

**EDUC 3107: Ways of Knowing
Syllabus and Description of Assignments**

Fall 2021
Thursdays, 12:00-2:40 pm
5602 Posvar Hall
CLS#: 30418

Catalog Description

In making a distinction between ways of knowing and procedures for knowledge generating, students in this seminar examine various epistemological, ontological and axiological schools of thought that are the basis for educational inquiry. The focus includes assumptions that form the logics of justification for truth claims embedded in educational research. The emphasis in this particular section of this course will be on the concept of relational knowing as a contributor to research for equity, justice, and liberation.

Contact Information

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Office hours by arrangement: Monday through Friday, 10 am -4:30 pm
Course website: <http://canvas.pitt.edu>
Zoom class site: <https://pitt.zoom.us/j/96228781980>

Course Texts

Required texts are available for purchase at the University Book Center:
Kuntz, Aaron M. (2015). *The responsible methodologist: Inquiry, truth-telling, and social justice*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. See [e-book from Hillman Library](#)
Patel, Leigh (2016). *Decolonizing educational research: From ownership to answerability*. New York, NY: Routledge. See [e-book from Hillman Library](#)

Additional Required Readings (posted on Canvas):

Berger, Peter L., & Thomas Luckmann (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. London: Penguin Books. [Selection: Introduction, Part I (Chapters 1-3)].
Bhattacharya, Kakali (2021). Rejecting labels and colonization: In exile from post-qualitative approaches. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 27(2), 179-184.
Calderón, Dolores, Dolores Delgado Bernal, Lindsay Pérez Huber, María C. Malagón, & Verónica Nelly Vélez (2012). A Chicana feminist epistemology revisited: Cultivating ideas a generation later. *Harvard Educational Review*, 82(4), 513-539.
Collins, Patricia Hill (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment, 2nd ed.* New York, NY: Routledge. [Selection, Ch. 11]
Crotty, Michael (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage. [Selection, Ch. 1]
Guba, Egon, & Yvonna S. Lincoln (2005). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research, 3rd ed.* (pp. 191-215). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Gunzenhauser, Michael G. (2013). From empathy to creative intersubjectivity in qualitative research. In B. Dennis, L. Carspecken, & P.F. Carspecken (Eds.). *Qualitative research: A reader in philosophy, core concepts, and practice* (pp. 57-74). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

- Harding, Sandra (1993). Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is strong objectivity? In Linda Alcoff & Elizabeth Potter (Eds.), *Feminist epistemologies* (pp. 49-82). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kerr, Jeannie, & Katya Adamov Ferguson (2021). Ethical relationality and indigenous storywork principles as methodology: Addressing settler-colonial divides in inner-city educational research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 27(6), 706-715.
- Koro, Mirka (2021). Post-qualitative projects: Exhilarating and popular “fashion”? *Qualitative Inquiry*, 27(2), 185-191.
- McKinney de Royston, Maxine, Tia C. Madkins, Jarvis R. Givens, & Na’ilah Suad Nasir (2021). “I’m a Teacher, I’m Gonna Always Protect You”: Understanding black educators’ protection of black children. *American Educational Research Journal*, 58(1), 68-106.
- Mills, Charles W. (1998). Alternative epistemologies. In C. Mills (Ed.), *Blackness visible: Essays on philosophy and race* (pp. 21-40). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Milner, H. Richard (2007). Race, culture, and researcher positionality: Working through dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen. *Educational Researcher*, 36(7), 388-400.
- Nicolazzo, Z (2021). Imagining a trans* epistemology: What liberation thinks like in postsecondary education. *Urban Education*, 56(3), 511-536.
- Patton, Lori D. (2016). Disrupting postsecondary prose: Toward a critical race theory of higher education. *Urban Education*, 51(3), 315-342.
- Popper, Karl R. (1994). *The myth of the framework: In defence of science and rationality*. (M.A. Notturmo, Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge. (Original work published 1965) [Selection, No. 2]
- St. Pierre, Elizabeth A. (2019). Post qualitative inquiry in an ontology of immanence. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 25(1), 3-16.
- Stewart-Ambo, Theresa (2021). “We can do better”: University leaders speak to tribal-university relationships. *American Educational Research Journal*, 58(3), 459-491.
- Tuck, Eve, & K. Wayne Yang (2014). Unbecoming claims: Pedagogies of refusal in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(6), 811-818.

