



MORAVIAN COLLEGE

MASTER OF EDUCATION PROGRAM

EDUC 704-705: Action Research Thesis Spring 2016

Dr. Richard Grove
EDUC 704-705 MO
Tuesdays, PPHAC 301
Office: (610) 625-7016
Home: (610) 767-3038
Office Hours:

E-mail: grover@moravian.edu

Dr. Jack Dilendik
EDUC 704-705 MQ
PPHAC 338
Office: (610) 861-1558
Home: (610) 739-9446

Office Hours: W 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. and evenings by appt.

E-mail: dilendikj@moravian.edu

Overview

Candidates will work independently under the guidance of a thesis advisor to place action research data within the context of published studies and to report on findings in a final thesis. An oral defense of the thesis will be required. Prerequisites: M.Ed. or M.A.T. degree candidacy, MEDU 702 (Reflective Practice Seminar) with grade of B or higher.

Objectives

The student will be able to complete the action research thesis process by:

1. Analyzing, organizing, and displaying trustworthy action research data.
2. Writing the action research thesis.
3. Presenting the action research thesis, including the research method, data, and conclusions, with a committee of educators.
4. Supporting colleagues in the analysis, organization, write-up, and presentation of action research data.

Required Texts

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Paley, V. (1997). *The girl with the brown crayon*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wolcott, H. (2009). *Writing up qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Selected Resources

Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K. (2011). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (5th Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Cazden, C. B. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning* (Rev. ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Clandinin, D. J. (Ed.). (2007). *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. (1993). *Inside/Outside: Teacher research and knowledge*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. (2009). *Inquiry as stance: practitioner research for the next generation*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Cole, A. L., & Knowles, G. K. (2000). *Researching teaching: Exploring teacher development through reflexive inquiry*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

- Elbow, P. (1998). *Writing without teachers* (2nd ed.). Oxford, Great Britain: Oxford University Press.
- Ely, M. (2007). In-forming re-presentations. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 567-598). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ely, M., Vinz, R., Anzul, M., & Downing, M. (1997). *On writing qualitative research: Living by words*. London: Falmer Press.
- Ely, M., with Anzul, M., Friedman, T., Garner, D., & Steinmetz, A. M. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles*. London: Falmer Press.
- Gee, J. P. (2014). *An introduction to discourse analysis: theory and method* (4th ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Gubrium, J., & Holstein, J. (Eds.). (2002). *Handbook of interview research: Context and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hendricks, C. (2013). *Improving schools through action research: A comprehensive guide for educators*. (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Holly, M. L., Arhar, J. M., & Kasten, W. C. (2005). *Action research for teachers: Traveling the yellow brick road*. (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Hubbard, R., & Power, B. (2003). *The art of classroom inquiry: A handbook for teacher-researchers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to western thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- MacLean, M., & Mohr, M. (1999). *Teacher-Researchers at work*. Berkeley, CA: National Writing Project.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Newman, J. (1998). *Tensions of teaching: Beyond tips to critical reflection*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2008). *The Sage handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College.
- Solomon, M. (1999). *The diagnostic teacher: Constructing new approaches to professional development*. New York: Teachers College.
- Wetherell, C., & Noddings, N. (1991). *Stories lives tell: Narrative and dialogue in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Zeni, J. (Ed.). (2001). *Ethical issues in practitioner research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Assignments and Grading

The thesis committee selected by the degree candidate and approved by the Education Department will award a thesis grade of *A*, *A-*, *B+*, *B*, or *NC* (no credit) based upon the criteria of scholarship, critical reflection, researcher trustworthiness, benefit to candidate's practice, and format of written document as outlined in the "Moravian College M.Ed. Criteria for Thesis Holistic Evaluation" document. According to College policy, a grade of *I* may not be awarded by a thesis committee. Note that the last day for withdrawal from the course with "W" is Thursday, April 2, 2015.

Attendance

Class sessions will consist of two parts and you are expected to participate actively in all aspects of each part. During the first part, we will discuss together the assigned readings and writings. Be prepared to share your thesis writing in progress. During the second part, research groups will meet and work on thesis writing. At the same time, each of you will individually conference with your thesis chair. It is crucial for all degree candidates to attend each session of the thesis seminar ready to share writing in progress as outlined on the course schedule below.

Academic Honesty

All work must adhere to strict ethical guidelines for teacher action researchers. See chapter 6 in the Hendricks text for a review of validity and ethical guidelines for teacher action research. The Moravian College policy on academic honesty as stated in the *Comenius Center Graduate Studies Handbook* will be followed. Academic dishonesty will result in notification of the Academic Dean, in accordance with Moravian College policy.

