Research Methods for EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

FALL 2016
9:40 – 11:10AM
T, Th ArtCom 202
EDUC 380

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Welcome to EDUC 380!

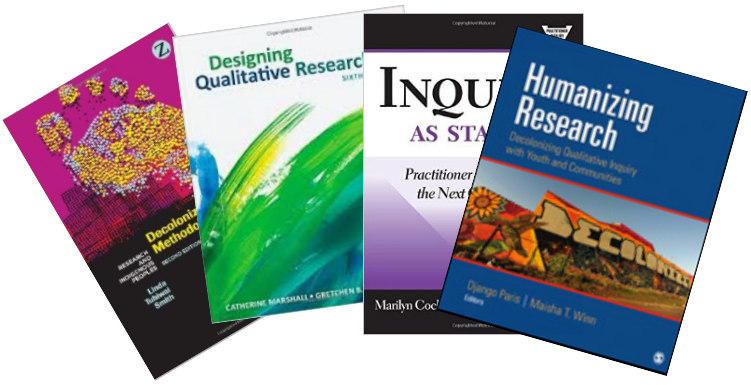
We are inundated with research about education. Every month new studies emerge looking at everything from the case of a single classroom to longitudinal studies that analyze national datasets for over a decade. How are we to make sense of educational research, particularly as it increases and yet has not overwhelmingly translated to effective practice to reduce disparities in schooling? This course will focus on two major topics: 1) The methodologies, practices, and philosophical foundations of various forms of qualitative education research, and 2) How education research can be applied to teaching and learning as well as making meaning about the social contexts and outcomes of schooling. A foundational premise of this course is that ethical, egalitarian research should be mobilized for the purpose of advocacy and activism to impact the focus of study. This means that it is not enough to simply conduct research. As researchers, we should also act upon what we find. Embedded in the course will be the option to conduct a small research project where you will have the opportunity to mobilize your research for advocacy regarding a specific topic in education.

"If I am interested in knowing the people's ways of thinking, and levels of perception, then the people have to think about their thinking, and not be only the objects of my thinking. This method of investigation … is at the same time a learning process…. Thus, in doing research, I am educating and being educated with the people." – Paulo Freire

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

- Articulate the colonial histories of Western conceptions of research, including educational research.
- Understand various, and sometimes competing, approaches to research based on the positionality of the researcher and their relationship to those being researched.
- Describe various (mostly qualitative) research methodologies, and the purpose behind using specific methodologies.
- Design a tenable research study that addresses an issue of disparity or injustice in education.
- Discuss issues of power and ethics in research conception, design, dissemination, and benefit.
- Describe methods for advocacy and activism using educational research
- Critique educational research by examining the epistemological and methodological constructs that support it.
- Understand the pedagogical aspects of research particularly when youth are positioned as researchers in their schools and communities
- Understand how teachers can be positioned as researchers of their own classroom and educational environments in order to make real time adjustments in their practice.
- Work with others in the class and community entities to effectively design and practice using qualitative research methods.



Required Texts:

Smith, (2012) Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples

Paris & Winn (Eds.) (2014) Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities

Cochran-Smith & Lytle (Eds.) (2009) Inquiry as Stance: Practitioner Research in the Next Generation

Marshall & Rossman, (2015). Designing Qualitative Research

* Selected supplemental readings provided by the instructor via Moodle will also be required.

Recommended Texts:

Coulter, D. (2011). What counts as action in educational action research? *Educational Action Research,* 10(2), 189-206.

Cammarota, J. & Fine, M. (Eds.) (2008). *Revolutionizing Education: Youth Participatory Action Research in Motion.* New York: Routledge.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.) (2003). *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

N. Denzin, Y. Lincoln, & L. Smith (Eds.) (2008). *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies.* Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

A. Gitlin (Ed.) (1994), *Power and method: Political activism and educational research.* (pp. 13-35). New York: Routledge.

Hale, C. R. (Ed.) (2008) *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship.* Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Lather, P. (2007). *Getting Lost: Feminist Efforts toward a Double(d) Science.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Morrell, E. (2004). *Becoming Critical Researchers: Literacy and Empowerment for Urban Youth.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Stringer, E. (2014). *Action Research, 4th Edition.* Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Tuck, E & Yang, K.W. (Eds.) (2014a). *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change*. New York: Routledge.

