

**George Mason University  
College of Education & Human Development (CEHD)  
Graduate School of Education (GSE)**

**EDUC 815 001 - Research Inquiries in International Education  
3 credits, Spring 2017  
Tuesdays 4:30-7:10 pm - Thompson Hall 1507**

**Professor**

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**Course Description**

- A. *Prerequisites:* EDUC 880 OR permission of instructor and advisor
- B. *University Catalog Course Description:* EDUC 815 focuses on the intersection of international education and research methodologies in educational settings. Students will delve into the construction, implementation, and impact of research in international settings or with an internationally minded perspective. Through critical inquiry into practice, the course offers students the opportunity to develop more sophisticated understandings of the research process in international education settings.
- C. *Expanded Course Description:* As the field of comparative and international education grows, there is a greater need for educators and scholars to understand the role of research in the practice of the field. This course will provide opportunities for advanced students to better understand the structures, procedures, and nuances of international research, while also building knowledge of and expertise in methodologies in the field of international education. This course serves as an extension of students' foundational experiences with research methods introduced earlier in their doctoral programs. While a range of research methods were presented in these earlier courses, this class focuses students on questions related to their identities as researchers who are interested in conducting research studies in and across international settings. As US-based and/or trained scholars working in increasingly global contexts, it is especially important for students to complicate, understand, and articulate their unique cross-contexts roles and positions.

**Course Delivery**

This course includes a variety of learning activities: discussions in seminar format, text-based/multi-media presentation of course materials, experiential learning activities including interactive assignments, cooperative learning group activities, online discussions and activities, and lecture.

**Learner Outcomes**

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Explore their identities as scholars conducting research in and across international education settings, including explorations of their intercultural competencies and dispositions and capacities necessary to operate successfully as internationally-minded scholars.
2. Develop research questions and methods that are particularly relevant to studies conducted in and across international education settings.
3. Understand the nuances of questions such as: How might US-based researchers and scholars committed to studying educational phenomena and school structures use scholarship for the

improvement of educational outcomes in and across international settings? What research questions and methods are most relevant to, responsive to, and ethical in researchers' explorations in and across international settings? And, finally, who are the players involved in educational research conducted in and across international settings and how do we determine the roles these players might take on?

4. Support the development of knowledge as it pertains to cultural, regional, and national issues around conducting research and the mechanics of better understanding and developing contingencies in the development of research protocols in international education contexts. Students will be presented with multiple forms of international research publications to better understand the role education stakeholders play in international settings while also working to deconstruct how international research takes place both within and outside the international contexts they are studying.
5. Learn more about research methods with relevance in and across international education settings, with special attention paid to methods that can be implemented in these settings focusing on visual and sensory methods—those tools that reach beyond traditional language-centered techniques and provide data that can be “translated” without the benefit of language, which can be a primary barrier to interpreting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data related to phenomena in international settings.

### Professional Standards

International and comparative education is a growing and important field within education and as a result there are a growing number of organizations that are oriented to specific international education audiences, such as the NAFSA: The Association of International Educators, the Association for the Advancement of International Education (AAIE), which serves international schools; the Institute of International Education (IIE), The Alliance for International Education (AIE) focused on developing partnerships between higher education institutions and international schools; the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), whose purpose is to promote cross-cultural understanding and social development through international education research, policy and practices, and many others. This course addresses some of the aims and goals of the above international education organizations and is intended for policymakers, practitioners and researchers who are interested in international education. This course is also aligned with the following vision statements: GSE Priorities--Diversity and Equity, and Children, Families and Communities, CEHD's Center for Language and Culture (CLC) and the National Association for Multicultural Education.

### Required Texts and Readings

- Bartlett, L. & Vavrus, F. (2017). *Rethinking case study research: A comparative approach*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Vavrus, F. & Bartlett, L. (2013). *Critical approaches to comparative education*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Please see the course schedule for a full list of all journal articles scheduled for each week. Full references listed at the end of the syllabus as well. These readings will also be available on Blackboard.

### Course Performance Evaluation

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via email. Formatting must be consistent with APA (6<sup>th</sup> edition) guidelines. Late papers and projects will not be

accepted without penalty, excepting extraordinary circumstances.

### ***Attendance and Participation (15 points)***

Class participation is important not only for each individual student's learning, but for the learning and success of our class as a whole. Class participation is a factor in grading; instructors may use absences, tardiness, or early departure in both on-line and campus class sessions as de facto evidence of non-participation and as a result lower a student's grade (Mason Catalog 2011-12).