Course Schedule

Tues., Jan. 19: Introducing Yourself to Your Thesis Reader

In Class: Writing Workshop: Purpose Statement, Delimitations
Reading Workshop: Sample M.Ed. Thesis Openings
Chair Conference: Review of Purpose and Delimitations; Initial Committee Selection

Tues., Jan. 26: Providing Your Research Methodology

Due: Wolcott, Chapters 1 and 2
McNiff, Chapter 2
Preliminary Table of Contents
Thesis Opening Pages (possibly Researcher Autobiography, Stance, Pilot Studies)
In Class: Reading Workshop: Wolcott and McNiff Discussions
Writing Workshop: Drafting the Research Method
Chair Conference: Drafting the Research Method and Committee Selections

Tues., Feb. 2: Beginning Your Research Narrative

Due: Paley, *The Girl with the Brown Crayon*
McNiff, Chapter 3
Wolcott, Chapter 3
Methodological Approach and Trustworthiness Statement
Committee Declaration Form with required signatures
In Class: Reading Workshop: Paley, McNiff, & Wolcott Discussions
Writing Workshop: Introducing the School, Setting, and Participants
Chair Conference: Feedback on Thesis Opening Pages, Beginning This Year's Story

Tues., Feb. 9: Sharing Your Review of Salient Literature and Telling This Year's Story

Due: McNiff, Chapter 4
Wolcott, Chapter 4
Synthesized Review of Salient Literature
In Class: Reading Workshop: McNiff & Wolcott Discussions
Writing Workshop: Anecdote, Vignette, Drama
Chair Conference: Methodological Approach and Trustworthiness Statement

Tues., Feb. 16: Exploring Narrative Forms

Due: McNiff, Chapter 5
Ely, "In-forming re-presentations" Handout (re-reading of EDUC 506 article)
In Class: Reading Workshop: Ely Discussion
Writing Workshop: Drafting the Explanation of Data Analysis
Chair Conference: Literature Review

Tues., Feb. 23: Explaining Your Analysis of Data

Due: McNiff, Chapter 9
Explanation of Data Analysis
This Year's Story, Part 2
In Class: Reading Workshop: McNiff Discussion
Writing Workshop: This Year's Story Continues
Chair Conference: This Year's Story

Tues., March 1: Presenting Your Findings

Due: Sample M.Ed. Thesis “Findings” Section Readings
This Year’s Story, Part 3
In Class: Reading Workshop: Sample Thesis Selections Discussion
Writing Workshop: Findings Section
Chair Conference: This Year’s Story

Tues., March 8: No Class: Spring Recess

Tues., March 15: Revising Your Write Up

Due: Wolcott, Chapter 5
McNiff, Chapter 10
Google Docs Working Draft of Action Research Thesis
In Class: Reading Workshop: Wolcott & McNiff Discussion
Writing Workshop: Peer Response to Thesis Draft
Chair Conference: This Year’s Story in its Entirety

Tues., March 22: Following APA Style

Due: Wolcott, Chapter 6
Revised Google Docs Draft of Action Research Thesis with Table of Contents, Works Cited, and Appendixes
In Class: Reading Workshop: Wolcott Discussion
Writing Workshop: APA Style
Chair Conference: Findings Section, Reflective Assessment of Progress to Date

Tues., March 29: Editing Your Write Up

Due: Edited Google Docs Draft of Action Research Thesis with Table of Contents, Works Cited, Appendixes, and Abstract
Final Google Docs Draft due to Committee for those sharing on 4/14.
In Class: Oral Defense Discussion; Chair Conferences as needed

Tues., April 5: Preparing to Present Your Study and Its Findings

Due: **Final Google Docs Draft due to Committee for those sharing on 4/21.**

Tues., April 12: Sharing Teacher Action Research I.

In Class: Presentation and Conversation #1, 2

Tues., April 19: Sharing Teacher Action Research II

In Class: Presentation and Conversation #3, 4

Friday, May 6: Submitting the Thesis

Final copies of the “publication ready” thesis must be approved by the Director of the Graduate Education program and placed on file with Jennifer Pagliaroli, administrative assistant, by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 8. See “Final Graduate Education Thesis Submission Guidelines.” Notify thesis committee chair if, for any reason, you plan NOT to be in attendance at Commencement exercises, so that your name may be announced *in absentia*. Note that Commencement exercises begin promptly at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 16.

Wed., May 11: Graduation Rehearsal

6:00 p.m. UBC Room, Haupt Union Building

Sat., May 14: Commencement Exercises

8:30 a.m. Class Picture, Priscilla Payne Hurd Courtyard
9:00 a.m. Robing, Athletic & Recreation Center
9:40 a.m. Processional
10:00 a.m. Commencement Ceremony