

Conducting Site-Based Research in Intercultural Settings, 9424A-650

Online: Start Date – September 4, 2018 (12 weeks)

Program Title: International Education

Program Type: M.PEd. Year 2

Instructor: Marianne Larsen

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Office location; office hours: 1122; office hours by appointment

Contact Policy

Please contact me using the message system through OWL. Students may expect a response within 48 hours, not including weekends. Instructor meetings are by-appointment, and in virtually any mode of students' preference. Please contact me by OWL mail to book an appointment. See the FAQ section on OWL for answers to general questions about the course and assignments.

Calendar Description

This course explores a number of methods to conducting field-based research in intercultural contexts, such as: program evaluation, action research, critical reflective practice and cross-cultural/global ethnographic techniques and other modes of inquiry.

Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

<i>1. Depth & Breadth of Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a breadth of knowledge about the foundational knowledge, theoretical and methodological approaches, multiple perspectives, key issues and current debates about various qualitative and quantitative research methods that can be applied to international, inter-cultural, and comparative contexts.
<i>2. Research & Scholarship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand a range of diverse theoretical and methodological approaches with a view to understanding research design and implications for professional practice in international and intercultural research.
<i>3. Application of Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to synthesize, evaluate and apply existing bodies of knowledge, including knowledge about the research process and knowledge mobilization/ dissemination, in the study of their chosen research problem of practice. • Apply understanding of relevant literature, theoretical and methodological approaches associated with their chosen field of study in order to make informed critical judgements about the debates and issues in the scholarly literature and field of practice.

4. <i>Communication Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate ability to analyze data and communicate knowledge and understanding of their specialization area using the most appropriate genres for different audiences. • Develop a range of oral and written skills to convey understanding of different educational issues, topics, etc.
5. <i>Awareness of the Limitations of Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate an awareness of taken-for-granted assumptions associated with the research process as a political and ethical activity with the aim to understand their own positionality and its effects in relation to their practice. • Critically understand the values and assumptions underlying the politics of knowledge production, including how frames, filters, biases and larger social and political contexts shape the production and legitimation of knowledge. • Critically understand the ethical and professional implications of educational research in general and of their own choices in understanding and applying research in their specialization area, with particular attention paid to ethical approaches associated with researching vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities and those in Global South communities.
6. <i>Autonomy & Professional Capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and articulate the values that guide research and personal practice as an educational practitioner and leader. • Demonstrate curiosity, intellectual independence and passion for understanding the importance of research and for continued professional learning to improve practice. • Demonstrate the ability to work both independently and collaboratively with others, as well as develop attitudes of openness and respect for others. • Grow personally and professionally through discussion and dialogue with others, as well as through engagement with educational research.

Mode of course delivery and technology requirements:

This is a fully online course. You will require regular internet access (high speed is recommended); a computer that enables connection to outside websites (flexible firewall); has multimedia playback capabilities (video/audio); and is capable of running a recent version of Internet Explorer, Safari, or Firefox. You will also require an audio headset and microphone for computer. A web cam is optional.

Course Time Commitment Expectations: *I recommend between 6 - 8 hours per week of course work, including reading the articles, posting responses and engaging in online discussions.*

Course Texts / Materials

Required: Parson, J., Hewson, K., Adrian, L, & Day, N. (2013). *Engaging in action research: A practical guide to teacher-conducted research for educators and school leaders.* Calgary, Alberta: Brush Education.

Below, the text will be referred to as *Engaging in AR*. It is available online as an e-book at <http://www.brushededucation.ca/catalog/arts-education-social-sciences/books/engaging-in-action-research>

All other reading materials will be available through OWL for course students.

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PART I. INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Week 1) Introduction to Education Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods (Sept. 4-9)

Readings:

- Chapters 1 & 2: “Introducing Action Research” (*Engaging in Action Research*)
- Fairbrother, G. (2014). Quantitative and qualitative approaches to comparative education. In M. Bray, B. Adamson & M. Mason (Eds.) *Comparative education research: Approaches and methods* (pp. 71-93). Hong Kong, China: CERC/The University of Hong Kong and Springer.

