

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Teaching Culturally & Linguistically Diverse and Exceptional Learners**



**Teaching Culturally & Linguistically Diverse and Exceptional Learners**  
**EDUC 626 – 6F1**  
**Inquiry Into Action: IB Teachers, Learners and Schools**  
**3 Credits**  
**CRN: 21232**  
**Spring 2020**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Office:** Virtual

**Meeting Dates:** January 21 – May 4

**Meeting Time:** online

**Meeting Location:** online

**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

Required Prerequisites: [EDUC 621B-](#), [622B-](#), [623B-](#) and [624B-](#).

B- Requires minimum grade of B-.

**University Catalog Course Description**

This course explores and utilizes the action research and qualitative research process to help educational practitioners plan and complete an action research study related to IB learners, teachers or schools. Furthermore, the course examines the social, cultural and ethical issues of conducting research with students.

## Course Overview

This course is an online seminar. This means that our work together will primarily be through dialogue with each other. Instead of utilizing lectures, each class will depend on the ideas that we collectively develop as we engage in ongoing discussion about international education and the International Baccalaureate. Your own experiences as teachers, readers, writers, and learners, along with the course readings, will be an important part of our developing collective understandings.

**Please ensure you read the whole syllabus. It contains important information that will help you complete the course smoothly.**

It is vitally important for each student to complete readings on a weekly basis. Typically, a course meets once weekly for approximately 2.5 hours. For each of the modules, you should spend this amount of time on the website in addition to your weekly readings and work. Successful students in an online learning environment are proactive, self-regulated, and manage their time well.

## Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on January 14, 2020 at 9AM (EST).

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

## *Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:  
[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#supported-browsers](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)
- To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:  
[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player:

- <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
- Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### *Expectations*

This online course is **not self-paced**. You will be expected to complete one module every week. Completing a module involves reading, participating in discussions with the whole class, and completing any accompanying assignments associated with that module. You are asked to engage deeply with the subject matter, to take risks in your thinking, and to listen to and learn from your classmates.

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Tuesdays and end on Mondays.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

## **Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of research studies within various paradigms, including action research, using measures of rigor;
2. Propose and complete an IB connected action research project that includes an overview, contextual statement, review of the literature, methodology, data analysis, conclusions, reflections and relationship to practice;
3. Make explicit links between theory and practice in their own action research;
4. Examine ethical considerations when conducting research with children including their own project;
5. Explain the critical importance of considering multiple perspectives using different approaches to inquiry; and,
6. Demonstrate leadership in conducting class discussions and presenting their action research projects to others.

## **Professional Standards (NBPTS / IB / ISTE)**

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

### *National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)*

Proposition 1: Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

Proposition 2: Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects.

Proposition 3: Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

Proposition 4: Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

Proposition 5: Teachers are members of learning communities

ASTL 6: Teachers attend to the needs of culturally, linguistically and cognitively diverse learners.

ASTL 7: Teachers are change agents, teacher leaders, and partners with colleagues and families.

### *IB Teacher Award Inquiry Strands*

**Purpose (0101):** Schools implement IB programmes to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

**Leadership and Governance (0201):** The leadership and governance of IB World Schools create and sustain high-quality learning environments.

**Student Support (0202):** Learning environments in IB World Schools support student success.

**Teacher Support (0203):** Learning environments in IB World Schools support and empower teachers.

**Culture through Policy Implementation (0301):** Schools develop, implement, communicate and review effective policies that help to create a school culture in which IB philosophy can thrive.

**Coherent Curriculum (0401):** Learning in IB World Schools is based on a coherent curriculum.  
**Students as Lifelong Learners (0402):** Learning in IB schools aims to develop students ready for further education and life beyond the classroom.

**Approaches to Teaching (0403):** IB programmes encourage approaches to teaching that create learning experiences that are shown to be meaningful to the school community.

