DEPARTMENT: EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

COURSE PREFIX: EDU  COURSE NUMBER: 639  CREDIT HOURS: 3

I. TITLE:
Research to Improve Student Learning

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITE(S):
A course designed to develop educator capacities regarding the collection, analysis and interpretation of data for decision-making, including the design and implementation of basic action research to improve classrooms, schools, and districts.
Prerequisite(s): none

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES:
Following each objective, and enclosed in parentheses, are numbers which reference the ISLLC Standards and Kentucky Teacher Standards (KTS) addressed by that objective.
Upon successful completion of this class, students will be able to
A. identify characteristics of professional learning communities (ISLLC 1, 2; KTS #10),
B. evaluate decision-making based upon common decision-making and leadership perspectives (ISLLC Standards 2, 3; KTS #10),
C. analyze research in order to become a knowledgeable consumer of and reflective decision-maker about research for district, school and classroom purposes (ISLLC Standards 1, 2, 4, 5; KTS #7),
D. select, review, and evaluate research-based sources of effective practice and, through the reflective decision–making process, improve teaching and learning (KTS #7, 9; ISLLC #2),
E. properly collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data (KTS #10, 7, 9; ISLLC #2),
F. properly analyze quantitative and qualitative data and lead others in the same (KTS #10; ISLLC #2),
G. demonstrate ethical practice in action research and the management of student data (KTS #7, 9, 10; ISLLC #5),
H. plan and implement an action research project based on CATS data and documents such as the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan and Comprehensive District Improvement Plan. Student data will be reviewed for the design of an action research or common assessment project designed to improve the school or district (KTS #6, 5, 7, 8, 10; ISLLC #2, 3), and
I. present the results of action research to a school group for decision-making purposes (KTS #10; ISLLC #1, 2).

The COE Theme of Educator as Reflective Decision-Maker is addressed in this course by requiring students to analyze research data and relate results to improved student learning.

The EPSB Themes – Assessment and Closing the Achievement Gap – are course topics in the discussion, research, design, and implementation of a study to solve a classroom/school/district problem.
The disposition of Teacher Leader to promote *dialogue/communication* is addressed as teacher leaders present their course knowledge with colleagues. Strategies for school *change* are explored as the teacher leader uses research to advocate for programs and methods that improve teaching and learning.

Course artifact for teacher leader portfolio: action research project and presentation (the action research project requires a consultation with the teachers’ principal about the topic and nature or the study. Documentation of that consultation is required.

This course contains professional literature for the discipline. This course provides instructions for on-going research for the discipline.

**IV. COURSE OUTLINE:**

A. Data-based decision-making and learning communities
B. Accessing, evaluating and synthesizing research on teaching and learning to prepare a literature review on selected topic
C. Approaches to research: Quantitative and Qualitative
D. Sampling procedures
E. Collecting and organizing data: assessment, focus groups, surveys
F. Analyzing data
G. Strategies for sharing results with university, school and community colleagues.

**V. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

Instructional methods will include a mixture of direct instruction and group activities. Teachers will read and review research in order to identify the elements of research and to evaluate research. They will interpret and design their own research with the goal of improving instruction and student learning (ISLLC Standards #1, 2, 3, 5).

**VI. FIELD, CLINICAL, AND/OR LABORATORY EXPERIENCES:** None

**VII. TEXT(S) AND RESOURCES:**

*LiveText* User License for Leadership Portfolio.


A. Internet and access to MSU Blackboard
B. University library
C. *LiveText* User License for Leadership Portfolio

**VIII. EVALUATION AND GRADING PROCEDURES:**

A 10% late penalty will be deducted each calendar day that an assignment is late. An assignment is considered late if it is not submitted when the professor collects the class assignments (i.e., turning an assignment in at the end of class when it was collected at the beginning of class would result in a 10% penalty). Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the instructor and only when notice has been given in advance.

All assignments are expected to be in proper APA format.

Course Activities and Quizzes ..........................200 point max
Research Article Abstracts ..............................50 points
Grading Scale:
A = 90% to 100%
B = 80% to 89%
C = 70% to 79%

IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Students are expected to adhere to the MSU Attendance Policy outlined in the current MSU Bulletins.
A. Attendance will be taken and recorded during all class sessions.
B. Students must email or telephone the professor indicating the reason for the absence (preferably before class).
C. Class will start on time.
D. Students assume the responsibility of informing the professor of a tardy arrival. A tardy is defined as arriving to class after attendance has been taken. Two tardies will equal one absence.
E. Two or more absences may result in the final grade being lowered by one or more letter grades.

X. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:
Cheating, plagiarism (submitting another person’s material as one’s own), or doing work for another person which will receive academic credit are all impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copying of examinations, assignments, reports, or term papers, or the presentation of unacknowledged material as if it were the student’s own work. Disciplinary action may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the faculty member who teaches the course in which the cheating took place. 
Note: Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any examination or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the examination has been compromised.

XI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT:
Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or other provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. For more information, contact Director of Equal Opportunity, Murray State