Week 2) Qualitative Educational Research: Case Studies (Sept. 10-16)

Readings:

- McCulloch, G. (2011). Case studies. In L. Cohen, L. Manion & K. Morrison (Eds.), *Research methods in education* (7th ed., pp. 289-302). New York, NY/London, England: Routledge.
- *Vavrus, F., & Barlett, L. (2006). Comparatively knowing: Making a case for the vertical case study. *CICE*, 8(2), 95-103. Retrieved from <http://devweb.tc.columbia.edu/centers/cice2012/index.asp?Id=Past+Issues&Info=Volume+8%2C+Issue+2>

Additional resource:

- Comparative Case Study Approach – FreshED podcast: <https://soundcloud.com/freshed-podcast/freshed-37-comparative-case>

Week 3) Using Media Technologies in International/Intercultural Research (Sept. 17-23)

Readings:

- Tobin, J. et al. (2009). Preschool in three cultures revisited. *Comparative Education Review*, 53(2), 259-283.
- Margolis, E. & Zunjarwad, R. (2018). Visual Research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 5th edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ONLY READ ‘Micro-ethnography and video’ (pp 607-609) and ‘Image Elicitation/Photovoice’ (613-616).

Additional reading:

- *Tobin, J. (2005). Quality in early childhood education: An anthropologist’s perspective. *Early Education and Development*, 16(4).

Week 4) Quantitative Research: Using Large Scale Data in International Education Research (Sept. 24-30)

Readings:

- *Schweisfurth, M., & Phillips, D. (2007). Comparative education research: Survey outcomes and their uses. In *Comparative and international education: An introduction to theory, method, and practice* (pp. 118-129). New York, NY: Continuum International.

OR

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- *Mundy, K., & Farrell, J. (2008). International educational indicators and assessments: Issues for teachers. In *Comparative and international education: Issues for teachers* (pp. 189-214). Toronto, Ontario: Canadian Scholars Press.

PART II. DESIGNING YOUR RESEARCH INQUIRY PLAN

Week 5) Overview of Research Design: Developing Research Questions and a Research Plan (Oct. 1-7)

Readings:

- Chapter 3 (Starting a Research Plan), Chapter 4 (Completing a Literature Review), Chapter 5 (Designing your Research Method); Chapter 6 (From Plan to Action) in *Engaging in Action Research*. (pp. 23-72).

Additional Reading:

- Cohen, L, Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2013). Planning Educational Research. (pp. 115-142). In L. Cohen, L. Manion, & K. Morrison (2013). *Research in Methods in Education*. London/New York: Routledge.

Week 6) Overview of Research Design: Collecting and Analyzing Data (Oct. 9-14)

Readings:

- Chapter 7 (Managing your Research Project); Chapter 8 (Collecting your Data); Chapter 9 (Analyzing your Data) in *Engaging in Action Research*. (pp. 73-125).
- *McNiff, J. (2013). Becoming Cosmopolitan and other dilemmas of internationalisation: Reflections from the Gulf States. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 43(4), 501-515.

PART III. ETHICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES IN CONDUCTING INTERNATIONAL / INTER-CULTURAL EDUCATION RESEARCH

Week 7) Self-Positioning and Self-Reflection in Intercultural/International Education Research (Oct 15-21)

Readings:

- *Potts, P. (2007). The place of experiences in comparative education research. In M. Bray, B. Adamson & M. Mason (Eds). *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and methods* (pp. 63-81). Hong Kong, China: CERC/The University of Hong Kong and Springer.
- Schweisfurth, M., & Phillips, D. (2007). Domains of practice and fields of inquiry within international education. In *Comparative and international education: An introduction to theory, method, and practice* (pp. 47-59). New York, NY: Continuum International.

Week 8) Methodological Challenges in Carrying out Intercultural/International Research (Oct.22 -28)

Readings:

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- *Taylor, S. (2006). Methodological challenges in complex comparisons: Bilingual and intercultural education research in Bolivia, Peru, and Chile. *Research in Comparative & International Education*, 1(2), 187-197.

OR

- *Larsen, M. (2016). International Service Learning in a Tanzanian Host Community. In M. Larsen (Ed.) *International Service Learning: Engaging Host Communities*. New York/London: Routledge. **(Only read pp. 94-101 plus 2 additional reflective pages)**

Week 9) Ethical and Socio-Cultural Challenges in Carrying out Research in ‘Developing’ Contexts (Oct 29- Nov. 4)

Readings

- *Asimeng-Boahen, L. (2012). Methodological and socio-cultural issues for social research in Africa: Problems, challenges and solution. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*, 5(1), 124-141.

OR

- *Chilisa, B. (2005). Educational research within postcolonial Africa: A critique of HIV/AIDS research in Botswana. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 18(6), 659-684.

