

EDG 7982
Practitioner Research: Theory and Practice
Spring 2018
Tuesdays 12:50 – 3:50

Instructor:

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Overview of Course:

Practitioner research is defined as systematic, intentional study by educators of their own professional practice. In this seminar, we will explore the concept of practitioner research by addressing such questions as:

- What is practitioner research, how does it differ from research conducted in University settings, and why is it important?
- What is the theoretical basis for the practitioner research movement?
- What does practitioner research look like in schools?
- What research has been conducted on this movement, what have we learned, and what yet needs to be explored?
- What is the relationship between practitioner inquiry and equity/social justice?
- What does it mean to take an “inquiry stance” towards teaching?
- What does it mean to coach practitioners in the research process?
- What constitutes quality practitioner research?

These questions, and others, will be explored through readings, discussions, guest speakers, class activities, online learning experiences and special projects. As a result of participating in this course, doctoral students will develop a strong theoretical understanding of the purposes of practitioner inquiry and be able to translate this knowledge into practice as scholars of the practitioner research movement as well as facilitators of the process in all educational settings.

Course Goals:

Through this course, advanced graduate students will:

1. Explore the theoretical underpinnings and research base for practitioner inquiry.
2. Explore the ways practitioner research plays out in practice with teachers and administrators in schools.

3. Develop the knowledge and skills necessary to coach the practitioner inquiry of both prospective teachers in University settings and practicing teachers and administrators in schools.
4. Engage with graduate student colleagues and course instructor in discussion and debate about pertinent and contemporary issues related to practitioner inquiry.
5. Complete a choice project related to each student's context and personal interest in the practitioner inquiry movement.

Required Readings:

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

Nichols, S., & Cormack, P. (2017). *Impactful practitioner inquiry: The ripple effect on classrooms, schools, and teacher professionalism*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Dana, N. F., & Yendol-Hoppey, D. (2014) *The reflective educator's guide to classroom research: Learning to teach and teaching to learn through practitioner inquiry, 3rd Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Caro-Bruce, C., Flessner, R., Klehr, M., & Zeichner, K.M. (2007). *Creating equitable classrooms through action research*. Corwin Press.

Grogan, M., Donaldson, J., & Simmons, J. (2007, May 19). *Disrupting the Status Quo: The Action Research Dissertation as a Transformative Strategy*. Retrieved from the Connexions Web site: <http://cnx.org/content/m14529/1.2/>

Curriu, E. (2017). *Storied stance: An oral history of long-term teacher researchers in the age of accountability*. Unpublished dissertation proposal. University of Florida: Gainesville, Fl.

MacDonald, M. (2016). *The role of differentiation and standards-based grading in the science learning of struggling and advanced learners in a detracked high school honors biology classroom*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Florida: Gainesville, Fl.

Dana, N. F. & Yendol-Hoppey, D. (2008) *The reflective educator's guide to professional development: Coaching inquiry-oriented learning communities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Dana, N. F., Thomas, C., & Boynton, S. (2011). *Inquiry: A districtwide approach to staff and student learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. (Parts I & III Only)

Dana, N. F., Tricarico, K., & Quinn, D. (2010). The administrator as action researcher: A case study of five principals and their engagement in systematic, intentional study of their own practice. *Journal of School Leadership, 19*(3), 232-265.

Dana, N. F., Marrs-Morford, L., & Roberts, S. (2015). The promise of action research: Lessons learned from the Indiana Principal Leadership Institute. *LEARNing Landscapes, 9*(1), 59-79.

Articles Related To Your Assignment For Class Decades Project

Additional Readings Related To Your “Your Choice” Project

Other Readings As Assigned

Recommended Reading:

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

Inside/Outside: Teacher Research and Knowledge, a classic text about the practitioner research movement, is the prequel to one of our course texts, *Inquiry as Stance: Practitioner Research for the Next Generation*. It is referred to frequently in this book and it will help the development of your knowledge about the practitioner inquiry movement if you read Part I of *Inside/Outside*.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S.L. (1999). Relationships of Knowledge and Practice: Teacher Learning in Communities. *Review of Research in Education, 24*, 249-305.

