Contacting the Instructor
I check my D2L e-mail periodically during the week. However, I check my gmail account multiple times per day. Please use ebrunsell@gmail.com if you have questions or need to contact me about the course! You can also call, but my phone is frequently off during the day (meetings and teaching classes!).

Introduction and Course Goals
Welcome to EDCI 505 Designing Action Research. Action research (AR) is semi-formal research designed and implemented by K-12 or college teachers to learn more about teaching issues of concern to them. In general, each teacher researcher (TR) works with a team of other TRs who are investigating related problems. Teams are often guided by a facilitator, who may be one of the TRs or an outsider with expertise in the problem being studied. Although action research involves data gathering in schools, often in the teachers’ or professors’ own classrooms, it also includes a "study group" aspect. Members of each AR team share readings, research strategies, and findings with one another. Members pool their experience as they design and implement studies, and as they translate research results into concrete changes in their own classrooms. Members form a support community for conducting research and for taking appropriate action to improve their students’ learning. Unfortunately, the term “research” conjures up images of inactivity, "Let’s not do anything about the problem, let’s just study it." The strength of action research is the insistence that research and action are inseparable -- both are essential to good teaching and they make sense best when they happen together.

The course will be divided into four major segments:
Weeks 1 – 2: Introduction to educational research and action research. Read and analyze previous AR projects.
Week 3: Begin identifying a potential focus for your AR project.
Week 4 – 6: Connecting theory and previous research to your AR project.
Week 7-11: Strategies for collecting and analyzing data.
Week 12-14: Sharing your results and using AR to promote change.
Textbooks

Don’t lose these books! These are also the two textbooks for EDCI 509.

Action Research: Improving Schools and Empowering Educators (Mertler - Sage) 9780132868648
The Basics of Data Literacy - Bowen/Bartley NSTA Press 9781938946035 (e-book 9781938946769)

Assignments and Grading:
Your assignments include (a) doing the course readings at the start of each week, (b) participation 3-4 times per week (the earlier the better) in a discussion, and (c) completing multiple assignments. Please complete the readings early so that you can jump into the week’s discussion. Each assignment is due on the date posted. Information regarding discussion is located below. If emergencies develop (and these should be limited) in keeping with these deadlines, you must notify the instructor or points may be deducted from your grade.

Grades will be assigned using the standard rule-of-thumb that those earning 90 - 100% of course points receive an A- to A+, scores of 80 - 89% are equivalent to a B- to B+, and so forth. Any variation from this guideline will be in the student's favor.

Late Work - I realize that there are a number of events in your lives that will make it difficult to reach the assigned deadlines. If you anticipate a late assignment please let me know ahead of time and we can work out a new due date. Failure to do so will result in a 10% grade deduction. Work will not be accepted 2 weeks after the posted deadline, unless arrangements are made ahead of time. See below for what you need to do if you miss a discussion.

In addition, poor discussion performance will result in a lowering of your grade. The most common reason for this is habitually posting your first post late in the week. I will provide a warning and specific steps you can take to improve before lowering your grade.
**MSU Policy on Incomplete Grades**
MSU's policy on incompletes is that you must have completed 75% of the coursework in order to receive an "I" grade in a course. If you meet this condition, and have instructor approval, the "I" grade allows you to make the missing work up by the end of the next term you are registered. Note that in EDCI 505 coursework includes both the 6 Assignments and active weekly discussion involvement.

In general, we discourage students from taking an incomplete. However, we will review requests when circumstances (serious illness, family crisis) prevent course completion.

**Assignments:**
1. Action Research Analysis- 5 points
2. Identifying a Focus- 5 points
3. Literature Review Part 1 (5) and 2 (10) points
4. IRB Training- 0 points (Note: You must complete this to pass the class)
5. Data Analysis Assignments 15
6. Action Research Proposal (final)- 24 points

Weekly discussion = 36 points

Assignment descriptions including how/ where they should be submitted (eg. Dropbox and/ or Discussion forum depending on which) are located in the Content area on D2L.

