

THED 696: Action Research I (3 credits)

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Prerequisites: THED 530, 540, 560, 600, 670, and 680.

Course Description:

In this course, students will begin an action research plan developed and approved in THED 680: Theatre Education Curriculum Development.

Course Goals:

- 1) To design and conduct an action research project.
- 2) Use teacher research to refine professional judgments, improve classroom practices and contribute to curriculum development.
- 3) Advance understanding of teacher inquiry in K-12 Drama and Theatre Art Education as an integral part of the teaching and learning processes during one's professional's career.
- 4) Value critical reflection as a basis for making reasoned decisions about one's teaching practices.
- 5) To strengthen skills in research and writing.

Course Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Investigate questions they identified in THED 680: Theatre Education Curriculum Development, while systematically documenting what happens in their classes.
- 2) Collect and analyze data from their classes including their own observations and reflections.
- 3) Complete an analysis of the data collected during implementation of the research project.
- 4) Examine their assumptions and beliefs about teaching practices and theatre making.
- 5) Articulate their theories on classroom practices.
- 6) Discuss research with their cohort and other colleagues to validate their findings and interpretations of data.
- 7) Submit data analyses to their graduate committee for review.

Outline of Course Content:

(Some content items taken from *The Action Research Guidebook*, by Richard Sagor)

Stating a coherent theory of action

- Generating a list of independent variables
- Identifying, clarifying prioritizing independent variables
- Crafting strategies beyond those already practiced
- Designing innovative techniques

Building a theory of action

- Graphic mapping of action plan
- Reflecting on rationales for principal actions
- Brainstorming variables, actions and ideas
- Sorting variables, actions and ideas

- Sequencing variables, action and ideas
- Proofing graphic plans
- Building a data-collection plan
 - Review of research tools
 - Data in descriptive research
 - Data collection and concerns about precision
 - Building a triangulated data-collection plan
 - Keeping a researcher's journal
- Analyzing the data
 - Organizing data to help answer research question(s)
 - Drawing tentative assertions
 - Using member checks to add credibility to tentative assertions

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- 1) Students MUST USE Microsoft Word for their thesis document. For each draft, you MUST use track changes so that your instructor can see the changes you have made. Instructors will not read documents that do not contain track change corrections.
- 2) Use the latest version of Microsoft Word (currently Word 2011 on a PC and 2012 on a Mac) and use the formatting tools as opposed to tab button for indents.
- 3) Avoid editorializing, first/second person and future tense.
- 4) All students MUST submit IRB forms for approval. See the IRB example on Blackboard. The IRB process must be completed by the end of the semester.
- 5) It is highly recommended that students seek out an editor to help with the writing process. The graduate school has a list of approved editors.

Course Requirements:

1. Complete the online reading assignments each week.
2. Online discussions and assignments
3. Submission of action research question, context, rationale, literature review to graduate committee for review and feedback (specifics provided separate from this syllabus)
4. Submission of data analyses to graduate committees for review and feedback (specifics provided separate from this syllabus)
5. Read additional selections as indicated by instructor.
6. Complete first draft of thesis/action research.

Method of Evaluation:

Final Draft Chap 1-2:	400 points (40% grade)
Final Draft Chap 3	400 points (40% grade)
Assignments from Action Research Guidebook:	200 points (20% grade)

Grading Scale: A=93-100 A-=90-92 B+=87-89 B=83-86 B-=80-82 C+=77-79 C=73-76 C-=70-72 D+=67-69 D=63-66 D-=60-62 F=0-59

Grade of A – All requirements thoroughly and exceptionally completed. Creative and original ideas are evidenced.

Grade of B – One or more of the listed requirements is missing or not adequately completed. The assignment is prepared at above average standards.

Grade of C – There is evidence that an effort has been made to prepare the assignment; however, the requirements were marginally realized.

Grade of D – The assignment was turned in, but is below required standards.

Grade of F – The assignment does not meet any of the requirements.

Required Texts:

GRADUATE SCHOOL HANDBOOK – It is imperative that you read this from cover to cover.

<http://www.unco.edu/grad/forms/pdfs/MastersThesisandCreativeProjectFormatManual.pdf>

Recommended Text:

Sagor, R. (2005) *The action research guidebook: A four-step process for educators and school teams*. Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Disability Support Services: Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Honor Code: All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

UNC Policies: UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link <http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html>

Evaluating Colorado Teachers Standards (August 2012)

Quality Standard I: Teachers demonstrate mastery of and pedagogical expertise in the content they teach. The elementary Teacher is an expert in literacy and mathematics and is knowledgeable in all other content that he or she teaches (e.g., science, social studies, arts, physical education, or world languages). The secondary Teacher has knowledge of literacy and mathematics and is an expert in his or her content endorsement area(s).

Quality Standard II: Teachers establish a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment for a diverse population of students.

Quality Standard III: Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction and create an environment that facilitates learning for their students.

Quality Standard IV: Teachers reflect on their practice.

