



Doctor of Education (EdD) Program

Practitioner Inquiry 3 - EDUC 3007, Section #1500

Spring 2025

Class Times

Please reserve 8am- 12pm for face-to-face classes in Wesley W. Posvar Hall, Room 1502:

- Saturday, Jan 11th
- Saturday, February 1st
- Saturday, March 1st
- Saturday, April 5th

Online activities will be conducted via canvas.pitt.edu

Co-Instructors

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Office Hours:

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The syllabus is a required text. Please read it carefully!

Doctor of Education (EdD)

*The University of Pittsburgh is a center for excellence in professional programs, and the School of Education school-wide EdD program is grounded in this **commitment to excellence**. The*

*program prepares working professionals to become **leader scholar practitioners** to develop specialized knowledge in their area of concentration and apply their intellectual and practical skills to address and mitigate enduring problems affecting children, families, and communities.*

Program Learning Goals

As a result of attending the EdD program at Pitt, students and graduates become leader scholar practitioners who:

1. Identify problems of practice, including questions of equity, ethics, and justice.
2. Use data to inform decisions in daily operations and improvement projects.
3. Communicate and collaborate to work with diverse communities and build partnerships.
4. Lead change that improves practice.
5. Are committed to using improvement science to address problems of practice.

Course

I. Rationale:

Practitioner Inquiry 3 is the third course in the four-course series designed to teach students to understand and use improvement science and apply quantitative and qualitative research methods to improve their actionable problem of practice.

II. Description:

In this course, EdD students will continue their improvement journey moving from understanding their problem of practice and local system to developing a theory of improvement and an aim for improvement with an equity and justice lens. Students will develop a driver diagram and identify specific places in their organizational system where change might impact or improve that system and measure systems change. Students will also learn about quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods and continue to refine those skills through hands on activities.

III. Course Aims and Outcomes:

Aims

There are two overarching aims in the course: (1) To further student knowledge about Improvement Science and how to apply it to their professional practice to solve problems of practice through taking the next steps in developing a theory of improvement; (2) to gain knowledge and skills in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods.

Specific Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop an aim statement for improving problems of practice.
2. Identify system drivers of change.
3. Develop a theory of improvement.
4. Identify improvement measures for changing systems.

5. Consider change ideas that could lead to improvement.
6. Design and implement survey and focus group protocols.
7. Perform data management, transcription, and analysis.

IV. Doctoral Requirements:

Completion of **Applied Inquiry Plan B (AIP-B)** to inform the dissertation in practice.

V. Format and Procedures:

This is a hybrid course with four monthly in-person meetings (one Saturday per month) and asynchronous weekly readings, activities, and assignments between classes on Canvas (<https://canvas.pitt.edu>; see Course Schedule for details). We expect that you will come to class prepared and ready to engage the materials and your peers. During asynchronous times, we expect that you will complete and upload assignments in accordance with the dates outlined in the Course Schedule section of the syllabus. Additionally, you can expect to spend time preparing for class by reading, studying, and completing assignments.

Our goal is to foster deliberation as a group, learn together, and improve our ability to name and address problems of practice. As instructors, we are committed to pedagogy that is anti-racist, non-sexist, non-classist, non-heterosexist, non-gender-normative, and inclusive. This pedagogy includes fostering an environment that is as safe as possible. It is our intention to name and correct as best as possible any actions on our part that fall short of these commitments. If everyone in the class is likewise committed, the work should be more easily facilitated.

