ED 626
Classroom Research

Distance students call toll-free: 1-866-339-5580
Meeting number: 1227197

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Course Information
Class Meets: 4:50 P.M. – 7:50 P.M.  Days: Wednesdays
Place: Egan Wing 116 (or via audio-conference for distance-delivered instruction)
Contact Hours: 3+0  Credits: 3

Course Context
This course is designed for students enrolled in the Master’s of Education (M.Ed.) programs in Early Childhood Education, Educational Technology, Reading, and M.A.T. Elementary (Distance), to acquire knowledge about qualitative research in classroom settings.

Course Description
This course addresses the philosophy and methodology of classroom research, the role of classroom research within the educational profession, and the reflective nature of such research. Students will learn methods of qualitative research and utilize them in classroom research. Prerequisites: Type A Teaching Certificate or instructor permission.

Relation to Conceptual Frameworks
The conceptual frameworks that guide and inform this course include: (a) the University of Alaska Southeast/Center for Teacher Education (UAS/CTE) Mission Statement; (b) the UAS/CTE Vision Statement; (c) the UAS/CTE Conceptual Framework Performance Standards; (d) the Alaska State Teacher Performance Standards; (e) the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Standards; and (f) the Assembly of Alaska Native Educators (AANE) Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge/Guidelines for Researchers.

**UAS/CTE Mission Statement**
The mission of the University of Alaska Southeast/Center for Teacher Education is to identify, prepare and strengthen effective teachers for sustained contributions to students and the education profession in rural and urban settings in Alaska and nationally.

**UAS/CTE Vision Statement**
The University of Alaska/Center for Teacher Education’s vision for our program is:

*Our graduates will be informed, reflective and responsive teachers within diverse, classroom, school and community contexts.*

**Informed**
Students will critically examine numerous bodies of knowledge relevant to the conduct of qualitative research in educational settings. This knowledge will be disseminated through required readings, independent scholarly/research activities, multimedia presentations, lectures, student presentations, discussion groups, creative-arts based project work, experiential learning activities and collaborative/cooperative learning activities. Each student is expected to contribute to the knowledge-base of other class members through his or her active participation in all class activities. Together the instructor and the students will construct a collective knowledge-base about qualitative research in educational settings.

**Reflective**
Students in this course will engage in intense self-reflection. They will examine/explore their self-ascribed multiple identities as educators and as human beings through their active participation in a variety of self-reflection/self-exploration and experiential learning activities, autobiographical writing activities, creative-arts based project work and student presentations/performances. Students will reflect upon their expanding knowledge-base and their school and community field-based experiences by keeping a daily journal/learning log. They are expected to connect theory with practice and to document these connections in writing in their journals/learning logs. Students are also expected to examine their values, beliefs, worldviews and emerging educational philosophies, and to connect these values, beliefs, worldviews and philosophies to their work with children/youth and their families.

**Responsive**
Students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to respond to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse children/youth with and without disabilities and their families. In this course, students will examine/explore the AANE Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge/Guidelines for Research and will develop and implement culturally responsive research methods based on these guidelines. Students will also participate in a variety of role playing activities, collaborative/cooperative and experiential learning activities, and school and community field-based activities in order to develop the knowledge and skills they will need to conduct meaningful research in diverse classroom settings.
Course Objectives

1. The candidate will design a qualitative study that includes a problem statement, a statement of purpose, and a research question(s).
2. The candidate will conduct a systematic and well organized review of the literature that is:
   a.) reproducible
   b.) includes at least 8-10 scholarly works (i.e., empirical studies and/or theoretical works)
   c.) translated into searchable terms (i.e., synonyms, keywords, and descriptors); and is
   d.) organized in a thoughtful and thematic manner
3. The candidate will develop and implement systematic methods to generate (i.e. collect) data.
4. The candidate will develop and implement systematic methods to analyze and represent data.
5. The candidate will develop a “Results” section (i.e., presentation of data) that summarize the data. This “Results” section will include the word tables that you construct.
6. The candidate will write a “Discussion” section that connects the “Results section” (i.e., the essence of your study) to the review of the literature.