Zuberi, T. & Bonilla-Silva, E. (2008). *White Logic, White Methods: Racism and Methodology.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Schedule

(Please note that this schedule is subject to change)

Week 1 **Sep 1**	**In Class Topics** Course Introduction and Community Building (Re)conceptualizing (Re)search -Mapping ourselves -What is researcher positionality?		
Week 2 **Sep 6,8**	**In Class Topics** Problematizing research Colonial histories of research	**In Preparation** **Read:** Smith – Intro, Ch.1 - Ch.2 White – "Critical Qualitative Research" (Moodle)	**Due** Reflection #1 & Response
Week 3 **Sep 13, 15**	**In Class Topics** Critical epistemologies of research Rejecting damage-centered research Positionality - Determining our commitments, biases, privileges What research can we do/not do?	**In Preparation** **Read:** Smith – Ch.3 - Ch.8 Tuck – "Suspending Damage" (Moodle) Ethical Principles & Guidelines for Research Involving Human Subjects (Moodle)	**Due** Reflection #2 & Response Group #1 Facilitation (9/15)
Week 4 **Sep 20, 22**	**In Class Topics** Conceptions of research Qualitative Research Trustworthiness & Ethics	**In Preparation** **Read:** *Marshall & Rossman – Ch. 1-3* Paris & Winn – Ch. 3	**Due** Community/Networks Positionality Photo Series (9/22) Group #2 Facilitation (9/22)

	In Class Topics	In Preparation	Due
Week 5 **Sep 27,29**	Methodologies vs. Methods Surveying Methodologies Guest Lecture – Dr. Kurth-Schai (9/29) International Roundtable (9/29-10/1)	**Read:** Marshall & Rossman – Ch. 4-6 Emerson, Fretz, Shaw – "Writing Fieldnotes" (Moodle) Kurth-Schai – "Using the Delphi Cross-Culturally" (Moodle)	Reflection #3 & Response
Week 6 **Oct 4, 6**	**In Class Topics** Practicing Methods of Data Generation Analyzing and Interpreting Findings Validity, robustness, trustworthiness Developing Research Interest Teams Library Session	**In Preparation** **Read:** Marshall & Rossman – Ch. 6-8 Tracy – "Qualitative Quality" Talmy – "Qualitative Interviews"	**Due** Data Generation - Observation Field Notes (Reflective & Analytic Memos)
Week 7 **Oct 11, 13**	**In Class Topics** Participatory Research Commitments Interview Practice	**In Preparation** **Read:** Freire – "Creating Alternative Research Methods" (Moodle) Paris & Winn – Part II (Ch. 4-6)	**Due** Methodology Literature Review (10/9) Group #3 Facilitation (10/13)
Week 8 **Oct 18**	**In Class Topics** Participatory action research & Participatory methods Mid-Term Self Evaluations	**In Preparation** **Read:** Paris & Winn – Part III (Ch. 7-9) Wang & Burris – "Photovoice" (Moodle)	**Due** Reflection #4 & Response Group #4 Facilitation (10/18)

	TC Social Justice Education Fair (10/21) – Attendance strongly encouraged! http://tcedfair.org/		
	In Class Topics	**In Preparation**	**Due**
Week 9 **Oct 25, 27**	Self Study & Practitioner Inquiry Teacher research to inform practice **Guest lecture (10/25): Jenna Cushing-Leubner (University of MN) – Cross-Community Research**	**Read:** Cochran-Smith & Lytle – Ch. 1 & 5 Choose 2 chapters from Part II (except ch. 13) Cushing-Leubner (TBD)	Issue-based Literature Review Positionality (10/28)
	In Class Topics	**In Preparation**	**Due**
Week 10 **Nov 1, 3**	Methods of action and advocacy Lobbying, policy, activism *****TBD class meets at: Kitty Anderson Youth Science Center – Science Museum of MN*****	**Read:** Cochran-Smith & Lytle – Ch. 13 Anderson & Herr – "Paradigm Wars" (Moodle) TBD	Data Generation - Interview Transcript Reflection #5 & Response
	In Class Topics	**In Preparation**	**Due**
Week 11 **Nov 8, 10**	Research Design Formulating questions Community Conceptions/Uses of Research	**Read:** Fine – "Dis-stance" (Moodle) Mathison- "Why Triangulate?" (Moodle) Lozenski & Ford – "From Individualism to Interconnectedness" (Moodle)	Advocacy Positionality (entire portfolio) – 11/13