Please note the following attendance and participation policies:

1. Two tardies are equal to one absence, and missing 30% or more of class sessions will result in automatic course failure. For each unexcused absence (a determination made by the instructor) one point will be deducted from your attendance and class participation points up to a total of 15 points.
2. Participants are expected to read the assigned materials, complete on-line activities including pre-session Blackboard assignments, arrive promptly, attend all class meetings for the entire session, and participate in on-line and face-to-face class discussions.
3. If, due to an emergency, you will not be able to participate during a given week of class, please contact the professor as soon as possible. Students are responsible for obtaining information given during class discussions/sessions despite attendance from a classmate.

### ***Critical Dialogue Dispatches (15 points)***

Over the course of the semester, students will submit three brief critical dispatches of the JOURNAL readings for that week. Each dispatch is to be between 300-500 words. These dispatches will offer a critical perspective on the readings for that week. Please note critical does not mean to CRITICIZE. It means that important underlying issues will be raised (1 point), connections across curriculum in this course and others will be drawn (1 points), and nuances of perspective, relationships and content will be highlighted (1 points). Further connections to the student's own interests and queries that this raises for the student can be addressed (1 point). This will be the foundation from which the dialogue in class is initiated. Please note that grammar, punctuation, and APA will be used to grade these papers (1 point) and no partial points will given for papers with more than two errors. **ABSOLUTELY NO LATE DISPATCHES WILL BE ACCEPTED. Please submit this in hard copy in class on the due date.**

### ***Podcast Exploration (15 points)***

The FreshEd Podcast seeks to make educational research issues relevant and helpful to international education scholars and practitioners (<https://soundcloud.com/freshed-podcast>).

Your assignment is to better understand one of these key issues. Please select one of the podcasts to listen to and plan to write a five-page paper that does three things: Provide a synopsis of the issue (5 points); find competing or concurrent research that allows for greater depth of knowledge on the topic (looking for at least eight additional references) (5 points); and finally provide three research questions you would explore and why, if this was your research agenda (5 points). APA, clarity and grammar are expected – points will be deducted from the other areas for lack of attention to these details. **This can be sent via email on the due date**

### ***Constructing Research Questions Project (CRQP) (25 Points)***

The CRQP is an exercise driven project that depends on two important qualities for doctoral students to develop – curiosity and self-direction. The project is made up of four parts, which will be due at

different times during the semester. This project is driven by the understanding that as doctoral students you are reading topics related to your research interests above and beyond what is assigned to you in classes. The project aims to help you understand the iterative process of scholarship, the necessity of embedding your question in literature, grounding your interests in theory and developing the skills to ask a researchable question.

1. **Part I (2 points)** - CRQP Neighborhood – On one page, please provide a clear understanding of the topic in which you are interested in situating your research questions. You can use words, images, graphics or tables to present your ideas. (Hard copy – due in class).
2. **Part II (3 points)** - CRQP Reading List – Prepare a 1-2 page reading list of articles that are helping you or will help you better understand your “neighborhood”. (Please note –this list must follow APA guidelines and some of these must be read to gather a clear and effective list). (Hard copy – due in class).
3. **Part III (10 points)** - CRQP Synthesis – Prepare a 4-6 page paper that synthesizes the ideas that are emerging from your literature review. Please do not summarize any article –rather, present the ideas that are emerging from your reading and cite the authors, but no paragraph should be devoted to solely one reading. This can be sent via email on the due date.
4. **Part IV (10 points)** - CRQP Final – Prepare a 4-6 page paper that presents 4-6 potential research questions that emerge from the literature and might be considered “researchable” and why and supported by literature. This can be sent via email on the due date.

### Final Exam (30 points)

This course will require a final exam to be held on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Details will be provided in class. Students must bring an examination blue book for the exam. One index (4x6) card with notes will be allowed.

### Assessment and Mastery Grading

Attendance and Participation	15 points
Critical Dialogue Dispatches	15 points
Podcast Exploration	15 points
CRQP Project	25 points
Final Exam	30 points

**Total** **100 points**

All assignments will be evaluated holistically using a mastery grading system; the general rubric is described below. A student must demonstrate “mastery” of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a “B” level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement—through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work—will she/he be assessed with an “A” level score. With a mastery grading system, students must *choose* to “go above and beyond” in order to earn “A” level scores.

