Advanced Research Projects in Special Education

EDSE 220

Spring 2026   Section 01   Hybrid   3 Unit(s)   01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026   Modified 01/12/2026

👤 Contact Information

Instructors:	Sudha Krishnan
Office Hours:	Thursdays 2pm-4pm or by appointment
Office Location:	Sweeney Hall 217
Class Days/Time:	Thursday, 4:00-6:45
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall Room 212
Prerequisites:	Completion of EDSE 285 with B or better

🕐 Course Information

Classroom Dates

Asynchronous Days: 1/22; 2/5; 2/19; 3/5; 3/19; 4/16; 4/30

In-Person Days: (Thursdays, Sweeney Hall 212, 4:00-6:45) 1/29, 2/12, 2/26, 3/12, 3/26, 4/9, 4/23

(Celebration of Learning to Follow)

Course Format

This course follows a Hybrid format with some class sessions face to face and some online which will include sessions designated for independent research and writing or individual sessions with professor face to face. Thiscourse has an extensive writing component, the bulk of which must be completed outside of class time. Studentsshould have access to a computer and the Internet in order to submit assignments to the CANVAS learningmanagement system.

Course Description

Applied research or projects in the field of Special Education.

CANVAS Learning Management System

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website at http://sjsu.instructure.com. All students are responsible for regularly checking their SJSU email for course updates from the instructor.

Technology Requirements

All written work must be turned in using Microsoft Office Word (or Excel, for the Research Matrix). TheMicrosoft Office Suite is available for free from the university. If you do not have Microsoft Office on yourcomputer, please refer to Information Technology Services (http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/microsoft-students/index.html) for information on how to download the software on your device.

Program Learning Outcome (PLO)

5. Utilize research-based knowledge and theoretical, conceptual and evidence-based practices related to individuals withdisabilities to improve services and instruction in the *(TPE 3; SK2; IKS 4.1, 4.2; AK5)*

🖳 Course Description and Requisites

Advanced application of special education action research projects conducted in diverse educational settings.

Prerequisite(s): Department consent.

Letter Graded

✳ Classroom Protocols

Class Expectations

Professional demeanor and disposition for a graduate student are expected in this class. Participants are expected toarrive to class on time and to stay until class is ended. Participants are expected to respect speakers and peers at alltimes. Students in the class receive a final disposition score in addition to a letter grade.

Respectful Environment

Special education is a field with complex philosophical understandings and paradigmatic leanings. As such, there maybe times of disagreement about what is best for students with dis/abilities in this class. While it is appropriate to disagree, it is expected that students do so in a respectful way during course discussions and activities.

▤ Program Information

LCOE Department of Special Education Mission
We prepare candidates to be transformative leaders in the field, and lifelong learners who respond to racism, ableism, bigotry, and prejudice in their schools and communities. To this end, we center anti-racist and anti-ableist policies and practices in our teaching, research, and service to disrupt systemic racism that has historically prevented full inclusion and equity for students with disabilities including our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) students, staff, and faculty. We engage culturally sustaining pedagogies and the principles of UDL in our coursework and fieldwork, partnering with our local districts to push for the success of students with disabilities in inclusive settings.

LCOE Department of Special Education Program Learning Outcomes
- **PLO 1** Assess and identify the educational needs and strengths of students with disabilities from diverse socioeconomic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- **PLO 2** Critically evaluate pedagogy, curricula and instructional materials grounded in quality indicators of evidence-based practices for students with disabilities.

- **PLO 3** Plan, design, implement, and monitor linguistically and culturally appropriate instruction that meets the unique needs of students with disabilities.
- **PLO 4** Apply knowledge of the purpose, characteristics, and appropriate use of different types of assessments used for special education eligibility, placement, and service selection.
- **PLO 5** Utilize research-based knowledge and theoretical, conceptual and evidence-based practices related to individuals with disabilities to improve services and instruction in the field.

Link to Education Specialist TPEs (pps 13 – 42) (https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/educator-prep/standards/education-specialist-standards-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=729750b1_45)

◎ Course Goals

Course Goals

A4 Ethical Professionals – Qualities of ethical professionals A5Change Agent – Qualities of change agents

C1 Scientific Inquiry – Engagement in scientific inquiry

C2 Critical Skills - Critical skills as consumers & investigators of research

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

1. Apply APA 7th Edition standards when completing research project, including double spacing, Times New Roman font 12, one-inch margins, etc.
2. Review, critically analyze and synthesize research as a part of reflecting on one's teaching practice andcommitment to equity and social justice in the classroom.
3. Complete all contents of the research project successfully using MA project outline and scheduled due dates.