VI. Course Requirements:

1. Course readings and where they are available:

1. Perry, J.A., Zambo, D., & Crow, R. (2020). *The improvement science dissertation in practice: A guide for faculty, committee members, and their students*. Access e-book at: https://pitt.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01PITT_INST/g3767l/alma9998620040906236
2. Hinnant-Crawford, B. N. (2020). *Improvement science in education: A primer*. Gorham, ME: Myers Education Press. Access e-book at: https://pitt.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01PITT_INST/g3767l/alma9998874550006236
3. Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Harvard Education Press.
 - a. Available online at: https://pitt.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01PITT_INST/1sjtb5p/alma99100635345306236

4. Menter, I., Elliot, D., Hulme, M., Lewin, J., & Lowden, K. (2011). *A guide to practitioner research in education*. SAGE Publications Ltd,
<https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781473957770>;
a. Available online at :
https://pitt.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01PITT_INST/i25aoe/cdi_askew_sholts_vlebooks_9781446241103
5. Hall, J. N. (2020). *Focus Groups : Culturally Responsive Approaches for Qualitative Inquiry and Program Evaluation*. (1st ed.). Myers Education Press.
a. Available online at:
https://pitt.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01PITT_INST/g3767l/alma99103074340906236
6. Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4E [Fourth edition].). SAGE.
a. Available online at:
https://pitt.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01PITT_INST/1sjtb5p/alma9999361871906236

****Additional readings and viewings will be available on Canvas****

2. Assessments of Learning

A. Applied Inquiry Plan B (AIP-B) - 50 Points

As a reminder, the AIP is a document that eventually becomes the overview for your dissertation in practice. The AIP is completed in pieces across the Practitioner Inquiry courses 2 through 4. In this class, students will complete Part B. This assignment is composed of four parts, submitted at different times during the semester:

1. Aim Statement (10 Points)
2. Driver Diagram & Theory of Improvement (15 Points)
3. Improvement Systems Measures (15 Points)
4. Final AIP Part B (10 Points)

Students will complete each part, receive feedback, and incorporate feedback into the Final AIP-B assignment due at the end of the term.

B. Protocol Design & Analysis - 50 Points

Through various assignments, you will engage in the research inquiry process, applying both quantitative and qualitative methods, from designing protocols, to collecting and managing data, to cleaning and analyzing data. This process and training will culminate in a final presentation.

1. Survey Protocol (10 points)
2. Focus Group Protocol (10 points)
3. Data entry & Transcription (15 points)
4. Preliminary Results Presentation (15 points)

VII. Feedback and Grading Procedures:

Feedback:

Feedback is essential for high quality learning and teaching. Therefore, we are committed to giving you individual, detailed, and timely feedback so that you can improve your learning on future assignments. Students will receive feedback from one of the instructors throughout the semester. Additionally, students will receive feedback from peers. Please note assignment descriptions for the type of feedback that students can anticipate. Students can expect to receive instructor feedback online within two weeks of assignment submission.

Grading:

Grading for this course is letter grade. Students will be divided into two grading groups—see Canvas for your assigned group.

Grading Scale:

Point Total	Final Letter Grade	Point Total	Final Letter Grade
94-100	A	77-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-76	C
87-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-86	B	60-69	D
80-83	B-	59 or below	F

G Grades and I Grades:

Under certain conditions you may receive a “G” or an “I” grade for the course. The Graduate Catalog explains the difference between two kinds of Incompletes: the G grade and the I grade as:

G Grade: *The G grade signifies unfinished course work due to extenuating personal circumstances. Students assigned G grades are required to complete course requirements no later than one year after the term in which the course was taken. As of August 16, 2018, G grades after one year automatically become non-changeable NG grades (no credit, no impact on grade point average) After this one-year deadline has passed, the student will be required to re-register for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation.*

I Grade: *The I grade signifies incomplete course work due to the nature of the course, clinical work, or incomplete research work in individual guidance courses or seminars. For this course, an “I” (Incomplete) Grade will be granted only if the student has actively attended to the course requirements but needs extended time to complete the required work to meet minimum expectations. If an Incomplete grade becomes necessary, the instructors will require you to propose a plan of action outlining how you will complete the work within no more than one term from the end of the course (and preferably a shorter period of time).*

As of August 16, 2018, G grades after one year automatically become non-changeable NG.

