New Course Proposal

1. Catalog description:
   a) Course number: ELE 59001, 59002, 59003
   b) Title: Applied/Action Research in Education
   c) Meeting times and credit: (Arr.-Arr.-1), (Arr.-Arr.-2), (Arr.-Arr.-3)
   d) Terms to be offered: F S SU
   e) Short title: Applied/Action Research
   f) Course description: This course provides the fundamental framework for analyzing research and for conduction of Action Research Projects. Students will create and implement an action research project. They will create a written paper and a presentation concerning their projects. Use of technology tools is required. Diversity issues will be addressed.
   g) Prerequisite(s): ELE 5100 Intro to Graduate Study; ELE 5250 Research or EDU 5200 Intro to Research
   h) Initial term of offering: Summer 2008

2. Objectives of the Course and Evaluation:
   a) List of student learning objectives:
      • Students will acquire a body of knowledge that supports the use of action research to impact the learning of P-9 students.
      • Masters candidates will analyze research and data and infer practical applications for the classroom setting.
      • Receive guidance on the use of technology research tools.
      • Engage in activities that provide information on conceptualizing, implementing, and reflecting on a specific question about practice.
      • Create and complete an action research project with the support of peers and a graduate faculty member.
      • Receive guidance as they write descriptive text to share the action research conducted.
      • Engage in critical thinking concerning educational questions and how to use these to inform teaching and learning.
   b) Assessment: Students will be assessed on assignments for using technology research tools, the completion of the proposal, the culmination of the written action research study; and presentation of the findings of the project. The presentations will be made during a culminating seminar session open to the public.
   c) For technology-delivered and other nontraditional-delivered courses/sections, address the following:
      • Describe how the format/technology will be used to support and assess students' achievement of the specified learning objectives.
      • Describe how the integrity of student work will be assured.
      • Describe provisions for and requirements of instructor-student and student-student interaction, including the kinds of technologies that will be used to
support the interaction.

d) For courses numbered 4750-4999, specify additional or more stringent requirements for students enrolling for graduate credit. N/A.

e) If applicable, indicate whether this course is writing-active, writing-intensive, or writing-centered, and describe how the course satisfies the criteria for the type of writing course identified. N/A.

3. Outline of this course:
   a) Meetings
      General Considerations
      • Course meets for 15 weeks or equivalent contact hours in alternative format.
      • The course outline may vary somewhat from instructor to instructor, but the outcomes will meet the objectives and use the Illinois State Board of Education template for research design and reporting.

      Culminating Activity
      • Students will prepare a 10-12 page paper, using APA guidelines that describe the research project they design and implement, along with a display that demonstrates the work completed.
      • Students will present in a class “research seminar” open to the public the last session of the semester with at least two faculty members present for the presentations in addition to the instructor of record. Copies of the research papers are to be provided for the participating faculty members at least one week prior to the seminar. The instructor of record will assign the final grade for the course.
      • Action research projects will follow guidelines based on the Illinois State Board of Education format. Guidelines will be available through the departmental webpage.

SESSIONS 1, 2
Discussion of applied research. A definition of applied research and discussion of current Action Research as a means to improve teaching and learning in the classroom will be given. Topics to be included in defining applied research include the elements of:

• Systematic inquiry
• Reflective practice
• Problem solving effort
• Teacher-led investigation
• Context of research
• Goals of Action Research
• Professional development
• Informed decision making
• Improvement of practice
• Reflective teaching
• Practical applications

SESSION 3
Action Strategies
• Approach Selection
• Question Development
• Process Initiation
• Approaches to Research
• Individual (single classroom)
• Collaborative (team)
• School-wide (entire school)

SESSION 4
Question Development
• Novel exploration
• Higher level questions
• Manageable study
• Specific focus
• Leads to other questions
• Research Questions are:
  o Significant (high impact)
  o Manageable (do-able/focused)
  o Contextual (job related)
  o Clearly stated
  o Self-reflective
• Starting Points
• Samples of Questions

SESSION 5
Processes and Plans
• Problem Identification
• Plan of Action
• Data Collection
• Data Analysis
• Findings and Recommendations
• Further Action Plan
• IRM and Ethical Treatment of Human Subjects (online training at <http://www.eiu.edu/~grants/ConsentTraining/index.html>)

