Researching Professional Practice: Tensions and Issues in Action Research, 7,5 Rec

Postgraduate studies

Studera en professionell praktik: Dilemman i aktionsforskning7,5 hp

Forskarnivå

1. Confirmation

The syllabus was confirmed by the Faculty Board of Educational Sciences on 2010-02-20 to be valid from spring semester 2010.

Field of Education: Educational Sciences

Responsible department: Department of Education and Special education

2. Position in the educational system

The course (Researching Professional Practice: Tensions and Issues in action Research), 7,5 higher education credits, is a single subject course in the PhD programme within the Faculty of Educational Sciences.

3. Entrance qualifications

To enter the course students have to be registered in a PhD programme in Educational Sciences

4. Course content

This course considers the nature of professional practice, and different ways of researching professional practice. In particular, it will explore tensions and issues, such as the role of the researcher, ethical issues and issues concerning validity and trustworthiness, when researching professional practice.

On each day of the course, leading researchers exploring professional practice will introduce two or three pre-circulated papers (or chapters) they have written, and they will
then respond to doctoral candidates’ comments and criticisms. In addition, candidates in the course will present progress reports on their own research, relating the substance of their research to the ideas and concepts explored in the different texts provided, allowing them critically to interrogate their own work and their own understandings of professional practice in the fields they are investigating.

The authors invited to participate in the course have been chosen because they have been active contributors to recent research and scholarship about the nature of professional practice and research into professional practice.

5. Learning outcomes

At the conclusion of the course, the students will
- more deeply understand the diversity of views about the nature of professional practice,
- more deeply understand the strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches to the study of professional practice, including tensions and issues in action research,
- more critically be able to analyse and discuss theoretical and practical discourses in the field, and
- be better able to relate their own research to different perspectives on practice and research into practice, and be better able to justify the choice of approaches to studying practice appropriate to different needs and circumstances.

6. Required reading

List of required reading enclosed in Appendix A

7. Assessment

Assessment will be based on course leaders’ evaluations of candidates’ contributions to the course, taking into account
- A presentation of each candidate’s own research – an oral presentation of a progress report on their research supported by a brief written report to the course leaders (which candidates may distribute to co-participants in the course if they wish);
- A written reflection about the concepts used in the texts (and arising in discussion) in relation to the candidate’s own research, submitted within two weeks of the conclusion of the course (the reflections of those participants who agree to share them will be circulated to all participants);
- The responsibility candidates take for a variety of set tasks during the course, including leading critical discussion of a set chapter/article (including a response to the introduction given by the author of the text), chairing discussion groups and plenary sessions, and participating in evaluation of the course; and
- Candidates’ active participation in all course activities

8. Grading scale
The grades are Pass or Fail.

9. Course evaluation

An evaluation of the course will be conducted orally in the final session of the course, led by three doctoral candidates who will facilitate evaluation activities through the week and in the concluding session. At the end of the discussion, participating students will present an oral report of their discussions and views to the leaders. The results of the evaluation will be communicated to the students and will function as a guide for the development of the course. A short survey will be distributed to the doctoral students on the last day. A summary of the answers will be mailed back to the students within a week.

10. Additional information

The doctoral candidates will present and discuss their own ongoing research in a 45-minute session devoted to discussion of their research (aiming for 15 minutes presentation, 30 minutes discussion). For research presentations and additional discussions, candidates will work in groups of 10 or less (staying in one group for the week).

For discussions of pre-circulated readings with authors, candidates will meet in plenary session (the whole group), with nominated candidates chairing sessions and leading critical discussions.

The course will be held over five days, Monday October 7 to Friday October 13, 2011.

The course will be conducted in English.

There will be places in the course for up to 24 doctoral candidates who will be divided into working groups of about 8 participants.

Travel and accommodation are the responsibility of participants. The course organisers can assist with advice about accommodation options in Gothenburg.
The course will be held at the Department of Education and Special Education, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden

This course will be given in collaboration between the University of Gothenburg, Sweden and Charles Sturt University in Australia.

Course organisers:
Course contact: Professor and director of postgraduate studies Karin Rönnerman,
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Course contact: Professor Stephen Kemmis, School of Education, Charles Sturt
University, Locked Bag 588, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia. Email:
skemmis@csu.edu.au
Appendix A

6. Literature


Rönnerman, Karin (2005). Participant knowledge and the meeting of practitioners and researchers. Pedagogy, Culture and Society13 (3), 291-311. (20 s)


Additional literature of own choice in consultation with the course leader