This article grounds the practitioner research movement and is referred to in other readings we will do in class.

Tentative Course Schedule:

PART I. FOUNDATIONS OF PRACTITIONER INQUIRY

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

Introduction to Practitioner Inquiry
Getting To Know One Another
Orientation To Class

Assignment: Read pages 1 – 85 of *Inquiry as Stance: Practitioner Research for the Next Generation*.

As you read Chapter One, highlight significant passages. Once you have completed the reading, review the passages you highlighted and select one passage each that fits the following criteria:

- One passage that resonates with your experiences as an educator
- One passage that is perplexing to you
- One passage that is inspirational to you

As you read chapter two of *Inquiry as Stance*, be prepared to summarize, in your own words, Figure 2.1 (p. 39) and Figure 2.2 (p. 53) as well as to raise one question you have about each figure.

BRING A DECK OF PLAYING CARDS WITH YOU TO CLASS ON 1/16.

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

The Practitioner Inquiry Movement: Versions, Variance, and Contemporary Times

Assignment: Read pages 86 – 165 of *Inquiry as Stance: Practitioner Research for the Next Generation*; Read pages 1-53 of *Impact of Practitioner Inquiry: The Ripple Effect on Classrooms, Schools, and Teacher Professionalism*

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

The University and Practitioner Research
 Understanding Inquiry as Stance
 The Impact of Practitioner Inquiry
 Decades Class Project

Assignment: Read Chapters 1 – 4 (pp. 5-145) of Dana & Yendol-Hoppey Classroom Research text; Read Chapter 7 of Nichols and Cormack text (pp. 101-125).

Begin work on Decades Class Project

Tuesday, January 30, 2018

The Nuts and Bolts of Practitioner Inquiry I: Wonderings, Collaboration, and Research Design

Assignment: Read Chapters 6,7, & 9 (pp. 157-211; 235-250) of Dana & Yendol-Hoppey Classroom Research text; Read Chapter 8 of Nichols and Cormack text (pp. 126-146)

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

The Nuts and Bolts of Practitioner Inquiry II: Data Analysis, Writing, and Sharing


Assignment: Read Chapters 5 & 8 (pp. 147-156; pp. 213-234) of Dana & Yendol-Hoppey Classroom Research text; Read Part III of Dana, Thomas, & Boynton's *Inquiry: A Districtwide Approach to Staff and Student Learning* (pp. 89 – 117).

PART II. THE VOICE OF THE PRACTITIONER INQUIRER

Tuesday, February 13, 2018

Practitioner Inquiry: Quality and Ethics

Listening to the Practitioner's Voice: Time with a Real, Live Teacher Researcher
Darby Delane, Alachua County Public Schools

Assignment: Read Part II of *Inquiry as Stance*.  Follow the instructions for discussing this text online from February 13 – February 20.

Tuesday, February 13 – Tuesday, February 20, 2018 (ONLINE LEARNING WEEK)

Listening to the Practitioner's Voice: Practitioner Research & Inquiry Stance

Due:

Saturday, February 17 at Noon – Creation of Wiki Page Chapter Summaries
(Online Learning “To Do” Step One)

Tuesday, February 20 at 4:00 PM – Read Chapter Summaries and Post (Online Learning “To Do” Step Two)

Assignment: Read *Creating Equitable Classrooms through Action Research*.
Follow the instructions for discussing this text online from February 20 –
February 27.

Work on Decades Class Project (Group Meeting Time)

Tuesday, February 20 – Tuesday, February 27, 2018 (ONLINE LEARNING WEEK)

Listening to the Practitioner's Voice: Practitioner Research & Equity

Due:

Saturday, February 24 at Noon – Creation of Wiki Page Chapter Summaries
(Online Learning “To Do” Step One)

Tuesday, February 27 at 4:00 PM - Read Chapter Summaries and Post (Online Learning “To Do” Step Two)

Assignment: Continue work for Decades Class Project (Group Meeting Time).
Spring Break Reading Suggestion: Enjoy sections of *Inquiry as Stance* Part II and *Creating Equitable Classrooms through Action Research* that were not originally assigned to you but were recommended by your peers.

