



EDCI 659-41B, EDUCATIONAL INQUIRY

Developing Frames of Mind for Becoming a Scholar-Practitioner

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Laura Slay

Office Hours: Monday 9:30 - 12:30 pm and Wednesday 1:00 - 3:00 pm

University Email Address: Laura.Slay@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: 48 hours maximum (Monday-Friday)

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required:



Feal, C.B. & Swales, J.M. (2009). *Telling a Research Story: Writing a Literature Review*. The University of Michigan Press. ISBN 978047203336
Available at Waters Library



Rallis, S. F. & Rossman, G. B. (2012). *The Research Journey: Introduction to Inquiry*. The Guildford Press. ISBN 9781462505128
Available at Waters Library:

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamu/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=886372>

Other readings will be made available in D2L Brightspace throughout the semester as needed.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Optional Texts and/or Materials:



American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association 2020: the official guide to APA style (7th ed.)*. American Psychological Association. ISBN 9781433832161

Recommended Auxiliary Website:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html



Patterson, L. & Holladay, R. (2018). *Deep Learning Ecologies: an Invitation to Complex Teaching and Learning*. Human Systems Dynamics Institute.

Recommended Auxiliary Website: <https://www.hsdglobalservices.org/index.html>



Harvey, T. & Moroz, K. (2024). *Transformative Potential-Based Research: A Guide to Successfully Findings One's Place in Research*. Myers education Press.

Course Description

This doctoral level course is intended to introduce students to research tools and to develop a mindset for pursuing a Dissertation in Practice This course draws on inquiry methods and Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theory to facilitate exploration of a Problem of Practice relative to participants' sphere of influence. It has a focus on writing in the professional realm by providing multiple opportunities to write, read, and collaborate. A strong emphasis throughout the course will be on the development of participants as researchers and writers.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Develop a scholar-practitioner mindset for pursuing the Dissertation in Practice.
2. Identify and frame a Problem of Practice relative to one's sphere of influence.
3. Write preliminary research question/s.
4. Seek out, read, analyze, and critique various types of academic writing.
5. Engage in inquiry, course discussions, the writing process and peer feedback on writing.
6. Develop or find a system to organize literature and selection criteria for inclusion of sources.
7. Analyze and synthesize literature relative to the Problem of Practice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Access to a Computer with:

- Internet Access
- Microsoft Word Processing Software
- Microsoft Power Point Software
- Adobe or Foxit Reader to open PDF File

Instructional Methods

This is a hybrid course involving face to face and simultaneous Zoom sessions every other Monday from 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm (see course schedule for exact dates). However, it uses a flipped classroom model where students are expected to complete readings, activities, and assignments before each in-person meeting. Instructional methods include lectures, small group discussions, student presentations, and writing assignments.

This course contains four modules designed to develop the scholar-practitioner identity, frame a Problem of Practice, and identify preliminary research question/s. Each of the four modules contains two class meetings and objectives for: 1) developing background information through reading, reflection, and discussion, 2) applying research and analysis of academic literature, and 3) collaborating with peers to write and confer on academic writing in a writing workshop. *Students are expected to come to class prepared to share notes and reflections on assigned readings and writing-process drafts.*

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Students are responsible for engaging in their own learning. This includes being aware of and meeting deadlines, checking class emails, asking questions to clarify understanding, and actively participating in course activities.

I expect active participation in the course, regardless of whether students participate in-person, online synchronously, or asynchronously. Asynchronous participation does not consist of simply watching a class recording. Additional coursework is required, per the university's course schedule.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Class Participation: Reflection, Discussion and Feedback

Actively engage in class discussion, inquiry cycles, and the writing process (read, write, revise, feedback, revisit) on prompted discussions and writing assignments. Reflection is a fundamental aspect of research and the inquiry process. This course will use a seminar approach to analyze literature and a workshop approach to support critical thinking and writing. Discussion and feedback should be professional, thoughtful, and useful for adding to the group knowledge.

Research Tools Development: Literature Organization and Synthesis System

Develop your own system or become proficient in an available system for organizing and synthesizing literature sources. You will share your system, research, and notetaking tools with the class.

Analytical Thinking: Problem of Practice Essay

Write a formal and academic essay describing a Problem of Practice and potential research question relative to your sphere of influence, including a review of relevant literature that supports this inquiry. This essay aims to contribute to the problem statement for your Dissertation in Practice and begin framing your research agenda.

Research Skill Development: Annotated Bibliography

Develop an annotated bibliography of literature for potential bodies of literature you will want to explore throughout your doctoral journey and that you anticipate using toward your Dissertation in Practice.

