

Action-Research Lab/Project

For **courses that are four (4) semester credit hours or more**, there is a term paper, **and generally an action-research lab/project as well.**

FOR ACTION-RESEARCH PROJECTS . . .

1. *Students can pick any topic of interest to you so long as it can be related in some way to the course topic.*

2. The action-research project a) is to make use of "real world" data; for example:

- observations in real world settings--in the course of taking action or engaging in professional practice;
- interviewing professionals/experts and/or lay people,
- gathering evidence from the internet about real world events and behaviors (e.g., one student looked for depictions of the "Karen Phenomenon" as part of his project for a course on racism and multiculturalism—and then analyzed these depictions for insights and questions for further study);
- analyzing videos from some realm of human behavior and/or professional practice and/or change effort.

3. The project focuses on qualitative methods, such as those emphasized in WISR's required research course, and consequently may often evolve and develop/change during the course of the study, in contrast to using standardized procedures set in stone.

4. Students ***must get faculty approval for your action-research lab/project, before starting it (from both Dr. Steve Pomerantz, Chair of WISR's IRB, and the faculty member supervising your work in the particular course in which the action-research project is required).*** For example, the student may need to give any people you interview an informed consent form to have them fill out and sign, and/or take steps to make sure the project provides some benefit to

any research participants (people they are observing, working with or interviewing, for example).

5. the recommended writing length is noted on the course home page (usually 8 - 10 for Master's students and 10-12 for Doctoral students)

6. generally, in the action-research project/lab term paper, the student:

a) describes and critically analyzes the methods of their action-research project (e.g., interviews with others, and/or observations and involvements in community or professional setting, or perhaps gathering data from first-hand information about people obtained online, such as videos of the behavior and views of people, and/or films that directly portray people's behavior, not just documentaries "telling" about behavior);

b) discusses and critically analyzes their data, including relating insights from the data, to other things they learned in the course and from any supplementary research they did (e.g., from readings or videos);

c) present and discuss the main results or insights from the project, along with recommendations for possible follow-up actions, and/or questions for further study and investigation.

For more details about action-research projects, go to:

<https://sites.google.com/wisr.edu/guide-to-wisrs-online-courses/online-courses/the-action-research-lab-the-irb>

{Note: in several 4-5 semester credit the student may be given a more specific term paper assignment—such as reflecting on what you learned in a course text. However, over 75% of the time your term paper will be on their self-designed action-research project.}