

ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT GUIDELINES

TEDV 535/593B Signature Assignment and Capstone Project

This assignment represents the demonstration of work at the Masters level. As a result, the work is research based and must demonstrate a high level of competence in using and interpreting data. The initial work for this project will be begun in TEDV 535 and completed in TEDV 593B. All students will outline and propose an action research project as the capstone project for TEDV 535.

During enrollment in TEDV 593B, students will complete their action research project IN COLLABORATION with their cooperating teacher. Attached are the guidelines for each assignment. Since this assignment is the capstone project for your Masters work, please be certain to follow the guidelines EXACTLY

The research documents in this packet include guidelines for:
TEDV 535 requirements:

1. Project summary
2. Action research proposal

TEDV 593B requirement:

3. Action research written report, due end of term enrolled in 593B
4. Guidelines for the poster presentation to be presented at the convocation at the end of the term

STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT DRAFTS OF EACH ASSIGNMENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Most school districts have regulations regarding research in their district, it is the student's responsibility to secure necessary approvals from the principal of the school where they intend to conduct their research and to secure the necessary consent from parents and staff.

PLEASE NOTE; All written work must be in the correct **APA 6th edition format**

Section One

Action Research Project:

Step 1: Summary due at mid-term for TEDV 535

Please type a brief overview (in the following format) of your Action Research project idea.

Statement of Purpose:

There are good examples statements of purpose in our text, Living the Questions, please refer to those

Description of what you plan to study:

What is your topic? What are the research questions that will guide your study?

Sample: I plan to study the impact of more frequent contact with at-risk students and their parents. My sub questions will include:

Research question one: Does increased contact lead to improved academic performance?

Sub-questions:

Does it improve student motivation?

Does it promote parent involvement in the students' school life?

Is it perceived to be beneficial by both students and parents?

Description of your "treatment" or plan of action:

What is the plan, when will it take place, and how will it be designed?

Sample: I will identify ten at-risk students in my 3rd and 4th period classes. The students will be selected based upon observed poor academic performance and/or attitude during the first quarter, as well as responses to a researcher-designed survey administered at the end of the first quarter. At the beginning of the 2nd semester, I will explain to the students and their parents that I will be working closely with them in an effort to improve the student's grade and interest in class. I will meet with the students during the first week of the semester to help them set their goals and create a plan of action. The treatment will include weekly conferences with the students regarding their grade and behavior, tutoring sessions, attending their extra-curricular activities, talking to their other teachers and counselor (if this is deemed necessary), and weekly contact with parents via email, notes home, or phone calls to five them and update and get their input. This will last during the 3rd quarter (although I may continue it through the 4th quarter even after the research project is completed).

Data collection:

What kind of data will you collect? When and how will you collect it?

Sample:

- I will keep track of their grades during the 2nd and 3rd quarter (homework, labs, quizzes, tests, participation points).

- I will keep track of homework completion rates during the 2nd and 3rd quarter. I will track attendance at the tutoring and review sessions that I implement in the 3rd quarter. I will design a student survey which delves into their motivation levels, and administer that survey to all of the students at the end of the 1st quarter as well as to the sample students at the end of the 3rd quarter.

During the second and third quarter, I will also collect anecdotal data regarding their motivation levels.

- The researcher-designed pre and post student survey will also delve into students perceptions of parent involvement During my contact with parents during the 3rd quarter, I will also collect anecdotal data regarding parent involvement.

The researcher-designed student post-survey will delve into sample students' perceptions regarding the benefit of the treatment. I will also design and administer a parent post-survey to gauge the sample parents' perceptions of treatment benefit.

Step 2: Research Proposal-due at the end of TEDV 535

General Guidelines:

Do not identify a specific student, teacher, school district or city by name.

Do not refer to yourself in the first person (I, my, etc).

For this paper, you may use the term “data” as a singular or plural term

The rough draft must be resubmitted when turning in the final draft

Must be in APA 6th edition format

Samples of proposals are in our D2L class site

Format:

1. Statement of Purpose:

Write a brief statement about the purpose of your research study.

2. Description of the Problem: (5%)

Identify and describe the problem that you have observed in practice. Be specific and thorough in your description. Add data to support your assertions (i.e.: number who are failing, tardy, etc.)

3. Literature Review: (30%)

Summarize a minimum of two peer reviewed sources that pertain to the problem that you will study. For each resource, you must describe how the research is relevant to your study (including specific ideas you might be taking from that research and incorporating into your own research design). Your textbook or other class handouts may be used as additional resources (not included in the 2).

4. Description of your Project: (25%)

Based upon what you have learned from you literature review, create a plan of action that you will implement in your classroom. Include subheadings and fully describe the following:

Research Question and sub-questions

Setting (urban/suburban, SES, general demographics, size of school, grade levels)

Participants (exact number, gender, age/grade in school, how selected)

Timeframe

5. Data Collection: (15%)

Organize this section by research question (and re-type the research question in its entirety). For each research question, you must describe the following: What qualitative and/or quantitative data will you collect to determine your project’s impact? How will you collect it? Describe any instruments you will use to collect the data such as surveys, interview questions, etc. Draft copies of the researcher-designed instruments must be attached to this proposal as appendices. In the body of the paper, refer to where these items can be found in the appendix.

6. Data Analysis: (15%)

Organize this section by research question (and re-type the research question in its entirety). How will you analyze the data? Comparisons must include whole group as well as sub-group comparisons (i.e.: Males v. Females, “High” students v. “Moderate” students v. “Low” achieving students) and perhaps individual comparisons depending upon the research sample

7. References: (10%)

Cite all literature in the body of the paper (with parentheticals) and on the reference page using APA (American Psychological Association) format.

