

George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Elementary Education Program

**ELED 459 Section DL1**  
**Critical Analysis and Reflection on Issues in Elementary Education**  
**3 credits, Spring 2023**  
**Wednesdays, 4:30 – 7:10 pm**  
**Online**

**Professor:** Dr. Janna Dresden  
**Office Hours:** Held virtually, by appointment  
**Office Location:** Thompson Hall 1800  
**Office Phone:** please email  
**Email:** [jdresden@gmu.edu](mailto:jdresden@gmu.edu)

**GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**

**Required Corequisite:** ELED 490

**University Catalog Course Description:** Provides teacher candidates an understanding of research paradigms utilizing systematic evidence to improve practice and further skills in assessment of learning outcomes. Emphasizes linking research and practice, making instructional decisions based on an understanding of research.

**Course Overview:** This course is designed to help teacher candidates understand various research paradigms utilizing research literature and systematic evidence to improve teacher practice. Course emphasizes linking research and practice and making instructional decisions based on an understanding of research.

**Course Delivery Method:** This course will be delivered online in a primarily synchronous format using Zoom and Google slides. Some asynchronous formats may also be used.

The course uses multiple instructional strategies including lecture, small group/large group discussion, hands on activities, interactive work, student presentations and cooperative learning. Practical applications of theory are explored in group activities. 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.

Assignments and in-class activities are designed to support the iterative writing process and require time to prepare. Throughout the course, you will be expected to make revisions of your drafts based on peer and instructor feedback in order to improve your work. This course has been approved by the Faculty Senate Writing Across the Curriculum Committee to fulfill the Writing Intensive requirement in the Elementary Education (BSEd) major. It does so through the writing of three papers, a minimum of 1500 words each.

**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.**

Students may send an email to request a one-on-one meeting with the instructor to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Meetings will be held via Zoom.

This course also uses Blackboard (**also denoted as Bb**) for announcements, posting all course information, additional readings and discussion board posts. To access our Blackboard site, please use Mozilla Firefox (a free downloadable browser that is most compatible with the Blackboard software). Then go to [mymasonportal.gmu.edu](http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu) and log on using your GMU ID and password. For help logging onto Blackboard, contact Teaching and Learning with Technology [see <http://itusupport.gmu.edu> or call 703-993-8870]. **The instructor cannot assist you with log-on problems.**

### **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)
- 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 the 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://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>
  - **Apple Quick Time Player:** [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

## **POLICIES**

### **Course Materials and Student Privacy**

All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course sites are private to this class; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

- Video-recordings — whether made by instructors or students — of class meetings that include audio, visual, or textual information from other students are private and must not be shared outside the class
- Live video conference meetings (e.g. Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio, textual, or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household or recorded and shared outside the class

### **Digital Communication, Devices and Netiquette**

- 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 should silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor
- The course environment is a collaborative space. Even an innocent remark typed in the online environment may be misconstrued. Students should always re-read responses before posting them. Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

### **Academic Integrity and Honor Code**

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>) with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted must be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using the appropriate format for this class. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient.

### **Equity, Accessibility and Disability Accommodations**

I will do whatever I can to make sure that each and every one of you is successful in this course and in your chosen profession. I expect you to tell me what I can do to help you be successful. If you have any special circumstances that you believe may affect your performance in class or on course requirements, please talk with me to so that we can make the necessary accommodations. I will maintain complete confidentiality of any information that you choose to share.

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474

### **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

## Diversity and Inclusion

Welcoming all students is the key to becoming a great teacher. This commitment to openness and acceptance must be reflected in the ways we interact with one another as well. The goal of our program is to create learning environments that foster respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning community to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.