**Approaches to Assessment (0404):** Learning, teaching, and assessment effectively inform and influence one another.

*Technology (ISTE):*

IV. Teachers apply technology to facilitate a variety of effective assessment and evaluation strategies.

V. Teachers use technology to enhance their productivity and professional practice.

### Standards and Outcomes Matrix:

Outcomes	NBPTS/ASTL	IB	Technology
1	4	0403, 0404	
2	4	0101, 0202, 0203, 0301, 0402, 0403, 0404	IV
3	1, 2, 4	0101, 0202, 0203, 0301, 0402, 0403, 0404	
4	4, 6	0101, 0402	
5	1, 4, 6	0202, 0402, 0403, 0404	
6	5, 7	0101, 0203, 0403	V

### Required Texts

Sagor, R. D. & Williams, C. (2017). *The action research guidebook: A process for pursuing equity and excellence in education* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin. ISBN: 978-1506350158

### Technology Resources:

- All students are required to have access to a computer with Internet access and a current GMU email account.
- All students will be enrolled in the Program Resource Center (PRC) through the International Baccalaureate.

### Relevant Websites:

- International Baccalaureate – Program Resource Center (PRC)  
<http://www.ibo.org/>
- Practitioner Research as Staff Development:  
<http://www.valrc.org/publications/research/index.html>
- American Psychological Association

## Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

### **TK20 PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT (Action Research Paper)**

Every student registered for any Teaching Culturally, Linguistically Diverse & Exceptional Learners program course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment and the Fieldwork Log of Hours and Evaluation Form to Tk20 through Blackboard (regardless of whether the student is taking the course as an elective, a one-time course or as part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Tk20 through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Tk20 (through Blackboard) will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Tk20 submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

### **FIELDWORK REQUIREMENT**

#### **Field Experience Record and Evaluation**

The **field experience is a required component** of the teacher preparation program at George Mason University. For this course, you will conduct your action research in a classroom, but you are not required to submit a fieldwork hours log. Please see the following sections for how to secure an approved fieldwork site for your project.

**In-service teachers:** Field experience can often be conducted in your own classroom if you have access to the population of students required for the PBAs and other assignments. Please consult your instructor if you have questions about the viability of your classroom for fieldwork in this class. You must register for your school as your field experience site in the online Field Experience Request form available here: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>. You will check the box indicating that: *“I will arrange my own field experiences (observations and/or case studies) because I am a full-time contracted school system employee and will complete field experience at my workplace.”* The deadline to submit your field experience placement is Week 2 of class. Failure to do so will result in an unsatisfactory grade for your fieldwork assignment. If you are taking this course as part of a cohort program, please indicate “TCLDEL Cohort” on your request form FIRST, then select your program and placement location. HINT: Cohort courses have section numbers beginning with “6F” (e.g. EDUC 511.6F1). **If you are an international student, please submit your fieldwork request to Amanda Jenkins at [ajenki4@gmu.edu](mailto:ajenki4@gmu.edu).**

**Pre-service teachers:** If you are not currently working in a K-12 school, you will need to be placed in an appropriate fieldwork setting to complete your required PBAs and fieldwork hours. You must

request a fieldwork site using the online Field Experience Request form available here: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>. You will check the box indicating that: I will need George Mason (Clinical Practice Specialist) to arrange a placement for my field experiences (including observations and/or case studies). The deadline to submit your field experience placement is Week 2 of class. Failure to do so will result in an unsatisfactory grade for your fieldwork assignment. If you are taking this course as part of a cohort program, please indicate “TCLDEL Cohort” on your request form, then select your program and placement location. HINT: Cohort courses have section numbers beginning with “6F” (e.g. EDUC 511.6F1). **If you are an international student, please submit your fieldwork request to Amanda Jenkins at [ajenki4@gmu.edu](mailto:ajenki4@gmu.edu)**

**Virginia state or county cohort teachers:** Cohort Students are required by their district and by TCLDEL to complete field experiences as required by the Virginia Department of Education for this program. Each district has arranged for candidates to be able to work at K-12 grade levels in order to complete all licensure requirements. Please contact your district coordinator for further information.

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Assignment	Percent of Final Grade	Outcomes Addressed	Due Date
Discussion Board/ Assignments	20	1, 3, 4, 6	Weekly
Annotated Bibliography	15	1, 3, 5	March 9
Plan of Action	10	2, 3, 4	February 17
Action Research Paper (PBA)	35	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	May 4
Presentation of Action Research	20	5, 6	April 27

More detailed descriptions of assignments and rubrics are shown at the end of the syllabus.

- **Grading**

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 university-wide system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade	GRADING	Grade Points	Interpretation
A+	=100	4.00	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements
A	94-99	4.00	
A-	90-93	3.67	
B+	85-89	3.33	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
B	80-84	3.00	

C*	70-79	2.00	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course
F*	<69	0.00	

**Note: “C” is not satisfactory for a licensure course; “F” does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education**

See the University Catalog for details: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/>

### **Honor Code & Integrity of Work**

**Integrity of Work:** TCLDEL students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>). The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated as such.

