

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

**EDUC 800 002  
Ways of Knowing  
Fall, 2011**

**Tuesday 4:30 – 7:10, Robinson A109**

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Office hours: T 2:30 - 4:00 or by appointment

**Course Description:** This course is a foundation course for the Ph.D. in Education program. The purpose of the course is to explore how we come to know and accept a method(s) of inquiry among the various ways of knowing. Using a seminar approach structured around readings, reflections on those readings, class discussions, and individual research, the course seeks to develop in students an ability to reflect critically on the strengths and limitations of the various ways of knowing and to become aware of the implications of the different ways of knowing for research and practice.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Students will describe, compare, and contrast ways of knowing from a variety of perspectives.
2. Students will describe ways of knowing of individuals or groups and will analyze and explain personal, sociocultural, professional, political, and other influences on ways of knowing.
3. Students will explore how various ways of knowing affect individual scholars, research, and practice in education and related fields.
4. Students will expand and refine their scholarship abilities including critical and analytic reading, writing, thinking, oral communication, and the use of scholarly resources.

**How this Course Supports GSE's Priorities**

This introductory course seeks to develop each student's ability to be a reflective researcher who becomes grounded in the ways we come to know through inquiry. Through the readings, the classroom conversations, discussions, and presentations, it is intended that each student will become more analytic about the conduct of inquiry and one's own perspectives on inquiry and the nature of knowledge, and to develop a respect for the diversity of thought that characterizes inquiry.

**Required Course Texts:**

Kuhn, Thomas. (1976). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. University of Chicago Press.  
Lyons, Nona & LaBoskey, Vicki Kubler. (2002). *Narrative Inquiry in Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Strogatz, Steven. (2004). *Sync: How Order Emerges from Chaos in the Universe, Nature, and Daily Life*. New York: Hyperion.

**Texts for Expert Area (differs for each individual):**

Excerpts from these texts will be available on blackboard or Mason e-reserve

Allen, P. B. (1995). *Art is a Way of Knowing*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R., Tarule (1986). *Women's Ways of Knowing*. New York: Basic Books.

Bruner, J. (1996). *The Culture of Education*. MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. MA: Harvard University Press.

Descartes, R. (1637). *Discourse on Method and Related Writings*. New York: Penguin Classics.

Goldberger, N., Tarule, J., Clinchy, B., & Belenky, M. (Eds.). (1996). *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by 'Women's Ways of Knowing.'* New York: Basic Books.

Harding, S. (1998). *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Kozol, J. (1995). *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Ladd, P. (2003). *Understanding Deaf Culture: In Search of Deafhood*. Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Lane, H., Hoffmeister, R., & Bahan, B. (1996). *A Journey into the Deaf-World*. San Diego, CA: Dawnsign Press.

Taylor, E., Gillborn, D., & Ladson-Billings, G. (Eds.). (2009). *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education*. New York: Routledge.

Selye, H. (1964). *From Dream to Discovery: On Being a Scientist*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Sterns, P.N. (2006). *Childhood in World History, Second Edition*. New York: Routledge.

**Additional Required Reading:**

To be determined articles available on the Mason e-reserve website or on Blackboard. Some will be chapters from

Bransford, J.D., Stipek, D.J., Vye, N.J., Gomez, L.M., & Lam, D. (2009). *The role of research in educational improvement*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

**Recommended Text:**

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Author: Washington, DC. (Recommended for entire doctoral program).

**Supplies**

Computer with Internet access, current GMU email account, notebook for journal (can use a word document if you prefer), access to scanner (if not able to get access to scanner please let me know and I will make one available to you).



## CEHD Course Expectations

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

- **Professional Dispositions:** Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/professional-disposition>
- **Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory, as the discussions that take place in this class are essential to achieving the course objectives.
- **Tardiness:** Prompt arrival for the beginning of class is expected.
- **Participation:** Each student is expected to complete all the assigned readings and participate in the discussions. It is expected that each student will be attuned to group dynamics in order to ensure the active participation of all in the class.
- **Absence:** If you must miss a class, you are responsible for notifying me (preferably in advance) and for completing any assignments, readings, etc. before the start of the next class.
- **Assignments:** All assignments must be completed in MSWord and submitted electronically on blackboard prior to class on the date each is due. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with me.
- **University Honor Code:** Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/> for the full honor code.
- **Students with disabilities** who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.
- **Computing Use:** Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See: [http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=1045#resp\\_use\\_comp\\_poli](http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=1045#resp_use_comp_poli)