Week 10) Puzzles, dilemmas and the shifting nature of carrying out international field work (Nov. 5-11)

Reading:

- *Dunworth, W.K. (2017). Reflections on the Making and Re-Making of a Conceptual Framework (pp. 169-191). In S.M. Ravitch and M. Riggan (Eds). *Reason & Rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research*. Los Angeles: Sage

Weeks 11 and 12: Sharing Research Inquiry Plans (Nov. 12-25)

During the final two weeks, you will all have an opportunity to showcase your Research Inquiry Plan with others in the class via Collaborate on OWL in a synchronous session. (We will have 2-3 sessions depending on your availability.) Further information on synchronous learning (i.e. computer requirements, general etiquette guidelines) will be made available. Students will NOT be penalized for not being able to attend synchronous sessions if they have reasonable grounds for their absence. In that case, we will find another way for you to share your research inquiry plans.

Assignments & Course Requirements

ASSIGNMENT	DESCRIPTION	Weighting	Due Date(s)
Online participation	Online participation and communication with instructor re: inquiry plan	20%	Ongoing
Critical Reflections on Readings	Submit 3 written critical reflections on course readings with an asterisk *	15% (5% each)	Due the Monday the week the reading is assigned.
Research Plan			
	Choose area of focus/topic of study + rationale	Formative feedback only.	Week 7
	Annotated Bibliography (2 pages)	5%	Week 8
	Initial Research Plan (using MindMeister)	Formative feedback only.	Week 9
	Draft research plan	10%	Week 10
	Showcasing Research Plan (through Collaborate)	10%	Week 11-12
	Peer Review of one other research plan	10%	Week 12
	Final Research Plan (Details & rubric to be provided on OWL)	30%	Week 13

PARTICIPATION

20%

Each week, on OWL, there will be a folder under ‘Lessons’ with the week’s readings and my class notes. Under ‘Forums’ I will post discussion questions based on the readings and my notes. I will assess your online participation in Forums using the rubric posted on OWL. Online participation assessment will be provided at the end of weeks 4, 8, and 12. Each assessment is weighted at 5%. Communication with instructor is weighted at 5%. I expect you to communicate with me at least 5 times throughout the course via OWL mail, skype or any other format that suits you, to discuss your research inquiry plans.

Critical Reflections

You will be expected to complete *three* reading reflections on **course readings**. You can choose from among the readings listed above with an asterisk *. You cannot complete more than 1 reading from the same week. Each reflection is to be between 400-500 words or 1 single-spaced page in length. Upload all reading reflections to OWL (under the assignments link) on the Monday of the week they are due (by 9 p.m.) Here are questions to consider when you write your reading reflections:

- 1) What is the main argument(s) the author(s) is making about the topic/issue?

- 2) What are the key points of the reading? (bullet points are fine)
- 3) How does this reading contribute to our understanding of conducting research in international/intercultural settings?
- 4) What claims is the author making? Are these substantiated? How? What kind of evidence does the author use? What evidence is missing? Does the evidence support the author's conclusions?
- 5) What are the weaknesses of this reading? Were there points or concepts you did not understand? How could it be improved?
- 6) Summarize the author's conclusions and the significance of the work. What significance does the reading have for understanding globalization?

Research Inquiry Plan

- All students are expected to conduct a small-scale research project as a part of your next course (9426 Fieldwork/Research Project) in the International Education MPED. This course (9424) is to prepare you do to that.
- Research inquiry plans should address a small-scale 'problem of professional practice' and be related to international and/or intercultural education. Your research study can be purely 'textual' in character (e.g. systematic literature review; documentary/policy analysis), draw on existing empirical data (e.g. PISA scores or other quantitative educational data) and/or other empirical data that don't necessitate ethics approval from Western's Research Ethics Board and the Ethics Review board at your institution. Other empirical data could include journaling, informal surveys and 'interviews' (discussions) with individuals who can help you answer your research questions. The overarching inquiry research question(s) will be developed during this course as well as your plan to carry out your research study.
- There are a number of components of this assignment, which I will provide details about on OWL in the folder "Research Plan". These include presenting your Research Inquiry Plan to your colleagues through Collaborate and providing peer feedback. Assessment rubrics will also be provided through OWL.

OWL login instructions and technical support information:

To access OWL, go to <http://owl.uwo.ca> Students may use Internet Explorer to access OWL; however, **Firefox is the preferred browser for using OWL.**

To log into OWL, students use their Western account credentials. The login is what precedes the "@uwo.ca" portion of students' UWO email addresses.

- *If you do not know your Western account*, please contact edu.tech.support@uwo.ca for instructions.
- *If you know your Western account, but you do not remember your password*, please contact the ITS Helpdesk at 519 661-3800 (or x83800). You will need to provide your Western username, your 9 digit Student Number and they may ask for other identifiers such as birth date.
- *If you require technical assistance in OWL*, information addressing common problems is available on the OWL home page. Students can also contact the ITS Helpdesk at 519-661-3800.