Note: The course objectives are guided and informed by the UAS/CTE Mission, the UAS/CTE Vision, the UAS/CTE Conceptual Framework Performance Standards, the Alaska State Teacher Performance Standards, the Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Standards, and the AANE Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge/Guidelines for Researchers

Course Content

1.0 Designing a Qualitative Study
   1.1 The problem statement
   1.2 The purpose statement
   1.3 Research Questions
2.0 Qualitative Traditions of Inquiry
   2.1 Case study
   2.2 Phenomenology
   2.3 Ethnography
   2.4 Grounded theory
   2.5 Biography
   2.6 Social Science Portraiture
3.0 Philosophical and Theoretical Frameworks
   3.1 Constructivism
   3.2 Critical Theory
   3.3 Postmodernism
   3.4 Feminist approaches
4.0 Data Collection
   4.1 Purposeful sampling strategies
   4.2 Interviews
   4.3 Observations
   4.4 Collection of artifacts
   4.5 Recording procedures
5.0 Data Analysis and Representation
   5.1 Data management
   5.2 Description of data
   5.3 Classification of data
Field-Based Components/Competencies
This course includes a school and community-based field component. Students will conduct qualitative research in the schools and classrooms in which they teach. They will document school and community-based field experiences by keeping a daily journal/learning log. Students should use the journals to connect the course material (e.g. readings, lectures, class activities and discussions, student presentations, etc.) to their school and community-based field experiences. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, ethical manner in the school and community-based field settings. They are also expected to respect the confidentiality of children/youth and their families.

Diversity Components/Competencies
Cushner (2002) and many other educators and social scientists have identified a number of cultural attributes or manifestations of culture that significantly impact teaching and learning. These cultural attributes or manifestations of culture include race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, socioeconomic status, sexuality, health, ability/disability, religious/spiritual/philosophical orientations, language, age and regional/geographic location. Students will participate in a variety of self-reflection activities, collaborative/cooperative and experiential learning activities, creative project work, student presentations and writing activities that examine/explore the impact of these cultural attributes and manifestations on teaching and learning. Students will also be required to demonstrate a familiarity with and understanding of the AANE Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge/Guidelines for Researchers. They are expected to model respect for diverse worldviews, values, traditions and lifestyles in all class and field-based activities.

Technology Components/Competencies
Access to the Internet is a prerequisite for this course. Students will use the Internet to conduct research for a number of class and field-based assignments/projects/presentations.

Required/Optional Texts

Required


Optional


**Instructional Procedures**

- Collaborative/cooperative and experiential learning activities (approximately 20%)
- Discussion groups (approximately 20%)
- Student presentations (approximately 20%)
- Lecture (approximately 20%)
- Media presentations (approximately 20%)

**Out-of-Class Learning Activities**

- Assigned readings (approximately 20%)
- Journals/learning logs (approximately 20%)
- School and community field-based experiences (approximately 20%)
- Independent scholarly/research activities (approximately 20%)
- Creative arts-based project work (approximately 20%)

**Basis for Evaluation**

The student will conduct a phenomenological self-study of his or her experience as an educator in Alaska. The grade in this course will be based entirely on the final narrative report that describes the student’s research project.

The final narrative report must include an: (a) introduction; (b) review of the literature; (c) methods section; (d) results and/or emergent themes section; and (e) discussion section with conclusion. The final narrative report will be evaluated as follows:

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 20%
2. Review of the Literature .......................................................................................................................... 20%
3. Methods ................................................................................................................................................. 20%
4. Results (i.e., Presentation of Data) .......................................................................................................... 20%
5. Discussion ............................................................................................................................................... 20%

*Note: The Final Narrative Report must conform to current American Psychological Association (APA) writing and publication guidelines.*

**Grading Criteria**

- 90-100 points ....................... A
- 80-89 points ......................... B
- 70-79 points ......................... C
- 60-69 points ......................... D
- Below 60 points .................. F
**Academic Honesty**

All students are expected to adhere to the academic honesty standards of the University of Alaska Southeast. Violations of academic honesty (e.g. submitting work completed by others, plagiarism, cheating on tests) will result in appropriate sanctions ranging from course failure to expulsion. If you have any questions about course assignments/activities and potential violations of academic honesty, **ASK** the instructor **BEFORE** engaging in the assignment/activity.