Student-Chosen Readings

Additional class readings will be chosen by students and posted on Canvas.

I. Rationale and Goals for the Course

This course serves an essential need for scholars, educators, and other human service professionals to understand and apply the *ways of knowing* that form the basis of social science research methods. For this course, *ways of knowing* are construed in two ways – first, as theoretical perspectives, worldviews, or paradigms, and second, as epistemologies (or theories of what gets to count as knowledge). There are no prerequisites for this course, but prior coursework in research methodology is helpful for understanding context of the course reading. Graduate students in education and related fields are encouraged to enroll.

This term we will focus on the concept of **relational knowing**. This is a term that several research methodologists have used to highlight the central role of intersubjective knowing in research methodology. Relational knowing is, in the words of philosopher Lorraine Code, “knowing others and their concerns.” This is an especially important concept in work for equity and justice, and the various problematics (questions of interest, contested concepts, unanswered difficulties) associated with that work. We will use the concept of relational knowing to address these three goals:

First is for students to be able **to understand the many (contested) approaches to the study of knowledge, knowing, and ways of knowing (what some scholars call epistemology)**. Scholars who take different approaches to studying knowledge – such as analytic philosophers, sociologists of knowledge, and deconstructionists – tackle the issues in such radically different ways that they appear to be speaking different languages. Scholars make it more difficult for us by having multiple definitions for the same term, such as *epistemology*. We will read texts that will help us understand the significant differences and to decode the various languages.

Second, these varied approaches to the study of knowledge make a significant difference for how scholars explain the social world. Paired with varied answers to questions about the nature of reality (is there one reality, multiple realities, or some combination of the two?), these different views lead to varied *world-views, paradigms, or theoretical perspectives*. And so, the second goal is for students **to acquire a sense of diversity of theoretical**

perspectives – sets of beliefs about knowledge, truth, reality, and our ability to make sense of the world using them. Our texts will not only provide us with a scaffolding for distinguishing among theoretical perspectives, but they will also provide extended exploration of several key theoretical perspectives, such as post-positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, and post-structuralism.

When specifically applied to education and related human service fields, the diversity of theoretical perspectives has multiple implications for practice and policy. The third goal is for students **to apply diverse ways of knowing to research practice.** Students will see that different forms of inquiry arise from differing theoretical perspectives, and there are direct implications for research ethics, standards of rigor, the use of prior research, and the relationship between the researcher and the researched.

II. Knowledge Base/Link to Educational Theory

Authors from varied backgrounds and theoretical dispositions have taken up issues relevant to the foundations of social science inquiry. Among educational theorists in particular, the foundations of inquiry –even the grounds for believing that there can be meaningful inquiry – have been hotly debated. Questions and issues are being debated constantly, with little consensus. I want you to have access to those debates so that you may know the resources available to you in constructing your own research. I have chosen readings for this course from works that have been influential in emerging scholarship at professional conferences and in research journals, most notably those sponsored by the American Educational Research Association, the American Educational Studies Association, the International Congress for Qualitative Inquiry, and the Philosophy of Education Society. We will also read examples of research conducted using varied ways of knowing concepts, mostly within education, and we will read some authors outside education to broaden our perspective.

III. Mode/Style of Instruction

Most in-class sessions will include collaborative summaries of the main arguments of the course readings, either through group work, class discussion, or reflection exercises. Together we will identify key concepts and ideas that provide clarification for the authors' arguments. I will lecture minimally and only when there is a need for additional background information to proceed with discussion.

Meaningful discussion is essential to the success of this course. Students are expected to interpret the readings and connect them to their previous knowledge and experience. Participation in class discussion is part of your course grade. For most students, the systematic study of inquiry is new and challenging, and so many discussions will take unique form, depending on the composition of the class. Class attendance is very important. Students should make every effort to attend class on time and for the full duration.

Students will do various assignments outside of class that will comprise a large part of their learning experience. I encourage you to sit down with me outside of class to work through your papers. It is largely up to you to make the most of this opportunity for me to help you.