Tuesday, February 27 – Friday, March 2 (ONLINE LEARNING WEEK)

Looking Across Practitioner Researcher Readings
Decades Project Final Work Week

Due:

Saturday, March 2 at Midnight –Looking Across Readings Post

Tuesday, March 6, 2018

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS

Tuesday, March 13, 2018 (*Note: This class may extend beyond our allotted time.*)

Practitioner Research through the Ages (Decades Project Presentations)

Due: Decades Project

Assignment: Grogan, Donaldson & Simmons’ *Disrupting the Status Quo: The Action Research Dissertation as a Transformative Strategy*; Currin Dissertation Proposal; MacDonald Dissertation

Begin reading Dana & Yendol-Hoppey coaching text (Due March 27th).

“Your Choice” Project

PART III. SPECIAL TOPICS IN PRACTITIONER INQUIRY

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Dissertationizing Practitioner Research

- *Studying Practitioner Research* – Guest Speaker: Elizabeth Currin
- *Practitioner Research as Methodology* - Guest Speaker – Mickey MacDonald

Practitioner Inquiry and P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School

- Guest Speakers: Ashley Pennypacker-Hill, Jon Mundorf, Kristin Weller

Assignment: Finish Dana & Yendol-Hoppey coaching text.

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Coaching Inquiry

Assignment: Read Dana, N. F., Tricarico, K., & Quinn, D. (2010). The administrator as action researcher: A case study of five principals and their engagement in systematic, intentional study of their own practice, *Journal of School Leadership*, 19(3), 232-265; Dana, N.F., Marrs-Morford, L., & Roberts, S. (2015). The promise of action research: Lessons learned from the Indiana Principal Leadership Institute, *LEARNing Landscapes*, 9(1), 59-79, and Part I of Dana, Thomas & Boynton S. *Inquiry: A Districtwide Approach to Staff and Student Learning*.

Tuesday, April 3, 2018

The Administrator and Practitioner Inquiry

- *Administrator Inquiry and the North East Florida Educational Consortium* – Guest Speakers: Mark Bracewell, Manager, Leadership Programs, NEFEC and Rhonda Clyatt, Program Development and Training Specialist, NEFEC
- *Administrator Inquiry and the Indiana Principal Leadership Institute* Guest Speaker: Linda Marrs-Morford, Director, IPLI

Due: Your Choice Project.

Assignment: Reflection Paper.

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Your Choice Project Share – *Share and learn from each other's special topic of exploration for the "Your Choice" project.*

NOTE: Nancy in Indiana for this class to speak at IPLI Action Research Showcase

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), New York, NY – No Class

Suggested Activity: Skim AERA Program – What sessions relate to the practitioner research? Contact authors to receive papers that are of interest to you.

Work on Reflection Paper.

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

Celebration of Learning: Nancy's House

Due: Reflection Paper.

Course Requirements and Grading

There are four major requirements for this course:

