artwork by Michelle Lavoie

**University of Alberta
Department of Secondary Education**

**Course Outline
EDSE 612 Section LEC X01**

**THE THEORY & PRACTICE OF
ARTS-BASED EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH**

Fall Term 2013

**Term Dates: Sept. 4 to Dec. 4, 2011
Class Day and Time: Wednesdays 5:00-8:00 p.m.
Room: 4-104 Education North**

**Instructor: Dr. Diane Conrad
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                Phone – (780) 492-5870
                E-mail – diane.conrad@ualberta.ca
                Office Hours – Wednesdays 3:00-5:00 p.m. or by appointment**

Course Prerequisite: EDSE 510 or consent of Instructor and Department.

Note: As part of the content of this course deals with research ethics, up to three hours can be applied as credit towards graduate students' 8 hour ethics training requirement.

Important Dates
Sept 17, 2013- Fall Registration Deadline (Bear Tracks web registration system available to midnight): Last day to add or drop Fall Term. Students withdrawing after this date through October 3 will be assessed 50% fees for withdrawn courses.
October 1, 2013- Last day for changing from 'credit' to 'audit' in Fall Term courses by students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.
October 3, 2013- Fall Term Refund Deadline: Students withdrawing after this date will be assessed full fees.
October 14, 2013- Thanksgiving Day. No classes. University buildings closed.
November 11, 2013- Remembrance Day. No classes. University buildings closed.
November 12, 2013- Fall Term class break. No classes.
November 27, 2013 - Last day for withdrawal from Fall Term courses.
December 4, 2013 - Last day of Fall Term classes.

Course Description & Objectives

Arts-based research is an emerging qualitative research approach that brings together scholarly inquiry and creative processes using any of the myriad of available art forms (or combinations of arts forms) in any of the stages of the research process: as a topic of inquiry - inquiring into an art work, art practice or a creative process; in generating, interpreting and/or representing/disseminating research. ABR has gained much ground over the past decade in various fields including education, nursing & other health sciences fields, art therapy, sociology, communications studies and the fine arts and design – in fields which value human experience and interaction; which recognize personal, emotional, experiential & embodied expressions of knowledge; where the arts are seen as ways of knowing and creative processes as ways of making meaning; where participatory knowledge & indigenous knowledge are acknowledged.

An emerging new paradigm attitude towards "truth" and the production of knowledge has legitimized these alternative approaches to doing research and new forms of representing research in the social sciences and humanities. From a postmodern perspective, alternative or arts-based research methods challenge empirical forms that reduce human experience to knowledge claims of certainty and truth, rather seeing truth and knowledge as individual, contextual, contingent and always in process. Arts-based inquiry encourages the expression of multiple truths, the interaction of these truths to make new individual and communal meanings and raise further questions. Moreover arts-based methods problematize the relationship between knowledge and power in our society, exposing knowledge as socially constructed, creating open texts that strive to give voice to those often silenced in our society.

The arts offer various methods for generating, interpreting and representing research. In recent years more and more arts-based methods have found their way into the mainstream (as journal articles, books, conference presentations) including fiction, narrative, autoethnography, reader's theatre, poetry, photography, music, collage, drawing, sculpture, quilting, stained glass, performance, dance, etc. In this course, we will investigate the philosophical underpinnings of new paradigm approaches to research and the methodological development of arts-based research in the social sciences. In this course we will explore postmodern philosophies of art; visual cultural studies approaches; performance ethnography; participatory research, indigenous approaches, and other arts-based approaches in various fields. We will ponder questions of how to judge quality in ABR, the ethical commitments of ABR and the challenges of doing arts-based work. We will examine exemplars of arts-based methods in the work of others and engage in creative activities to explore conceptual and autoethnographic aspects of our own research interests.

Changes may take place to course content, evaluation or scheduling based upon class discussion and negotiation.