VIII. Tentative Course Schedule (*Subject to change*)

WEEK	DATES		TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1	January 8 – January 12	Saturday Jan 11 - CLASS	Course Welcome & Overview Intro to Model of Improvement & Aim Statements	Readings: a) Syllabus & Welcome Here Module; Read Pitt DiP;
2	January 13 – January 19		Finalizing Your Aim Statement	Readings: a) NYCDOE pp. 67-70; b) Sandoval & Van Es (2021); c) IHI Tips of Aims; d) Making your Aim Equitable and Inclusive; Assignment: Share your draft Aim Statement with your EdD advisor
3	January 20 – January 26		Understanding a Theory of Improvement	Readings: a) Reinholz & Andrews (2020); b) Hinnant-Crawford (2020) Ch. 6; c) Perry et al. (2020) Ch. 5; Assignments: Submit Aim Statement
4	January 27 – February 2	Saturday Feb 1 - CLASS	Developing your Theory of Improvement Intro to Inquiry Methods	Readings: a) NYCDOE Ch. 2; b) Bennett & Provost (2015);
5	February 3 – February 9		Improvement Cases: Theories of Improvement come to life	Readings: Pick 2 of the following - a) Zhao et al. (2021); b) Barnard (2021); Milko (2021) Assignments: Submit Driver Diagram & Theory of Improvement
6	February 10 – February 16		Survey Purpose & Protocols	Readings: a) Castillo & Gillborn (2023); b) Bernhardt, 2004 (pp. 69 - 78); Assignments: Submit Survey Protocol

7	February 17 – February 23		Focus Group Purpose & Protocols	<p>Readings: a) Hall (2020) Ch. 2; Hall (2020) Ch. 3 (pp.41-52) & Appendix A; c) Choose 1: Ch 4,5,6,or 7 from Hall (2020);</p> <p>Assignments: Submit Focus Group Protocol</p>
8	February 24 – March 2	Saturday Mar 1 – CLASS	<p>Overview of Improvement Systems Measures</p> <p>Guest speaker</p> <p>Practice FG Moderating skills</p>	<p>Readings: a) Hall (2020) Ch. 3 (pp.52-57); b) Andrzejewski et al. (2019); c) Perkins (2011);</p> <p>Assignments: Implement Survey protocol/gather data</p>
9	March 3 – March 9		SPRING RECESS	
10	March 10 – March 16		Improvement Systems Measures	<p>Readings: a) Hinnant-Crawford (2020) Ch. 7; b) Perry et al (2020) Ch. 6; c) Bryk et al. (2015) Ch 4;</p> <p>Assignments: Submit Improvement Systems Measures; Implement Focus Group protocols/gather data</p>
11	March 17 – March 23		Data Entry & Transcription	<p>Readings: a) Whitney et al., 2024; b) Hall (2020) Ch. 8 (pp. 155-160); c) Menter et al. (2011) Ch 12 (pp. 192-201);</p> <p>Assignments: Submit Data Entry & Transcription</p>
12	March 24 – March 30		Analyzing Qualitative Transcripts	<p>Reading: a) Hall (2020) Ch. 8 (pp. 160-175; b) Suh (2021);</p>
13	March 31 – April 6	Saturday Apr 5 - CLASS	<p>Analyzing Survey Data</p> <p>Qualitative Coding</p> <p>Looking Ahead</p>	<p>Readings: a) Menter et al. (2011) Ch 12 (pp. 199-213); b) Boone & Boone (2012); c) Qualtrics Results-Reports Basic Overview: https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/reports-module/results-section/reports-overview/?parent=p002 ;</p>

				WATCH: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_9vGqQaCFk or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0p6_Wm3r3w
14	April 7 – April 13		Final Applied Inquiry Plan B	
15	April 14 – April 20		Presenting your Results	Readings: (a) Saldaña (2021) Ch. 15; b) Data Visualization: https://www.tutorialspoint.com/excel_data_analysis/excel_data_analysis_visualization.htm Assignments: Submit Final AIP-B (Due 4/16)
16	April 21 – April 27		<i>**Final Grades Due Saturday 5/3**</i>	Assignments: Results Power Point Presentation (Initial post due 4/23; peer replies due 4/27)