**Adaptations and Accommodations**

If you need adaptations or accommodations, if you have emergency medical information to share or if you need special arrangements, please notify the course instructor as soon as possible.

**SCHEDULE**

01/19

- Syllabus/Introductions
- What is research? Discuss Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research (Positivist theories vs. Post-positivist theories; Objectivity vs. Subjectivity; Numbers (statistical analysis) vs. Words (i.e., stories); Reliability vs. Authenticity; Primary vs. Secondary.
- **DISCUSS NARRATIVE REPORT**

01/26

- Read Creswell (1998), pp. 1-10 – Introduction
- **DISCUSS PROBLEM STATEMENT, PURPOSE STATEMENT, RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
- **DISCUSS JOURNAL-WRITING ACTIVITIES**

02/02

- Read Creswell (1998), pp. 13-26 – Designing a Qualitative Study
- Read Janesick (2004), pp. 17-68 – Part II: The Observation Cycle: Selected Exercises
- **PROBLEM STATEMENT PRESENTATIONS DUE TODAY!**
- **PURPOSE STATEMENT PRESENTATIONS DUE TODAY!**
- **RESEARCH QUESTIONS PRESENTATIONS DUE TODAY!**
- **DISCUSS REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

02/09

- Read Creswell (1998), pp. 27-45 – Five Different Qualitative Studies
- Read Janesick (2004), pp. 71-85 – Part III: The Interview Cycle
- **DISCUSS HAiku ACTIVITIES**
- **DISCUSS REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

02/16

- Read Creswell (1998), pp. 47-72 – Five Qualitative Traditions of Inquiry
• Read Janesick (2004), pp. 89-103 – Part IV: Personal Development and the Role of the Researcher

• HAiku ACTIVITIES / PRESENTATIONS DUE TODAY!

• DISCUSS COLLAGE ACTIVITIES

02/23

• Read Creswell (1998), pp. 73-91 – Philosophical and Theoretical Frameworks


• COLLAGE ACTIVITIES / PRESENTATIONS DUE TODAY!

• DISCUSS YA-YA BOX or QUILT MAKING ACTIVITIES

03/02

• Read Creswell (1998), pp. 93-107 – Introducing and Focusing the Study

• YA-YA BOX ACTIVITIES or QUILT MAKING ACTIVITIES / PRESENTATIONS DUE TODAY!

• DISCUSS REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

03/09

• NO CLASS MEETING – DO INDEPENDENT RESEARCH FOR LITERATURE REVIEW

• Read Creswell (1998), pp. 109-137 – Data Collection

03/17

• NO CLASS MEETING – DO INDEPENDENT RESEARCH FOR LITERATURE REVIEW

• Read Creswell (1998), pp. 139-165 – Data Analysis and Representation

03/24

• Read Creswell (1998), pp. 167-191 – Writing the Narrative Report

• DRAFT VERSIONS of LITERATURE REVIEWS DUE TODAY!

• DISCUSS METHODS SECTION

• DISCUSS STEVICK-COLAIZZI-KEEN METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

• JOURNALS DUE TODAY!

03/31

• Read Creswell (1998), pp. 193-218 – Standards of Quality and Verification

• REVIEW STEVICK-COLAIZZI-KEEN METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

• DISCUSS RESULTS (i.e., PRESENTATION OF DATA) SECTION

• DISCUSS WORD TABLES

• REVIEW STEVICK-COLAIZZI-KEEN METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

• DISCUSS RESULTS (i.e., PRESENTATION OF DATA) SECTION

• DISCUSS WORD TABLES

04/07
• Read Creswell (1998), pp. 219-229 – “Turning the Story” and Conclusion
• DRAFT VERSION of WORD TABLES DUE TODAY!
• Discuss “Discussion” section

04/14
• NO CLASS MEETING – PREPARE NARRATIVE REPORT PRESENTATIONS

04/21
• PRESENT NARRATIVE REPORTS

04/28
• PRESENT NARRATIVE REPORTS
• FINAL VERSION OF NARRATIVE REPORT DUE TODAY!

