Drs. Susan Allen, Meagan Call-Cummings, Elizabeth DeMulder,
Dann Sklarew, Jessica Srikantia and Jenice L. View present:

Incorporating Action Research for Big Social, Ecological and Learning Impacts

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

D

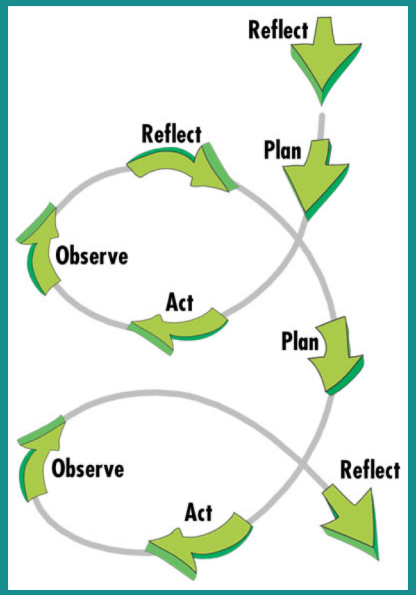
Overview

- What is Action Research?
- Who are we?
- How do we each use Action Research in our teaching?
- Multidisciplinary Action Research Course for CEHD, EVPP, S-CAR, SCHAR
- What opportunities do you see to strengthen Action Research at Mason?
- (Join us! Contact jview@gmu.edu)

S

What is Action Research?

- Democratic and participative knowledge creation to address issues of concern.
- Co-creation of knowing with people, not on or about people.



ources: http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ccar/images/action%20research.jpg ; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Systems_Model_of_Action-Research_Process.jpg ; ttp://celt.ust.hk/files/public/arcycle.jpg ; http://www.whataboutus.org.uk/make_a_difference/action_research_cycle/Action_research_cycle.jpg ; ttp://www.enquirylearning.net/ELU/Issues/Research/Res1Ch4A.GIF

How to use AR in classes? Impacts? Lessons?

- **Jenice L. View** (Graduate School of Education)
- **Jessica Srikantia** (Schar School of Policy & Gov.)
- **Betsy DeMulder** (GSE)
- **Meagan Call-Cummings** (GSE)
- **Susan Allen** (S-CAR)
- **Dann Sklarew** (Environmental Science & Policy)

Jenice View:

4th Grade Students

Classroom teacher

NPS Interpreters

PD researchers

Jenice View:

Learning Historic Places with Diverse Populations

Jessica Srikantia:

Teaching PAR building blocks

- Inner shifts
  - Relinquishing control
  - Comfort with ambiguity
  - Significance of 2nd order meanings/realities vs just content-level
  - Appreciating process vs only outcomes
- Outer challenges
  - institutional structures (e.g., dissertation requirements, deadlines for deliverables)
  - Social, cultural and institutional rewards for ownership/control

Jessica Srikantia:

Lessons and Challenges

- Shifts in mindset happen with scaffolding
- Ongoing mindfulness required to achieve AR at process level of practice
- AR invites learning new ways to relate in groups
- Outer pressures can create tendencies to default to outcome orientation, content over process, etc.

Betsy DeMulder:

Teacher Action Research: Improving Teaching & Learning

Process Starts with Intentional Questions:

- A problem from your classroom
- A puzzle or dilemma about the learning of a particular student or group of students
- A question you have about your teaching
- A situation that has arisen in your classroom
- How to develop and support particular learning qualities (e.g., motivation, engagement, etc.)

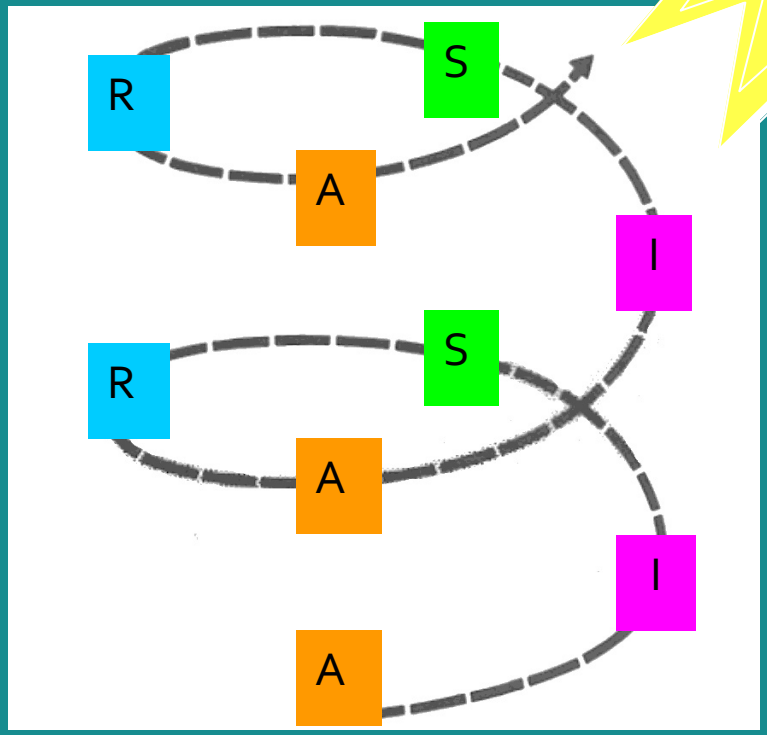
Betsy DeMulder:

