

COURSE SYLLABUS

Department: Educational Inquiry

Course Number Y510

Course Title: Action Research

Semester Hours: 3

Text(s) and/or Required Readings:

Burnaford, G.E., Fischer, J., Hobson, D. Eds. Teachers Doing Research: The Power of Action Through Inquiry. Mahwah N.J. Lawrence Erlbaum

Mertler, Craig A. (2004) Action Research: Teachers As Researchers in the Classroom. San Francisco Sage Publications

Purpose

This course is designed to give graduate students who are interested in improving classroom instruction greater insight into the nature of action research. This course will promote a view of action research as an inquiry process that is school or classroom-based and closely tied to professional development. The most important **assumption** of the class is teacher-researchers are most capable of generating new knowledge about teaching practice through this inquiry process. As part of the requirements for the course, students will be asked to develop and implement an action research plan that is important to the student and related their classroom experience.

Related Assumptions:

Teachers will play increasingly critical leadership roles in schools of the 21st century. This leadership role will involve the development of practice-based or empirical knowledge about the teaching-learning process.

Action research offers teacher-leaders a research perspective from which to view the classroom. Action research can and should lead to improved practice individually and collectively

Core Course Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- implement action research process as an approach to educational problem-solving and professional development.
- differentiate pragmatically between teacher-research, collaborative research and school-wide action research
- develop skills related to action research including:
 - the construction of a research diary
 - relating their research problem to a larger body of knowledge.
 - defining acceptable research problems
 - developing appropriate library skills to support the research process
 - assembling practical research plans
 - interviewing, observation and document analysis

- collaboration in design and implementation of research protocols
- defining local problems of district or school wide importance.

Course Topics:

1. Historical and philosophical background for action research
2. Different conceptualizations the action research
3. Reflective Practice
4. Action research and professional development
5. Observation and Narrative Data Collection Methods
6. Surveys and Self-Report Techniques
7. Discourse Analysis and Problem Solving Data collection Methods
8. Critical-Reflective Data Collection Methods
9. Analysis of Action Research Data
10. Reporting Action Research
11. Implementing the Results of Action Research

Class Assignments:

The primary assignment will be to develop and implement an action research plan. A report will be developed that includes such basic items as: Background statement, Literature Review, Problem statement, Methodology (including multiple methods) Analysis, Recommendations for making the results public and implementing the results.

Supplementary Readings and Materials:

Cheney, D. (1998). Using action research as a collaborative process to enhance educators= and families= knowledge and skills for youth with emotional or behavioral disorders. Preventing School Failure, 42, 88-93.

Cox, A. M. & Craig, D. V. (1997). Action research. The Science Teacher, 64, 50-53.

McCarthy, J. & Riner, P. (1996). The accelerated schools inquiry process: teacher empowerment through action research. Education, 117, 223-29.

Pellicer, L.O. & Anderson, L.W. (1995). A handbook for teacher leaders. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Sardo-Brown, D. (1995). The action research endeavors of sex classroom teachers and their perceptions of action research. Education, 116, 196-200.

Bibliography:

Books

Altrichter, H., Posch, P. & Somekh, B. (1993). Teachers investigate their work. London: Routledge.

Argyris, C., Putnam, R. & Smith, D. M. (1985). Action science. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Burgess, R. (Ed.). (1985). Issues in educational research: Qualitative methods. Lewes: Falmer.

- Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. (1986). Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research. Geelong: Deakin University Press.
- Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. (1993). Inside/outside: Teacher research and knowledge. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Corey, S. (1953). Action research to improve school practice. New York: Teacher's College Press.
- Elliott, J. (1991). Action research for educational change. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Goswami, D. & Shultz, J. (1993). Reclaiming the classroom: teachers and students together. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Goswami, D. & Stillman, P. (1987). Reclaiming the classroom: teachers research as an agency for change. Upper Montclair, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Gregory, R. (1988). Action research in the secondary school. London: Routledge.
- Hubbard, R. & Power, B. (1993). The art of classroom inquiry: A handbook for teacher-researchers. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Hustler, D., Cassidy, A. & Cuff, E. (Eds.). (1986). Action research in classrooms and schools. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. (Eds.). (1988a). The action research planner (3rd. Ed.). Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press.
- Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. (Eds.). (1988b). The action research reader (3rd. Ed.). Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press.
- McNiff, J. (1993). Teachers as learners. Dorset Bournemouth: Hyde Publications.
- McNiff, J. (1993). Teaching and learning: An action research approach. London: Routledge.
- McNiff, J. (1992). The creation of a good social order through action research. Bournemouth: Hyde Publications.
- McNiff, J. (1988). Action research: Principles and practice. London: MacMillan Education.
- Nixo, J. (1981). A teacher's guide to action research. London: Grant Intyre.
- Oja, S. & Smulyan, L. (1989). Collaborative action research: A developmental approach. Philadelphia: Falmer.
- Schon, D. (1987). Educating the reflective practitioner. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schon, D. (1983). The reflective practitioner. New York: Basic Books.
- Smyth, J. (1991). Teachers as collaborative learners. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Stenhouse, L. (1975). An introduction to curriculum research and development. London: Heinemann.
- Webb, R. (1990). Practitioner research in the primary school. Lewes: Falmer.
- Whitehead, J. (1993). The growth of educational knowledge: Creating your own living educational theories. Bournemouth: Hyde Publications.
- Winter, R. (1989). Learning from experience: Principles and practice of action research. Lewes: Falmer.

Journal Articles

- Adelman, C. (1993). Kurt Lewin and the origins of action research. Educational Action Research, 1(1), 7-24.
- Carson, T. (1990). What kind of knowing is critical action research. Theory Into Practice, 29, 167-173.
- Carson, T. (1986). Closing the gap between research and practice: Conversation as a mode of research. Phenomenology and Pedagogy, 4(2), 73-85.
- Chisholm, L. (1990). Action research: Some methodological and political considerations. British Educational Research Journal, 16, 249-257.
- Clarke, J., Dudley, P., Edwards, A., Rowland, S., Ryan, C. & Winter, R. (1993). Ways of presenting and critiquing action research reports. Educational Action Research, 1(3), 490-492.
- Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. (1992). Communities for teacher research: Fringe or forefront. American Journal of Education, 298-324.
- Elliott, J. (1994). Research on teachers' knowledge and action research. Educational Action Research, 2, 133-137.
- Hammersley, M. (1993). On the teacher as researcher. Educational Action Research, 1(3), 425-445.
- Holly, P. (1987). Action research as cul-de-sac or turnpike. Peabody Journal of Education, 64(3), 71-99.
- Lytle, S. & Cochran-Smith, M. (1990). Learning from teacher research: A working typology. Teachers' College Record, 92, 83-103.
- McKernan, J. (1988). Teacher as researcher: paradigm and praxis. Contemporary Education, 59(3), 154-158.
- McKernan, J. (1988). The countenance of of curriculum action resaerch: traditional, collaborative and critical-emancipatory conceptions. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 3(3), 173-200.
- McKernan, J. (1987). Action research and curriculum development. Peabody Journal of Education, 64(2), 6-19.
- Posch, P. (1994). Changes in the culture of teaching and learning and implications for action research. Educational Action Research, 2(2), 153-161.
- Reimer, K. M. & Bruce, B. (1994). Building teacher-researcher collaboration: Dilemmas and strategies. Educational Action Research, 2(2), 1994.
- Whitehead, J. (1989). Creating a living educational theory from questions of the kind, 'how do I improve my practice?'. Cambridge Journal of Education, 19, 41-52.
- Whitehead, J. & Lomax, P. (1987). Action research and the politics of educational knowledge. British Educational Research Journal, 13, 175-190.
- Zeichner, K. M. (1993). Action research: personal renewal and social reconstruction. Educational Action Research, 1(2), 199-219.