- “A” level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional relevant component. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers’ efforts.
- “B” level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines.

Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.

- "C" level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- "F" level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible

### Grading Scale:

At George Mason University, course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is a measure of quality. The system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade	GRADING	Graduate Courses
A+	100	Satisfactory / Passing
A	94-99	Satisfactory / Passing
A-	90-93	Satisfactory / Passing
B+	85-89	Satisfactory / Passing
B	80-84	Satisfactory / Passing
C	70-79	Does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education
F	<69	Does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

### Professional Dispositions

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

### Proposed Class Schedule

January 24 Week 1	Learning about inquiry	1. Introductions 2. Syllabus	
January 31 Week 2	Research in International Comparative Education – tracing a history	Carey, R. D. (1966). Conceptual tools for research in comparative education. <i>Comparative Education Review</i> , 10(3), 418-425.  Hawkins, J. N., & Rust, V. D. (2001). Shifting perspectives on comparative research: A view from the USA. <i>Comparative Education</i> , 37(4), 501–506.  Baily, S. Shah, P. & Call-Cummings, M. (2015). Reframing the center: New directions in qualitative methodology in	

		international and comparative education. In A.W. Wiseman & E. Anderson (Eds.), <i>Annual Review of Comparative and International Education</i> (pp. TBD). Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing.	
February 7 Week 3	Who am I as a researcher? What do I want to know about international research? How does one "do" international research?	Nóvoa, A., & Yariv-Mashal, T. (2003). Comparative research in education: A mode of governance or a historical journey? <i>Comparative Education</i> , 39(4), 423-439.  Hayhoe, R. (2007). The use of ideal types in comparative education: A personal reflection. <i>Comparative Education</i> , 43(2), 189-207.  Berstecher, D., & Dieckmann, B. (1969). On the role of comparisons in educational research. <i>Comparative Education Review</i> , 13(1), 96-103	Dispatch 1 due in class
February 14 Week 4 ONLINE	Our identities as researchers and scholars in and across international settings The complexity, nuances and challenges of comparison – fighting our inclination to make judgments across setting	Smyth, J., Shacklock, G., & Hattam, R. (1999). Doing critical cultural studies: An antidote to being done to. <i>Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education</i> , 20(1), 73-89.  Alexander, R. J. (2001). Border crossings: Towards a comparative pedagogy. <i>Comparative Education</i> , 37(4), 507-523.  Troman, G., & Jeffrey, B. (2007). Qualitative data analysis in cross-cultural projects. <i>Comparative Education</i> , 43(4), 511-527.	
February 21 Week 5	Understanding the Framework of the Vertical Case Study and how it makes sense in CIE.	Bartlett and Vavrus – 1-2  Andrews, P. (2007). Negotiating meaning in cross-national studies of mathematics teaching: Kissing frogs to find princes. <i>Comparative Education</i> , 43(4), 489-511.	CRQP Part 1 - due
February 28 Week 6	PERPECTIVES AND CONCERNS (CONT) - LEARNING TO HONE OUR SKILLS Bringing theory to our practice	Bartlett and Vavrus – 34  Canen, A. (1999). The challenges of conducting an ethnographic case study of a United Kingdom Teacher Education Institution. <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i> , 50(1), 50-57.	Dispatch 2 due