The course will proceed with this combination of methods not only because I believe that students learn more through active engagement, but also because my intention is for students to be able to use this course in their subsequent professional practice and scholarship.

IV. Expectations for Assignments

The Chicago Manual of Style or APA Publication Manual. Most educational research is written in either APA format (Smith & Jones, 1965) or in Chicago, empirical research more often in the former and theoretical work more often in the latter. See the 6th or 7th editions of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and the APA manual web site, <http://www.apastyle.org>. See the 15th or 16th edition of the Chicago Manual of Style. You must follow one of these two formats.

Timelines & feedback. No one wants to fall into the trap of turning assignments in late. Plan now the time you need to devote to them, get them done the best you can, and meet the deadlines. Required assignments are due within 24 hours

after class is over. The 24-hour extension is intended for those times when you need just a little bit more time to finish, or if your printer unexpectedly runs out of ink. If you aren't going to make that deadline, just let me know. You may turn in late work electronically or in person. Keep electronic copies of all submitted work. Getting timely feedback is very important, particularly on papers, and so I will do my best to return assignments, graded and with comments, at the next class after the assignments are due.

Policy on re-writing papers. Students are welcome to re-write required assignments for an improved grade (the new grade will be an average of the two grades). You can re-write each paper only once for a grade. Students have until the end of the term to re-write for a grade. You can always have me take a quick look at a draft of your paper ahead of the due date.

What to do if you miss class. Email or phone your instructor if you will miss class for any reason (this is requested only as a courtesy so your instructor will know whether to expect you; you don't need to ask me permission to miss class). I have a method for keeping you up after you miss class. After your second absence, regardless of the reason and for each subsequent absence, students will be required to write a short paper (500 words per reading) that covers all of the readings scheduled for that day. The paper should include a summary of each author's argument, a statement about the author's subjectivity, and reflections on the strengths and limitations of the selection. Writing this paper will not replace the lost opportunity for class discussion; nor is it punitive. Instead, it will enable the student to still keep up with the course and the instructor to respond to the student's understanding of the material. Please remember to do this; I will not remind you that this needs to be done. Successful completion of the paper, due by the next class period, will contribute toward the student's participation grade.

V. University Policies

Several university policies are pertinent to this course. As an instructor I am committed to pedagogy that is anti-racist, non-sexist, non-classist, non-heterosexist, non-ableist, and non-gender-normative. This includes fostering an environment that is as safe and inclusive as possible. It is my intention to name and correct as best as possible any actions on my part that fall short of these commitments. If everyone in the class is likewise committed, the work should be more easily facilitated. I am also committed to making the class accessible to anyone wishing to participate.

University COVID Precautions. *The University of Pittsburgh updates its COVID protocols in response to changing conditions. See the latest information at coronavirus.pitt.edu. In this course we will adapt as needed. Please reach out and we'll make it work.*

Departmental Grievance Procedures. *The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. When a student in ADMPS believes that a faculty member has not met his or her obligations (as an instructor or in another capacity) as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow the procedure described in the Guidelines by (1) first trying to resolve the matter with the faculty member directly; (2) then, if needed, attempting to resolve the matter through conversations with Dr. Jennifer Russell, the chair of the Department of Educational Foundations, Organizations, and Policy; (3) if needed, next talking to the academic integrity officer of the school, Assistant Dean Shederick McClendon; and (4) if needed, filing a written statement of charges with the academic integrity officer.*

Academic Integrity. *Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.*

Disability Services. *If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both the instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS) as early as possible in the term: 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for these courses.*

Statement on Classroom Recording. *To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.*

See the [Pitt Graduate Catalog](#) and [School of Education section](#) for more information.

VI. Assessment and Evaluation:

Letter grades will be assigned for class participation and assignments. Written work is graded on *demonstrated insight, completion of expectations of the assignment, coherence of organization, and grammar, spelling, and syntax*. Letter grades have the following meaning. Letter grades with a + and – are also used. I convert the letter grades to a 4.0 scale using the standard University of Pittsburgh values to compute a final grade. Please note I use the standard Pitt grading scale, wherein A+= 4.25; A=4.0, A-=3.75, B+=3.25, B=3.0, etc.