*Violations of the Honor Code* include:

1. Copying a paper or part of a paper from another student (current or past);
2. Reusing work that you have already submitted for another class (unless express permission has been granted by your current professor **before** you submit the work);
3. Copying the words of an author from a textbook or any printed source (including the Internet) or closely paraphrasing without providing a citation to credit the author. For examples of what should be cited, please refer to:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>

### **Late Work Policy**

At the graduate level all work is expected to be of high quality and submitted on the dates due. *Work submitted late will be reduced one letter grade for every day of delay.* Because we live in uncertain times, if you have any extraordinary circumstances (think flood, earthquake, evacuation) that prevent you from submitting your work in a timely manner, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible after the circumstances occur and make arrangements to complete your work. *It is up to the discretion of the instructor to approve the late/makeup work.*

### **Course Withdrawal with Dean Approval**

For graduate and non-degree students, withdrawal after the last day for dropping a course requires approval by the student's academic dean, and is permitted only for nonacademic reasons that prevent course completion (Mason catalog). *Students must contact an academic advisor* in APTDIE to withdraw after the deadline. There is no guarantee that such withdrawals will be permitted.

### **Online Participation/Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to participate in **all** online discussions. Not participating in an online discussion module will be reflected with a zero for the week and as an absence. **Students with two absences will receive a one-letter grade deduction in their final grade; students with three absences will receive a two-letter grade deduction in their final grade; students with four absences will not receive credit for the course.**

### **Incomplete (IN)**

This grade may be given to students who are in good standing, but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 9th week. Unless an explicit written extension is filed with the Registrar's Office by the faculty deadline, the grade of IN is changed by the registrar to an F (Mason catalog). Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. The faculty member does not need to allow up to the following semester for the student to complete the course. A copy of the contract will be kept on file in the APTDIE office.

### **GMU E-MAIL AND WEB POLICY:**

Mason uses electronic mail ([www.gmu.edu/email](http://www.gmu.edu/email)) to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly (Mason catalog). All communication sent for this course will be sent to your Mason email account.

All communication sent for this course will be sent to your Mason email account. I will respond to emails as soon as I can, but always within 24 hours.

### **OTHER GMU POLICIES**

#### **Professional Dispositions**

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

#### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

##### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- 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 <https://ds.gmu.edu>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

*Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:** As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

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

**Class Schedule**

<b>Module 1</b>	<b><i>Introduction to Action Research and Ethics</i></b>
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Dates	January 21 – January 27
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1, Sagor</li> <li>• “Ethics,” Mills, Chapter 2 (online)</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Read syllabus and course schedule Participate in discussion board 1 Post self-introduction

<b>Module 2</b>	<b><i>Finding a Focus</i></b> <b>and</b> <b><i>Determining the Action Research Questions</i></b>
Dates	January 28 – February 3
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 2, Sagor</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 2

<b>Module 3</b>	<b><i>Theory of Action</i></b>
Dates	February 4 – February 10
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapters 4, 5, 6, Sagor</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 3

<b>Module 4</b>	<b><i>Building a Data Collection Plan</i></b>
Dates	February 11 – February 17
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 7, Sagor</li> </ul>

Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 4 Plan of Action
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<b>Module 5</b>	<b><i>Creating a Literature Review</i></b>
Dates	February 18 – February 24
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to write a literature review (online)</li> <li>• <a href="http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/">http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/</a></li> </ul>
Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 5

<b>Module 6</b>	<b><i>Writing Week</i></b>
Dates	February 25 – March 2
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None – Writing week</li> </ul>
Assignments due	1. Work on annotated bibliography

<b>Module 7</b>	<b><i>Analyzing the Data</i></b>
Dates	March 3 – March 9
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 8</li> </ul>
Assignments due	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate in discussion board 7</li> <li>2. Annotated bibliography</li> </ol>

<b>Module 8</b>	<b><i>Turning Findings Into Action Plans</i></b>
Dates	March 10 – March 16
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 9, Sagor</li> </ul>
Assignments	Participate in discussion board 8

due	
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<b>Module 9</b>	<b><i>Reporting and Sharing Action Research</i></b>
Dates	March 17 – March 23
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Writing Up Action Research,” Mills, Chapter 8 (online)</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 9