Self-Evaluation

Complete a written course evaluation and learning-understanding synthesis that discusses your progress and growth as a doctoral student.

GRADING

Evaluation in this course follows an “**ungrading**” approach, rooted in trust, reflection, and meaningful academic engagement. Rather than assigning traditional letter grades to individual assignments, the emphasis will be on your growth as a scholar, your ability to engage critically with course content, and your contributions to our shared learning environment. Instructor feedback, student self-assessment, and a collaborative final evaluation are key components of “ungrading”.

However, to conform with the registrar’s system for posting final grades will be assigned using the following scale:

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F= 59% or Below

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.etamu.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

Google Workspace

Collaboration tools offered by Google, including Drive, Docs, Sheets, and Slides

Application programs as recommended in class

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

You should expect responses to questions and concerns posted in my virtual office or sent by email within 48 hours. In most cases, I respond within 24 hours. Please email me only for personal concerns. Questions about the class should be posted in my virtual office for the benefit of the class. I will respond to emails sent Friday after 5:00 pm on the following Monday.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

This course allows students to work through each unit at their own pace, prior to the scheduled class meeting. However, all assignments are to be submitted by the due date. No late work will be accepted after the due date except for in extenuating circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances include a verified illness, death in a student's immediate family, and obligation of a student at legal proceedings in fulfilling responsibility as a citizen. Documentation is required to be granted an exception to the late work policy. Make-up work, re-writes, and extra credit are not permitted.

Students are responsible for engaging in their own learning. This includes being aware of and meeting deadlines, checking class emails, course announcements posted in D2L, asking questions to clarify understanding, and actively participating in course activities.

Please know that I, your instructor, welcome your questions and concerns. Please stay in contact with me for assignment clarifications, to offer feedback, and/or to update me on your status that may impact your success with this course. The best way to reach me is through email: Laura.Slay@etamu.edu.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

AI Policy

AI use policy as of May 25, 2023

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of

race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M University Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.etamu.edu/counseling-center

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Class Meeting Dates

[A detailed course calendar \(subject to change\) is linked here.](#)

Class A: Dr. Slay	Class B: Dr. Mills
August 24 (Joint Class Meeting) September 7 – No class – Labor Day	
August 31 Sept. 21 Oct. 5 Oct. 19 Nov. 2 Nov. 16 Nov. 30	Sept. 14 Sept. 28 Oct. 12 Oct. 26 Nov. 9 Nov. 23 Dec. 7

Dates	Topic/s
Module 1: Framing the Scholar-Practitioner Identity	
8/24	Introductions (Joint Class with Dr. Mills)
8/31	Inquiry as Stance
Module 2: Complexity, the Problem of Practice, and Managing the Scholarly Life	
9/21	Complexity Theory and the Problem of Practice
10/5	Managing the Scholarly Life
10/19	Analytical Reading and Research Routines
Module 3: Developing Scholarly Voice and Identity	
11/2	Annotated Bibliography vs Literature Review
11/30	Researching Questions / Final Presentations

Bibliography

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association 2020: the official guide to APA style (7th ed.)*. American Psychological Association.
Cilliers, P. (1998). *Complexity and Postmodernism*:

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Understanding Complex Systems. Routledge.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamu/detail.action?docID=165109&query=cilliers>

Davis, B. & Sumara, D. (2008). *Complexity and Education: Inquiries into Learning, Teaching, and Research*. Routledge.

Eoyang, G.H. & Holladay, Royce, J. (2013). *Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization*. Stanford Business Books

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamu/detail.action?docID=1157360&pq-origsite=primo>

Evans, R. (2023). The CPED Framework as a network-level signature pedagogy: Who frames PoPs and which frames count? *Impacting Education*, Vol. 8, No. 3. [DOI 10.5195/ie.2023.349](https://doi.org/10.5195/ie.2023.349)

Feal, C.B. & Swales, J.M. (2009). *Telling a Research Story: Writing a Literature Review*. The University of Michigan Press. ISBN 978047203336

Fullan, M. (2025). *The New Meaning of Educational Change (6th edition)*. Teachers College Press.

Harvey, T. & Moroz, K. (2024). *Transformative Potential-Based Research: A Guide to Successfully Findings One's Place in Research*. Myers Education Press.

Patterson, L. & Holladay, R. (2018). *Deep Learning Ecologies: An invitation to complex teaching and learning*. Human Systems Dynamics Institute.

Rallis, S. F. & Rossman, G. B. (2012). *The Research Journey: Introduction to Inquiry*. The Guildford Press. ISBN 9781462505128