▤ Course Materials

Required Texts/Readings

American Psychological Association.
(2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (*7th ed.).

Washington, D.C.: Author. ISBN: 978-1-4338-3217-8 (Spiral with tabs).

Order Info: www.apa.org/pubs/books @$45

Sagor, R. D., & Williams, C. (2016). *The action research guidebook: A process for pursuing equity and excellence in education.* Corwin Press.

Other Readings on Canvas

Forester, C., & Eperjesi, R. (2021). Action Research for Student Teachers.

Mertler, C.A. (2009). *Action research: Teachers as a researcher in the classroom.* Sage.
https://edge.sagepub.com/mertler6e

https://www.perkinselearning.org/videos/webcast/action-research-special-education

:≡ Course Requirements and Assignments

Action Research Project Requirements – See Appendix A- MA Project Outline
 for more complete descriptions of assignments

1.   Revised Methods Section

2.   Title Page – Title of MA project, Name, Department Name, Date

3.   Abstract – No more than 200 words, summarizes the purpose of the project,

inquiry question(s), method, main or important findings, and implication for teacher practice.

4. Table of Contents – List all main sections of the paper on the left side with its correct pagination on right side of page.

5. References and Appendices – Include only cited references, entries must be 100% correct using 7th version APA.

6. EDSE 285 - Revised content with appropriate in-text APA citations, page numbers and headings, etc.

7. EDSE 220 - Finalized 220 method, data analysis, teacher practice implications, and future research withappropriate APA citations, tables, figures labeled correctly and page numbers.

Final Presentation - Final oral presentation will include a culminating presentation of all of the major elements of the action

research project: introduction, action inquiry question, key relevant literature, methodology, sample of main results, implications for teacher practice, and key references.

✔ Grading Information

Determination of Grades

Assignments	Points	Percentage
Revised Method Section	20	10%
Title Page	10	5 %
Abstract	20	10 %
Table of Contents	10	5 %
References and Appendices	10	5 %
EDSE 285 Final Revision	30	15 %
EDSE 220 Final Written AR Project	80	30%
Final Presentation	20	20 %
TOTAL POINTS	200	100 %

In order to keep up with the pace of the class, turning in late assignments is strongly discouraged. If you have a medical or significant emergency (e.g., illness, house flooding, etc.), please let me know as soon as possible, and if it's a medical issue I will need a doctor's note. If need be, we will figure out a doable timeline to get all your work successfully completed this semester.

Grade	Percent
97-100	A
94-96	A-
91-93	B+
88-90	B
85-87	B-
82-84	C+

Department Grading Policy

All MA students must receive a GPA of 3.0 with a grade of B or better in each MA class to be able to pass the finalMA course EDSE 220. An "Incomplete" is only given when 80% or more of the work has been completed on time.

Action Research MA Project Outline

General APA Format 7th version

1. **Title Page** – Title of MA project, Name, Department Name, Date – **220 class**

2. **Abstract (no more than 200 words)** – **220 class**

Written after you have completed your study, it summarizes the purpose of the study, initial question(s), methodology (data you collected and how you analyzed the data), findings, and implications for teachers.

3. **Table of Contents** – **220 class**

List all the main sections of the paper (headings) on left side with its correct pagination on right side of page

4. **Introduction (about 2-3 pages) - 285 class**

Part 1: Positionality/Personal Experience. What educational experiences have you had

 as a student and/or teacher that inform your inquiry? What experiences have you had

 with people with disabilities that inform your teaching experiences?

Part 2: Problem of Practice Statement. What is the problem in your practice that you wish to investigate? What is the evidence of this problem? For example, what student learning outcomes point to this problem? Why is this problem important to other educators and/or society?

Part 3: Initial Question. End your introduction with a clear description of your initial

research question. For example, what happens/can I notice about X (S outcome) when Y

(T intervention). Your question should be clearly connected to the background information

 you've shared and may be related to state, national, and global issues. Keep in mind that

action inquiry is not suited to investigate questions of cause and effect. You have a choice

between conducting a descriptive action study in which the action inquiry seeks to better

understand and perhaps act upon a problem/phenomenon (where words like effect, cause,

intervention, hypothesis would not be appropriate) OR a hypothesis testing action project

where you would be looking at the effect of an intervention (words like effect,

intervention, hypothesis would be appropriate here).

5. **Conceptual Framework (about 1-2 pages)- 285 class**

Part 1: Theory of Action. Briefly state what you plan to do and what your expected

outcomes are. E.g., "I will try X in (defined educational context) to address problem Y"

or "If I do X (intervention) in my educational context, participants will Y (outcome) as

evidenced by Z (outcome data)."

