George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Advanced Studies in Teaching and Learning Program

EDUC 612
INQUIRY INTO PRACTICE
Summer 2011
CRN 42105

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Office Hours:
Before or after class, and by appointment

COURSE DATES/TIMES: Tuesday, May 24: 5 – 8:30 p.m. Orientation & Class 1
May 31, June 7, 14, 21, 23, 28, & 30 (online) from 5 – 8:30 p.m. MultiGenre Study due July 29

COURSE LOCATION:
Prince William Campus
COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Provides experience using research skills to foster systematic and thoughtful inquiry into classroom practice. Explores relevant classroom practice issues through critical writing, action, and research. Emphasizes cultural diversity and gender issues in research.

COURSE OVERVIEW:
The purpose of this course is to provide participants with: a) knowledge about academic research; b) opportunities for experience using research skills; and c) a foundation for implementing reflective, systematic, and thoughtful inquiry into classroom practice. Practitioners explore relevant classroom practice issues through writing, reflections, experimenting with action research strategies, and sharing their work in a collaborative setting. Through the critical reading of action research studies and experimentation with action research strategies, teachers come to recognize the value of action research as a way to make more informed decisions about practice. Practitioners give special attention to cultural diversity and gender issues in both the consideration of research questions, puzzlements, and the conduct of research.

RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

EDUC 612 is the first of five courses in the ASTL Program Core. It lays the foundation through reading, experiential learning activities, and reflective action research exercises for the research projects in both EDUC 613 and EDUC 606 and the future. It is aligned with the following GSE Priorities: Diversity and Equity, Students, and High Standards and Research-Based Practices. EDUC 612 is also aligned with the Propositions established by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, as follows:

III. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning,
IV. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience,
V. Teachers are members of learning communities,
VI. Teachers account for the needs of culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse learners,
VII. Teachers are change agents, teacher leaders, and partners with colleagues and families.
VIII. Teachers use technology effectively to facilitate student learning and their own professional development.

COURSE DELIVERY

To meet course objectives, the delivery of EDUC 612 is accomplished through a combination of experiential learning activities, in-class collaborative work groups, on-line discussion strand postings, and mini-lectures designed to help meet the needs of all learners and learning styles. These include:

- *Presentations* (i.e., mini-lectures/lecturettes, often assisted by Power Point and other visuals);
- *Discussions* (i.e., active involvement of students in learning by asking questions that provoke critical thinking and verbal interaction);
- *Cooperative learning* (i.e., small group structure emphasizing learning from and with others);
- *Collaborative learning* (i.e., heterogeneous groups in an interdisciplinary context);
- *Guest lectures;*
- *Student sharing and mini-presentations;*
- *Blackboard* web-based course management and portal system.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

George Mason University Statement of Professional Behavior and Dispositions, Honor Code, and Policy on Disabilities:

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/].

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See http://ods.gmu.edu/].

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html].

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University 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 must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See http://caps.gmu.edu/].

- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/].

- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See http://gse.gmu.edu/].

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
As a result of EDUC 612, ASTL participants will be able to:
- identify and understand different approaches to inquiry and inquiry into practice,
- reflect systematically and critically about their teaching practice as members of learning communities,
- demonstrate an emergent understanding of the role of action research in their educational settings,
- consider the development of research questions relevant to their classroom practice,
- provide a rationale for researching their own practice and explore how action research informs the management and monitoring of student learning,
- identify, comprehend and express the ethical and moral issues connected to research involving students,
- explain the critical importance of considering multiple perspectives, including cultural diversity in the field of action research,
- acknowledge the role of critical reflection in professional learning.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Falk, B., & Blumenreich, M., (2005). *The power of questions: A guide to teacher and student research.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fecho, B. (2004). *Is this English? Race, language, and culture in the classroom.* New York: Teachers College Press.

ADDITIONAL RELATED TEXTS (not required)

Mills, G. (2007). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher.* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Romano, T. (2000). *Blending genre, altering style*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

RELATED RESOURCES
American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
ASTL Community & Course Website: http://mymason.gmu.edu. Click on ASTL Fairfax Core 2011 - 2012. The course syllabus and other related course documents, including daily agendas, related PowerPoint presentations and announcements will be posted regularly on the Core site.