	Guest Lecture (11/8): Gevonee Ford, Network for the Development of Children of African Descent		
Week 12 **Nov 15, 17**	**In Class Topics** Researcher Therapy (dealing with emotions) Group worktime Positionality reflections **American Anthropology Association – Youth Summit (11/19)**	**In Preparation** **Read:** Pillow – "Confession, catharsis, or cure" (Moodle) OR Dimitriadis- "Coming Clean at the Hyphen" (Moodle) OR Moje – "Changing our Minds" (Moodle) OR Paris & Winn - Ch. 1	**Due** AERA Proposal Draft
Week 13 **Nov 22**	**In Class Topics** Regrouping Session Revisit Important ideas Review past discussions, reflections	**In Preparation** Fine – "Working the Hyphens" (Moodle)	**Due** Reflection #6 & Response (Open Topic)
Week 14 **Nov 29, Dec 1**	**In Class Topics** Group worktime	**In Preparation** **Read:** Paris & Winn – Part IV (Ch. 10-12)	**Due** AERA Proposal (12/2) Group #5 Facilitation
Week 15 **Dec 6, 8**	**Course Wrap-up** **Group Presentations** **Celebration**		

Learning Environment

It is critically important that our class be a safe, inclusive learning environment for everyone involved because it is your right as learners and the success of this class is dependent upon everyone's participation. This course will regularly address issues of race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexuality, and other markers of identity. I intend to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity in gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race and culture. I intend that people from all backgrounds will be well served by this course, that your learning needs will be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity you bring to this class will be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit by all class members. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other individuals, or student groups. Furthermore, to ensure a productive learning environment for all of us, electronic devices such as cell phones should be kept on silent during class time. In addition, friends or relatives of enrolled students are welcome to attend class sessions with prior consent of the instructor.

Accommodations:
I will strive to accommodate every student to achieve optimal learning conditions. In some cases this may mean adapting the course design or classroom environment. If you think you need an accommodation for disability please contact the Office of Student Affairs at your earliest convenience. The Assistant Dean of Students, Robin Hart Ruthenbeck, coordinates services. To schedule an appointment call 651-696-6220.

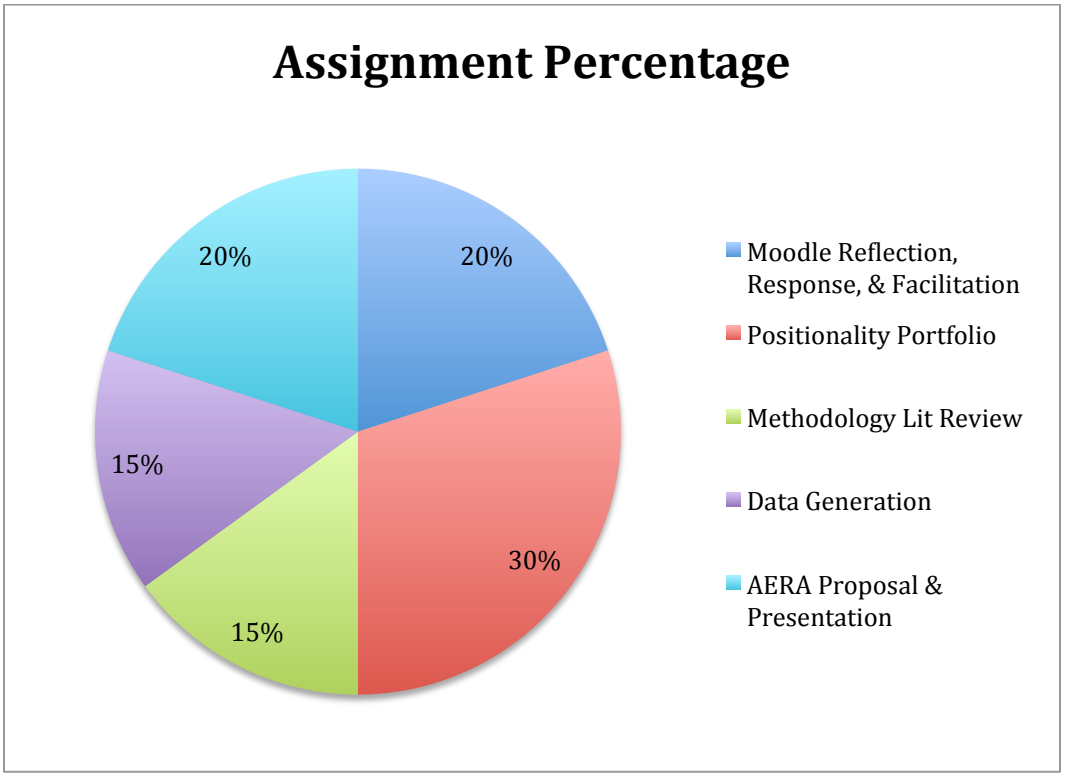
Course Attendance:
Class attendance is critical to the learning process. Many of the class exercises and activities cannot be replicated by make up assignments. There also may be topics and examples discussed specifically in class, and not in texts, that you will be expected to understand. Therefore, **at least 80% attendance is required for successful completion of the course.**
I understand that unavoidable absences may occur. Whether an absence is planned or unplanned, it is your responsibility to:
1) Inform the instructor of your absence before the class session missed
2) Follow-up on what you have missed with either a classmate or the instructor before the next class session because it is your responsibility to keep on-track with course requirements.