Part 2: Theoretical Grounding. Describe the theoretical and research-based literature

That supports your theory of action. E.g.: "I believe action X will address problem Y

because ____(evidence from the literature)."

6. **Literature Review (about 5-10 pages)-285 class**

Part 1: What have others learned about your topic? This should flow directly from

the question and theoretical framework presented in the previous sections. In the

literature review, discuss what researchers and practitioners have learned from their

studies of a similar or related question/topic. Select literature from a variety of topics that

are related to your initial question/topic. Use headings and, if necessary, subheadings, to

clearly label the component parts/themes of your literature review. Among the articles

that you cite, include at least one scholarly literature review (e.g., from Review of

Educational Research). Such a source can be an excellent starting point and provide you with many   other
related references.

Part 2: What still needs to be learned about your topic? What seem to be the gaps in

the field's understanding of your topic? How, if at all, might what you learn through

your inquiry contribute to others' understanding of this problem? (Note: Your inquiry is

primarily to advance your own understanding.)

Part 3: Conclusion. How does what others have learned about your topic inform how

you plan to investigate it? Connect this back to your initial question.

7. **Methodology (about 3-5 pages)- (you'll complete Part 1 & 2 in 285 class and Parts 3 &**

4 in 220 class)

Part 1: Context--Where, Who, and How Do I Fit In? Describe the setting (classroom, school,etc.) of your inquiry, the key participants (students and/or others), and your positionality within that context. Include how your paper includes an asset-framed approach, as discussed in class.

Part 2: Inquiry Design. Briefly describe the design of your inquiry, e.g., as an action-oriented cycle of inquiry. Include a justification for this form of inquiry as compared to others. In this design sub-section, consider the following: What is my inquiry question? What are the data that I need to answer that question? What inquiry methods will get me those data? Why are these methods appropriate for your inquiry. Somewhere in your inquiry design, explain how your sampling method aligns with your inquiry context.

Part 3: Data Collection. Describe the data you collected (e.g., interviews, student work, questionnaires, observations, reflective inquiry journal, interval data, etc.) and how often you collected these data (e.g., how frequently did you observe students, how often did you interview participants, when did you administer questionnaires?). These need to be directly related to your initial question.

Part 4: Data Analysis. How did you analyze your data? Carefully explain how you analyzed your data (e.g., the coding categories you arrived at and the process that you used to arrive at this system). Provide examples to illustrate coding categories. Describe your analysis process in enough detail such that another teacher inquirer, if given your data, would be able to analyze it as you did.

8. Findings (about 3-5 pages) – 220 class

Part 1: Findings. (a) What did you learn from your analyzed data? Make sure to illustrate your points (e.g., with carefully selected quotes from participants or selections of writing). Include charts, tables, graphs, and samples of student work, etc., to help you

make your point clearly and evocatively. (b)Discussion. Relate your findings back to your initial question and the existing literature. Unanticipated findings belong here, too.

Part 2: Limitations of your study (about 1-2 paragraphs). If you were to do the study again under the same conditions, what would you do differently (e.g., in terms of participants, data sources, intervention(s), etc.) and why? How else might one explain what you found? What factors related to this study may limit its usefulness (e.g., events, population)?

9. **Conclusions and Implications (about 2-4 pages) 220 class**

Part 1: Conclusions and Implications. Now that you have completed your study, so what? What do your findings mean for you, for other educators, for your school, for the education community in general?

Part 2: Future Research. What research needs to be done to learn more about your topic? What new questions did your project raise? What future action (e.g., as a first-year teacher), will you take related to your inquiry (or others) and the process of engaging in cyclical inquiry? How does this study inform future work that can be conducted as it relates to special education teachers, students with disabilities or other educational stakeholders?

10. **References (In APA 7th Edition) – 220 class**

- The reference list is intended to help readers locate readings that you cite.
- Only cited works are placed in the reference list.
- Entries must be absolutely accurate and complete (e.g., spelling of names and titles, publication date, journal volume and issue, page numbers).
- Make sure to double and triple check your list for accuracy and completeness

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Appendix B

Rubric - Final Oral Presentation – 10pts

	Exemplary 1 pt	Developing ½ point	Unacceptable 0 pts
Title of Study	Clear statement	Unclear	Not included
Abstract	All elements included	1-3 Elements Missing	Not Included
Introduction+ Purpose statement	Overarching topic is clearly identified for the viewer with purpose statement. Topic ties to sub-topic areas.	Overarching topic not clear or not linked to sub-topic areas. *3 pts*	Not Included.
AR Inquiry question(s)	1-2 clear research questions presented	Inquiry questions presented are unclear or not linked to research reviewed.	No Inquiry Qs.
Key Literature Summaries w/Sub-topics	Sub-topics are clearly summarized and related to the overarching theme of the project.	Sub-topics are not summarized for viewer OR one is not related to overarching topic/theme.	Sub-topics are not related to major topic area.

