

## Action Research Syllabus - EDU 5491 Spring 2015 - Undergraduate Secondary Cohort

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**Office hours:** Always available by phone, email, or appointment

**Classroom Meetings:** West High School, Room 403 – Thursdays 3:45 – 6:15

Important Events	Dates
Classes begin	Monday, Jan 12
Last day to add without a permission code	Monday, Jan 19
Last day to drop (delete) classes	Wednesday, Jan 21
Last day to add, elect CR/NC, or audit classes	Monday, Jan 26
Last day to withdraw from classes	Friday, Mar 6
Last day to reverse CR/NC option	Friday, Apr 24
Classes end	Tuesday, April 28
Final exam period	Thursday - Wednesday, Apr 30 – May 6

### Teacher Preparation Framework

*A professional teacher is reflective and responsive, attends to research, and builds relationships among diverse people, ideas, and perspectives.*

### Course Description

This capstone experience will assist you, the teacher candidate (TC) in developing your professional voice through the exploration of significant issues in educational settings. You will complete an action research project, develop your portfolio, and engage in seminar discussions. This course is open only to students in the secondary teacher certification program.

### Required Reading

Johnson, A.P., (2012). *A Short Guide to Action Research, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

### Course Objectives

*By the end of this course, you are expected to have accomplished the following:*

- Demonstrated knowledge of, and the ability to use, action research as part of personal professional development and reflective practice. You will design and conduct an action research project with strong ties to current educational research. This culminating project is the capstone for the licensure program thought the Urban Institute for Teacher Education. In addition to a written research paper, you will present your project in a poster session sponsored by the College of Education.

Final projects will also be available for review by faculty in the Department of Education, Culture and Society, as well as the World Languages Program.

- As you move from the formal role of student to that of professional, much of your course work and reading assignments will center around the theme of professional development. Class discussions, presentations, and assignments will address the following: teacher evaluations, teacher development, and professional affiliations.

### **Course Performance Outcomes**

You will demonstrate progress toward proficiency in the UETS standards through the completion of your action research project. Additionally, you will participate in a seminar course that familiarizes you, through discussion and written feedback from your US, with the culture of teaching, including teacher development and professional affiliations.

### **Assignments**

#### **Action Research Project Steps**

Periodic assignments lead to the fulfillment of your action research project. *Action research* refers specifically to an integrative methodology in that it brings together inquiry about self and context and provides the opportunity to synthesize information from a variety of sources. In a nutshell, you will be expected to explore research literature relevant to a specific question you choose to investigate, develop a plan of action, implement this plan, evaluate the results, and report back the findings. Here are the steps we will follow:

Step 1. *Researching your Research Question.* If you have not already done so, conduct an initial review of the literature related to the research question(s) you proposed—and received feedback on—during Fall Semester 2014. This review will inform you as to what is already known about the problem/situation/topic you are interested in and whether it is a feasible study topic for your action research project.

Step 2. *Problem Identification/Rationale.* In a short paper (no more than two pages), clearly identify ONE problem to which the research review you conducted in Step 1 has led you. Explain why you consider the topic to be important and how you believe your specific research findings could contribute to the education profession. **(10 points)**

Step 3. *Comprehensive Literature Review.* This portion of your paper (three to five pages) will comprise a wide representation of research from peer-reviewed studies related to your project. Your discussion should provide readers with an understanding of how your work relates to that of others in the field of education, including insights you've gained from readings in past courses. Cite all sources using APA (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.) format. **(40 points)**

Step 4. *Plan of Action.* Based on the nature of your research question and the literature you have explored, you will fully develop a plan for conducting your project. In three to four pages, describe what you plan to do, how your plan incorporates the relevant literature,

any anticipated difficulties, and methods for evaluating your plan's effectiveness. **(40 points)**

Step 5. *Data Collection Summaries #1 and #2*. Implement your research project for a period of several weeks during February – March 2015 (approximately). Systematically collect data throughout, then compile two summaries—the first midway through data collection and the second at the conclusion of your data collection—discussing changes, concerns, or weaknesses you have observed. **(2 @ 60 points each; 120 points total)**

Step 6. *Presentation and corresponding reflection*: You will present your action research project informally in class, then formally in a presentation on Wednesday, April 1, 2015, at the College of Education Research Fair. Additionally, you will write a one-page reflection on how the entire presentation process went, what worked, and what the challenges were. **(50 points)**

Step 7. *Final Paper*: Your final paper (20-25 pages) should be a compilation of your previous work, as well as **two additional sections**. Specifically, the paper should include:

- Problem Identification/Rationale*
- Comprehensive Literature Review*
- Plan of Action*
- Methods and Data Analysis**
- Data Collection Summary #1*
- Data Collection Summary #2*
- Conclusions and Discussion**

The two additional sections (**bolded**) will be described in detail at a later time; in a nutshell, you will analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your entire project, make predictions as to how your findings will influence your future teaching, and explain what you believe to be the value of action research as professional development for teachers. **(90 points)**

### **Submission Details**

Assignments are due on CANVAS on the dates and times indicated, unless otherwise specified. Late assignments may receive little or no written feedback and will receive a lower grade. You are strongly encouraged to work with a classmate to critique and proofread each other's assignments inasmuch as this practice typically results in the submission of superior papers and projects.

