



Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Program

Signature Assignment for EDLD 731

Qualitative Research Project

Student Learning Outcome(s) Assessed:

SLO #4: Students demonstrate the ability to plan and conduct research and evaluation studies with a clear purpose to improve educational lives of others and based on findings make recommendations to improve future educational practices.

Description of the Signature Assignment

Candidates complete a semester-long qualitative research project on a topic related to urban education. They collect data through observations, interviews, and document analysis, use qualitative techniques for data analysis, and report their findings in a final paper.

Directions for Students

The signature assignment for this class is the design, execution, analysis and presentation of a small, qualitative research project. Your topic should have relevance or connection to a current topic or challenge in urban education.

You will conduct all phases of a research study and will complete the project in small increments throughout the semester. You will complete observations, interviews, and document collection.

You will submit a final paper for the project that will include:

- An introduction that includes a statement of the problem, a purpose statement, and research questions, and a very brief description of the literature related to your topic (5-10 quality sources best exemplifying the topic that situates your study in the literature).
- A thorough description of the research methods and analysis procedures used including the rationale for choices made throughout the research process.
- A presentation of the findings including direct quotes from interviews, fieldnotes and documents collected in the study.
- A conclusion that concretely and thoroughly discusses the practical and research-oriented implications of the findings and recommendations the researchers can make based on those findings.
- Appendices that include interview protocol, observational forms, key documents, and other tools used in the research process

Scoring Rubric:

Criteria	Excellent				Professional				Developing				Needs Improvement				Missing/ Unacceptable	
Introduction (9 points)	Problem statement is clear and directly related to the importance/relevance of the research; research questions are appropriate, reflective of qualitative approach to research, and linked to the problem statement; literature review draws primarily on peer-reviewed literature and provides solid foundation for the study.				Problem statement is clear and seems generally related to the importance/relevance of the research; research questions are appropriate, reflective of qualitative approach to research, and linked to the problem statement; literature review draws on peer-reviewed literature and provides foundation for the study.				Problem statement is present but not evidently related to the importance of the research and/or the research questions; research questions are loosely connected to qualitative inquiry although one or more questions seems inappropriate; literature review draws on some peer-reviewed literature, but frequently uses non-peer reviewed or dissertation as sources and/or does not relate directly to the topic.				Problem statement is missing or not clearly stated; research questions are not appropriate for qualitative inquiry; literature review draws primarily or exclusively on non-peer reviewed or dissertation as sources and/or does not relate directly to the topic.				Missing, incomplete, or presented in such a way as to impede effective grading and feedback.	
	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0								
Methods & Procedures (18 points)	The methods (observations, interviews, document analysis) are described in detail, with explanations for why choices were made (e.g., about who to interview or observe) and details on how the data collection was carried out; choices of observations, interviews and documents reflect clear relationship to the research questions; data analysis procedures are explicitly and appropriately described.				The methods (observations, interviews, document analysis) are described in some level of detail, although some gaps may be present, with explanations for why choices were made (e.g., about who to interview or observe) and a general discussion of how data collection was carried out; choices of observations, interviews and documents are generally related to the research questions although not always tightly aligned; data analysis procedures are described and generally appropriate.				The methods (observations, interviews, document analysis) are described unevenly, with explanations for why choices were made (e.g., about who to interview or observe) and details on how the data collection was carried out often weak or absent; choices of observations, interviews and documents often do not clearly relate to the research questions; data analysis procedures are described, but often in cursory or abbreviated form.				The methods (observations, interviews, document analysis) are not clearly described nor are the reasons for choices that were made (e.g., about who to interview or observe); details on how the data collection was carried out is absent or contradictory; choices of observations, interviews and documents do not clearly relate to the research questions; data analysis procedures are inappropriate or consistently poorly described.				Missing, incomplete, or presented in such a way as to impede effective grading and feedback.	
	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	0	

Findings (18 points)	Findings are presented with evidence to substantiate the claims made by the authors. Evidence presented relates directly and clearly to the theme and claims being made. Themes and findings as presented are discrete and well-formed, with little or no duplication or overlap. Findings are discussed with sophistication and nuance – with authors exploring the tensions and connections between various themes and ideas.				Findings are presented with sufficient evidence to substantiate the claims made by the authors. Evidence presented generally, but not always, relates to the theme and claims being made. Themes and findings as presented are generally well-formed, although there appears to be some duplication or overlap among themes.				The evidence presented to substantiate findings is frequently weak, not relevant, or missing. Themes and findings are often overlapping, duplicative, or not well defined.				The evidence presented to substantiate findings is consistently weak, not relevant, or missing. Themes and findings are consistently overlapping, duplicative, or not well defined.				Missing, incomplete, or presented in such a way as to impede effective grading and feedback.
	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	0
Conclusion (6 points)	Conclusion section synthesizes key findings and translates these into implications for research and practice with clarity and sophistication.				Conclusion section synthesizes key findings; implications for research and practice are discussed, although gaps exist and/or the implications are not always grounded in the findings.				Conclusion section summarizes but does not synthesize key findings; implications for research and practice is treated in a cursory or simplistic manner.				Conclusion section is cursory or missing; implications for research and practice are absent.				Missing, incomplete, or presented in such a way as to impede effective grading and feedback.
	6		5		4		3		2				1				0
Writing (9 points)	The writing is cogent, concise and compelling. Proper APA format is followed consistently throughout – including in citations, presentation of evidence/quotes, and references.				The writing is clear and professional. Proper APA format is generally followed – including in citations, presentation of evidence/quotes, and references.				The writing is uneven, with frequent spelling, grammar, or other errors. Proper APA format is not followed throughout – including in citations, presentation of evidence/quotes, and references.				The writing is consistently poor, with frequent spelling, grammar, or other errors. Proper APA format is not followed throughout – including in citations, presentation of evidence/quotes, and references.				Missing, incomplete, or presented in such a way as to impede effective grading and feedback.
	9		8		7		6		5		4		3		2		1

Legend

Total Points	College of Education Assessment Scale Equivalent
54-60	4 (Exceeds Expectations)
48-53	3 (Meets Expectations)
42-47	2 (Meets Some Expectations)
36-41	1 (Does Not Meet Expectations)
40 and lower	0 (Can't Score)