

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

**EDUC 800 002: Ways of Knowing (3)**

Prerequisite(s): Admission to PhD program

**Fall, 2013**

**Wednesday 4:30 – 7:10, Robinson Hall B103**

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Office hours: by appointment

**Course Description**

This course is a foundation course for the Ph.D. in Education program. The purpose of the course is to explore how we come to know and accept a method(s) of inquiry among the various ways of knowing. Using a seminar approach structured around readings, reflections on those readings, class discussions, and individual research, the course seeks to develop in students an ability to reflect critically on the strengths and limitations of the various ways of knowing and to become aware of the implications of the different ways of knowing for research and practice.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will describe, compare, and contrast ways of knowing from a variety of perspectives.
2. Students will describe ways of knowing of individuals or groups and will analyze and explain personal, sociocultural, professional, political, and other influences on ways of knowing.
3. Students will explore how various ways of knowing affect individual scholars, research, and practice in education and related fields.
4. Students will expand and refine their scholarship abilities including critical and analytic reading, writing, thinking, oral communication, and the use of scholarly resources.

**How this Course Supports GSE's Priorities**

This introductory course seeks to develop each student's ability to be a reflective researcher who becomes grounded in the ways we come to know through inquiry. Through the readings, the classroom conversations, discussions, and presentations, it is intended that each student will become more analytic about the conduct of inquiry and one's own perspectives on inquiry and the nature of knowledge, and to develop a respect for the diversity of thought that characterizes inquiry.

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

**Professional Dispositions**

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

**Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

## GMU Policies and Resources for students

1. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
2. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
3. 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.
4. 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/>].
5. 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/>].
6. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
7. 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/>].

## Required Course Texts

Bruner, J. (1996). *The Culture of Education*. MA: Harvard University Press.

Elmore, R. F. (2011). *I Used to Think . . . And Now I Think . . . Twenty Leading Educators Reflect on the Work of School Reform*. MA: Harvard University Press.

Kuhn, T. (1976). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. University of Chicago Press.

Strogatz, S. (2004). *Sync: How Order Emerges from Chaos in the Universe, Nature, and Daily Life*. NY: Hyperion.

## Texts for Expert Area (differs for each individual)

**Excerpts from these texts will be available on blackboard or Mason e-reserve**

Allen, P. B. (1995). *Art is a Way of Knowing*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's Ways of Knowing*. NY: Basic Books.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. MA: Harvard University Press.

Carr, N. (2010). *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*. NY: W. W. Norton.

Descartes, R. (1637). *Discourse on Method and Related Writings*. NY: Penguin Classics.

Goldberger, N., Tarule, J., Clinchy, B., & Belenky, M. (Eds.). (1996). *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by 'Women's Ways of Knowing.'* NY: Basic Books.

Harding, S. (1998). *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Johnson, S. (2006). *Everything Bad is Good for You: How Today's Popular Culture is Making Us Smarter*. NY: The Penguin Group.

- Kozol, J. (1995). *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*. NY: Crown Publishers.
- Ladd, P. (2003). *Understanding Deaf Culture: In Search of Deafhood*. Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Lane, H., Hoffmeister, R., & Bahan, B. (1996). *A Journey into the Deaf-World*. San Diego, CA: Dawnsign Press.
- Lyons, N., & LaBoskey, V. K. (2002). *Narrative Inquiry in Practice*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Mitchell, M. (2009). *Complexity: A Guided Tour*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Taylor, E., Gillborn, D., & Ladson-Billings, G. (Eds.). (2009). *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education*. NY: Routledge.
- Selye, H. (1964). *From Dream to Discovery: On Being a Scientist*. NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Snow, C. P. (1993). *The Two Cultures*. NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Sterns, P.N. (2006). *Childhood in World History, Second Edition*. NY: Routledge.
- ... and many more ... this is open ended as there are many ways of knowing**

### **Additional Required Reading**

To be determined articles available on the Mason e-reserve website or on Blackboard. Some will be chapters from books, for example,

- Grandin, T. (2006). *Thinking in Pictures: My Life with Autism*. New York: Vintage. (Pages 3 to 32)
- Stokes, D. E. (1997). *Pasteurs Quadrant: Basic Science and Technological Innovation*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press. (Chapter 1)

### **Recommended Text**

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Author: Washington, DC. (Recommended for entire doctoral program).

### **Supplies**

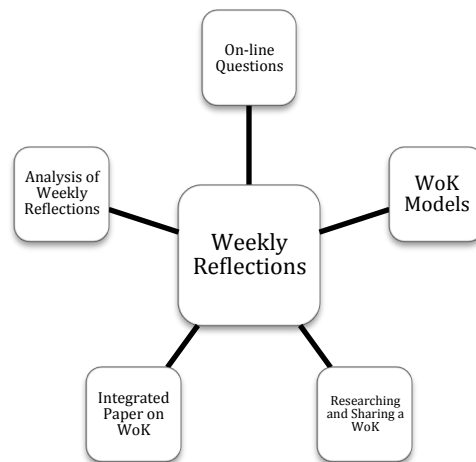
Computer with Internet access, current GMU email account, access to scanner or digital camera (if you do not have either please let me know and I will make one available to you).