Policy Statements:

Please see the “Policies” page of the Graduate Programs & Research website for further details on course and program policies: <http://www.edu.uwo.ca/graduate-education/policies.html>

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes. In the case of absence, instructors may assign additional course work. Normally, students who are absent from one-quarter or more of their classes will be assigned a grade of "F" (Fail), (Graduate Studies Subcommittee - December 3, 1999). As an example, most onsite half meet 12 times during a term, so students in these courses cannot miss more than two classes.

For **online courses**, participation will be determined and explained by the course instructor, and will reflect similar principles as attendance policy for on-site courses.

For **online courses** organized on a week-by-week basis, participation in each week’s discussion will be considered the equivalent of one onsite class. For online courses that are organized on a multi-week basis (i.e. module or unit), contributing to the discussion of each unit will be considered the equivalent of attending and participating in, the classroom discussion of a face-to-face class.

Students are encouraged to contact their instructor *in advance* of cases in which they will be unable to attend class on a regular basis.

NOTE: If you have an additional attendance policy, please confirm it with the Graduate Programs Office.

Language Proficiency: "Each student granted admission to Western must be proficient in spoken and written English. Students must demonstrate the ability to write clearly and correctly. Work presented in English in any subject at any level, which shows a lack of proficiency in English and is, therefore, unacceptable for academic credit, will either be failed or, at the discretion of the instructor, returned to the student for revision to a literate level. To foster competence in the use of the English language within their own discipline, all instructors will take proficiency in English into account in the assignment of grades." A student who, after admission, shows an inadequate command of spoken or written English must improve his or her proficiency to the satisfaction of the graduate program or department.

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/admission.html

Evaluation: Graduate students must maintain at least a "B" average in their program. Although only numeric grades are assigned by instructors in the Faculty of Education, the following alpha grade ranges are provided for your information.

A = 80% and above

B = 70% - 79%

C = 60% - 69%

F = Fail - less than 60%

The following guidelines for assigning grades are in effect at the Faculty of Education.

- A:** Reserved for those students whose work is excellent. Their work will contain an element of originality, creativity, or thoroughness. It will be well organized and expressed, and will reflect a particularly clear command of techniques and principles, incisive judgements, sound critical evaluations, and so on.
- B:** Assigned for proof of good competent work. A "B" grade indicates that a student has mastered the course material and can manipulate it, can write clear prose, can demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and synthesize material, and can apply the course material to relevant situations or problems.
- C:** Assigned because a student does not meet one or more of the above criteria. Even though the student may be conscientious, he or she has not demonstrated a mastery of the graduate work in the course. A lack of mastery may include any number of characteristics such as an inability to write clearly, to research a topic adequately, to synthesize material, or to make basic judgements about relevance, and so on.
- F:** Glaring inaccuracy and confusion, little or no grasp of techniques and principles, trivial and irrelevant treatment of topics. In general, a failure to demonstrate the minimal knowledge and skills for effective work in the discipline.
- INC:** (Incomplete) An INC may be granted for a course where the student has not been able to complete the assigned work in the normal timeline due to exceptional circumstances. Permission to carry an INC must be sought from the Chair, Graduate Education before the end of the term. The INC must be completed by the end of the following term or a grade of F (FAIL) will be assigned. According to SGPS policy, **NO** exceptions will be granted to this rule.

A numerical grade submitted for an INC grade, or an F grade resulting for an INC, is final. The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will not consider a subsequent revision of either such grade except on documented medical or compassionate grounds.

Instructors shall inform students, both in class and in the course outline, as to any policies and/or penalties concerning late submission of assignments.

- IPR:** (In Progress) assigned during preparation for Thesis or Directed Research Project or a half or full course which extends over two or more terms.

Statement on Academic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously; a student guilty of a scholastic offence may be subject to the imposition of one or more penalties, ranging from reprimand to expulsion from the university, as well as criminal proceedings where appropriate. Students are strongly encouraged to review the appropriate policy document, and specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence: http://www.grad.uwo.ca/current_students/regulations/11.html

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar [reproduced below]).

Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Accessibility: The University of Western Ontario is committed to recognizing the dignity and independence of all students and seeks to ensure that persons with disabilities have genuine, open and unhindered access to academic services. Please contact me if you require course materials in an alternative format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact the Faculty of Education Graduate Programs Office at (519) 661-2099 and/or Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (519) 661-2111 X 82147 for information about requesting academic accommodation, or go to the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html