## Course Delivery

This course is a doctoral seminar, and my teaching style revolves around the concept of “learning via activity, conversation, and visualization.” As such it is expected that you will read in advance of class and continue to try to find the bigger picture as you learn to sort through the findings of one area of study to the next. In addition to classroom attendance and participation, I expect you to participate fully in whole class and small group discussions, group, pair, and individual projects, internet research, analyses of case studies, and reflections on practice. I will use GMU’s web-

accessible Blackboard course (<https://myMason.gmu.edu>) framework throughout the course; many of the examples are posted there for you to read in advance of our discussions.

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### *Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### *Campus Resources*

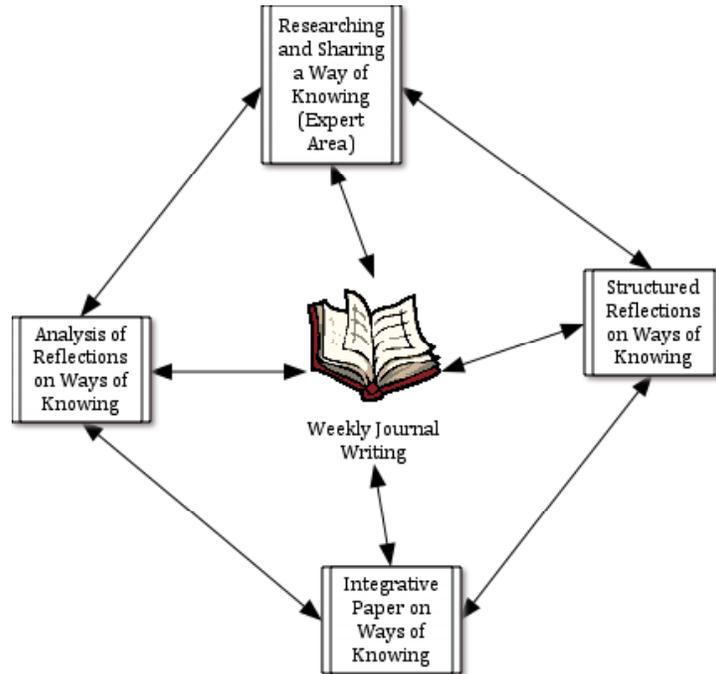
- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

*The College of Education & Human Development is committed to the following five values: collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>*

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

## Assignments

The assignments for this course over lap, are simultaneously reflective, integrative and analytic. They are depicted below:



### **Weekly Journal Writing**

You are expected to keep a weekly journal that is reflective, integrative, and analytic. The overall purpose is to use informal journal writing as a means to think and reflect on the content of the course. In particular, the journal is a means for you to connect course material to your own experiences and to analyze the course readings critically. I expect that your reflections will support you in class as well as in all other assignments.

### **Structured Reflections on Ways of Knowing**

Throughout the class and listed in the course outline you will find structured reflections to be included in your journal. Each will be unique but will always include two repeated components, 1) whether our class model of Ways of Knowing makes sense and how it might need to be tweaked and 2) a question specific to a current Way of Knowing under discussion.

The intent of these brief papers (equivalent to 2 pages, double-spaced) is to help you become thoughtful and analytic about some rather conceptual, and sometimes complex, course content. You should look upon these papers as a source of information to engage each other and me in a discussion as we grow over the semester.

These structured reflections can be sent to me via blackboard. If you choose to write them in your journal you can scan and submit the scanned PDF on blackboard.

## Researching and Sharing a Way of Knowing (Expert Area)

On the first night of class we will begin exploration of a way of knowing that is of keen interest to you and that is new to you. You will solidify your choice by the end of the second class. Beginning in class #3 you will actively voice “your chosen” way of knowing in class. There will be one particular class in which we will have a primary focus on “your chosen” way of knowing. In that class you will provide an excerpt(s) from your reading for pre-class reading assignment (~30 pages) and an experiential (e.g., video, audio, art activity, etc) activity to take place in class. You will help me lead the discussion based on the reading and activity.