05/05
• PRESENT NARRATIVE REPORTS

Bibliography


### Websites Related to Qualitative Research


### Websites Related to Reviews of Empirical Research

- The Literature Review: A Few Tips on Conducting It, University of Toronto: [http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/litrev.html](http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/litrev.html)

### Websites Related to Alaska Native Issues

- Alaska Federation of Natives: [www.nativefederation.org/flash.html](http://www.nativefederation.org/flash.html)
- Alaska Inter-Tribal Council: [www.aic.org/](http://www.aic.org/)
- Alaska Native Heritage Center: [www.alaskanative.net](http://www.alaskanative.net)
- Alaska Native Knowledge Network: [www.ankn.uaf.edu/index.html](http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/index.html)
- Justice Center website: [www.uaa.alaska.edu/just/rlinks/natives/](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/just/rlinks/natives/)

### ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

**The student will conduct a phenomenological self-study.**

### What is a phenomenological study?

A *phenomenological study* describes a phenomenon as experienced by one or more individuals. The researcher gathers information (i.e., data) from the individual(s) who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 1998). Typically, this information is gathered through in-depth interviews, and is augmented with researcher self-reflection and previously developed descriptions from artistic works (Polkinghorne, 1989). The researcher attempts to set aside prejudgments regarding the
phenomenon being investigated. The researcher also relies on intuition, imagination, and systematic methods of analysis to interpret the data. The researcher analyzes the data by: (a) embedding textual descriptions of his or her personal experiences within the study; (b) recording the participants’ experienced realities of the phenomenon under investigation; and (c) developing textual descriptions that convey the essential invariant structure, or “essence,” of these experienced realities (Moustakas, 1994).

What is a self-study?

Self-study research is a mode of scholarly inquiry in which educators examine their beliefs and practices within the context of their work as instructors (Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy, & Stackman, 2004).

Self-studies conducted by teachers in classroom settings are often referred to as “action research.” Descriptions of “action research” include:

- **Action research** is the process by which practitioners attempt to study their problems scientifically in order to guide, correct, and evaluate their decisions and actions.
  
  *Stephen Corey (1953)*

- **Action research** in education is a study conducted by colleagues in a school setting of the results of their activities to improve instruction.
  
  *Carl Glickman (1992)*

- **Action research** is fancy way of saying let’s study what’s happening at our school and decide how to make it a better place.
  
  *Emily Calhoun (1994)*

What is a phenomenological self-study?

A phenomenological self-study describes a phenomenon as experienced by a practitioner who studies his or her own practice in order to improve the quality of this practice. When the phenomenological self-study is conducted in a classroom setting, a teacher studies his or her classroom experiences, and his or her attitudes and beliefs about teaching and learning, in order to improve his or her educational practice. The teacher assumes the role of “teacher-as-researcher” when conducting a phenomenological self-study in his or her classroom. The “teacher-as-researcher” typically participates in numerous self-reflection activities in order to generate (i.e., collect”) data for the phenomenological self-study. The “teacher-as-researcher” then analyzes this data using procedural methods typically associated with phenomenology. These data analysis methods include: (a) identification of “statements of meaning”; (b) development of “clusters of meaning”; and (c) the development of “essences” (i.e., themes).

Teacher-as-Researcher Self-Reflection Activities
In order to generate (i.e., collect”) data for the phenomenological self-study, the “teacher-as-researcher” will participate in numerous self-reflection activities, including: (a) the “Autobiographical Collage” activity; (b) “Haiku” activities; (c) the “YaYa Box” activity; and (d) the “Teacher-as Researcher Notebook” activity. Detailed descriptions of these data generation activities are included in the Janesick (2004) text.