Articles
Articles that will be used to support learning in this class may be accessed through the GMU Library E-Reserves. *One of the most direct ways to access the E-Reserves is through the class electronic site by clicking on the External Links button.* Follow the instructions provided there for the E-reserves. The course password will be provided in class and posted under the link, as well. The GMU Library may also be directly accessed at:

http://furbo.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/ers/OSCRnexttermgen.cgi

Representative list of E-reserves to support teachers' growth of inquiry and professional development:

Baumann, J., & Duffy, A. (2001). Teacher-researcher methodology: Themes, variations, and possibilities. *Reading Teacher 54* (6), 608-616.

Brookfield, S. (1995). What it means to be a critically reflective teacher. *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* (pp. 1 – 27). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. (1995). Becoming critically reflective: A process of learning and change. *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* (pp. 28-48). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dewey, J. (1933). What is thinking? *How we think* (pp. 3 –23)*.* Boston: D.C. Heath & Company.

Dewey, J. (1938). Criteria of experience. *Experience and education* (pp. 33-50). New York: Collier Books.

Dewey, J. (1938). The meaning of purpose. *Experience and education* (pp. 67-72). New York: Collier Books.

Dewey, J. (1944). Experience in thinking. *Democracy in education* (pp. 139-151). New York: The Free Press.

Fecho, B. (2000). Critical inquiries into language in an urban classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English 34* (3), 368-395.

Fendler, Lynn (2003). Teacher reflection in a hall of mirrors: Historical influences and
     Political reverberations. *Educational Researcher, 32* (3), 16-25.

Goldston, M., & Shroyer, M., (2000). Teachers as researchers: Promoting effective science and
     mathematics teaching. *Teaching and Change 7* (4), 327-346.

Hermann, K. , Carstarphen, N. , & Coolidge, J. (1997). Meeting the challenges of diversity and
     conflict: The immigrant student experience. *Teaching and Change 4* (3), 206-226.

Hole, S. & McEntee, G. (1999). Reflection is at the heart of practice. *Educational Leadership
     56* (8), 34-37.

Osterling, J., & Fox, R. (December 2004). The power of perspectives: Building a cross-
     cultural community of learners. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and
     Bilingualism 7* (6), pp. 489-505.

Power, B.M. (1997). Passing notes. *Learning 8, 70-72.*

Rodgers, C. (2002). Defining reflection: Another look at John Dewey and reflective thinking.
     Teacher's College Record, 104 (4), 842-866.

Schön, D. (1983). Professional knowledge and reflection-in-action. *The reflective practitioner*
     (pp. 49-69). New York: Basic Books.

Seidman, I. (1997). Technique isn't everything, but it is a lot. *Interviewing as qualitative
     research* (pp. 56-71). NY: Teachers College Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Personal Journals and Shared Reflections (100 points)
   Participants in the Core will maintain a reflective journal throughout EDUC 612, as
explained at the orientation, and will engage in both online and personal reflections (see
Schedule) on a weekly basis to support the development of critical reflective practice and deep
reflection. Participants will be asked to develop reflections on their learning, their students
and/or practice and respond to the readings, research exercises, and discussions. After recording
questions, ideas, and insights, Core participants will share selected excerpts from their journals
orally during class sessions and electronically. In addition, selected reflections will be submitted
for instructor feedback. Systematic and regular journaling will be used to provide evidence of
growth as a reflective educator and will provide experience in reflection as a data collection
source for the MultiGenre study and forthcoming research in the Core.
   **Due: Each class, (see class schedule) oral or written reflective responses to be
shared in class or submitted to the instructor.**

2. Class Participation Activities (100 points)
   A. In-class experiences incorporating reflective practice, critical inquiry, posing potential
research questions, and action research procedures.
   B. Critical discussion of scholarly research studies from required readings with a focus

on developing critical reflective capacity.
	Due: In class, as designated.

3. MultiGenre Study (100 points)

	Core participants will draw from their narratives, research experiences, course materials, and focused reflections to provide a rationale and foundation for an autobiographical study. Participants are encouraged to include a variety of genres that are relevant to their own learning and teaching. The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis of one's own learning experiences and teaching practices. Specifically, the study focuses on how one's learning and teaching experiences relate to the practices they adhere to in their teaching. The MultiGenre study emphasizes the incorporation of critical reflective practice. Examples will be provided in class. **Due: no later than Friday, July 29th, Electronic submission on CD, flash drive, or other electronic storage (hard copy optional)**

EVALUATION CRITERIA
Criteria for evaluation includes attendance in class, active participation in class and on-line discussions and in small group activities, completion of all readings, exercises, and papers, active and ongoing engagement with journaling as a growth of reflective practice.