## Integrative Paper on Ways of Knowing

Select a new way of knowing for you, e.g. a new theory in your field, an area within the arts, sciences, or social sciences, or an interdisciplinary area of inquiry. Explore this new way of knowing. Prepare a paper (about 2500 words/10 pages) that demonstrates: 1) your understanding of the basic assumptions of this approach, and 2) what it is that makes this approach a new way of knowing for you. Note: depth and analysis are more important than breadth. APA format required. **Paper is due: 12/6.**

As part of the development of your paper, please submit via blackboard a one-page description of your proposed project so we can agree early in the semester no later than the 8th week (**11/22**). The outline should address the following questions:

1. What is the way of knowing you will explore?
2. How do you propose to study it?
3. What are your tentative sources?

You will have considerable input from other classmates on your topic through class activities and discussions and discussion of their related topics. It is quite appropriate to include other readings and materials from class in your paper.

Evaluation of the final paper: The main criteria are a clearly defined focus, clear and accurate presentation of its assumptions and definitions about knowing, a demonstrated understanding of the implications for research, and clear organization and writing (*see scoring rubric at the end of this syllabus*).

## Analysis of Reflections on Ways of Knowing

For this paper, you will look across the semester and consider its effects on you. The guiding questions for this final paper are:

1. How would you have described your way(s) of knowing, learning, and thinking when you began this class?
2. As you consider your autobiography/personal history, what factors personal, experiential, familial, sociocultural, historical, and/or disciplinary influenced your ways of knowing?
3. How has the course affected your ways of knowing as a practitioner and as a researcher?
4. How would you describe your current way of knowing?

5. What are the implications of your reflections on questions 3 and 4 above for your personal and professional growth during your doctoral study?

Criteria for assessment include: evidence of serious reflection and analysis, clear organization and clear writing. This paper is the culminating activity of the course and is due at the beginning of the last class meeting (12/13).

**All assignments must be completed in MSWord and submitted in blackboard prior to class.** Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with me.

### Grading of Assignments

1. Structured Reflections on Ways of Knowing	30	
2. Researching and Sharing a Way of Knowing (Expert Area)	20	
3. Integrative Paper on Ways of Knowing		30
4. Analysis of Reflections on Ways of Knowing	20	
<b>Total Points Possible</b>		<b>100</b>

### Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100	A- = 90 – 94	B+ = 87 – 89	B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82	C = 70 – 79	F = < 70	

A+ is possible if work is of exceptional high quality above and beyond that required for the course.

### Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Class Topic	Readings and Assignments
<b>August 30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Overview of course</li> <li>• My introduction to Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Expert Area</li> <li>• Video: Deb Roy: <i>The birth of a word</i> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RE4ce4mexrU">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RE4ce4mexrU</a></li> </ul>	1. Complete blackboard form on Expert Area (Due 9/4) 2. <b>Structured Reflection 1:</b> Think of the video clip shown in class. In what ways might this “Way of Knowing” be applied to research related to Education? Write out a couple of your thoughts. Did seeing the video clip inspire you to see any new ways to think of education and educational research? (Due 9/6) 3. Lyons & LaBoskey - pages vii to 129 (Due 9/6)
<b>Sept 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of <i>The birth of a word</i></li> <li>• Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Video: Vivian Paley <a href="http://itunes.tv.columbia.edu">itunes.tv.columbia.edu</a></li> <li>• Discussion of Narrative as a Way of Knowing</li> <li>• Update: Depicting Ways of</li> </ul>	1. Read in Expert Area 2. Lyons & LaBoskey - pages 131 to 159 3. Excerpts, pages 3 to 32 from Grandin, T. (2006). <i>Thinking in Pictures: My Life with Autism</i> . New York: Vintage on Mason e-reserve.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing</li> <li>Expert Area Choice: Discussion and future Plans</li> <li>Teachers' Voices – PreK Writing</li> </ul>	
<b>Sept 13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check in about Expert Area. Are there any requested changes, clarifications, etc?</li> <li>Movie: Temple Grandin</li> <li>Discuss Thinking in Pictures as a Way of Knowing</li> <li>Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structured Reflection 2: TBD</b></li> <li>Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>Lyons &amp; LaBoskey – pages 160 to 199</li> <li>TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> </ol>
<b>Sept 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> </ol>
<b>Sept 27</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structured Reflection 3: TBD</b></li> <li>Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> <li>Kevin M. Roy, K. M., Tubbs, C. Y., &amp; Burton, L. M. (2004). Don't Have No Time: Daily Rhythms and the Organization of Time for Low-Income Families. <i>Family Relations</i>, 53, 168–178.</li> </ol>
<b>Oct 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>Discussion of Roy, Tubbs &amp; Burton</li> <li>Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> </ol>
<b>Oct 11</b>	No Class (Columbus Day adjustment)	
<b>Oct 18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structured Reflection 4: TBD</b></li> <li>Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> </ol>
<b>Oct 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> <li>Bransford et al Introduction and Ch 4</li> <li><i>Description of Integrative Paper on Ways of Knowing</i></li> </ol>
<b>Nov</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert Area Emphasis</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Structured Reflection 5: TBD</b></li> </ol>