Method	Clear description of type of study, participants, data collection, data analysis process	Unclear descriptions of Method elements	Not Included
Main Findings	Clear description of main findings, tables/figures, linked to inquiry question	Unclear description of main finding elements	Not Included
Implication – Teacher Practice	Clear description of implication for teacher practice	Unclear description of implication	Not Included
Key References	1-2 Key References included	1 Key reference	Not Included
APA format	Correct use of in-text citations and references.	Minor 1-3 errors with in-text citations or references.	No APA present

Appendix C

Rubric - Final Action Research Paper – 35 points

Exemplary 3-5 points	Developing 1 point	Unacceptable Zero points
Title Page – all Elements included 3pts	1-2 Elements missing	Missing
Abstract – all Elements included 3 pts	1-2 Elements missing	Missing
Table of Contents – All main headings included and pagination is correct 3pts	1-3 Errors	Missing
Introduction includes 3 sub sections in Outline – Part 1,2,3 3 pts	1 Subsection missing	Missing

	Exemplary 3-5 points	Developing 1 point	Unacceptable Zero points
	Conceptual Framework includes all elements in Part 1 – theory of action and Part 2 – theoretical grounding 3pts	Missing Part 1 or 2	Missing
	Literature Review A minimum of 12 relevant articles are reviewed (note: articles relevance is made clear through the creation of clear topic areas that guide reader to understand gaps in the literature) 3 pts	A minimum of nine articles are included, but 2-3 are not clearly related to the rationale for the study.	Fewer than 12 articles reviewed.
	Methodology All 4 parts in project outline included in paper 4 pts	1 or 2 parts missing	Missing

Exemplary 3-5 points	Developing 1 point	Unacceptable Zero points
Findings include Part 1 & 2 in Outline 5 pts	1 part missing	Missing
Conclusion and Implications included Part 1 and Part 2 as noted in Outline 5 pts	1 part missing	Missing
Adhered to APA style throughout the majority of the chapter including reference section – no errors 3 pts	Minor errors 1-3 with APA style.	Consistent errors 4-6 or more errors in APA style throughout paper (e.g., consistent errors with headings)

🏛 University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (PDF) (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the Syllabus Information (https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

📅 Course Schedule

EDSE 220 Schedule Spring 2025

Week	Topics	Assignments and Readings
January 22 Asynchronous	Work on the final paper edits from EDSE 285 last semester	
January 29 In-Person	Introduction to Syllabus Review Methods Section Lecture – Title Page, Table of Contents, References APA review	
February 5 Asynchronous	Individual Meetings/Check in	**Implement your action research** Due: Feb 8: Detailed Revised Methods Section
February 12 In-Person	Data collection APA review	**Due: Final Title Page** **Due: References & Appendices** **Read:** Sagor & Williams, Chapter 7
February 19 Asynchronous	Individual Meetings – Discuss method, data collection and analysis	

February 26 In-Person	Data Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis Write up of Results section, Limitations, Tables and Figures APA review	**Due: Mar 1 Final 285 paper** **Read:** Sagor & Williams, Chapter 8 **Read:** APA pgs. 200-207; 232;243
March 5 Asynchronous	Individual Meetings-discuss possible results/iterations/limitations	**Implement your action research**
March 12 In-Person	Lecture – Conclusions, Implications, Future Research APA review	**Read:** Sagor & Williams, Chapter 9
March 19 Asynchronous	Writing Week - Conclusions, Implications, Future Research	
March 26 In-Person	Lecture – Abstract Content Practice – Abstract Write up Lecture – Preparation/Outline of AR Presentation – Celebration of Learning Event Peer Review - Abstract Review of Final Project Template and Content	**Due: Mar 29:** Draft version of Results, Limitations, any tables or figures Read: APA 73-74
April 2 Spring Break	April 2 Spring Break	April 2 Spring Break

April 9 In-Person	Final Paper	Due April 7: Draft version of conclusions, implications and future research Due: April 12: Abstract
April 23 Asynchronous	Individual Meetings	Due: April 19 Draft of final paper
April 30 In-Person	Practice – Presentation of AR project to classmates	*Due: Draft of Presentation to class for peer review and edits* Due May 3: Table of Contents
May 8 In-Person	Celebration of Learning/Poster Session in Department	Due: Presentation
May 14	Final Exam	Due: Final Thesis