



EDUCATION 811-5

Fieldwork
(Enroll # 7178)

Summer Semester 2009	Instructor:	Dr. Robin Brayne
Meeting Dates: May 2, 23, and 30, 2009	Office:	15 - 360
Times: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Telephone:	778-782 8561
Location: SFU Surrey	Email:	rbayne@sfu.ca
Room: May 2 (SUR 4040), May 23 (SUR 5080), and May 30 (SUR 3240)		

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND STUDENT CONDUCT

All members of the University community share the responsibility for the academic standards and reputation of SFU. Academic honesty is a condition of continued membership in the university community. Please review the Policy at <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10-02.htm>

COURSE RATIONALE

EDUC 811-5: Fieldwork is a required course and capstone element in the Master of Education (MEd) in Educational Leadership.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course content for EDUC 811-5: Fieldwork will include the purposes and elements of action research, developing research questions that will guide enquiry, describing research settings, research methods, data collection and interpretation and final report preparation. In practical terms, EDUC 811-5: Fieldwork is the opportunity for each student to complete the design, execution and write up of a research project addressing a topic that is personally important and relevant in his/her professional work.

During the course, each student will be expected to develop and expand upon his/her own research question(s), design/develop and describe suitable methods for finding answers to the research question(s), determine and describe what data/information is needed and from what sources, decide and describe how the data/information will be organized and analyzed, develop and describe defensible conclusions based upon findings, and describe how the findings and conclusions of his/her research might influence practice or inform policy.

By the end of the course, each student will, with the advice and support of collegial/peer and instructor review, be expected to have completed the design, execution and write up of a research project addressing a topic that is personally important and relevant.

There are no textbooks for this course. The instructor will provide readings during the class meetings.

COURSE DELIVERY AND EXPECTATIONS

In addition to developing their own research projects, students are expected to actively participate in ongoing discussions about their work and the work of other members of the class/cohort.

For the first class meeting (May 2, 2009) each student is required to prepare a written abstract of his/her proposed research project for distribution to all members of the class. Each student will be asked to introduce his/her proposed research project in a 5-10 minute presentation. Each presentation will be followed by a question and feedback session. The question and feedback sessions will provide teaching and learning opportunities to discuss and clarify the purposes and nature of research, project requirements, research ethics, formulating and refining research questions, methods of data collection and ways of organizing and analyzing data.

The Abstract should be brief (not to exceed 350 words) and should summarize the following: Introduction, Statement of the Problem, Background of the Study, Research Question(s), and Methods and Procedures. Each of these elements is described below.

Introduction: Introduces the proposed study and provides a general overview of the circumstances, issues, and background (research context) leading up to the problem under investigation.

Statement of the Problem: Describes the purpose of the proposed study, why it is important, and how it will help to advance professional knowledge and practice.

Research Question(s): The research question(s) should be stated clearly and should flow logically from the Introduction and be consistent with the Statement of the Problem.

Methods and Procedures: Describes how the study will be conducted, what data or information will be collected and how it will be obtained, and the methods to be used for analyzing the data.

Please send the Abstract to Sharleen Schiedel, Program Assistant by 4:30 pm on Wednesday, April 29, 2009, so that a class package can be prepared for the May 2, 2009 class meeting. The email address is sschiede@sfu.ca. A student not able to meet this deadline is requested to bring 22 copies of his/her Abstract to the May 22 class.

For the final class meeting (May 30, 2009), each student will be expected to have completed the first draft (no more than 20 pages, excluding appendices) of his/her research project, using the format/sections suggested below.

Introduction: Introduces the study and provides a general overview of the circumstances, issues, and background (research context) leading up to the problem under investigation. This section should include reference to prior research on the topic

Statement of the Problem: Describes the purpose of the study, why it is important, and how it will help to advance knowledge and improve professional practice.

Research Question(s): Describes the specific research question(s) that guided the research

Methods and Procedures: Describes how the study was conducted, what data or information was collected and how it was obtained (e.g. survey, interview, observation, assessment), and the methods used for analyzing the data.

Findings and Conclusions: Describes/displays the findings and results of the analysis and interprets findings and results to form defensible conclusions

Implications for Professional Practice: Describes what has been learned in conducting the study (e.g. caveats, limitations) and how the findings and conclusions will contribute to professional practice and knowledge.

In preparing the first draft of his/her research project for the May 30 class meeting, each student should reflect upon and address the following key considerations.

Clarity [e.g. Is the research project clear, lucid and well-organized and readable?]

Worth [e.g. Does the research project add to or deepen understanding of issues associated with professional practice?]

Coherence [e.g. Is there a match between the research question/problem being investigated and the findings and conclusions of the research?]

Transparency [e.g. Does the write up describe clearly how the data were collected, the characteristics of the participants/subjects and what data were used to make interpretations?]

Credibility [e.g. Do the conclusions reflect the findings, and do the findings reflect the data collected?]

Implications [e.g. Is there a clear description of lessons learned from carrying out the study and how the findings and conclusions contribute to the improvement of professional knowledge and practice]

Each student is required to submit his/her research project to the course instructor in final form by 4:30 pm on June 15, 2009. This submission will provide the basis for evaluation and the assignment of a grade.

COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADE

EDUC 811-5: Fieldwork will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis and will be based upon the standard: does the research project submitted represent a careful attempt by the student to systematically gather, analyze and reflect on relevant data related to a researchable question within his/her professional practice?

An acceptable standard meets the following criteria The research project: (a) explains the setting for the study, including reference to prior research on the topic, (b) states an adequate research question[s], (c) identifies appropriate data/information needed to answer the research question[s], (d) explains how the data were analyzed, (e) presents the results, (f) interprets the results (defensible conclusions), and (g) describes what has been learned and how the findings and conclusions will contribute to professional practice and knowledge