All written work should be carefully edited for standard grammar and punctuation, as well as clarity of thought. All submitted work should be prepared through word processing and reflect APA-style (6th edition).

EDUC 612 Grading Scale

Rating	Course Points
A+	295-300
A	285 – 294
A-	270 – 284
B+	255 – 269
B	240 – 254
B-	228 – 239
C	210 – 227
F	<209

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Class Topic	Assignments For this Class

Class One
 	
May 24
Core Orientation
&
EDUC 612
Class One)
 	
5—8:30 PM
	• Part I: Core Orientation (5 – 6:30)
	
	• Part II: Introduction and overview of the Course, EDUC 612, *Inquiry Into Practice* (6:45-8:30 p.m.)
	    * Review of Syllabus
	    * TR Pre-Assessment
	    * Opening Reflection: What does reflection mean to you? How can reflection be used to influence your teaching practice? What does critical reflective practice mean to you?
		Teachers should purchase course texts – you may visit the book store during break to purchase books and materials

Class Two May 31 5—8:30 PM	• Artifact sharing • Exploration of Reflection and what it means to Core participants • Power Point & Reflective practice self-assessment and discussion • Critical Reflection Protocol: Beginning to define what it means to be a critically reflective teacher *Finding ways to gain insight into your area of focus for research (fish bowl) • Form Critical Reflection Groups (CRGs) *Engage in Critical Reflection Group Protocol • Assign Jig Saw Readings – Dewey and Schön (All will read Brookfield) • Focused journal entries in personal journal	**Submit Opening Reflection to Instructor electronically (MS Word) and bring paper copy to class** **Bring** an artifact to class this evening that represents you as an individual **Read** "Reflection is at the Heart of Practice" by Hole & McEntee **Read:** "Defining Reflection: Another look at John Dewey & Reflective Thinking" by Carol Rodgers Begin **Journal entries** in personal journal – may be based on topics suggested or own choice (see handout)
Class Three June 7	• Reflective Practice - Continuing discussion & Refining our understanding of what it means to be a critically reflective teacher (jig saw-with the Dewey, Brookfield, Schön chapters)	**Read** Falk & Blumenreich, Ch. 1 and 2 and Brookfield **Read** Jig Saw Chapters, as

5 – 8:30 PM	• Critical Reflection Group Protocol • Begin Okun Reflection in class – to be completed for Class Four **Opening Discussion of the Multigenre paper: how it can bring into focus who we are as learners, teachers, and teacher-researchers.	assigned, for Dewey or Schön Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class
Class Four June 14 5 – 8:30 PM	• Deepening our understanding of and engagement in reflection - Avoiding a "Hall of Mirrors" • Discussion of the Kohl chapter • Critical Reflection Group Protocol Further look at the MG Study	**_Email Okun Reflection_** to your instructor before class **Read:** "Teacher Reflection in the Hall of Mirrors" by L. Fendler. **Read:** "Topsy-Turvies" by H. Kohl **Read:** Critical Reflection Handout **Read** F & B, 4 Begin to think of potential unifying themes/metaphors for your Multigenre Papers Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class
Class Five June 21 5 – 8:30 PM	• Fecho Discussion • Overview of Teacher Research – its components and process • Understanding the influences literature can have in the teacher research process *Discuss how theory serves as an analytical and interpretive framework for teachers trying to make sense of what goes on in the classroom. • Research questions – casting & development of the question	**Read**: Fecho _Is This English?_ Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class Continue to reflect about potential unifying themes/metaphors for your Multigenre Papers
Class Six	• Opening: Critical Incident Reflection – in	