### **Course Delivery**

This course is a doctoral seminar, and my teaching style revolves around the concept of “learning via activity, conversation, and visualization.” As such it is expected that you will read in advance of class, help to develop discussion questions and continue to try to find the bigger picture as you learn to sort through the findings of one area of study to the next. In addition to classroom attendance and participation, I expect you to participate fully in whole class and small group discussions, group, pair, and individual projects, internet and library research, analyses of case studies, and reflections on practice. I will use GMU’s web-accessible Blackboard course (<https://myMason.gmu.edu>) framework throughout the course; many of the examples are posted there for you to read in advance of our discussions.

### **Assignments**

The assignments for this course overlap, are simultaneously reflective, integrative and analytic (WoK = Ways of Knowing). They are depicted below:



## Weekly Reflections

You are expected to write a weekly reflection at the end of each class that is reflective, integrative, and analytic. The overall purpose is to use informal journal writing as a means to think and reflect on the content of the course. In particular, the journal is a means for you to connect course material to your own experiences and to analyze the course readings critically. I expect that your reflections will support you in class as well as in all other assignments as depicted in the figure above. ***Due Weekly.***

## On-line Questions

As described previously these questions are due weekly on blackboard and must be posted before class begins. Two questions are required, a minimum of 1 question on a point in the reading that truly excites you – that you are anxious to discuss with others, and a minimum of 1 question on a part of the text that you find confusing, unclear. The goal is for you to think through your understanding of the reading by assessing what is interesting to you and what is confusing “to get a inkling of what you don’t know.” ***Due Weekly.***

## WoK Models

We will have whole class, group or individual WoK models. Please make sure yours is represented. ***Due Randomly but at least 2 individual models during the semester.***

## Researching and Sharing a Way of Knowing (WoK)

On the first night of class we will begin exploration of a WoK that is of keen interest to you and that is new to you. First thoughts about your WoK area will be discussed in the second class. You will solidify your choice by the end of the third class and identify it as part of your reflection that week. There will be one particular class in which we will have a primary focus on “your chosen” WoK. In that class you will provide an excerpt(s) from your reading for pre-class reading assignment (around 30 pages). This needs to be chosen and submitted to me at least 2 weeks before your discussion date so it can be submitted to the library. You will lead the discussion based on the reading and

activity. The experiential activity (e.g., video, audio, art activity, etc) will take place in class on the night of your discussion. ***Due Dates Vary.***

### **Integrative Paper on Ways of Knowing**

Select a WoK for this paper (hopefully this is the same as the one you researched and shared in class. Explore this way of knowing. Prepare a paper (about 2500 words/10 pages) that demonstrates: 1) your understanding of the basic assumptions of this approach, and 2) what it is that makes this approach a new way of knowing for you. Note: depth and analysis are more important than breadth. APA format required. ***Due 12-4-13.*** Assignment must submitted to Safe Assign on blackboard on or prior to due date. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with me.

As part of the development of your paper, please submit via blackboard a one-page description of your proposed project so we can agree early in the semester no later than the 8th class, ***10-16-13.*** The outline should address the following questions:

1. What is the way of knowing you will explore?
2. How do you propose to study it?
3. What are your tentative sources?

You will have considerable input from other classmates on your topic through class activities and discussions and discussion of their related topics. It is quite appropriate to include other readings and materials from class in your paper.

Evaluation of the final paper: The main criteria are a clearly defined focus, clear and accurate presentation of its assumptions and definitions about knowing, a demonstrated understanding of the implications for research, and clear organization and writing (*see scoring rubric at the end of this syllabus*).

### **Analysis of Reflections on Ways of Knowing**

For this paper, you will look across the semester and consider its effects on you. The guiding questions for this final paper are:

1. How would you have described your way(s) of knowing, learning, and thinking when you began this class?
2. As you consider your autobiography/personal history, what factors personal, experiential, familial, sociocultural, historical, and/or disciplinary influenced your ways of knowing?
3. How has the course affected your ways of knowing as a practitioner and as a researcher?
4. How would you describe your current way of knowing?
5. What are the implications of your reflections on questions 3 and 4 above for your personal and professional growth during your doctoral study?

Criteria for assessment include: evidence of serious reflection and analysis, clear organization and clear writing. This paper is the culminating activity of the course and is due at the beginning of the last class meeting ***Due 12-11-13.*** Assignment must submitted on blackboard on or prior to due date. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with me.