<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Bransford et al</li> <li>• Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>3. TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> </ol>
<b>Nov 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>• Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>2. TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> <li>3. Bransford et al Ch 7</li> </ol>
<b>Nov 15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>• Discussion of Bransford et al</li> <li>• Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Structured Reflection 6: TBD</b></li> <li>2. Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>3. TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> <li>4. Kuhn pp. 1 – 110</li> </ol>
<b>Nov 22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>• Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>2. Kuhn pp. 111-210</li> </ol>
<b>Nov 29</b>	<p>On line discussion of Kuhn <i>What is a Scientific Revolution?</i> Imagine a conversation between Kuhn and a major author in the area of expertise you are examining. What would Kuhn say, your author? Has or could the perspective you are studying create(d) a scientific revolution? Why or why not? <i>A philosophical view of how ways of knowing change</i> How does the second half of Kuhn’s perspective appeal to you? Why? What is it specifically about his perspective that helps you understand how we come to know? Did you find any weaknesses in his argument, i.e., things you just could not accept? What were they and why?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read in own Expert Area</li> <li>2. Strogatz, pp. 1 to 152</li> <li>3. TBA Excerpts from Expert Area</li> </ol>
<b>Dec 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert Area Emphasis</li> <li>• Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strogatz, pp. 152 to 289</li> <li>2. <i>Integrative Paper on Ways of Knowing</i></li> </ol>
<b>Dec 13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chaos/Complexity: The New Revolution?</li> <li>• Video: What the Bleep Do we Know!?</li> <li>• Similarities and Differences with other Ways of Knowing</li> <li>• Update: Depicting Ways of Knowing</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Analysis of Reflections on Ways of Knowing</i></li> </ol>

## Scoring Rubric for the “knowing” paper

1. Focus: the way of knowing is clearly identified and its historical roots are clearly described
  - Accomplished:** the focus of the paper is clearly stated and its historical roots are clearly described.
  - Basic:** the focus of the paper is either clearly identified and its historical roots are not clearly described or vice versa.
  - Unsatisfactory:** the focus of the paper and/or its roots are neither clearly identified nor clearly described.
2. Presentation of Assumptions: the fundamental assumptions about the nature of knowledge in the “way” are explained clearly and the key terms necessary to understand this way of knowing are defined.
  - Accomplished:** the fundamental assumptions are clearly explained and the key terms are defined.
  - Basic:** the fundamental assumptions are explained and some key terms are defined.
  - Unsatisfactory:** neither are the assumptions made clear, nor are the key terms defined.
3. Demonstrated understanding of the implications for research: the nature of the research questions this way of knowing has been used to explore are included and described clearly.
  - Accomplished:** the nature of the research questions are included and relevant examples presented
  - Basic:** either the nature of the research questions or the examples are not included or are not clearly presented
  - Unsatisfactory:** neither the research questions are clear nor are the examples clearly presented
4. Organization and Clarity: the paper is well-organized; the argument flows easily from point to point; follows APA writing guidelines.
  - Accomplished:** the paper is well-organized with the logic following from point to point follows APA guidelines; there are no grammatical errors, typos, misspelled words, etc.
  - Basic:** the paper jumps from topic to topic; there are grammatical errors, typos, misspelled words, etc.; APA guidelines used inconsistently.
  - Unsatisfactory:** the paper is hard to follow as the points are not connected into a coherent whole; inattention to grammar, typographical errors and misspelled words; failure to consult APA is evident.
5. Discussion of why this is a new or expanded way of knowing for you
  - Accomplished:** Delineations between your way of knowing and that of this “other” perspective are clear.
  - Basic:** Distinctions are drawn, but not developed in enough depth to see what you learned from the exercise.
  - Unsatisfactory:** No attention is given to how this way of knowing is new to or expanded for you.