**Building a Collage: My Role as [Teacher as] Researcher,**
(Janesick, 2004, p. 93).

The candidate will develop an autobiographical collage that answers each of his or her research questions:

1. What are my beliefs about education?
2. What are my beliefs about my role as “teacher-as-researcher”?
3. How do these beliefs guide and inform my classroom practices?

The candidate will write a 2-3 page description of his or her collage. A primary purpose of this written description is to generate textual data (i.e., written information) that the candidate will analyze (using the STEVICK-COLAIZZI-KEEN METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS) in order to answer each of the research questions.


The candidate will develop at least one haiku in response to each of his or her three research questions, for a total of at least three haiku:

1. What are my beliefs about education?
2. What are my beliefs about my role as “teacher-as-researcher”?
3. How do these beliefs guide and inform my classroom practices?

The candidate will write a 2-3 paragraph description of each of his or her haiku. A primary purpose of these written description is to generate textual data (i.e., written information) that the candidate will analyze (using the STEVICK-COLAIZZI-KEEN METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS) in order to answer each of the research questions.

**Constructing a YaYa Box or Making a Quilt Patch,** (Janesick, 2004, pp. 94-95).

The candidate will develop YaYa Box or Quilt Patch that answers each of his or her research questions:

1. What are my beliefs about education?
2. What are my beliefs about my role as “teacher-as-researcher”?
3. How do these beliefs guide and inform my classroom practices?
The candidate will write a 2-3 page description of his or her YaYa Box or Quilt Patch. A primary purpose of this written description is to generate textual data (i.e., written information) that the candidate will analyze (using the STEVICK-COLAIZZI-KEEN METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS) in order to answer each of the research questions.


The candidate will keep a daily journal. He or she will make daily entries in this journal. The candidate will use this journal to reflect on each of his or her research questions:

1. What are my beliefs about education?
2. What are my beliefs about my role as “teacher-as-researcher”?
3. How do these beliefs guide and inform my classroom practices?

A primary purpose of this written description is to generate textual data (i.e., written information) that the candidate will analyze (using the STEVICK-COLAIZZI-KEEN METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS) in order to answer each of the research questions.

THE NARRATIVE REPORT

The candidate will develop a narrative report that describes the self-study (i.e., action research project) to the reader. This report must include the following sections: (a) introduction section; (b) review of the research; (c) methods; (d) results; and (e) discussion.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Introduction Section consists of three sub-sections: (a) problem statement; (b) statement of purpose; and (c) research questions.

The Introduction Section often begins with a vignette, anecdotal report, journal entry, poem, song lyric, a brief excerpt from a novel, short story, or other literary form, student writing samples, and/or quotation(s) that foreshadow (i.e., “set the mood”) of the study for the reader.

A. Problem Statement

The problem statement (also known as the context statement) describes the “problem” (i.e., topic) under investigation. You will conduct a self-study in an educational setting. The problem statement for this self-study should, therefore, include descriptions of: (a) your job title and professional responsibilities (e.g., second-grade classroom teacher; reading specialist; special education aide; etc.); (b) the classroom, program, school, and community where you work (include information about the cultural and linguistic characteristics and socioeconomic status of your students and their families); (c) personal experiences
that caused you to be interested in this topic (i.e., why is this study important to you); and (d) the social (e.g., educational) implications and relevance of your topic.

**B. Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this self-study is to describe the beliefs and practices of an educator who ______________ ______________. (Describe your teaching position; e.g., a reading professional who provides instructional services to culturally and linguistically diverse learners in a second grade classroom in rural Alaska; a special education teacher who provides instructional services to youth with emotional disabilities and behavior problems at an adolescent day treatment program in urban Anchorage; an early childhood educator who provides developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive services for young children and their families at a Tlingit-Haida Head Start Program in rural southeast Alaska; etc.).

**C. Research Questions**

1. What are my beliefs about education?
2. What are my beliefs about my role as “teacher-as-researcher?”
3. How do these beliefs guide and inform my classroom practices?