<b>Module 10</b>	<b><i>Reporting and Sharing Action Research, Part 2</i></b>
Dates	March 24 – March 30
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Writing and Disseminating the Action Research Report,” Hendricks, Chapter 8 (online)</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 10

<b>Module 11</b>	<b><i>Action Research Papers: Crafting the Narrative</i></b>
Dates	March 31 – April 6
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None – writing week</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Work on crafting action research papers Individual conferences

<b>Module 12</b>	<b><i>Action Research Papers: Crafting the Narrative</i></b>
Dates	April 7 – April 13
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None – writing week</li> </ul>
Assignments	Work on crafting action research papers Individual conferences

due	
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<b>Module 13</b>	<b><i>Action Research Papers: Crafting the Narrative</i></b>
Dates	April 14 – April 20
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None – writing week</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Work on crafting action research papers Individual conferences

<b>Module 14</b>	<b><i>Presentation of Action Research Projects</i></b>
Dates	April 21 – April 27
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None – writing week</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 14 Presentation of Action Research

<b>Module 15</b>	<b><i>Self-Evaluation and Reflection</i></b>
Dates	April 28 – May 4
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None – writing week</li> </ul>
Assignments due	Participate in discussion board 15 Action Research Paper

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

## COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via Blackboard. The submission deadline for assignments is 11:59 pm EST of the due date indicated for each assignment. All projects must be typed, in a legible 12-point font, with one-inch margins, and double-spaced. **All writing assignments should be submitted as Word documents, or a word processor based format.** Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall points for each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully. Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, except for in extraordinary circumstances. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please contact me within a reasonable timeframe.

### 1. Blackboard Participation (20%)

**\*\*Due: weekly**

Each week in our class we will have an online group discussion of the readings that are assigned for the module. You are expected to participate in this discussion in a substantive way (by both responding directly to the prompt and by responding to others' comments). Your participation in discussion board conversations is **20%** of your final grade.

**\*\*Please note, as this is an online course, all our discussion will be in the form of the electronic discussion board. It is not acceptable to wait until the end of the week to post your comments as you will not be able to engage fully in the discussion, and others will not have an opportunity to engage with your thoughts and comments. **Each module will begin on a Tuesday and run through the following Monday.** You must start posting for each module by *Friday at noon (EST)* so that the class will have Friday through Monday to engage in conversation.**

**\*\*Students will be expected to respond to each of the discussion questions that the instructor posts.**

**\*\*Additionally, students should respond to **at least two** posts from other classmates.**

Discussion Board is particularly important in a class such as this as it provides us with a forum for discussion of the topics we will be exploring and an open space to work through our own thoughts and ideas. Some of the richest and most robust discussions I have ever heard (seen) have taken place on a discussion board, and it is my hope that you will actively engage your colleagues in this medium. To provide a bit of a framework for participating in Discussion Board, please see the general "criteria for Blackboard Discussions" below.

**Important Note:** Discussion board for each module will be "open" only during the week that the module is active. You will always be able to go back and read earlier responses, but you will only be able to physically post in that week's discussion board during the week we are working on it.

## Criteria for Blackboard Discussions

1. Responses to the *initial questions* that I post to start the discussion should be a minimum of one short paragraph and a maximum of two paragraphs.
2. Each module begins on a **Tuesday**. You should *begin* posting by **Friday** at noon (at the latest). This will give us time to engage in discussion over the remainder of the module.
3. Postings should be distributed during the discussion period (not concentrated all on one day or at the beginning and/or end of the period).  
\*Please note: it is acceptable to post your responses to my initial questions at the same time. However, your responses to your colleagues should be distributed throughout the course of the module and not done at one fall swoop.
4. Avoid postings that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc. If you agree (or disagree) with a posting then say why you agree by supporting your statement with concepts from the readings or by bringing in a related example or experience.  
\*Please note: it is perfectly fine to send “agree” or “great idea” responses with a brief comment on why you agree (or perhaps disagree). These responses do **not** have to be a paragraph in length.
5. Every week you should respond to **each** of the discussion questions that I post. Additionally, you should respond to at least **three** posts from other classmates **unless** otherwise noted in the discussion board prompt.
6. Address the questions as much as possible (don't let the discussion stray).
7. It is a **good idea** to use quotes from the articles that support your postings. Include page numbers when you do quote.
8. Bring in related prior knowledge if/when you can (work experience, prior coursework, readings, etc.). This greatly adds to the richness of the conversation.
9. Use proper etiquette (proper language, typing, etc.). Please avoid using “text” talk (such as “C U,” “B4,” “cuz,” etc.). It is a graduate level course, so it is important that, while the Discussion Board is meant to be an open and safe space for discussion and exchanges, we should aim to maintain appropriate adherence to grammar and style.