SESSIONS 6, 7, 8
Data Collection Guidelines
• Data types
• Multiple sources of data
• Amount of data
• Use of the data
• Communication of the data
• Generation of findings
• Data Collection Questions
• Data Collection Questions
  o WHY collect this data?
  o WHAT is going to be collected?
  o WHERE will data be collected?
  o Who will be collecting the data?
  o HOW will the data be collected?
• Data Sources

SESSIONS 9, 10, 11
Data Analysis Guidelines
• Themes and patterns
• Labels
• Data management
• Data analyses

SESSIONS 12, 13
Action Research Report
Written paper must include a detailed report of the project.
• Focus Statement
• Related Literature
• Context/Setting/Descriptions
• Intervention/innovation Explanation
• Data Collection
• Data Analysis and Interpretation
• Conclusions and Recommendations
• Future Action Plan

SESSION 14
Final Editing of Action Reports: Online Action Research Options; “Dress Rehearsal for Seminar in Session Fifteen.
• Mechanics
• Style
• Action Research Template Found on EC/ELE/MLE website: www.eiu.edu/~eemedu

SESSION 15
Culminating Seminar Session Open to the Public to share presentations in the manner of a “Research Fair.”

b) For technology-delivered or other nontraditional-delivered courses/sections, explain how the course content “units” are sufficiently equivalent to the traditional on-campus semester hour units of time described above.

4. Rationale:
   a) Purpose and need: This course provides insight into the practical application of research. It guides masters candidates in asking questions about teaching practice and in finding answers to those questions. It provides a venue that both demonstrates how teachers can conduct more systematic research to inform practice and enable teachers to do so.

   b) Justification of the level of the course and of course prerequisites: This graduate course fulfills the requirement for students to research, analyze, and find practical course applications for implementation of effective strategies in their classrooms. Many schools are engaging in action research as they seek to implement school improvement plans and as they participate in grants.

   c) Similarity to existing courses: This course is distinct.

   d) Impact on the program: This course will positively affect academic rigor and takes the place of a non-credit culminating experience termed “Colloquy.” It will provide information needed in contemporary classrooms dealing with issues of accountability. It is a necessary addition to the program to provide an alternative to the Thesis Option to meet an academic need.
5. Implementation:
   a. Faculty members to whom course may be assigned: Any member of the 
graduate faculty serving on the Departmental Graduate Council should be able to 
teach this course.
   b. Specification of any additional costs to students: none unless desired by the 
student
APA Manual; and professional journal articles.

6. Community College Transfer  NA

7. Date approved by the department or school 4-29-2005

8. Date approved by the college curriculum committee 9-26-2005

9. Date approved by CAA  Not Applicable  CGS 12-6-05

* A technology-aware course section uses the Internet and other technologies to augment a 
regularly scheduled, face-to-face course section by providing basic catalog, scheduling, syllabus, 
and other routine information via the Internet. No two-way technology-based interaction 
between faculty and students is facilitated. A technology-enhanced course section 
augments a regularly scheduled course section and adds opportunities for interaction between a 
faculty member and the students or among students; course related information, including 
handouts and assignments, may be published dynamically during the course, and students may 
submit and have assignments returned electronically. The primary and predominant mode of 
instruction is face-to-face. A technology-delivered course section is designed and scheduled 
to use technology as the exclusive or predominant mode of instruction and faculty-student 
interaction.

** In writing-active courses, frequent, brief writing activities and assignments are required. 
Such activities – some of which are to be graded – might include five-minute in-class writing 
assignments, journal keeping, lab reports, essay examinations, short papers, longer papers, or 
a variety of other writing-to-learn activities of the instructor’s invention. Writing assignments and 
activities in writing-active courses are designed primarily to assist students in mastering course 
content, secondarily to strengthen students’ writing skills. In writing-intensive courses, 
several writing assignments and writing activities are required. These assignments and activities, 
which are to be spread over the course of the semester, serve the dual purpose of strengthening 
writing skills and deepening understanding of course content. At least one writing assignment is 
to be revised by the student after it has been read and commented on by the instructor. In 
writing-intensive courses, students’ writing should constitute no less than 35% of the final course 
grade. In writing-centered courses (English 1001G, English 1002G, and their honors 
equivalents), students learn the principles and the process of writing in all of its stages, from 
inception to completion. The quality of students’ writing is the principal determinant of the course 
grade. The minimum writing requirement is 20 pages (5,000 words).