Policies and Tips

Use of Technology: This course uses Canvas learning management system. To access the course Web site, go to <http://canvas.pitt.edu> using your Pitt username and password. Or you can go to www.my.pitt.edu and access the Canvas site there. For help logging onto the course, call 412-624-HELP. This help is available 24/7. The instructors cannot assist you with log-on problems.

Course Format: Hybrid

A hybrid course is not a reduced-time course. According to the University's definition of a credit hour, a one-credit course should have 14 contact hours, where a contact hour is 50 minutes of instruction. Thus a 3-credit course should have 2100 minutes of instruction (50 minutes/hour x 14 hours x 3 credits = 42 hours), and a two-credit course has 1400 minutes or 28 hours of instruction. In addition, students are expected to spend a minimum of 1.5 hours outside of class for each in-class hour. Therefore, you need to spend 1.5×28 course hours = 42 hours across 11 weeks, in addition to the core of 28 hours. This includes reading, completing weekly exercises, and working on graded assignments.

Attendance

Regular and prompt attendance in the Saturday class sessions is an essential part of the educational experience in the EdD program. Each course meets only four times throughout the term – missing one of those sessions constitutes a significant portion of the time for face-to-face interaction with instructors and peers.

Although students are expected to attend all Saturday class sessions, working professionals sometimes find themselves in circumstances that cause them to miss these class meetings. Exceptions may be made for **illness, a required work-related commitment, or valid emergency**. In such cases, students need to contact the course instructor to determine if there is any way to make up missed classwork.

If you are going to be absent for class because of a required work-related commitment, illness or valid emergency, **please follow the following instructions:**

1. Email the course instructors, copying your advisor, with the reason for missing the class.
2. Complete the course- or instructor-specific make-up requirements for missed classes prior to the next class meeting.
3. Adhere to the acceptable reasons for missing class outlined in the policy above. Please note that they do not include vacation and/or personal events.

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.

Copyright Notice

These materials may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 17 USC section 101, et seq., in addition to University policy and procedures, prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials.

See [Library of Congress Copyright Office](#) and the [University Copyright Policy](#).

Email Communication

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., gmail, iCloud). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address.

Statement on Scholarly Discourse

In this course we will be discussing very complex issues of which all of us have strong feelings and, in most cases, unfounded attitudes. It is essential that we approach this endeavor with our minds open to evidence that may conflict with our presuppositions. Moreover, it is vital that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy even when they diverge and conflict with our own. We must avoid personal attacks and the use of ad hominem arguments to invalidate each other's positions. Instead, we must develop a culture of civil argumentation, wherein all positions have the right to be defended and argued against in intellectually reasoned ways. It is this standard that everyone must accept in order to stay in this class; a standard that applies to all inquiry in the university, but whose observance is especially important in a course whose subject matter is so emotionally charged.

Gender Inclusive Language Statement

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students, faculty, and staff may share their pronouns.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, visit the [Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance web page](#).

The instructors ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu. Reports can also be [filed online](#). You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

Accessibility

The Canvas LMS platform was built using the most modern HTML and CSS technologies, and is committed to W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative and Section 508 guidelines. Specific details regarding individual feature compliance are documented and updated regularly.

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), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for these courses.

Inclement Weather Policy: Only the Chancellor may officially close the Pittsburgh campus of the University. The University will remain open in all but the most extreme circumstances. Cancellation of classes does not imply that the University is closed.

The University offers an Emergency Notification Service (ENS) which is used to communicate with subscribers through voice, text, and email messages, as deemed appropriate in the event of an emergency. For instructions on how to register, please refer to CSSD's website: <http://technology.pitt.edu/services/emergency-notification-service>.

