

Qualitative / Visual Methods Exercise

- Drawing on readings about qualitative and visual research methods, have students reflect on how qualitative approaches (interviews, focus groups, observations, visual methods) might reveal aspects of inclusion, cultural responsiveness, or social context that quantitative methods miss.
- Optionally, students could plan a small-scale qualitative study — for example, draft interview or focus-group questions, or outline a visual/observational protocol appropriate for early childhood settings.

Focus-Group Simulation for Policy / Practice Insights

- In small groups, students pick a policy- or practice-relevant topic (e.g., access to intervention services for multilingual families; culturally responsive early childhood practices).
- Each group writes a clear research question, then sketches out a focus-group design: target participants, recruitment, facilitation questions, and how they will use findings to inform practice or policy.
- Then groups present their planned focus group to the class for peer feedback — refining the research question, methodology, and feasibility.

Single-Case Research Design (SCRD) Project

- Students choose an issue relevant to early childhood intervention/special education (e.g., evaluating a behavioral support, a teaching strategy, a coaching intervention).
- Draft an SCRD proposal: define the research problem, review relevant literature, state research questions or hypotheses; select an appropriate SCRD type (multiple baseline, ABAB, etc.) with justification.
- Describe participants, setting, dependent/independent variables; outline procedures for baseline/intervention phases, how data will be collected and analyzed (e.g., visual analysis, graphing), and how fidelity and social validity will be tracked.
- Address ethical and cultural considerations (informed consent, context sensitivity, feasibility) and produce a final written proposal (plus sample graphing template and reference list).

Mixed-Methods / Participatory Research Discussion & Design

- After reading about the benefits and challenges of combining quantitative and qualitative methods (or including participatory methods), students discuss: what are the advantages in early childhood intervention research? What are pitfalls? How to address those?
- Then students design a hypothetical mixed-methods or participatory research plan — combining, say, a survey with focus groups or observations — considering sampling, data integration, ethical and cultural responsiveness.

Sample Learning Activities: Advanced Research Methods

Translating Research to Practice & Policy — Implementation Plan / Presentation

- Using their own survey or SCR design (or existing published study), students develop a practice/policy translation plan. They identify target stakeholders (teachers, administrators, families), and design actionable steps for implementation.
- Create a professional presentation (e.g., 12–15 minutes) summarizing their research-to-practice plan, potential barriers, facilitators, and considerations related to sustainability, cultural/linguistic diversity, and feasibility in real-world settings.
- Encourage students to think about how research findings might influence early childhood intervention programs and policies.