ASSESS
need for a change or action
(Data Collection & Analysis)

IMPLEMENT
the change or action
(Try out new strategies)

STUDY
the results
(Data Collection & Analysis)

RETHINK
the need, the change, and the results
(Reflection & Dialogue)



Goal-to meet the learning needs of every child

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT THROUGH TEACHER ACTION RESEARCH

Meagan Call-Cummings:

"Teaching" PAR at CEHD

- Voices/experiences/expertise of historically marginalized should be meaningfully included at every step
- Each class section is different, depending on "community's" (students') interests
- Last year: "True Stories of Mason PhD Students"
- Goal: create more "empowering" PhD programs at Mason

Meagan Call-Cummings:

Local High School Community Action Group (CAG)

- Invited by principal to "build community"
- Working with teachers and students
- Data collection and analysis 2017-2018
- Finding: Ask the "hard" questions
- Action: Create space and time for courageous dialogue with people we don't know, don't understand, don't agree with
- Continue to collect data, iterative process
- PAR in schools is *hard*

Susan Allen:

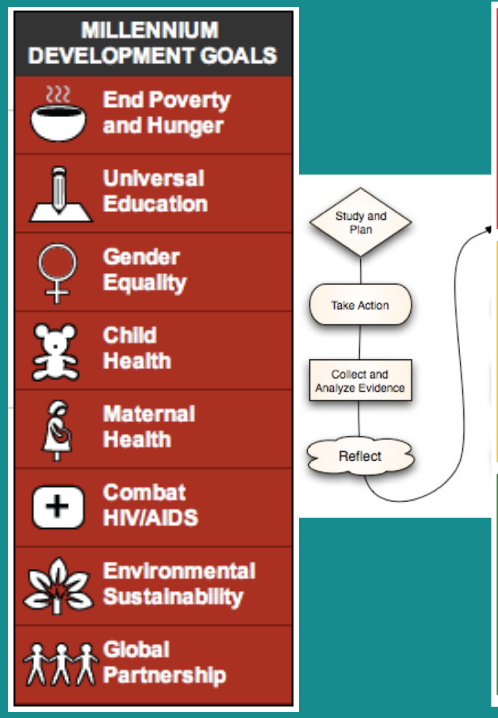
AR in Conflict Resolution

- Graduate Courses
  - Applied Practice and Theory Courses
  - Engaging Current Conflicts
- Doing conflict resolution practice with teams from across the conflict divides
- Recent Action Research Dissertations
  - Phil Gamaghelyan
  - Rochelle Arms

Dann Sklarew:

Think Global, Act Local Scale AR

2000-2015



2015-2030

Dann Sklarew:

Think Global, Act Local Scale AR

AR IMPACTS

- New recycling programs at Dick's, Red Bull, Starbucks, skate park and 4 mosques
- Students develop AR and project mgmt. skills
- Building subject matter experience/expertise

AR LESSONS LEARNED

- Problem/opportunity statement frames options
- Conceive of a "novum," test "Theory of Change"
- Fumbles and pivots normal
- Some projects realized across series of cohorts

Graduate AR Courses + Certificate

- AR for Social Change and/or Environmental Sustainability

- Fall Course: AR Theory and Practice
- Spring Course: Practicum

- Certificate planned to include the fall and spring course, plus three from home units.

Opportunities to strengthen AR @ Mason?

- What do you suggest?
- What opportunities do you see?

Want more Action Research?

To join our community,

please contact

Dr. Jenice L. View

jview@gmu.edu