The specific objectives of the course are for students to:
• gain an understanding of philosophies underlying arts-based approaches to research.
• examine current theories and methods in arts-based research.
• explore examples of arts-based research.
• develop criteria for doing and evaluating arts-based research.
• consider the ethical implications of arts-based research.
• engage in arts-based activities.

Required Texts

A reference list of readings for Arts-based Research can be found at the end of this course outline. Readings for the course will be selected from this list. All required readings will be available electronically. The journal and e-book titles underlined are available through the UA library. Note: for e-books you can usually e-mail yourself a pdf of a selected section or page range. For e-journals you can usually download a full-text pdf of an article.

Course Evaluation/Assessment

To encourage experimentation and risk-taking this course will be evaluated as **credit/non-credit**.

Assessment for the course will be based on the completion of the following major tasks as well as full participation in class activities and discussions. Details regarding the tasks will be discussed throughout the course as required. These tasks will not be graded but will be assessed by the instructor as acceptable or unacceptable. If deemed unacceptable an opportunity will be given for the assignment to be re-done within a reasonable time frame. All tasks must be completed to an acceptable standard for credit to be assigned in the course.

An **acceptable** task will display satisfactory to excellent understanding/analysis of the themes/topics addressed, with interpretations that clearly reflect the intentions of the assignment, and/or the writing and creative work are focused and of satisfactory to excellent quality.

An **unacceptable** task will display weak understanding/analysis of the themes/topics addressed, with interpretations that do not reflect the intentions of the assignment, and/or the writing and creative work lack focus and are of poor quality.

Students will be provided with ongoing feedback regarding their standing in the course. If a student is working at an unacceptable level and is in danger of receiving a non-credit standing the instructor will inform the student and discuss options for improvement as time permits.

Assignments

1. **Readings**
Two or three readings will be assigned each week around weekly themes. Each student will post each week prior to class on the class Moodle site, a question that the week's reading has raised for them. The questions are meant to be authentic queries or wonders in relation to the week's theme (not questions that have direct answers). The group's questions will form the basis for weekly discussions.
Due: one question is due each week prior to class

2. **Collaborative Arts-based Inquiry**
The class, as a group, will decide on a topic and process for a collaborative arts-based inquiry. Each student will contribute to the process and product of the inquiry in a variety of possible ways – to be determined. Some class time will be utilized for this inquiry; as well, some time outside of class may be required. The assignment may culminate in a public sharing, exhibition or co-authored paper.
Due: collective process/product to be completed by the end of the term or as decided by the group

3. **Arts-based Exemplar**
Each student will select one exemplar of arts-based research to present to the class. Students should select examples that they deem to be of high quality or innovation based on an art form, a research approach and/or research topic of interest to them. Presentations should include a brief summary of the highlights of the work being examined, some sort of audio-visual or interactive component may be useful. The presentations each week will be followed by discussion. Scheduling of individual's exemplar presentations of 15 minutes in length each, during weeks 2-6, will be determined by the class.
Due: In class presentation dates TBA (e.g. weeks 2 through 7)

4. **Arts-based Autoethnographic Inquiry**
Each student will conduct an arts-based autoethnographic inquiry related to some aspect of their intended research or a proposed research topic of their choice and prepare a presentation based on that inquiry for the class. The autobiographical inquiry should proceed via and/or be represented in an artistic medium of the student's choosing. At the time of presentation, along with display of the artistic creation, the student will hand out to each class participant a 1 page maximum (approximately 600 words in Times New Roman 12 point font, single-spaced) written reflection of the creative process in which they engaged to conduct the inquiry.
Readings, examples and class discussions on autoethnography will occur prior to the presentation dates. Presenters should allow time in their presentations for some class interaction/discussion. Scheduling of individual's autoethnography presentations of 20 minutes in length each, during weeks 7-14, will be determined by the class.
Due: In class presentation dates TBA (e.g. weeks 7 through 13)

5. **Final Project**
The final project may consist of a written paper (2000 words, approximately 7 pages in Times New Roman 12 point font, double spaced excluding references – using APA style) or equivalent in some other creative format. In the case of a creative format, the artwork must be accompanied by a 1 page (approximately 600 words in Times New Roman 12 point font, single-spaced) written reflection of the creative process in which the student engaged to create the work. The project should be on a topic related to some area of arts-based research of the student's choosing related to the ideas, themes and issues taken up in class. Students should consult with the instructor prior to beginning the work. An informal sharing of project topics (approx. 5 mins. each) will occur during the final class, time permitting.
Due: Monday December 9, 2013

Late Assignments:
For any assignment submitted late, the lateness will count against it, for purposes of evaluation.

