



College of Education
LAE 6637: Current Trends
Spring 2026

Instructor: Michael B. Sherry, Ph.D.

Email: mbsherry@usf.edu

Classes: Mondays, EDU 413, 5-7:30 PM

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description and Goals

This Masters research seminar is designed to provide educators with opportunities to explore theoretical, methodological, and praxis issues in English Education, with a specific focus on how to use research to inform pedagogy. The research project completed in this course is the capstone project for a Master's degree in English education.

Course Goals:

1. Identify criteria for evaluating English education research and synthesize current research in English Education and its implications for praxis.
2. Draw on our experiences as educators in conversation with new understandings in order to transform our research and teaching.
3. Develop a research project to inform pedagogy.

Course Inquiry Questions:

- What does research suggest about successful English teaching and what do I believe?
- How might I develop research questions that help me to better understand pedagogy?
- How do I conduct research that helps me to better understand my pedagogy?

Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
1. Jan 12	Introductions Course Assignments 5Ws + H for choosing an inquiry focus	What inquiry focus might you pursue?
2. Jan 19	No Class – MLK Jr. Day	Dialogue Journal1
3. Jan 26	Passion Profiles Library Databases/Resources	Annotated Bib1
4. Feb 2	Reading research Library research tools/strategies Mentors/Obstacles	Dialogue Journal2
5. Feb 9	Research as problem/opportunity Research/writing as inquiry	
6. Feb 16	Questions□Theories□Methodologies	Dialogue Journal3 Inquiry Project Introduction
7. Feb 23	5Ws+H for Methodology	Dialogue Journal4 Inquiry Project Methodology
8. Mar 2	Data generation: Observations/Surveys	
9. Mar 9	Data generation: Field notes/Interviews	Annotated Bib2
	Spring Break!	Spring Break!
10. Mar 23	Sources□ inspiration, dialogue, collaboration	Inquiry Project Lit Review
11. Mar 30	Looking for patterns, Writing it up	Dialogue Journal5
12. Apr 6	Looking for patterns, Writing it up	Inquiry Project Findings
13. Apr 13	Talking back to the literature Sharing your work	Inquiry Project Draft
14. Apr 20	Talking back to the literature Sharing your work	Inquiry Project Final
15. Apr 27		Inquiry Project Presentations

Course Texts

Dana, N. F., & Yendol-Hoppey, D. (2019) The reflective educator's guide to classroom research: Learning to teach and teaching to learn through practitioner inquiry (4th Edition). Corwin Press.

***This text can be read online via the USF library.**

You will also be selecting choice texts to read for your Inquiry Project and will be expected to access USF library resources for this part of the course.

Course Assignments

15%: Scholarly Community Participation

25%: Dialogue Journals (5% X5)

20%: Annotated Bibliography

40%: Inquiry Project

Sharing Joy

I can't define what this assignment looks like in our class. We're teaching and learning together in challenging times. I invite and welcome each class member to contribute to the course in ways that share joy. You might share a poem, song, painting, or a moment. You might send an encouraging note to a colleague. You might find another way to share joy.

Grades in this course are based on a percent +/- scale.

Grading Scale		Assignments not completed will receive an "F" unless you notify me in advance and we agree upon a plan. If you would like to discuss your grade on an assignment, please see me during office hours; some assignments can be revised for partial credit. No grade below C- will be accepted toward a graduate degree.
94-100	A	
90-93	A-	
87-89	B+	
84-86	B	

80-83	B-	
77-79	C+	
74-76	C	
70-73	C-	
67-69	D+	
64-66	D	
60-63	D-	
0 - 59	F	

Policies and Procedures

Attendance/Tardy policy:

This course is the capstone research course for the Master of Arts in Teaching and Master of Education degrees. Learning will require each member of the class participating in dialogue, support, and inquiry with other members of the class.

Missing more than 1 session will result in a lowering of your grade, and in some cases, the need for a student to take an repeat the course.

When you are able, please notify the professor and/or colleagues in advance of missing a scheduled session. Please be in communication with me about any extenuating circumstances.

Extensions

Twice in the semester, you may request an extension on any assignment, given that you meet the following requirements:

1. In advance of the due date, please email me at mbsherry@usf.edu to let me know what assignment you are requesting an extension on and when you will complete the work.