Any changes to normal University operations will be announced as early as possible through the ENS, the University's official website (www.pitt.edu), Twitter ([@PittTweet](https://twitter.com/PittTweet)), and local news media outlets.

Academic Integrity Guidelines

All students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty. Any student

engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty would be subject to disciplinary action. 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](#).

Provided here is the School of Education [Academic Integrity Policy](#). Please read the policy carefully.

The rights and responsibilities of faculty and students are described in the [University's Academic Integrity Guidelines](#).

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 the EdD program 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 (See below) 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 the chair/associate chair of the department; (3) if needed, next talking to the associate dean of the school; and (4) if needed, filing a written statement of charges with the school-level academic integrity officer.

The more specific procedure for student grievances is as follows:

1. The student should talk to the faculty member to attempt to resolve the matter.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the student should talk to the relevant department chair or associate chair (if the issue concerns a class) or his or her advisor.
3. If the matter remains unresolved, the student should talk to the director of the EdD program, Dr. Rachel Robertson.
4. If needed, the student should next talk to the SOE associate dean of students, Dr. Andrea Zito. If the matter still remains unresolved, the student should file a written statement of charges with the dean's designated Academic Integrity Administrative Officer.

The School of Education Policies and Forms page on the SOE website explains several policies and procedures, including academic probation, course repeats, leaves of absence, monitored withdrawal, transfer credits, and statute of limitations.

Food/Housing Insecurity

Many students, both undergraduate and graduate, experience housing and/or food insecurity that can impact their academic work and general health. Please know there are resources available to you that are confidential. Of course, you are welcome to speak with us if you need support in contacting the right people/offices:

Pitt Pantry: Food Pantry available to the wider University community
<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/pittserves/sustain/pantry/>

Off-Campus Housing Office: <http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/>

Your Well-being Matters

College/Graduate school can be an exciting and challenging time for students. Taking time to care for yourself and seeking appropriate support can help you achieve your academic and professional goals. You are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax.

It can be helpful to remember that we all benefit from assistance and guidance at times, and there are many resources available to support your well-being while you are at Pitt. If you or anyone you know experiences overwhelming academic stress, persistent difficult feelings and/or challenging life events, you are strongly encouraged to seek support. In addition to reaching out to friends and loved ones, consider connecting with a faculty member you trust for assistance connecting to helpful resources. The University Counseling Center is also here for you. You can call 412-648-7930 at any time to connect with a clinician. You can also [visit the Counseling Center website](#).

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, please call the University Counseling Center at any time at 412-648-7930.

You can also contact Resolve Crisis Network at 888-796-8226. If the situation is life threatening, call Pitt Police at 412-624-2121 or dial 911.

If the situation is life threatening, call the Police:

- On-campus: Pitt Police: 412-268-2121
- Off-campus: 911

Additional Resources:

Education Library Guide. See this Hillman Library [customized libguide](#), a gateway to resources for education students and faculty.

Religious Observances. See the [Provost's annual memo](#) about religious observances.

Emergencies. Do you have Pitt Police saved on your mobile phone? 911 works, or Pitt Police, 412-624-2121

Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (OEDI): Resources, consultation, and bias incident reporting: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/>

Title IX office, resources regarding sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, and sexual violence: <https://www.titleix.pitt.edu/>

Catalogs: The University Catalogs have comprehensive information about policies, programs, and courses. There are University-level policies and policies specific to the School of Education. Bookmark these links and review these documents periodically.

- [Pittsburgh Campus Graduate and Professional Studies](#)
- [Additional graduate student information and resources](#)

Student Mental Health: University Counseling Center, in the Wellness Center in Nordenberg Hall: <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/> Call 412-648-7930, any time.

Sexual Assault Response: 412-648-7856. Care and Resource Support Team (CARS): Email pittcares@pitt.edu or see: <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cars/>