



## Advice from a Self-Study Scholar

### Informal Self-Study Methods Demystify Research

I use informal self-study methods as a way of demystifying research. In my qualitative research course, students engage in and practice different methods of self-study research through “hands-on” activities. The informal activities raise students’ awareness about how we, as teachers and practitioners, are often reflecting on our work. The activities also help students see how their day-to-day wonderings and dilemmas of practice are excellent starting points for thinking about potential research questions. In the class we discuss how self-study involves systematically exploring the tensions of practice and the dilemmas we encounter. The activities are designed to scaffold student learning by providing guided assistance, which starts with the informal activities and moves on to examples of formal self-study research (Samaras & Freese, 2006). Instead of implementing theory to practice, we actually use practice as a way of making sense of theory.

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