**Online Discussion**

Online discussion becomes the "meat and potatoes" of distance learning. Distance learning classes provide more of an opportunity for class participants to share their thoughts and ideas. The asynchronous nature of online learning means that every participant has the opportunity to engage in truly meaningful dialog with other participants often separated by thousands of miles. It is little wonder that distance learning participants often assess that the dialog between their class participants becomes the most valuable component of a distance education class. For this to happen effectively, participants must log on frequently and respond with meaningful threaded dialog that contains interactive questions, statements and information.

*The Instructors Role:* It is always a challenge to determine the proper level of instructor participation in the discussion area. Generally, I keep a very low profile in the discussion area. I have found that instructor posts usually end a line of discussion! If you would like my perspective on something that I do not address in the discussion area, please use either the muddiest points option in the discussion portfolio (see below) or the Course Questions discussion forum.

Some important points in the discussion expectations include:

1. Log on early in the week so that discussion can begin in a meaningful manner.
2. Make one response to the questions/issues raised by your Group leaders.
3. Make a second response that raises an original question or issue stemming from the readings and/or assignments for the week.
4. Make at least two responses to other members' messages.
5. Make a connection between the reading and something occurring in your classroom or school.
6. Describe any muddy points you have about the course material.
7. The intent behind this discussion is **not** for a student to log on Sunday evening and complete the requirements.

**Discussion protocols:**

During the weeks that I “lead” discussion, please make an initial response to my prompts early in the week (Wednesday night) and at least two more comments by the end of the week (Sunday night).

During the remaining weeks, we will use a “book club” approach to discussion. You will rotate through multiple roles during the semester. If your role requires an initial post, please do so as early as possible (Monday is best, but try not to slip past Tuesday night). All of you should actively engage in discussion throughout the rest of the week. The summarizer should make her or his final post as late in the week as possible.

Details are provided in the “Discussion Groups and Roles” document on D2L. This will be posted late in the first week of classes.

**The Discussion Summary** - (or what to do if you must miss a week of discussion)

Sometimes schedules and conflicts come up whereby students aren't able to log on, participate in discussion and therefore complete the required discussion rubric. The discussion summary becomes the tool that allows students who missed a week’s discussion to earn the discussion points. If you can’t be present during a weekly discussion, please try to notify both your group and the instructor that you will be gone. This should be done prior to the week that you will miss. In emergencies, phone calls either before or immediately after are good. A general policy is that each student would only be doing one discussion summary for each semester. There are exceptions so communicate with the instructors.

What goes into the discussion summary? The discussion summary is a synthesis, analysis and evaluation of the week’s discussion that was missed by the student. A nice format might be:

1. Provide a synthesis of the weeks' discussion. What were some of the main themes and points brought up?

2. Provide an analysis of this synthesis. What are some of your thoughts and comments regarding some of these themes? Can you provide some experiences and thoughts from your background as to these comments? Attempt to cite some specific examples from your
background experience.

3. Provide an evaluation of some of the major points that you learned in this discussion summary. You would write up the above in the form of three or so paragraphs which you would submit via e-mail to the instructor. The benefit of online courses is in the discussion, so we encourage everyone whenever possible to be present for the discussion.

**NOTE: If you are assigned to the role of “Summarizer” and are unable to do it, please find someone in your group to switch with you!**

**Calendar**

Note 1: Assignments are due on Sunday at the END of the week.
Note 2: If you find discrepancies in posted dates, do the following:
   a. Let me know where you find the error (ebrunsell@gmail.com)
   b. Follow the dates in this syllabus!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What is Action Research?</td>
<td>Hendricks 1, Action Research as Engineering (Found in D2L - Content)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What is Action Research?</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. AR Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Mills 3, Hendricks 2</td>
<td>2. Identifying a Focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lit Review</td>
<td>Hendricks 3, Lit Review (D2L - content)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lit Review</td>
<td>Plagiarism Policy Reading (D2L – content)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Lit Review*</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Literature Review Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>TBD + MSU IRB Training (D2L – content)</td>
<td>4. IRB Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Introduction to Data Analysis (D2L – content)</td>
<td>3. Literature Review Part 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Normalized Gain &amp; Descriptive Statistics (D2L – content)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Likert Data and Inferential Statistics (D2L – content)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Qualitative Data (D2L – content)</td>
<td>5. Intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Revise Literature Review</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Hendricks Ch 4</td>
<td>6. Inquiry Brief</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NO WORK ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE</td>
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</tbody>
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*NOTE: No Discussion this week.