March 7 Week 7 ONLINE	PERPECTIVES AND CONCERNS - LEARNING TO HONE OUR SKILLS Trends, ideologies and alternate perspectives	Bartlett and Vavrus – 6 Vavrus and Bartlett - Introduction  Online Podcast Exploration Exercise	
SPRING BREAK – MARCH 11-18			
March 21 Week 8	Exploring, critiquing and understanding the style and substance of international education research Case studies from the field	Part 1 – Vavrus and Bartlett – Chapters 1-3  Francis, D. (1998). A voice in the wilderness: Meetings as ritual in a cross-cultural context. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i> , 11(4), 583-603.	Podcast Exploration Due
March 28 Week 9	Exploring, critiquing and understanding the style and substance of international education research Case studies from the field	Part 2 – Vavrus and Bartlett – Chapters 4-6  Cain, T., & Milovic, S. (2010). Action research as a tool of professional development of advisers and teachers in Croatia. <i>European Journal of Teacher Education</i> 33(1), 19–30.	CRQP Part II Due
April 4 Week 10	LEARNING TO SEE HOW IT IS DONE (CONT). Exploring, critiquing and understanding the style and substance of international education research Case studies from the field	Part 3 – Vavrus and Bartlett – Chapters 7-9  Diallo, M. (2007). People from different backgrounds write different histories: An essay on historiography (Britain and India). <i>African and Asian Studies</i> , 6(1/2), 155–172.  Martin, T. J. (2003). Divergent ontologies with converging conclusions: A case study comparison of comparative methodologies. <i>Comparative Education</i> , 39(1), 105-119.	
April 11 Week 11	LEARNING TO SEE HOW IT IS DONE (CONT). Exploring, critiquing and understanding the style and substance of international education research Case studies from the field	Part 4 – Vavrus and Bartlett – Chapters 10-12  Pérez, Á., Soto, E., & Serván, M. J. (2010). Participatory action research and the reconstruction of teachers’ practical thinking: Lesson studies and core reflection; An experience in Spain.	Dispatch 3 is Due

		<p><i>Educational Action Research, 18(1), 73–87.</i></p> <p>Tseng, Y. (2002). From 'us' to 'them': Diasporic linkages and identity politics. <i>Identities: Global Studies in Power and Culture, 9(3), 383–405.</i></p>	
<p>April 18 Week 12</p>	<p>IDEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH</p> <p>Understanding the ramifications of ideological and ethical dilemmas in research</p>	<p>Ghaffar-Kucher, A. (2014). Writing Culture; inscribing lives: a reflective treatise on the burden of representation in native research. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education.</i></p> <p>Ghaffar-Kuchar, A. (2014). 'Narrow-minded and oppressive' or a 'superior culture'? Implications of divergent representations of Islam for Pakistani-American youth. <i>Race, Ethnicity and Education.</i></p> <p>Niranjana, T. (2000). Alternative frames? Questions for comparative research in the third world. <i>Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, 1(1), 97-109.</i></p> <p>Merriam, S. B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., &amp; Muhamad, M. (2001). Power and positionality: Negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures. <i>International Journal of Lifelong Education, 20(5), 405–416.</i></p> <p>Pryor, J., Kuupole, A., Kutor, N., Dunne, M., &amp; Adu-Yeboah, C. (2009). Exploring the fault lines of cross-cultural collaborative research. <i>Compare: Journal of Comparative and International Education, 39(6), 769–782.</i></p> <p>Sweeting, A. (1999). Doing comparative historical education research: Problems and issues from and about Hong Kong. <i>Compare, 29(3), 269-285.</i></p>	<p>CRQP Part III – Due</p>
<p>April 25 Week 13</p>	<p>STUDENT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM</p>		
<p>May 2 Week 14</p>	<p>SHARING OUR EXPERTISE - BECOMING CRITICAL</p>	<p>Ferguson D. L., &amp; Meyer, G. (1998). Talking across borders and languages: Encouraging international research discussions and</p>	<p>CRQP Part IV Due</p>



	<p>COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS.          SETTING OUR SIGHTS ON THE FUTURE - WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH</p> <p>Wrap up          End of semester evaluations</p>	<p>collaboration. <i>International Journal of Educational Research</i> 29(2), 89-93.</p> <p>White, M. T. (2007). A right to benefit from international research: A new approach to capacity building in less-developed countries. <i>Accountability in Research: Policies and Quality Assurance</i>, 14(2), 73-93.</p> <p>Kennedy, J. (2007). International education and developing countries: Research and educational collaboration in the field. <i>Journal of Political Science Education</i>, 3(3), 223-237.</p> <p>Ebbutt, D. (1998). Evaluation of projects in the developing world: Some cultural and methodological issues. <i>International Journal of Educational Development</i>, 18(1), 415-424.</p>	
<p>May 9          Week 15</p>	<p>Final Exam</p>		

**Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and 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**

*Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk2o should be directed to [tk2ohelp@gmu.edu](mailto:tk2ohelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk2o>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- The Writing Center 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/>).
- The 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 Student Support & Advocacy Center staff helps students develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through confidential one-on-one support as well as through interactive programs and resources. Some of the topics they address are healthy relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health (see <http://ssac.gmu.edu/>). Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone at 703-993-3686. Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://ssac.gmu.edu/make-a-referral/>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.