June 23 5—8:30 PM	class • Analyzing and Collecting Data in Teacher Research - Refer to F & B, Chapters 6 & 7 • Observation -- Looking at different ways a researcher can obtain data through observation. *In class observation exercises for analysis and interpretation. Group debrief. Individual reflection. • Gaining an understanding of the importance of having multiple perspectives in obtaining and interpreting data. • A look at ethical considerations and responsibilities related to conducting research	**Read** "Technique isn't everything, but it is a lot" **Read:** Purcell-Gates: ". . . As Soon as She Opened her Mouth?": Issues of Language, Literacy and Power. Continue to reflect about potential unifying themes/metaphors for your Multigenre Papers Maintain **Journal entries** in personal journal to share in class
Class Seven June 28 5—8:30 PM	• Introduction to the ASTL Professional Portfolio • In-class reflection • EDUC 612 Course Synthesis: Pulling it All Together & Presentations of Multigenre themes and plans • Course Evaluations	**Read:** F & B, Appendix 3 (APA Format) After reading the two MG example papers on BB and looking at the exemplar copies provided in class, **prepare your outline & ideas to share in Class 7** about the theme of your MG paper
Class Eight June 30	• Individual work on MultiGenre Studies	**Final Multigenre project is due no later than Friday, July 29, 2011**
July 29	• Submit Multigenre Papers by this date (CD	

		or other electronic storage; hard copy optional) • Upload your MG Study to Task Stream	

EDUC 612 RUBRICS

	Points	No evidence (Little or no evidence)	Beginning (Limited evidence)	Developing (Clear evidence)	Accomplished (Clear, convincing and substantial evidence)
		F: <30 (<75)	C: 30-34 (75-79)	B: 35-41 (80-92)	A: 42-50 (93-100)
Journals and Online Postings *Learning Outcomes 3, 4, 5, & 8*	**100**	Does not make entries in journals and/or does not share select passages	Maintains journal on most days. Journal entries are descriptive only; sometimes shares relevant passages	Maintains journal regularly. Journal entries analyze and apply descriptions to teaching, learning and research; often shares relevant passages	Maintains both personal & word-processed journal entries regularly, and makes required postings online. Journal entries synthesize and evaluate description and application to self as a teacher, learner, and researcher; consistently shares relevant passages
Reflection and Research Exercises *Outcomes 3,4,5*	**50**	Does not participate	Sometimes participates and contributes to group process and products	Often participates and makes many useful contributions to group process and products	Always participates and plays an integral role in group process and products
Oral Participation *Learning Outcomes 3, 5, 6, & 7*	**50**	Does not participate in discussions or in-class exercises. Minimal to no participation in final community synthesizing reflection time	Sometimes participates in daily cohort discussions and exercises; minimal participation in final community synthesizing reflection time	Often participates in daily discussions and exercises; makes some useful contributions during the final community synthesizing reflection time, but is not fully engaged	Always participates in daily discussions: pairs, small groups and/ or whole class; provides many useful contributions and is fully engaged during the final community synthesizing reflection

Signature *Performance-based Assessment* for the ASTL EDUC 612 *Inquiry Into Practice*

	Points	*No evidence* (Little or no evidence)	*Beginning* (Limited evidence)	*Developing* (Clear evidence)	*Accomplished* (Clear convincing and substantial evidence)
Multigenre Paper	100	F: <75	C: 75-79	B: 80-92	A: 93-100
Introduction *Learning Outcome 4*	5	No introduction is included, or the introduction is brief.	Introduction is included that presents the unifying theme but may not elaborate on two or more of the key elements.	Introduction is included that clearly presents the unifying theme but may not elaborate on one or more of the key elements.	**Introduction** included that contains clearly and substantially all key elements: Introduces the reader to the unifying theme. Provides a *roadmap* for the learning journey and explains how the theme will be carried through
Personal Beliefs Statement *Learning Outcomes3 and 4*	10	*Teaching Beliefs statement* provides little to no evidence about teachers' beliefs regarding: teaching, using inquiry to improve practice, focus on student learning, role of reflection – thinking systematically about your practice. Beliefs statement is abbreviated, or more than two of the key elements may be missing.	*Teaching Beliefs statement* provides limited evidence about teachers' beliefs regarding: teaching, using inquiry to improve practice, focus on student learning, role of reflection – thinking systematically about your practice. Beliefs statement is brief or two of the key elements may be missing.	*Teaching Beliefs statement* provides clear evidence about teachers' beliefs regarding: teaching, using inquiry to improve practice, focus on student learning, role of reflection – thinking systematically about your practice. One of the elements may be missing.	*Teaching Beliefs statement* provides clear and convincing evidence about teachers' beliefs regarding: teaching, using inquiry to improve practice, focus on student learning, role of reflection – thinking systematically about your practice.
Genres—Inquiry *LearningOutcome 4*	20	No description of a learning journey, or no theme is used to weave the genres together for the Multigenre Project.	Provides a *learning journey,* however it may lack elaboration on two of the elements Project theme is present but doesn't clearly weave the genres together to contribute to the flow of the MultiGenre Project.	Provides a clearly developed *learning journey,* that may lacks elaboration on one of the elements There is a clearly articulated *theme* that weaves the genres together and contributes to the flow	Provides a clearly and substantially developed *learning journey,* elaborates on self as learner, teacher, and teacher as inquirer. There is a clearly articulated *theme* that weaves the genres together and contributes to the flow of the MultiGenre Project.