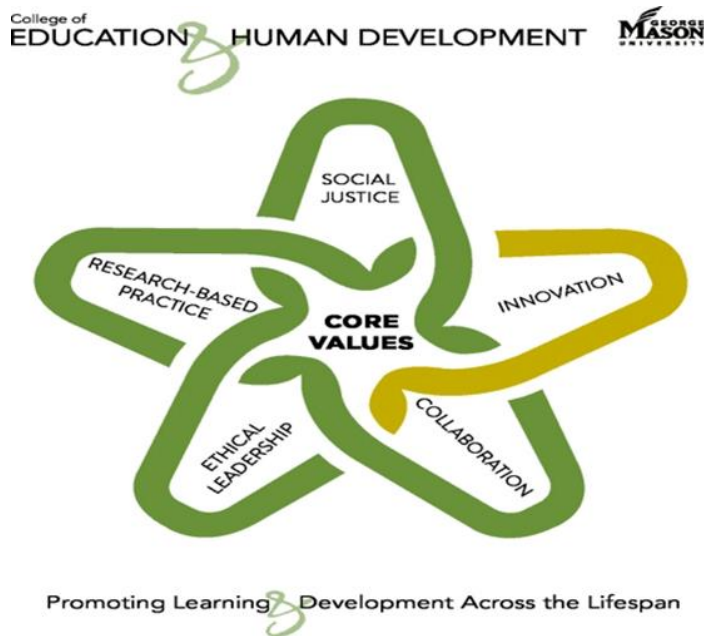
## Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times (See Elementary Education Program Handbook).

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

## 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 Campus Resources for Students

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- 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 <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate the role of systematic evidence in the improvement of teaching and learning.
2. Use educational research literature as a basis for reflecting on and improving their teaching practice.
3. Critique the quality of research studies within various paradigms.
4. Use technology to assist in locating, using, conducting research, and analyzing data.
5. Develop skills to become critical consumers of research
6. Provide research-based evidence to support assertions.
7. Use writing to explore and respond to texts or other content in ways that deepen their awareness of the field of elementary education.
8. Develop strategies appropriate to the discipline and genre for revising, reorganizing, and proofreading writing based upon feedback they receive as they engage in a recursive writing process.

## STANDARDS

### [INTASC \(The Interstate Teacher Assessment & Support Consortium\):](#)

- **Standard #1: Learner Development.** The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- **Standard #2: Learning Differences.** The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- **Standard #3: Learning Environments.** The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, and active learning.
- **Standard #4:** A commitment to professional growth and development through reflection, collaboration, and continuous learning.
- **Standard #5:** The ability to use computer technology as a tool for teaching, learning, research, and communication.
- **Standard #6: Assessment.** The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

- **Standard #7: Planning for Instruction.** The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- **Standard #8: Instructional Strategies.** The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
- **Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice.** The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
- **Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration.** The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

**OUTCOMES AND STANDARDS**

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>InTASC Standards</b>
1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10
2	9, 10
3	6, 9
4	6,
5	6, 9
6	6, 9, 10
7	6, 9, 10
8	9, 10

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Available on Blackboard

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

### **Engagement (15 points)**

I expect that you will show consistent evidence of being engaged with our class by:

- Attending all classes-- I expect you to be in class and prepared each day. Absences will only be excused if they are arranged in advance or, in the case of illness, explained as quickly as possible.
- Being on time for class-- As a common courtesy, you should offer an explanation when you are late for class and you should ask permission if it is absolutely necessary for you to leave class early.
- Paying attention
- Participating in small group activities
- Participating in online discussion posts as assigned.

### **Paper #1: Researching a Topic Using Popular Resources (25 points)**

Students will choose an education topic of interest. Students will identify at least 10 practitioner resources, such as teacher journals, blogs, Wikis, newspapers, social media, that provide information on their topic. They will analyze these resources and write a paper about their topic. The paper should be at least 1500 words in length. References should be in APA style.

Students will revise this paper and resubmit after receiving feedback from the instructor and critical friends.

A detailed explanation of the required elements of this paper will be provided at least two weeks before the paper is due.