Papers submitted for this class should be typed (double-spaced) and conform to APA (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.) style. Each will be read and evaluated based upon clarity, quality of thought, and depth of analysis. Please do not assume that the reader of the work will have an understanding of your thoughts and intentions; thus, provide clear, well-written descriptions and analyses of the material covered. In each of your assignments you will be asked to provide work which is reflective and thoughtful.

Because your assignments build upon each other, it is important that work be turned in on time so that it may be returned to you without delay. That said, late work will be accepted up to one week late, with a 10% deduction per day. Regardless of this lack of points after

one week, however, all assignments must be completed and turned in as part of your professional development.

### **Grading**

Grades for this course will be determined by the instructor. In addition to the points you accumulate through your assignments, two important components of your grade are **Participation** and **Professionalism**.

**Participation:** Active participation includes, but is not limited to, attending to seminar/presentation content and communicating (e.g., offering suggestions, feedback, and analysis during discussions). **(75 points)**

**Professionalism:** Some of the behaviors that address professionalism are: completing assignments in a professional, timely fashion; displaying evolving attitudes toward teaching and learning; developing assignments that are of high quality; demonstrating openness to suggestions; seeking advice when needed; and sharing ideas with others. **(75 points)**

*PLEASE NOTE: Missing more than two (2) class sessions will result in formal notification regarding the status of your continuation in the licensure program.*

**Total course points possible = 500 points**

470-500 = A	435-449 = B+	385-399 = C+	<b>335-349 = D+</b>
450-469 = A-	420-434 = B	370-384 = C	<b>320-334 = D</b>
	400-419 = B-	<b>350-369 = C-</b>	<b>300-319 = D-</b>

**A grade of C- or lower (i.e., < 370 points) will necessitate the retaking of this course (EDU 5495) in order to be recommended for certification.**

### **Student Conduct:**

Usage of cell phones is not allowed in class and will affect your grade. The use of a laptop computer, PDA, or other devices will also not be allowed in class without express permission. If this is a problem, please speak to your instructors privately.

### **Civility Statement:**

This class needs to be a participatory community if students are to fulfill their potential for learning. Thus, people who disrupt the community by their words or actions (e.g., rude, sarcastic, or disrespectful speech or disruptive behaviors) will not be allowed in class. In order to achieve the stated educational goals and to encourage the expression, testing, understanding, and creation of a variety of ideas and opinions, respect must be shown to everyone.

**Accommodations and ADA:** Students with special needs (as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA) who need assistance should notify the Center for Disability Services, as well as the instructors. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If in-class accommodations are needed, reasonable prior notice must be given to the Center for

Disability Services (CDS), 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020. CDS will work with concerned parties to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to CDS.

**University Policy and Codes:** In order to maintain a positive, civil environment for learning, the instructors expect that all students will strive to meet the goals described in the University of Utah's Student Code, which states *"the mission of the University of Utah is to educate the individual and to discover, refine and disseminate knowledge. The University supports the intellectual, personal, social and ethical development of members of the University community. These goals can best be achieved in an open and supportive environment that encourages reasoned discourse, honesty, and respect for the rights of all individuals. Students at the University of Utah are encouraged to exercise personal responsibility and self-discipline and engage in the rigors of discovery and scholarship."*

### **University Policy and Codes**

Following the Student Code, the instructors adopt a zero-tolerance policy for academic misconduct in this course. "Academic misconduct," according to the University of Utah Student Code, *"includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct."* Again, utilizing the ideas, expressions, or words of others without citing the source constitutes plagiarism. Therefore, students must cite sources in ALL work, including work completed with peers if and when appropriate. Please also note that no assignment may be submitted for this class that has been previously submitted for another course. Students will be held accountable to high standards for academic integrity and should read and understand the policy on academic integrity as printed in the University of Utah's Student Handbook. Please read the Student Code of Academic Conduct available at: <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>.

### **Addressing Sexual Misconduct**

*Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).*

### Action Research Calendar

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Activities and Readings from <i>Action Research</i> text (to be read prior to class)</b>	<b>Assignment due on this day</b>
Jan. 15	Review course requirements --Chapter 3 - <i>Using Action Research for Solving Problems</i> --Chapter 4 - <i>The Beginning</i>	
Jan. 22	--Chapter 5 - <i>Reviewing the Literature</i>	Problem Identification/Rationale
Jan. 29	Doing a literature search	
Feb. 5	Writing in APA style	Comprehensive Literature Review
Feb. 12	--Chapter 6 - <i>Methods of Collecting Data</i>	Plan of Action
Feb. 19	--Chapter 8 - <i>Quantitative Design in Action Research</i>	
Feb. 26		
Mar. 5	--Chapter 7 - <i>Methods of Analyzing Data</i>	Data Collection Summary #1
PresMar. 12	--Chapter 9 - <i>Evaluating, Describing, and Proposing Research</i>	
Mar. 19	--Chapter 10 - <i>Reporting Findings in Action Research</i> --Chapter 12 - <i>Writing an Action Research Report</i>	Data Collection Summary #2
Mar. 26	--Chapter 13 - <i>Presenting your Action Research</i>	(Informal presentation in class)
April 1	Presentation at College of Education Research Fair, 3:30-5:00 p.m., SAEC	
April 2	(No class)	Reflection on actual presentation and processes involved
April 9	Finalizing your action research paper, Pt. 1	
April 16	Finalizing your action research paper, Pt. 2	
April 23	Semester wrap-up	Final Action Research Paper