

EDCS 899: Dissertation Preparation

Spring 2022 | March 14th – May 6th

3 Credit Hours

INSTRUCTOR

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ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with (dis)abilities that may affect participation in this course are invited to contact Student Disability Services. You can make an appointment by calling 803-777-6142, emailing sasds@mailbox.sc.edu, or visiting Room 112A in LeConte College. Additionally, students are encouraged to speak with the instructor so that every plausible effort can be made to arrange appropriate accommodations. For further information: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_disability_resource_center/index.php

Required texts/media/materials:

Please consult the Dissertation Preparation website for guidance documents and resources here: <https://sites.google.com/view/dissertation-preparation/home>

A list of recommended books is available on the Dissertation Preparation website here: <https://sites.google.com/view/dissertation-preparation/list-of-recommended-books>

Course Description and Rationale

This course is Part 1Q of Dissertation Preparation. It is intended to satisfy University core requirements in the accelerated, online EdD Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) Curriculum Studies (CS) program. This course is open to graduate students seeking to fulfill core 899 requirements for graduation in the accelerated online program. This course will guide the students through the stages of completing chapter 1 of the Dissertation in Practice (DiP).

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated skills to cover the criteria described in the table below:

Sections (can use as subheadings)	Descriptors
Opening Narrative	Opening narrative for the Problem of Practice that is grounded in your specific context. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Provide a rich description of the problem of practice on which this study will focus.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The narrative could take on many forms including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A vignette (one semi-fictional, exemplar story based on multiple experiences that captures the essence of the problem and conveys an emotionally rich connection to those involved) ○ A rich description of a critical incident from practice. This could be in the form of a short story or a summary of an event that exemplifies the problem. ○ A historical account of the problem of practice as it has occurred in your context over time. ● Depending on the guidance from your dissertation chair, the narrative may be written in either 1st or 3rd person.
Problem of Practice	<p>Clear, explicit and succinct description of the specific problem of practice followed by a brief review of the very relevant research literature concerning the problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This a short review of the very relevant literature that situates the problem on the local or national context of education. ● The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that the problem of practice is similar in many ways to larger problems but also unique in its contextual significance. ● The problem of practice needs to be persistent, contextualized problem of practice embedded in the work of professional practice with the potential for positive impact on, and reciprocity with the field.
Theoretical Framework	<p>Provide a brief summary of the synthesis of the specific theories that inform your understanding of the problem and lead to the decision about your intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe the specific theories of curriculum or instruction that guide your decisions in conducting this study. ● This section should include only the very relevant literature that articulates the theories by which your study will be guided. ● You might begin by describing each theory discreetly but should end this section with a description of how you are synthesizing the theories into one framework for the study.
Research Questions	<p>This section provides a concise description of the purpose of the study (why it is being conducted), clearly stated research questions, a rationale for why the specific research questions were selected and why this particular intervention was chosen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a concise description of the purpose of the study

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clearly articulated description of the research questions on which the study will focus. ● A concise summary of the proposed intervention. ● Conclude this section with a brief rationale for why these questions are the focus of the study and why this intervention was selected over others.
<p>Researcher Positionality</p>	<p>Summarize your own positionality as it relates to the problem of practice and the study more generally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify where on the continuum of positionality you see yourself and your collaborators. ● Identify your role as the researcher and the level of collaboration with colleagues/participants that will occur in the study
<p>Research Design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a brief description of research design (e.g., action research, mixed methods, case study, ethnography, etc.) and why the design is most appropriate for the research questions/study. ● Provide a brief description of the context and setting of study. ● Briefly describe the participants that will be involved in the study. ● Briefly describe the specific instruments for data collection you will use in the study (e.g., surveys, focus groups, interviews, observations, document analysis) ● Briefly summarize the methods of analysis you will use to analyze the data you generate (coding, quantitative analysis, etc.)
<p>Significance of the Study</p>	<p>Summarize and explain how the research study is relevant to educational research and best practices. Explore the significance or importance of developing a deeper understanding of your research topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Affirm the benefits of Action Research and why it was the approach selected for this study. ● Affirm that while this study is intended to generate knowledge, Action Research it is not intended to be generalizable or demonstrate external validity. THIS IS NOT A LIMITATION. ● Describe the intended audience(s) for this study and what they might gain from it. You might discuss the intended audience and how other audiences might find it evocative.
<p>Limitations of the Study</p>	<p>Focused on the specific limitations associated with the study focus, research design, number of or attributes of the participants, etc.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the limitations of the study. These could be that the study was completed under certain constraints, ran into challenges that had an impact on the findings, etc. You might also focus on the methodological decisions and their impact. (This may not be fully developed until after the study is completed. In the proposal phase, consider limitations that are due to the timing, the participants, or other relevant challenges.)
Organization of the Dissertation	<p>Briefly describe the basic organization of the rest of the dissertation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefly describe how the rest of the dissertation will further describe the study. Provide sufficient but brief details about each subsequent chapter. (Again, at the proposal phase this may be a very general statement about the organization of a dissertation.) This section also serves as the conclusion of Chapter 1.
Glossary of Terms	<p>Provide a list of all of the important terms or constructs used in the study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and define the significant terms used throughout the dissertation. (This may not be fully developed until after the study is completed). Provide a citation for each definition.

Course Requirements

Class Participation and Discussion:

Given the individual nature of this course, class participation is measured by your ability to be communicative regarding your process and any check-ins you choose to have with the instructor. It is strongly recommended that you meet regularly with the instructor to keep track of your progress, navigate potential obstacles, and work towards your goal of a final Chapter 1.

Assignments:

In this course, students are expected to meet the deadlines outlined below in drafting their Chapter 1.

Furthermore, given the range of experiences and individual interests of each student, your best learning will be self-directed. That is, I am happy to recommend texts and guiding resources to meet your needs.

However, you will need to identify your knowledge, awareness, and skill gaps and plot your path through this course accordingly.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity. Any deviation from this expectation will result in a minimum academic penalty of your failing the assignment and will result in additional disciplinary measures. This includes improper citation of sources, using other students' work, and any other form of academic misrepresentation.

Grading

The completion of the first chapter equals the passing of the qualifying exam. A grade of T indicates satisfactory progress and passing the course. A grade of U indicates unsatisfactory progress and failing the course.

Course Schedule

HEADING	DUE DATE
Introduction	Part 1: April 5 th (First)
Problem of Practice	
Purpose of the Study	
Research Questions	
Theoretical Framework	Part 3: April 18 th (Third)
Research Design	Part 2: April 11 th (Second)
Researcher Positionality	
Significance of the Study	Part 4: April 25 th (Fourth)
Limitations of the Study	
Organization of the Dissertation	
Glossary of Terms	Ongoing
References	Ongoing
Revised Completed Chapter	May 1 st (Final)

Syllabus Change Policy: This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change.