Written Assignments: All written assignments **must be word processed** (12pt. Times New Roman font & double spaced unless otherwise indicated). Writing ability/style will be assessed along with the content. Particular details on assignments will be communicated throughout the course.

Information about the U of A grading system can be found at *the University of Alberta Policies and Principles Online (UAPPOL) website at http://www.uappol.ualberta.ca/*

According to the University of Alberta Grading Policy, "Grades reflect judgments of student achievement made by instructors and must correspond to the associated descriptor. These judgments are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class." In this course, your work will be evaluated using the general grading descriptors established by the University, as well as the more detailed assessment criteria that will be provided for specific assignments. Your grade on each assignment will be in one of three formats: a descriptor (excellent, good, satisfactory, etc.), a letter (A, B, C, etc.), or a number. When necessary, descriptor and letter grades will be converted into numerical equivalents in order to weight them properly and average them into a final course grade. Conversions between descriptors, letters, and numbers will be made in accordance with the University's grading policy and the table provided. Your final course grade will be reported as a letter grade. It will not be official until it has been approved by the Department Chair and posted on Bear Tracks.

U of A Letter Grading System
Course Grades Obtained by Graduate Students
http://www.gradstudies.ualberta.ca/en/degreesuperv/academicgrades.aspx

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value Equivalent	Notes
Excellent	A+ A A-	4.0 4.0 3.7	
Good	B+ B	3.3 3.0	
Satisfactory	B- C+	2.7 2.3	Minimum Academic Standing GPA Minimum course pass mark
Failure	C C- D+ D F	2.0 1.7 1.3 1.0 0.0	

Important Reminders

Course Outlines
Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

Recording Class Lectures: Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is permitted only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used

solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent of the instructor.

Code of Student Behaviour
"The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at **www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm**) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University."

Equity Statement and Inclusive Language Policy
The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of equality and respect for all people within the university community, and to educating faculty, staff and students in developing teaching and learning contexts that are welcoming to all. In seeking to achieve a climate of respect and dignity, all staff and students must use inclusive language to create a classroom in which an individual's experience and views are treated with equal respect and value in relation to his/her gender, racial background, sexual orientation, and ethnic background. We are encouraged to use gender-neutral or gender-inclusive language and become more sensitive to the impact of devaluing language in order to create a thoughtful and respectful community.

Recommendation to Students with Disabilities
Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental and physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Specialized Support and Disability Services, 2-800 Students' Union Building, 492-3381.

Bibliography of Course Readings
Course readings will be selected from amongst the following based, in part, on student interest. Additional student-selected readings are also welcomed.

Anderson, T. (1998). Aesthetics as critical inquiry. Art Education, 51(5), 49-55.

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Conquergood, D. (2003). Performing as a moral act: Ethical dimensions of the ethnography of performance. In N. Denzin & Y Lincoln (Eds.) *Turning points in qualitative research: Tying knots in a handkerchief* (pp. 397-414). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press. Retrieved from: http://www.csun.edu/~vcspc00g/301/perfasmoralact.pdf

Conquergood, D. (1998). Beyond the text: Toward a performative cultural politics. In S. J. Dailey (Ed.), *The future of performance studies: Visions and revisions* (pp. 25-36). Annandale: National Communication Association.

Conrad, D. (2003). Unearthing personal history: Autoethnography & artifacts inform research on youth risk-taking. *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education,* (23), 44-58. Retrieved from: http://www.ualberta.ca/~dhconrad

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