Final Action Research Written Report and Presentation due during the second half of enrollment in TEDV 502B

General Guidelines:

- Never identify a specific student, teacher, school, district or city by name.
- Do not refer to yourself in the first person (I, my, etc.), except in the last section
- The paper should be written in the past tense, except the last section
- For this paper, you may use the term “data” as a singular or plural term.
- Do not use the term “significant” when referring to your data results unless you did a test for statistical significance
- Proofread your paper carefully for spelling and grammatical errors, use APA 6th edition formatting
- The rough drafts, proposals and comment sheets must be resubmitted when turning in the final draft
- Final study must be submitted both electronically and in hard copy.
- You must present a poster of your project at the convocation
- **An electronic copy of your paper is due 5 days prior to the capstone presentations**

Format:

1. **Title Page:** Title of study, name and the following:

“Submitted in partial fulfillment of the M.Ed in Secondary Education, University of Arizona, South”, name of advisor, date of submission

2. **Table of Contents**

3. **Abstract (10%)**

The title of your report should be centered at the top of the page with your name and date centered beneath, preceding the body of the abstract.

The abstract is a summary of your entire written report (rationale, research questions, setting/participants, treatment, instruments, chronology, findings, conclusions). A reader should get a general overview of your whole project from reading the abstract alone.

The abstract can be no longer than 300 words

4. **Research Problem (5%)**

Begin typing this section on the top of a new page of the paper.

Summarize how your internship observations and/or teaching experiences led to your identifying the research problem. Specify your Independent Variable and Dependent Variables. Then, list your **Research Questions**.

This will not be a long section; please note that you are not expected to relate your research problem to any other research literature in this written report since you have done that previously in the Action Research Proposal.

5. Procedures (20%)

This section is longer and should be typed with the following subsection headings:

Setting: Describe the school (overall population, demographics/SES) where the research took place. Describe the course (content area, grade level).

Participants: Describe the participants targeted for the study (sample size, demographics, how chosen); this includes information regarding any comparison group if that is part of the study. Remember, do not identify the site or any individuals by name.

Instruments: Describe the measures used to collect your data. Specify if each instrument was designed by you (the researcher) or by another person/company. If it was researcher-designed, describe the process by which it was developed. Copies of the actual instrument(s) must be included in the appendix.

Treatment: Some of you will be doing studies involving the implementation of a treatment. This independent variable needs to be described in detail.

Chronology: This is where you present a delineation of the precise time frame for implementing the project as well as collecting/analyzing all data.

Analysis: This is where you describe the quantitative and/or qualitative procedures you followed to analyze your data. This section must be organized by research question. (Restate research question #1 and then describe how you analyzed the data for that question. Then, do the same for each research question in your paper.) The findings from your analyses are not listed here. They are presented in section six of the paper.

6. Findings (25%)

This is where you lay out the data. This section must be organized according to your **research questions**. (Restate research question #1 and then discuss/present the data for that question. Then do the same for each subsequent research question in your study.)

When presenting your data for each research question, begin with a narrative which describes the data table that is to follow. This narrative should be an objective description of the data — what it is, how it was obtained, how it is organized for display, etc. You do not state any subjective conclusions about the data in this section. The conclusions should be presented in section seven of the paper.

Each data table must be numbered and titled. Tables should not be carried over to another page; begin the table on the top of the next page if it will not fit in its entirety at the bottom of an existing page. Sample data tables will be made available for you to review prior to the due date.

7. **Conclusions** (25%)

This is where you discuss what the findings seem to indicate about the relationships among the variables. In other words, what do you make of this data? As with the previous section, this section must be organized according to the **research questions**. (Restate research question #1, make a concluding statement and then describe why you came to this conclusion. Then, restate question #2, and so on.)

Since this is action research, we can bend a bit about drawing fine lines between conclusions and implications. You are not really attempting to make conclusions about the world at large; you can only talk about what you have learned about the unique variables in your setting.

Also, since this is action research, there were likely numerous variables that may have impacted your data — we will call these **confounding factors**. For each research question, you will be expected to discuss possible confounding factors and how they may have influenced the data.

Just a note, the data is what it is. Sometimes it is not what we wanted it to be. You need not have found that your treatment led to noticeable student improvement for the study to be successful. We are looking only at your ability to analyze the findings honestly, thoroughly, and appropriately.

8. **Final Comments** (10%)

In this section only, you may refer to yourself in the first person.

This is where you take a step back and reflect on the process of doing action research. You are expected to consider: 1) What you would do differently if you had the chance to redesign or re-implement the project; 2) Ideas for future research on this topic; 3) How this action research experience and/or your findings from this particular project may influence your future teaching practices.

9. **Appendix** (5%)

You need not provide us with all of the raw data collected during the study. The appendix should include copies of your data collection instruments. Also include your summary and proposal

Each item in the appendix must be preceded by a **cover page** that assigns a letter to the item (i.e.: Appendix A, Appendix B) and gives a title to the item (i.e.: Student Pre-Survey, Time-on-Task Chart, etc.)

Poster Components

Poster presentations accompany Convocation each semester, please be sure to review posters presented at Convocation to learn the process and format.

The poster must include the following:

1. Your full abstract, this is key for the poster
2. Statement of the Research Problem Summarize how your internship observations and/or teaching experiences led to your identifying the research problem. List your Research Questions.
3. Procedures: Briefly describe: Setting, including description of the school (overall population, demographics/SES) where the research took place; describe the course (content area, grade level); Describe the participants targeted for the study and describe the tools/methods used to collect your data. Specify if each instrument was designed by you (the researcher) or by another person/company. Copies of the actual instrument(s) must be included in the notebook that is placed on the table with your poster.
5. Analysis: This is where you describe the quantitative and/or qualitative procedures you followed to analyze your data. This section must be organized by research question.
6. Findings: Summarize your findings and conclusions