				of the MultiGenre Project.
Genres—Quantity *Learning Outcome 4*	10	Paper contains two or fewer genres, or limited to no excerpts from the personal reflective journal (two or fewer journal excerpts).	Paper contains three genres one of which is multiple excerpts from the personal reflective journal (minimum of three journal excerpts).	Paper contains four genres, one of which is multiple excerpts from the personal reflective journal (minimum of four journal excerpts).	Paper contains *at least five genres*, one of which is multiple excerpts from the personal reflective journal (minimum of five journal excerpts).
Genres— Technology *Learning Outcome 8*	5	The presentation of the genres does not demonstrate that *technology* was effectively used. Project submitted on CD, jump drive, or via personal web site.	The presentation of the genres demonstrates limited to little use of *technology*. Project submitted on CD, jump drive, or via personal web site	The presentation of the genres demonstrates effective or varied use of *technology*. Project submitted on CD, jump drive, or via personal web site	The presentation of the genres demonstrates effective and varied use of *technology*. Project submitted on CD, jump drive, or via personal web site
Key Events & Application of New EDUC 613 Readings *Learning Outcome 5*	15	Project provides limited description or limited support of key events or people who shaped you as a learner. Limited references to EDUC 613 readings to articulate and support the statements you make about who you were/are as a learner and a teacher.	Project creates a focus around *key events/people* who shaped you as a learner and incorporates at least two EDUC 613 readings to articulate & support the statements you make about who you were/are as a learner and a teacher.	Project creates a focus around *key events/people* who shaped you as a learner and incorporates at least three EDUC 613 readings to articulate & support the statements you make about who you were/are as a learner and a teacher.	Project creates a focus around *key events/people* who shaped you as a learner and clearly incorporates at least four EDUC 613 readings to articulate & support the statements you make about who you were/are as a learner and a teacher.
Future Research	10	Limited or no future teacher inquiry/research	Project includes limited ideas for future teacher	Project includes potential ideas for future teacher	Project includes explicitly stated, potential ideas for future teacher

Learning Outcome 4		ideas are included, or lists fewer than two ;research questions	inquiry/research; lists two potential questions for research.	inquiry/research; lists three potential questions for research.	inquiry/research; includes list of four or more potential questions.
Concluding Reflections (included at the end of MG project) *Learning Outcome 4*	10	**Concluding Reflection:** Reflection provides minimal connections to what was learned in the MG creation process, or Reflection is not included.	**Concluding Reflection:** Provides a *reflection* about what the author has learned in the MG creation process. *Few connectionsof own learning to classroom practice*	**Concluding Reflection:** Provides a critical *reflection* about what the author has learned in the MG creation process. *Connects own learning to classroom practice*	**Concluding Reflection:** Provides a clearly articulated critical *reflection* about what the author has learned in the MG creation process. *Connects own learning to classroom practice*
Referencing *Learning Outcome 4*	10	The project integrates three or fewer Core (EDUC 612 & 613) readings, and/or other current, relevant literature. References do not follow APA (6th edition) style.	The project integrates four Core (EDUC 612 & 613) readings, and/or other current, relevant literature. References contain numerous APA (6th edition) errors.	The project integrates five Core (EDUC 612 & 613) readings, and/or other current, relevant literature that are correctly referenced. References may contain minor APA (6th edition) errors.	The project integrates a minimum of 6 Core (EDUC 612 & 613) readings and/or other current, relevant literature that are correctly referenced. References adhere to *APA style (6th edition).*
Overall Style *Learning Outcome 4*	5	Contains many grammatical errors or error patterns.	Lacks in grammatical or stylistic form OR contains many errors or error patterns.	Grammatically and stylistically written, but contains some errors or error patterns.	Grammatically and stylistically well written with few errors and no error patterns.