1. Attendance at, Preparation for, and Participation in all Face-to-Face and Online Learning Classes. Your attendance and participation in class is vital for your own learning as well as for your classmates' and the instructor's learning. It is expected that you will be present for and prepared for every face-to-face class meeting as well as complete all online assignments in a timely manner, producing quality posts and responses to classmates' posts as you engage in online discussion. Attendance, preparation, and participation is worth 25% of your final grade.
2. Decades Project. The concept of practitioner action research has been around for ages, with roots in the work of John Dewey (1933), popularized by Kurt Lewin in the 1940s, and shortly thereafter applied to the field of education by Stephen Corey (1953). Since its inception, many educational innovations have come and gone, but the systematic study of educators' own practice is a concept that has proved its staying power! As a class, we will construct an online resource for one another featuring a comprehensive collection and review of conceptual and empirical work related to practitioner inquiry from the 1950s (when the practitioner action research movement began to become popular in educational contexts) to the present time. Members of the class will be assigned two or three decades in which to deeply explore the literature on practitioner research that was generated during that time period. This project involves developing a comprehensive collection of the literature in your time period, summarizing each piece of literature in a chart formation, and providing an overview of what was learned about practitioner inquiry during your assigned time period. We will compile all copies of articles online. More detailed instructions regarding this project will be given on Tuesday, January 23, 2018. You will be assessed on the comprehensiveness of your literature collection during your assigned time period, your ability to summarize your literature in a succinct, but accurate and useable chart form, and your ability to synthesize your findings and share with the class in an interesting and engaging fashion. The Decades Project, due Tuesday, March 13th, is worth 30% of your final grade.
3. "Your Choice" Project. After learning from one another about practitioner inquiry throughout the decades (breadth of practitioner inquiry movement), each student will have the opportunity to select a topic of interest related to practitioner inquiry and dig deep into that topic through the completion of the "Your Choice"

Project (depth in the practitioner inquiry movement). Options for the “Your Choice” Project include:

- **“Practitioner Inquiry Versions/Variance Dive”** – Select one version/variance of the practitioner inquiry movement and dive deeply into it through extensive readings on the topic (for example, you might explore critical action research, participatory action research, self-study in teacher education, etc.). Complete a paper that summarizes and synthesizes your reading about this particular version/variance in the practitioner inquiry movement, and includes a personal statement about how what you learned through this project contributed to your growing knowledge about practitioner inquiry and the ways you might interact with this movement in your future work as a teacher educator.
- **“Practitioner Inquiry Hot Topic”** – Select a “hot topic” related to the practitioner inquiry movement that you wish to explore in depth (for example, you might explore ethics and practitioner inquiry, action research dissertations, etc.). Complete a paper that summarizes and synthesizes your reading about this particular hot topic, and includes a personal statement about how what you learned through this project contributed to your growing knowledge about practitioner inquiry and the ways you might interact with this movement in your future work as a teacher educator.
- **“Practitioner Inquiry Texts – What’s New?”** – Select and read 2-4 texts of the same genre (for example, “How To,” “Collection of Studies,” etc.) that have been written on practitioner inquiry in the last 5 – 7 years. Complete a paper that summarizes and compares/contrasts the texts and includes a personal statement about how what you learned through this project contributed to your growing knowledge about practitioner inquiry and the ways you might interact with this movement in your future work as a teacher educator.
- **“Your Choice Your Choice”** – Discuss a project idea with the instructor that creates the opportunity for you to dig deep into a topic of interest related to the practitioner inquiry movement.

More detailed instructions regarding this project will be given on Tuesday, March 13, 2018. You will be assessed on the depth of the reading you complete for this project and your ability to synthesize and present your reading in a written format, as well as your ability to articulate the ways completing this project contributed to your growing knowledge about the practitioner inquiry movement and how you might apply this learning to your future work as a teacher educator. The “Your Choice” project, due Tuesday, April 3rd, is worth 30% of your final grade.

4. **Final Reflection.** This short paper creates the opportunity for you to analyze and synthesize the learning you have done about practitioner inquiry over the course of the entire semester. More details and a specific writing prompt will be discussed on April 3, 2018. This paper is worth 15% of your final grade.

Each of the above requirements will be assigned a point value equal to the percentage of your grade that the requirement is worth (Attendance, Preparation, and Participation – 25 points; Decades Project – 30 points; Your Choice Project – 30 points; Reflection Paper – 15 points). Each student’s points on all assignments will be totaled and a final grade will be assigned based on the following scale:

| | |
|----------|----|
| 96 – 100 | A |
| 92 – 95 | A- |
| 88 – 91 | B+ |
| 84 – 87 | B |
| 80 – 83 | B- |
| 77 – 79 | C+ |
| 74 – 76 | C |
| 70 – 73 | C- |
| 60 – 69 | D |
| Below 60 | F |

Information on current UF grading policies can be found here:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

ADA Statement

Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities to assist in planning accommodations.