Quality Standard V: Teachers demonstrate leadership.

Colorado Academic Standards for Drama and Theatre Arts

1. Create

The creation of drama and theatre is a demonstration of learned skills in forming new theatrical works, interpreting theatrical works for performance and design, and developing characters and analyzing roles.

2. Perform

The theatre process is a product of the knowledge and essential skills gained in the study of theatre toward the expression of the human experience in story, movement, speech, and staging for an intended audience.

3. Critically Respond

An informed literacy, thoughtful critique, and cultural research are key aspects of theatre arts study. Responding focuses on the artistic and scientific knowledge of conventions, cultures, styles, genres, theories, and technologies needed to know better choices and best practices.

Standard Grade Level Expectation:

High School – Extended Pathway

1. Create

1. Character development in improvised and scripted works
2. Technical design and application of technical elements
3. Ideas and creative concepts in improvisation and play building
4. Creation, appreciation, and interpretation of scripted works

2. Perform

1. Drama and theatre techniques, dramatic forms, performance styles, and theatrical conventions that engage audiences
2. Technology reinforces, enhances, and/or alters a theatrical performance
3. Direction or design of a theatrical performance for an intended audience

3. Critically Respond

1. Contemporary and historical context of drama
2. Elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques, and conventions
3. Respect for theatre professions, cultural relationships, and legal responsibilities

High School – Fundamental Pathway

1. Create

1. Creative process in character development and script improvisation
2. Technical elements of theatre in improvised and scripted works
3. Expression, imagination, and appreciation in group dynamics
4. Interpretation of drama using scripted material

2. Perform

1. Communicate meaning to engage an audience
2. Technology reinforces, enhances, and/or alters a theatrical performance
3. Directing as an art form

3. Critically Respond

1. Analysis and evaluation of theatrical works
2. Evaluation of elements of drama, dramatic techniques, and theatrical conventions
3. Respect for theatre, its practitioners, and conventions

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standards

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, the unit, and its programs.

Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

Standard 4: Diversity

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P–12 school faculty, candidates, and students in P–12 schools.

Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance. They also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) Teaching Competency Standards for Theatre Education

The theatre teacher is expected to understand the total contemporary educational program—including relationships among the arts—in order to apply theatre competencies in teaching situations and to integrate theatre instruction into the total process of education. Essential competencies are:

1. An understanding of child development and the identification and understanding of psychological principles of learning as these relate to theatre education;
2. An understanding of the philosophical and social foundation underlying theatre in education and the ability to express a rationale for personal attitudes and beliefs;
3. An ability to assess aptitudes, experiential backgrounds, skills, and interests of individuals and groups of pupils, to devise learning experiences to meet assessed needs, and to manage classrooms and rehearsals effectively;
4. A knowledge of current methods and materials available in all fields and levels of theatre

education;

5. An understanding of the principles and methods of developing curricula and the short- and long- term units that comprise them;
6. An understanding of evaluative techniques and the ability to apply them in assessing both the progress of students and in the objectives and procedures of the curriculum; and
7. An awareness of the need for continuing study, self-evaluation, and professional growth.

Schedule

*Schedule may change. Make sure you check online regularly for any updates.
Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due on the last Sunday of the week at midnight, MST. Turning work in past deadline will result in a deduction of points.

Week One: Jan 13-19: Write/Edit/Rewrite Chap 1-2

If you are continuing with the work you did in THED 680, go back to this draft and clean up the writing and implement any notes Gillian gave you. Get draft to Rich by Jan 19.

If you are starting a new topic, go back to Chap 1-3 in the ARG and use the outline of the thesis to write Chap 1-2 of the thesis. Your Chap 1-2 draft is due to Gillian by Feb 9 @ midnight. Your final draft will be due at the end of the semester. You will work with Rich after Feb 9 to get feedback on your writing.

Week Two: Jan 20-26: Write/Edit/Rewrite Chap 1-2

Week Three: Jan 27-Feb 2: Write/Edit/Rewrite Chap 1-2

Week Four: Feb 3-9: Chap 1-2 due Feb 9 @ midnight

Week Five: Feb 10-16: ARG: Chap 4

Week Six: Feb 17-23: ARG: Chap 5

Week Seven: Feb 24-March 2: ARG: Chap 6

Week Eight: March 3-9: ARG: Chap 7

Week Nine: March 10-16: Outline Chap 3 of Thesis

SPRING BREAK

Week Ten: March 24-30: Work on Chap 3 of Thesis

Week Eleven: March 31-April 6: Submit Chap 3 of Thesis to Rich (Sunday April 6 @ midnight)

Week Twelve: April 7-13: Implement research in classrooms/work on writing

Week Thirteen: April 14-20: Work on Chap 1-3: implement editing notes from Rich

Week Fourteen: April 21-27: Work on Chap 1-3: implement editing notes from Rich

Week Fifteen: April 28-May 4 Work Chap 1-3 final draft

***Final Draft Chap 1-3: Monday, May 5, noon via email.**