

**MORAVIAN COLLEGE**  
**MEDU 500 - TEACHER AS INQUIRER**  
**FALL 2012**

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Office hours: Tuesday, 2:00-4:00; Wednesday, 2:00-4:00  
and by appointment.

**Overview**

The purpose of this course is to introduce teachers to current issues in reflective teaching, with an emphasis on developing essential questions related to their own effectiveness in the classroom. The influence of action research on curricular and instructional change will be examined.

**Essential Questions**

1. What is the purpose of reflective teaching?
2. What are the potential outcomes of incorporating action research into the classroom?

**Course Objectives**

The student will be able to examine his/her teaching practice by:

1. examining the roles of inquiry and reflection,
2. analyzing the findings of educational research reports,
3. critiquing forms of educational research,
4. applying techniques for classroom inquiry.

**Required Texts**

Dana, N. F., & Yendol-Hoppey, D. (2009). *The reflective educator's guide to classroom research: Learning to teach and teaching to learn through practitioner inquiry* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Good, T. L., & Brophy, J. E. (2008). *Looking in classrooms* (10th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**Recommended Text**

*Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). (2010). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

**Assignments**

"Information is an undigested burden unless it is understood. It is knowledge only as its material is comprehended. And understanding, comprehension means that the various parts of the information are grasped in their relations to one another—a result that is attained only when acquisition is accompanied by constant reflection upon the meaning of what is studied" (Dewey, *How We Think*, 177).

### ***Reading Assignments***

Reading assignments will include chapters in the texts and related materials.

### ***Dana and Yendol-Hoppey Question and Quote***

Reflect on the assigned chapter and write an insightful question for class discussion. Identify a quotation from the chapter that captures an important concept.

### ***Written Assignments***

You will complete several kinds of written assignments. All written work is to be prepared using a word processor. APA formatting is recommended.

### ***Good and Brophy Inquiry Journal***

You will be reading about aspects of classroom teaching, based on research findings. These readings illustrate classroom practices that apply research results.

- Briefly summarize the chapter and reflect on the relevance of the reading to your classroom.
- Examine the list of skills, attitudes, and behaviors that you created and analyze how the reading relates to one or more items on the list. (You may modify or increase your list if you wish.)
- Create possible research questions (two or more) that you might investigate that are related to the chapter, with a rationale for the efficacy of each.

Six journals are assigned. Your paper for each journal will be about two pages long.

Note: You may substitute an unassigned chapter that interests you for any one of the assigned journals.

### ***Inquiry Mini-study***

You will develop a research question about an issue in your classroom.

As a foundation for your question, seek sources that relate to your question and write a brief review of the literature.

Design and carry out a mini-study to investigate your question.

Share your findings by giving a short presentation to the class about your question, methodology, and findings about your mini-study.

Detailed instructions for each component will be given separately.

### ***Mini-study Conference***

Schedule a conference with me at some point during the semester to discuss your mini-study. (Of course, you may consult me at any time, in addition to the required conference!)

### ***Blackboard***

Important information about our class will be posted on our Blackboard site at <http://blackboard.moravian.edu>. The Discussion Forum will enable us to exchange ideas, insights, and resources about various topics throughout the semester. Information about logging in and using the site will be given in class. You will be expected to post three entries that give insightful ideas about the various topics.

### **Attendance and Class Participation**

Attendance in every class is expected. Arrive on time and remain for the entire class session. If you need to be absent, call to tell me the reason. If you do not notify me, your absence will be recorded as unexcused. Lateness or partial class attendance will count toward absence. Absence because of illness will be excused if you bring a note from a health professional. Each unexcused absence will lower your final grade.

A missed class cannot truly be made up because of the critical role that discussion plays in each class session. Even so, you are responsible for the missed work. If you are absent, please notify me of the reason. If you do not notify me, your absence will be recorded as unexcused; unexcused absences lower your grade.

Be prepared for each class session by completing the assignments and considering ideas and questions that emerge from the assignments. During class, remain actively involved by paying attention and sharing your relevant and thoughtful responses and questions. Class participation on a regular basis is expected to ensure grasp of textual materials and important concepts. Participation will be assessed on evidence of your completion of the assigned work, the relevance and quality of responses, the questions and comments made during class sessions, and your voluntary contributions that enrich class discussions.

Be present in class, and stay with the class. Inattention or focus on work unrelated to class activities is not acceptable. Side conversations distract classmates and display disrespect to the speaker. Be sure your cell phone is turned off during class. Lack of appropriate participation or inappropriate participation will lower your grade.

### **Grading**

You can expect to work 6-9 hours per week outside of class preparing for this class. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

The Moravian College policy on academic honesty will be followed. Collaboration with peers can be valuable in enabling your understanding of various aspects of your work. However, the work you submit must be the result of your individual effort, apart from the collaborative process. You may use paper and on-line resources as you develop your work. Here, too, the work you submit must be the result of your individual effort, apart from the resources. In all cases, cite sources that you used.

Each assignment will be graded based on the specific criteria stated in the syllabus and distributed during the discussion of the assignment. Reading and written assignments are expected on the due date. Grade will be reduced for lateness.

#### **Inquiry Mini-study:**

References	10%
Literature review	10%
Methodology	10%
Mini-study results and discussion	25%
Presentation	5%
Classroom Topics Journal - 6 entries	35%
Blackboard	5%

## Course Outline

- I. Understanding Inquiry and Reflection
  - Defining inquiry
  - Describing reflection
  - Unpacking teaching scenarios into analyzable components
  - Applying reflection to teaching scenarios
  
- II. Using Educational Research
  - Searching the literature
  - Analyzing research reports
  - Comparing and critiquing research methodologies
  
- III. Carrying Out Action research
  - Generating wonderings
  - Creating classroom inquiries
  - Developing research questions
  - Designing research methods
  - Gathering data
  - Explaining research outcomes

### Course Schedule

8/27	Introduction: Teacher as Inquirer - Course Overview
9/3	Labor Day - No class
9/10	Teacher inquiry - Teacher knowing due: Dana & Yendol-Hoppey - Forward, Preface, Ch. 1 Journal: Classroom Management • Good & Brophy - Ch. 3 Good & Brophy - p. 33, Activity 1 - List your answer
9/17	No class
9/24	Autobiographical inquiry - Finding a wondering due: Dana & Yendol-Hoppey - Ch. 2 Journal: Teacher Expectations • Good & Brophy - Ch. 2 TOPIC
10/1	Accessing research: Reeves Library due: Journal: Student Interactions • Good & Brophy - Ch. 6 Outline
10/8	Fall Break
10/15	Individual Conferences Research Question
10/22	Researching through teacher's experiences - Data gathering due Dana & Yendol-Hoppey- Ch. 4 due: Journal: Teaching content for understanding • Good & Brophy - Ch. 9 due: Journal: Active teaching • Good & Brophy - Ch. 10 Good & Brophy - Ch. 1, 1-33
10/29	Planning research due: References Methodology and Related Documents
11/5	Researching through students' experiences due Journal: Constructing knowledge • Good & Brophy - Ch. 11
11/12	Critiquing quantitative and qualitative research methodologies due: Literature Review
11/19	Quantitative vs. qualitative vs. action research due: Two readings (to be distributed) Good & Brophy - Ch. 1, 33-47
11/26	Making sense of research data - Processing outcomes - Analyzing outcomes due: Dana & Yendol-Hoppey - Ch. 5, 6
12/3	Class Presentations due: Mini Study

Note: This schedule is tentative and may be modified as necessary.