Class Participation
This course is taught from the philosophy that knowledge is socially constructed; therefore, each class member's participation is desired and needed in order to maximize our collective learning and understanding. Students are expected to attend each class on time, be prepared for class by having read assigned material and completed assignments, actively participate in class exercises and group learning experiences, and communicate with the instructor.

Late Work
Due dates for assignments are firm for logistical reasons unless you and I have prior written agreement on an extension. Assignments turned in after the due date, without prior written agreement may not be counted toward your final grade.

Assignments & Grading

Assignment Quick-view



Assignment Details

- Each individual assignment will be introduced in class.
- In some cases assessment rubrics will be made available as the class progresses.
- All written assignments should be double-spaced using 12pt. font and 1" margins.
- Assignments should all be submitted electronically on the class Moodle site.

Assignment Quick-view
**See Alternative Project Option Below*

Assignment	Due	% of grade
Weekly Reflections, Responses, & Group Facilitation	Multiple dates	20%
Positionality Portfolio	Multiple dates (final 11/13)	30%
Methodology Review	10/9	15%
Data Generation	Multiple dates	15%
AERA Proposal & Presentation	12/2	20%

Weekly Reflections, Responses, & Group Facilitations – You are expected to post at least 4 (out of 6 possible) reflections to Moodle according to the dates in the syllabus. The reflections should be between 400-500 words. They should address the assigned readings for the week and incorporate your views, other texts, or questions you still have. *The reflections should not be summaries of the readings.* I may occasionally ask specific questions to be addressed in a reflection. Reflections must be posted by Tuesday's class.

In addition, students will form reflection groups of 3-4 members. Reflection group members will respond to each other's reflections by Thursday of each week, and facilitate one 30-minute session for the class during the semester based on the readings for that week.

Methodology Review - (See detailed assignment description handed out in class) During the semester we will cover various qualitative methodologies and critical theories used within those methodologies in educational research. Your assignment is to find and compare 5-6 peer-reviewed empirical studies focused on education using a specific qualitative or mixed-methods methodology. Your 3-4 page (12 pt. font, double spaced, 1-inch margins, not including citations) review will explore the epistemological and methodological aspects of the studies, addressing issues such as researcher positionality, ethics, trustworthiness**,** and implications for policy and advocacy.

Positionality Portfolio – (See detailed assignment description handed out in class) Throughout the semester you will explore your own positionality as an educational researcher. This process encompasses exploring your own histories, biases, identities, and desires for change. You will build a 4-part electronic portfolio consisting of a

personal map, a photo series and narrative, an issue-based literature review & positionality statement, and an advocacy statement.

Data Generation - (See detailed assignment description handed out in class) – During the semester you will have an opportunity to generate data using methods such as photography, field observation, and semi-structured interview. These data generation methods will be discussed in class connected to positionality and researcher ethics.

***AERA Proposal & Presentation* -** (See detailed assignment description handed out in class) Based on interest and some practice with research methods, in groups of 2-3 you will write a proposal for the 2017 American Education Research Association's Conference. These proposals document many of the ideas described in this class such as purpose, context, methodology, methods, analysis, and impact.

****Alternative Research Project Option* -** (See detailed assignment description handed out in class) Students who have experience conducting qualitative research can opt to use this course to engage in usable research for advocacy. This option will allow you to use many of the course assignments to conduct a small-scale project. If you are interested in this option please send me a short proposal (500 words) by October 1st detailing the following: 1) Your research experience; 2) An overview of the project; 3) A statement on methodology and methods (how will you approach and carry out the work?); 4) A timeline, and; 5) Ideas for advocacy. This assignment will replace the Data generation and AERA Proposal assignments in this course resulting in 35% of your grade. Your Positionality Portfolio can also use portions of your project.

For support with …

Writing / Research / Presentations

For support with writing, research, and presentations feel free to talk with me. You can also make use of the MAX Center http://www.macalester.edu/max/ and the Dewitt Wallace Library http://www.macalester.edu/library/

Mental Health and Stress Management:

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, depression, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Macalester services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Health and Wellness Center http://www.macalester.edu/healthandwellness/