## EVALUATION OF DISCUSSION BOARD:

At the end of each module, you will receive a score on your participation in the discussion board conversation. Below is the rubric that will be used to provide your scores.

Weekly Online Discussion Rubric			
Criteria	Excellent (3 points)	Average (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
<b>Content quality:</b> Responsive to discussion and demonstration of knowledge and understanding gained from assigned reading	It is very clear that readings were understood and incorporated well into responses.	The readings appear to be generally understood and there is some incorporation into responses.	It is not evident that readings were understood and/or not incorporated into discussion.

<b>Writing quality:</b> Responses are professionally crafted and sources are cited	Writing is professionally crafted, and any sources are properly cited.	Writing is generally clear. Sources are not properly cited.	Writing is unclear and full of errors. Sources are not cited properly.
<b>Timeliness:</b> Posts are well distributed throughout the module	Postings are well distributed throughout the module. (Posts span three or more time periods). Initial posting is on time.	Postings minimally distributed. (Responses are posted from two time periods). Initial posting is on time.	Postings are not distributed throughout the week. (Responses are posted at one time). Initial posting is late.
	Met (1 point)	Not Met (0 points)	
<b>Responsiveness:</b> At least posts from two others have been responded to during the module	At least posts from two others have been responded to during the module	One or no others have been responded to during the module	

## 2. Annotated Bibliography (15%)

**\*\*Due: March 9**

Each student will create an annotated bibliography of a minimum of ten (10) resources related to the subject and context of the action research paper. Ideally, the ten resources utilized in the annotated bibliography will be resources used to help create the literature review and inform that theoretical basis of the paper. Further information regarding the annotated bibliography can be found on Blackboard.

## 3. Action Research Study (65%)

The action research study is comprised of three major components: A) the action research plan of action, B) the final action research paper, and C) a multimedia presentation of the project.

### A. Action Research Plan of Action (10%)

**\*\*Due: February 17**

Students will submit an action research plan of 4-7 double spaced pages that includes the following components:

- 1) An area-of-focus statement
- 2) Develops a research question
- 3) Describes the intervention or innovations
- 4) Describes the membership of the action research group
- 5) Describes negotiations that need to be undertaken
- 6) Develops a timeline
- 7) Develops a statement of resources
- 8) Develops data collection ideas

Additional information will be provided on Blackboard.

## **B. Final Action Research Paper (35%)**

**\*\*Due: May 4**

Each student will write a research paper that includes the following sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, findings (with accompanying samples/examples), analysis and implications for practice, and reflections. Papers must follow current APA formatting guidelines. See the appendix for further information and the rubric. Additional information will be provided on Blackboard.

## **C. Presentation of Action Research (20%)**

**\*\*Due: April 27**

Students will utilize a multimedia tool (Prezi, iMovie, PowerPoint, etc.) to design a presentation synthesizing their action research project. Like the paper, the presentation should include an introduction, summary of the literature, description of the methodology, findings, analysis and implications for practice, and reflections. The presentations will be uploaded by the instructor into a shared folder on Blackboard so that all participants in the class can view the presentations. Additional information will be provided on Blackboard.

## APPENDIX

### PBA: Action Research Paper

Each student will write an action research paper detailing the action research project that he/she conducted. The paper should include the following sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, findings (with accompanying samples/examples), analysis and implications for practice, and reflections.

- The introduction should explain what the overall purpose of the action research project is and provide a clear synopsis of what is to come in the paper.
- The literature review should explain what others are writing in the subject area.
- The methodology should explain what the student did to collect data and why those specific methods were utilized.
- The findings section should explain what the student found. Specific examples/samples of the data collected should be provided.
- In the analysis, the student should examine the data and note themes that emerge from the findings.
- In the implications section, each student should review the findings and analysis and suggest what the work implies about education/his or her class/his or her practice.
- The final portion of the paper should be a reflection. The reflection should be twofold: the student should reflect on the process of doing action research (what was learned, what would/could be done differently, etc.), and the student should reflect on the findings of his or her research.

