable manner in all collaborative work.

- Discussions:

  In class discussion of required readings contributes to your grade in the course. Featured discussants must be in attendance. Failure to attend class on your assigned discussion session will result in a 10% reduction of your grade in the course.

- Inclement Weather/Emergency Policy

  In case of snow, other severe weather, or security emergencies, call (703) 993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu for information on class cancellations and university closings.

Tentative Class Schedule
[January 19 – April 28]

Topics & Assigned Readings
[Subject to change]

Session One	**Objectives of this course, textbooks, and requirements**. What is Action Research? Why do Action Research? Selecting a research topic. Choosing the right research questions and assessment criteria. Group dynamics: Practical aspects of collaboration, member roles. Stages of Action Research Process. ***SAMPLE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT.*** *Readings: Sagor, Chs. 1-2, 6*
Session Two	Clarifying theoretical basis. Dependent & independent variables. Drafting the research proposal. ***Due today: DRAFT RESEARCH QUESTIONs.*** *Readings: Sagor, Ch. 4*
Session Three	**Writing up the Theoretical Section.** Data Collection Process. Creating tools to answer research questions. Quantitative and qualitative approaches to Action Research • Clarifying theoretical basis with graphic reconstructions • Drafting the problem statement/research proposal • Using teacher records and observation data • Methodological and ethical issues • Creating tools to answer research questions. • Samples of student work. • Determining data resources • Validity and reliability • Finalize research teams • Sign up for presentation dates Workshop session: Research questions Triangulation Matrix: Setting up a valid & reliable data collection plan. Methodological & ethical issues. ***Due today: Research Question & Triangulation Matrix.*** *Readings Sagor, Chs. 3, 5 - 7*
Session Four	**Data Analysis Processes** • Interpreting the data results • Coding data for analysis • Setting up a valid & reliable data collection plan – triangulation • Organizing findings and interpreting results

	Workshop Session: Research teams *DUE: Draft ARP Proposal for feedback*
Session Five	**Writing up the Data Collection Plan**, Class & Instructor Feedback on Research Q, Triangulation Matrix, Teaching Intervention, and Assessment Tools (Data Sources).
Session Six	**Revising Assessment Tools – Class Feedback.** ***DATA ANALYSIS WORKSHOP***. Data Analysis Process. Interpreting the data results. Coding data for analysis. ***Due Today: Action Research Proposal, Stages 1 - 3.*** ***Sample DATA ANALYSIS.*** ***Readings Sagor, Ch. 8***
Session Six	Using EXCEL Software for data analysis. Create your own data tables from pre-assessment. Examples of collaborative action research.
Session Seven	More on Data Analysis & Interpretation. Drafting Data Tables with Pre-Test Results. Writing Data Interpretation
Session Eight	Team Work Session. Instructor meets with Teams. Data Tables: Pre-Test Data Results.
Session Nine	ARP Data Analysis – Interpreting the Data. Turning Findings into Action Plans. Team Work Session. ***Readings Sagor, Chs. 9 - 10***
Session Ten	Presenting your ARP: Do's & Don'ts. Practice for ARP Presentations.
Session Eleven	Class feedback on Data Analysis. Writing up your Action Research Project: Essential Components*.* Team Work Session. Practicing for Presentations. Bring blank videotapes.
Final Sessions	***ARP Presentations.*** ***Send Self-Assessment of your presentation by email to Instructor within 48 hours of your presentation. Course Evaluation Forms. Feedback Forms. Materials Release Forms. PLEASE TURN IN YOUR ARP PRESENTATION***