An “A” signifies work that clearly exceeds expectations. Written work falling into this category will demonstrate clarity of purpose, organization, and communication. It will fully address all aspects of the assignment and be free of grammatical, formatting, and citation errors. It will also demonstrate original interpretation of course material. “A” level participation need not mean a large quantity of participation but should denote the student who prepares for class and consistently indicates having thought about the material.

A “B” signifies work that meets expectations, meaning that all aspects of the assignment are completed, but it lacks some aspects of “A” work, particularly inconsistent preparation for class or written work that demonstrates less significant insight into the material or repeated grammatical, formatting, and citation errors.

A “C” for written work denotes poorly constructed, supported, or inconsistent argument; work that does not address the assignment; or work with multiple grammatical, formatting, and/or citation errors. A “C” for participation signifies a student who regularly misses class or is otherwise unprepared on multiple occasions.

A “D” signifies minimal attention to assignments or class preparation.

An “F” is assigned for undone work or any work that breaches University standards of academic integrity.

Policy on assigning an “I” or “G.” Incompletes are rarely offered as an alternative to just doing the best one can with the time allotted. They are to be avoided if possible, since they delay the progress of all involved. Extenuating circumstances, such as severe illness, are sufficient to grant a grade of I or G. G grades are time limited and turn to NG grades after one year, without impact on grade point average.

Grade percentages are as follows:

1. Researcher Autobiography, draft10%
2. Readings & discussion groups15%
3. Book study25%
4. Relational Knowing paper25%
5. Researcher Autobiography, revised15%
6. In-class participation and attendance10%

VII. Description of Assignments

First Assignment: Researcher Autobiography Draft (at least 1000 words*). Craft an autobiographical statement about ways of knowing. This is intended as a first draft, and it is due early in the semester. You will have an opportunity to revisit the ideas in a revision of the autobiography at the end of the term (**and will be longer – see below**). This autobiography can take whatever form you choose. If you're stuck, you might consider the following questions as a guide or prompter:

1. What is reality? How do you know? For you, what is the distinction between reality and individuals' perception of it?
2. How would you define the term "knowledge"? What counts as knowledge? What is worthwhile to research?
3. What about your background, experiences, and identity affects how you view the world, what you know, and what interests you in knowing?
4. What is true? Is it coherent (is something true because it seems to hang together with other things that are true?), correspondent (is something true because it seems to map onto something we can touch?), contextual (is something true because a group says that it's true)?
5. How should research participants be treated? What is appropriate for a researcher to do to help a research participant achieve his or her goals?
6. How do you determine what is worthwhile to study?
7. Using the various theories we have read in the course, what is your world view? What is the nature of social interaction? What is the relationship between individual choice and structural determination?
8. How do you see research in relation to professional practice? What role should research play in education (or another human service field)?
9. What is the right conduct of research? What should its goal be? More particularly, what research goals would you like to pursue?

Second Assignment: Readings and discussion groups. There is more material on the topic of ways of knowing that can be address within a semester. This is an opportunity for you to select readings that fill in gaps and allow us to go in depth on topics of student interest. Three course meetings are devoted to student-chosen themes and readings. Students will choose which week they volunteer to work with a small group and select readings. This assignment has the following components:

1. During an early class, you'll have the opportunity to choose a group for selecting readings and leading class discussion. Select either the week for exemplar readings or one of the weeks for student-chosen themes.
2. Select the number of readings specified on the course schedule for your chosen week. Provide the instructor a clean PDF of the reading at least two weeks prior to class so he can post it on Canvas.
3. With your group, jointly design a class discussion around the readings you have chosen. You can break it up by article or organize the discussion thematically across the articles. Consult with the instructor if you have questions about how to make it work.

Third Assignment: Book Study (at least 1500 words*). This paper is an opportunity for you to select a work of research that is of interest to you and apply the course concepts to that work. Use whatever resources are available to you, whether inside or outside of the course. While I am open to you writing a study with any methodological orientation, the assignment is going to be more applicable if the research is qualitative or historical. *This paper should be original to this course.* This paper should have the following:

1. A coherent focus. See suggestions below. Whatever you choose as your focus, it is very important that this paper be a well-organized and coherent whole. Your paper should have an introduction, thesis statement, supporting points, and a conclusion.
2. The paper should incorporate at least three readings from the course.