The final paper should be 12-15 double spaced pages, plus appendices, written **in correct APA formatting, and adhere to graduate level expectations.**

#### **Human Subjects Research Review Process:**

Any research or action research that will be *publicly* disseminated must have prior approval of the GMU IRB. Inquiry/action research that is used solely for the purpose of studying pedagogical aspects may be conducted without additional permission but cannot be disseminated. Detailed information on what is involved in submitting a proposal to the Review Board is available from the following web site: <http://oria.gmu.edu/irbnet/>.

## PBA Rubric: Action Research Paper

Action Research				
<i>Criteria:</i>	<b>Exceeds Standards</b>	<b>Meets Standards</b>	<b>Approaching Standards</b>	<b>Does not meet Standards</b>
	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	The introduction is clear and comprehensive. The topic being explored is clearly explained in detail. The rationale for exploring the topic is explained in-depth.	The introduction is clear and provides a solid sketch of what is to come in the paper. The topic being explored is clearly with some detail. The rationale for exploring the topic is explained in some detail.	The introduction is vague and is lacking in detail. The topic vaguely described with some detail. The rationale for exploring the topic is vague with limited detail.	The introduction provides little to no description of the paper. The topic being explored is not clearly articulated. The rationale for exploring the topic is not explained.
<b>Literature Review</b>	Sources are woven together to form an accurate and in-depth narrative that describes the work being done in the field in the subject area. The literature review contains a minimum of ten related sources.	Sources are woven together to form an accurate narrative that describes the work being done in the field in the subject area. The literature review contains a minimum of eight related sources.	Sources are described, but not woven together to form a narrative that describes the work being done in the field in the subject area. The literature review contains a minimum of seven related sources.	Sources are minimally described and are not woven together to form a narrative that describes the work being done in the field in the subject area. The literature review contains fewer than seven related sources.
<b>Methodology</b>	The methodology provides a clear and in-depth description of the methods used to enact the Action Research Project. An in-depth description of the setting and participants is included.	The methodology provides a clear description of the methods used to enact the Action Research Project. A clear description of the setting and participants is included.	The methodology provides a limited description of the methods used to enact the Action Research Project. A limited description of the setting and participants is included.	The methodology provides a vague or no description of the method used to enact the Action Research Project. No description of the setting and participants is included.
<b>Findings: Data Presentation</b>	The data uncovered during the research is clearly presented in an in-depth manner. A well-crafted narrative is included that describes the findings in-depth.	The data uncovered during the research is clearly presented manner. A well-crafted narrative is included that describes the findings.	The data uncovered during the research is vaguely presented manner. A narrative is included that describes the findings, but is vague and may lack clarity.	The data uncovered during the research is not presented. A narrative is included, but is limited and lacks description and detail.
<b>Analysis</b>	The data is thoroughly and effectively analyzed and several examples are provided to demonstrate the conclusions of the analysis.	The data is clearly analyzed and a few examples are provided to demonstrate the conclusions of the analysis.	The data is analyzed, but is limited in scope. One example is provided to demonstrate the conclusions of the analysis.	The data is vaguely or not analyzed. No examples are provided to demonstrate the conclusions of the analysis.

<b>Implications</b>	In-depth & comprehensive implications of the findings are explained.	Clear implications of the findings are explained.	Limited implications of the findings are explained.	No implications of the findings are explained.
<b>Reflection</b>	The author reflects upon the experience of enacting the Action Research in detail AND the author thoroughly reflects upon the findings and implications of his or her work.	The author reflects upon the experience of enacting the Action Research AND the author reflects upon the findings and implications of his or her work.	The author provides a limited reflection upon the experience of enacting the Action Research in detail. The author provides a limited reflection upon the findings and implications of his or her work.	The author does not reflect upon the experience of enacting the Action Research in detail. The author does not reflect upon the findings and implications of his or her work.
<b>Writing Quality</b>	Paper adheres to APA standards: Very clearly organized and very well-written with no significant errors.	Paper adheres to most APA standards: Clearly organized and well-written with few errors.	Paper adheres to some APA standards: Organization and errors detract from overall quality of writing.	Paper does not adhere to APA standards: Disorganized and poorly written.