**II. REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE**

Also referred to as the literature review, “topics include a review of databases searched, an introduction to the literature, a procedure for selecting studies, the conduct of these studies and themes that emerged in them, a summary of core findings and statements as to how the present research differs from prior research (in question, model, methodology, and data collected)” (Creswell, 1998, p.176).

Your literature review will be a systematic and reproducible search of the databases for empirical research studies or theoretical works relating to your topic. Systematic means that you will keep detailed notes of the keywords, synonyms, subject terms, and limitations (i.e. date ranges, full-text, peer-reviewed journals only) you use to conduct each and every search you do in the databases, and document this in the beginning of your literature review. Reproducible means that your instructors (or any reader of your report) can re-trace your steps in database searching and come up with the exact same results you came up with each and every time. Empirical research studies are articles that have a Methods and Results section (the author did research and is reporting it, not simply writing an opinion piece), opinion pieces are not acceptable. Theoretical works, “provide an explanation, a predication, and a generalization about how the world operates. They may be posed by researchers at the broad philosophical level or at the more concrete substantive level” (Creswell, 1998, p.84). Some theories used as a framework for previous student phenomenological studies were feminist theory, critical theory, constructivist theory, and Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and other religious world views.

Not acceptable are searches in Google or other Internet search engines for empirical studies without prior consultation with an Instructor.

**III. METHODS**

*Here is an example of how you might write the Methods section of the Narrative Report:*
Methods

I engaged in multiple activities to generate and analyze data for this self-study.

Data Generation Activities

I participated in the following researcher-as-participant self-reflection activities to generate data for this self-study:

1. I constructed an autobiographical collage that represented: (a) my multiple roles as teacher and researcher; (b) my beliefs about education and (c) my classroom practices (Janesick, 2004).

2. I developed haiku that represented: (a) my multiple roles as teacher and researcher; (b) my beliefs about education and (c) my classroom practices (Janesick, 2004).

3. I constructed a “YaYa Box” that represented: (a) my multiple roles as teacher and researcher; (b) my beliefs about education and (c) my classroom practices (Janesick, 2004).

4. I kept a researcher-as-participant notebook. This notebook functioned as a journal in which I reflected on: (a) my multiple roles as teacher and researcher; (b) my beliefs about education; and (c) my classroom practices (Janesick, 2004).

Data Analysis Activities

I used a modified version of the Stevick-Collaizi-Keen method of data analysis to analyze the data generated through the teacher-as-researcher self-reflection activities (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). I used the following procedural steps to analyze this data:

1. I identified significant statements from of each the data sources and developed a list of nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statements. I constructed word tables to visually represent these significant statements.

2. I grouped these significant statements, thematically, into clusters of meaning. I constructed word tables to visually represent these significant statements.

3. I developed a written description of each cluster of meaning. These written descriptions describe my beliefs about education and classroom practices and represent the essence of my self-study.
I constructed word tables to visually represent these significant statements.

IV. RESULTS

The Results section will include the word tables that you construct to visually represent your data. You must construct at least 3 sets of word tables: (a) the first set of tables represents significant statements; (b) the second set of tables represents clusters of common themes; (c) the third set of tables represents written descriptions of the “essence” of your study (the “essence” is a brief narrative, written in paragraph form, that describes each major theme that emerges from your analysis of data). Organize your tables around the following research questions:

1. What are my beliefs about education?
2. What are my beliefs about my role as “teacher-as-researcher?”
3. How do these beliefs guide and inform my classroom practices?

V. DISCUSSION

In the Discussion section of the narrative report, you should connect the results of your study to the review of the literature. That is to say, you should discuss what you have learned about: (a) your multiple roles as teacher and researcher; (b) your beliefs about education and; (c) your classroom practices. How are the findings of your self-study supported by your review of the literature? How do the findings of your self-study differ from the literature that you reviewed? Your “Discussion” section should provide the reader with a clear, accurate, and articulate description of your beliefs about education, your multiple roles as teacher and researcher, and your classroom practices. Your Discussion section is, essentially, a discussion of what you learned by conducting this self-study. Many researchers end the “Discussion” section with a brief piece of creative writing that describes the essence of the study and its inspiration for the researcher.