## Grading of Assignments

1. Weekly Reflections	10
2. On-line Questions	10
3. WoK Models	10
4. Researching and Sharing a WoK	20
5. Integrative Paper on WoK	30
6. Analysis of Reflections on WoK	20
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>100</b>

## Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100	A- = 90 – 94	B+ = 87 – 89	B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82	C = 70 – 79	F = < 70	

## Class Schedule

Date	Class Topics and Activities	Readings and Other Assignments Due
<b>August 28</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Overview of course/syllabus</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/neil_harbisson_i_listen_to_color.html">http://www.ted.com/talks/neil_harbisson_i_listen_to_color.html</a></li> <li>• Walk through previous graphics and student hints on WoK</li> <li>• Small group WoK graphic</li> <li>• Weekly reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	
<b>Sept 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Bruner–use questions from Blog</li> <li>• Waiting for Superman (30 minutes)</li> <li>• Your WoK topic</li> <li>• Weekly reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Bruner preface and first 4 chapters</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Sept 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further discussion of Bruner–use questions from Blog</li> <li>• Deb Roy: <i>The birth of a word</i> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RE4ce4mexrU">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RE4ce4mexrU</a></li> <li>• Small group WoK graphic</li> <li>• Your WoK topic</li> <li>• Weekly reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Bruner chapters 5 to 8</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Sept 18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Stokes – use questions from Blog</li> <li>• Experiential activity</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Your WoK topic</li> <li>• Weekly reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stokes Ch 1(on e-reserves)</li> <li>• Strogatz Preface and Chs 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Sept 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Grandin – use questions from Blog</li> <li>• Film: Temple Grandin (30 minutes)</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Your WoK topic</li> <li>• Weekly reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grandin Pages 3 to 32 (on e-reserves)</li> <li>• Strogatz Chs 3 &amp; 4</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Oct 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Strogatz – use questions from Blog</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/steven_strogatz_on_sync.html">http://www.ted.com/talks/steven_strogatz_on_sync.html</a></li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• WoK topic changes</li> <li>• Questions on assignments</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strogatz Chs 5 to 10 and Epilogue</li> <li>• Bring your possible reading for the WoK topic of choice</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Oct 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students WoK topic discussions and experiential activity (30 minutes each)</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for 2-3 students WoK topics</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>

<b>Oct 16</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students WoK topic discussions and experiential activity (30 minutes each)</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for 2-3 students WoK topics</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Oct 23</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students WoK topic discussions and experiential activity (30 minutes each)</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for 2-3 students WoK topics</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Oct 30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students WoK topic discussions and experiential activity (30 minutes each)</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for 2-3 students WoK topics</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Nov 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students WoK topic discussions and experiential activity (30 minutes each)</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for 2-3 students WoK topics</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Nov 13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students WoK topic discussions and experiential activity (30 minutes each)</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for 2-3 students WoK topics</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Nov 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Elmore – use questions from Blog</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U&amp;feature=player_embedded">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U&amp;feature=player_embedded</a></li> <li>• I Used to Think ... and Now I Think ... Activity</li> <li>• Any individual WoK graphics to share?</li> <li>• Questions on assignments?</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection at 6:50pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Elmore</li> <li>• Post at least 2 questions on Blog</li> </ul>
<b>Dec 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ON LINE CLASS on Kuhn</li> <li>• Weekly Reflection by end of day 12-11-13</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Kuhn</li> <li>• Integrative Paper on Ways of Knowing Due</li> </ul>
<b>Dec 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exam Day – no class – final assignment due</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of Reflections on Ways of Knowing Due</li> </ul>

## Scoring Rubric for the “knowing” paper

1. Focus: the way of knowing is clearly identified and its historical roots are clearly described  
**Accomplished:** the focus of the paper is clearly stated and its historical roots are clearly described.  
**Basic:** the focus of the paper is either clearly identified and its historical roots are not clearly described or vice versa.  
**Unsatisfactory:** the focus of the paper and/or its roots are neither clearly identified nor clearly described.
2. Presentation of Assumptions: the fundamental assumptions about the nature of knowledge in the “way” are explained clearly and the key terms necessary to understand this way of knowing are defined.  
**Accomplished:** the fundamental assumptions are clearly explained and the key terms are defined.  
**Basic:** the fundamental assumptions are explained and some key terms are defined.  
**Unsatisfactory:** neither are the assumptions made clear, nor are the key terms defined.
3. Demonstrated understanding of the implications for research: the nature of the research questions this way of knowing has been used to explore are included and described clearly.  
**Accomplished:** the nature of the research questions are included and relevant examples presented  
**Basic:** either the nature of the research questions or the examples are not included or are not clearly presented  
**Unsatisfactory:** neither the research questions are clear nor are the examples clearly presented
4. Organization and Clarity: the paper is well-organized; the argument flows easily from point to point; follows APA writing guidelines.  
**Accomplished:** the paper is well-organized with the logic following from point to point follows APA guidelines; there are no grammatical errors, typos, misspelled words, etc.  
**Basic:** the paper jumps from topic to topic; there are grammatical errors, typos, misspelled words, etc.; APA guidelines used inconsistently.  
**Unsatisfactory:** the paper is hard to follow as the points are not connected into a coherent whole; inattention to grammar, typographical errors and misspelled words; failure to consult APA is evident.
5. Discussion of why this is a new or expanded way of knowing for you  
**Accomplished:** Delineations between your way of knowing and that of this “other” perspective are clear.  
**Basic:** Distinctions are drawn, but not developed in enough depth to see what you learned from the exercise.  
**Unsatisfactory:** No attention is given to how this way of knowing is new to or expanded for you.