2. Submit the work via email at mbsherry@usf.edu within one week of your initial email.

I suggest aiming for extensions of 1 week--this suggestion is meant to make sure you don't feel overly behind, which in my experience can create anxiety or other stress. In the event that you need more time for emergency reasons, please let me know.

Academic Integrity:

Academic dishonesty is defined in this course as:

- Cheating - using or attempting to use materials, information, notes, study aids, or other assistance in any type of examination or evaluation which have not been authorized by the instructor
- Plagiarism - intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work which has wholly or in part been created by another person.
- Fabrication - the use of invented, counterfeited, altered or forged information in assignments of any type including those activities done in conjunction with academic courses that require students to be involved in out-of-classroom experiences.
- Violations of Professional/Ethical Standards - Students who participate in programs that include clinical practice or field-based experiences are required to adhere to the ethical standards and/or code of conduct of the profession. Violations of the ethical standards and/or professional code of conduct may be grounds for academic dismissal and/or termination from the program.

Students who commit an act of academic dishonesty will receive a 0.0 on the assignment or in the course.

Use of Generative AI

Generative AI tools refer to any artificial intelligence-powered software, program or application that can generate content, including but not limited to text, visuals, music, and other creative outputs. Examples of these tools include AI text generators, AI content rewriters, AI graphic generators, etc. The use of Generative AI tools is generally not permitted as a tool to generate the content for course-related submissions, including discussion board posts, papers, and other forms of assessment.

Not Permitted

- Students are not permitted to use ChatGPT or other content generators to summarize assigned readings, conduct research, generate discussion questions, compose their arguments or stance on an issue, or to develop substantial written content for discussion boards or papers.

- Students are not permitted to use Generative AI for tasks that require students to develop and apply higher order thinking skills independently. Students may not use Generative AI to complete the substantial work of researching, summarizing, synthesizing, analyzing, arguing, or otherwise expressing ideas about previously published content as well as authoring original content.

Permitted

- Students are permitted to use editing tools such as Grammarly to improve grammar, spelling, sentence structure, formatting or for other copyediting features to strengthen their original writing.
- Students are permitted to use citation tools to help them with accurate APA citations, including producing correctly formatted in-text citations and generating reference pages.
- Students are permitted to use Generative AI for tasks that may otherwise be completed by an editor or writing coach, such as proofreading, clarity, and writing style as long as these tools are used as a supplemental resource (i.e., as an editor) to strengthen students' original written content and not as the primary means of completing assignments.

Violation Consequences

- Misuse of AI tools, including use of AI that undermines the student learning objectives of the course or assignment, failing to cite AI-generated content, relying too heavily on AI for work completion or submitting inaccurate information generated by AI tools, will be subject to academic penalties. Consequences may range from a reduction in an individual assignment grade (including receiving a zero on the assignment) to larger academic sanctions per USF policy, depending on the severity of the violation (USF Regulation 3.027). If students are unsure whether a tool they wish to use qualifies as a generative AI tool, or if they have questions regarding the allowable use of such tools, they should consult with the course instructor before using it.

Accommodations for Disabilities:

Please talk to me during the first week of class—I want to accommodate you. Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with Students with Disabilities Services (SVC 1133, 813.974.4309 or email sa-sds-information@usf.edu) to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation.

Writing Support:

The USF Writing Studio (2nd floor of the library) is an excellent resource for writing assistance for writers of any ability level at any stage of the writing process. As you know, even good writers can benefit from peer review, and you might be interested simply in seeing how they do it. I encourage you to make appointments at the Writing Studio early. The schedule often becomes

very busy during the semester--making appointments early will assure that you get assistance and will give you deadlines for drafts.

Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment Reporting

USF is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence (USF System Policy 0-004). The USF Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention is a confidential resource where you can talk about incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. This confidential resource can help you without having to report your situation to either the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSSR) or the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEO), unless you request that they make a report. Please be aware that in compliance with Title IX and under the USF System Policy, educators must report incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. If you disclose any of these situations in class, in papers, or to me personally, I am required to report it to OSSR or DIEO for investigation. Contact the USF Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention: (813) 974-5757.

Emergency Closures

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It's the responsibility of the student to monitor the Canvas site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, College, and department websites, and emails for important general information.

Other University Policies

Policies about disability access, religious observances, academic grievances, academic misconduct, and several other topics are governed by a central set of policies, which apply to all classes at USF:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-info/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>