### **Paper #2: Researching a Topic Using Peer-Reviewed Resources (30 points)**

Students will keep the same educational topic used in *Paper #1*. For this paper, students will identify 6-8 peer-reviewed journal articles. They will analyze these resources and write another paper about their topic. The paper should be at least 1500 words in length. References should be in APA style.

Students will revise this paper and resubmit after receiving feedback from the instructor and critical friends.

A detailed explanation of the required elements of this paper will be provided.

### **Paper #3: Researching a New Topic (30 points)**

Students will choose a new educational topic. Students will choose 10 -12 reliable and valid resources. At least half of these resources should be from peer-reviewed articles. They will analyze these resources and write a paper about the new topic. The paper should be at least 1500 words in length. References should be in APA style.

Students will revise this paper and resubmit after receiving feedback from the instructor.

A detailed explanation of the required elements of this paper will be provided.

### Course Performance Evaluation Weighting

Course Outcomes	Requirements & Assignments	# of points	Due Dates Saturdays at 5:00 pm
1, 2, 3, 4, 7	<b><u>Paper #1: Researching a Topic Using Popular Resources</u></b>	25	Paper due 2/18 Revision due 3/4
1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8	<b><u>Paper #2: Researching a Topic Using Peer-Reviewed Resources</u></b>	30	Paper due 4/1 Revision due 4/15
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	<b><u>Paper #3: Researching a New Topic</u></b>	30	Paper due 4/29 Revision due 5/13

#### Grading Policy

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.

Grade	GRADING	Grade Points	Interpretation
A	95-100	4.00	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements
A-	90-94	3.67	
B+	87-89	3.33	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
B	83-86	3.00	
B-	80-82	2.67	
C*	70-79	2.00	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course
D	60-69	1.00	
F*	<69	0.00	

*In order to receive an A+ in this course all participation, assignments (written and oral) as well as discussion must be at the very highest level and represent the highest level of discourse in the Elementary Education program.*



### ELED 459 Course Schedule Spring 2023

(Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.)

DATE	HOMEWORK	TOPIC and ACTIVITIES	ASSIGNMENTS and DUE DATES
Jan. 25	**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Considering topics of interest</li> </ul>	
Feb. 1	Module 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying critical friends.</li> <li>• Choosing a topic</li> </ul>	Topic for Papers #1 & #2 due Saturday February 4 @ 5 pm
Feb. 8	Module 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locating practitioner resources.</li> </ul>	
Feb. 15	Module 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing practitioner resources.</li> <li>• Working with critical friends to analyze practitioner resources.</li> </ul>	Paper #1 due Saturday February 18 @ 5 pm
Feb. 22	Module 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with critical friends to revise paper #1</li> <li>• What are peer-reviewed resources?</li> <li>• Locating peer-reviewed resources</li> </ul>	(Paper #1 returned)
March 1	Module 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing quantitative research – making sense of the research data.</li> </ul>	Paper #1 Revision due Saturday March 4 @ 5 pm
March 8	Module 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing qualitative research – making sense of the research data.</li> <li>• Working with critical friends to interpret resources located.</li> </ul>	
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
<b>March 22</b>	Module 7	<b>Asynchronous class—Module 8</b>	
March 29	Module 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparing practitioner resources with peer-reviewed research.</li> <li>• Choosing a new educational topic.</li> </ul>	Paper #2 due Saturday April 1 @ 5 pm
April 5	Module 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with critical friends to revise paper #2.</li> <li>• Locating resources for paper #3</li> </ul>	(Paper #2 returned) Topic for Paper #3 due Saturday April 8 @ 5 pm
<b>April 12</b>	Module 11	<b>Asynchronous class</b>	Paper #2 Revision due Saturday April 15 @ 5 pm
April 19	***	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with critical friends to interpret resources located.</li> </ul>	
April 26	**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>	Paper #3 due Saturday April 29 @ 5 pm
May 3	**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with critical friends to revise paper #3.</li> </ul>	(Paper #3 returned)
<b>FINAL: PAPER #3 REVISION Due Saturday May 13 @ 5 pm</b>			