* **A note on word limits:** Word ranges provide a sense of the depth expected for the assignment. Typically there are about 250 words per double-spaced page when printed in 12-point.

3. Use excerpts from the chosen text to support your interpretations, but avoid overciting. Be sure to convey ideas in your voice and avoid stringing quotations together.
4. Use APA or Chicago format for all citations and references.

Here are different options for approaching the paper. You may combine one or more of these questions to form the basis of your paper, and you are not limited to these ideas.

1. Identify a recurring conflict in the study and how respondents understand that conflict. What does the author's exploration of this conflict contribute to the reader's understanding of the people that the author is writing about?
2. Select a theme the author uses in one or more places in the text. What meanings do these images evoke for the respondents? What meanings do they evoke for you as a reader? How might you as a social science researcher evoke similar meanings through other means?
3. Identify a critical review of the book and use it as a springboard for a discussion of its value as a work of research.
4. Address audience for this work. Who should read the text? How do you suspect that different readers would respond to the work?
5. Place the work in historical context. What does the book mean for the time in which it was written? To what extent does context change its meaning over time?
6. Place the book in relation to other relevant social science. In what ways does the study break new ground?
7. Use other readings from the course (perhaps reading ahead) to position the study in terms of epistemology and theoretical perspective. Keeping in mind historical context, how would you characterize the author, based on this text, as a social scientist?
8. Connect the author's work to your own work. What issues does the text raise for you about the meaning and value of research? What issues does the text raise for your positioning as a researcher?
9. If you have chosen a recent book, consider submitting your paper for publication to a journal that publishes book reviews.

Fourth Assignment: Relational Knowing Paper (at least 2000 words*): This paper will be a reflection on the topic of relational knowing. This paper will require outside reading that's relevant to you. This should be a paper *original to this course*. It should have the following components:

1. Develop a particular argument related to the topic of relational knowing.
2. Engage both Patel and Kuntz on the subject of relational knowing. Cite both texts and provide brief quotations from each to support your assertions.
3. Cite at least four additional sources from the course reading.
4. Cite at least four additional sources outside the course that are relevant to your interests and/or the focus you have chosen.

Fifth Assignment: Revised Researcher Autobiography (at least 1750 words*): Revisit your researcher autobiography and reflect upon how your views may have changed over the time you have been in the course. Expand what you wrote in the first draft and incorporate reflection upon at least five readings in the course.

EDUC 3107 - FALL 2021 COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	THEME	READINGS (suggested order)	NOTES
Sept 2	Introductions and Overview		
Sept 9	Relational Knowing	Milner Lincoln & Guba Crotty Kerr & Ferguson	
Sept 16	Relational/Decolonial I	Patel, Intro, Ch 1, 2	Be prepared to select which week to work in a group to select theme(s) and readings
Sept 23	Relational/Material I	Kuntz, Ch 1, 2	Researcher autobiography due
Sept 30	Relational/Decolonial II	Patel, Ch 3, 4, 5	
Oct 7	Relational/Material II	Kuntz, Ch 3, 4, 5	Choice of book for book study due
Oct 14	Exemplar Studies	McKinney de Royston et al. + 2 student-chosen readings	
Oct 21	Epistemology	Popper Mills Nicolazzo	
Oct 28	Post-Qualitative	St. Pierre Koro Bhattacharya	Book study due
Nov 4	Social Construction of Knowledge	Berger & Luckmann Harding Collins Gunzenhauser	
Nov 11	Relational Knowers	Patton Stewart-Ambo Calderon et al. Tuck & Yang	
Nov 18	Student-Chosen Theme(s)	Three student-chosen readings	
Nov 25	Break - No Class		
Dec 2	Return to Relational Knowing, Q&A with Leigh Patel	Re-read Patel Re-read Kuntz	Prepare questions for Dr. Patel Draft of Relational knowing paper due
Dec 9	Student-Chosen Theme(s)	Three student-chosen readings	
Dec 16	Final Class	No Reading	Final Relational knowing paper due Revised autobiography due