

**Westminster Choir College of Rider University
Department of Music Education**



***ME 685:
Research in Music Education
Fall, 2007***

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Overview

Stated simply, research informs practice. More specifically, research enables music teachers to make informed decisions. In the last twenty years, research in education has changed. Believing that the very nature of education is more subjective than objective, and honoring the intuitive nature of teachers, research has become qualitative. Researchers look at individual cases, or study the culture of the community, or generate theory rather than test it. The paradigm is open-ended and adds a human element not found in research design and methodology of the past.

The primary goal of this course is to generate a thesis proposal. The course content will emphasize qualitative designs and methodologies because the instructor believes that they are better suited to the nature of education as a domain of study. Further, it allows teachers in classrooms to be the researchers, and to use their own students as subjects. Most importantly, it allows teachers to investigate open-ended issues that concern the relevancy of their day to day work in the music classroom and rehearsal.

Required Materials

Creswell, John, W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2007. ISBN 1-4129-1607-0

Slade, Carole. *Form and Style*. 10th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997. ISBN 0-395-79655-5.

Endnote – Bibliographies Made Easy (computer program) 2006, Thompson.

References

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Clandinin, J. D., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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- Green, L. (1999). Research in the sociology of music education: Some introductory concepts. *Music Education Research*, 1 (2), 159-169.
- Lather, P. (1991). *Getting smart: Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern*. New York: Routledge.
- Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. (1995). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis (3rd ed.)*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
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- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Marshall, L. (1998). *Fieldwork and families: Constructing new models for ethnographic research*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B. (1995). *Designing qualitative research, Second edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Merriam, S.B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education. Revised and expanded from Case study research in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *An expanded sourcebook: Qualitative Data*

- Analysis, Second Edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation methods (2nd ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Phelps, R. P., Ferrara, L., & Goolsby, T. W. (1993)). *A guide to research in music education.* 4th ed. Metuchen, N.J: (Scarecrow Press).
- Seidman, I.E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research.* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Stake, Robert E. *The Art of Case Study Research.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1995.
- Noffke, Susan E. and Robert B. Stevenson. *Educational Action Research.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1995.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods.* (3rd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Applications of case study research.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Course Expectations

1. Prompt completion of all readings and homework as they are assigned.
2. Prompt attendance at each class. Grades are lowered for students who are late, miss class or leave early.
3. Completion of a thesis proposal that conforms to the guidelines of the department *Thesis Manual* available at www.rider.edu/musiced
4. Quality participation in class activities.
5. All written work must conform to the guidelines for style as articulated in the appropriate style manual and departmental thesis manual. It must be scholarly, well-written, and free of gender bias or jargon. Work which is poorly written, will not be accepted and will significantly impact the final grade.
6. Purchase of all required materials.
7. In this course, you will work in small peer groups. All work is to be channeled through the

peer group before it is submitted to the instructor. The role of the peer group is to critique and assist each researcher to see their research from a variety of perspectives, to troubleshoot, brainstorm, problem pose and problem solve as appropriate. Each member of the research group is charged to defend their work to the other members of the group. Each member is required to sign each document before it is submitted. The signature indicates that the peer group member has read the document and given its author significant and appropriate input.

Learning Goals

1. Consider the implications and modes of principal research methodologies in qualitative research including but not limited to: Case Study, Ethnography, Narrative Inquiry, Action Research, Grounded Theory, and Phenomenology.
2. Understand the structure and development of the research process as well as the Thesis and its parts.
3. Understand the ethical processes and considerations involved in research as well as its consequences.
4. Consider research and its implications to educational practices.

5. Develop an understanding of the available research in the field, its main sources of publications, as well as determinations about value, quality and possible outcomes.
6. Develop a researcher's habit of mind.
7. Understand the values of collaborative research.

Plagiarism

In a research course such as this, it is very easy to accidentally plagiarize. Cutting and pasting from sources on the Internet, not citing adequately or properly, results in work that is plagiarized. Students are urged to take special care to acknowledge ideas which are not their own original thoughts and to properly cite all references. In the unfortunate instance of plagiarism, the professor will follow the procedures and protocol described in The Source.

Grades

Your grade will be based on how well you can demonstrate to the instructor your ability to:

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 1. | Follow directions and copy templates and formulas | 10 points |
| 2. | Complete work on time | 10 points |
| 3. | Write well | 20 points |
| 4. | Work as an integral member of a peer group | 10 points |
| 5. | Complete a thesis proposal | 40 points |

6. Attend all classes on time and remain in class for the entire time 10 points

Class Schedule

(subject to change)

September 6

Overview of Research in Music Education
 Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research Paradigms
 Overview of Qualitative Research
 Narrative
 Ethnography
 Grounded Theory
 Phenomenology
 Case Study
 Action Research

September 13

Stating the Problem
 Framing the Questions
 Ethical Considerations
 Use of Human Subjects in Research
 The Literature Review

Research topic and questions due at the beginning of this class.

September 20

Writing Issues Assignment due

September 27

Section I of the thesis due at the beginning of this class.
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October 4

The Methodology - Part I

October 11

The Methodology - Part II

October 18

Presenting the Data
 Validity

Section III of the thesis is due at the beginning of this class.

October 25

Your Thesis Proposal - Where Are We Now?

November 1

Writing the Conclusions

Section II of the thesis due

November 8

Research night – work on the literature review proposal

November 15

Section II of the thesis due – Research roundtables

November 29

Thesis proposal checklist. Sources of validity.

December 6

Completed Thesis proposal due