

EDUC 622
Research Methods in Education
Summer 2002

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Office Hours:
Mondays 3:00-4:00
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A core course designed to introduce educational practitioners to the fields of educational research and evaluation. As such, it explores quantitative and qualitative methods of designing and conducting research and evaluation in the context of classroom settings. It further examines measurement, assessment, common statistical techniques and methods for critiquing research and program evaluation studies.

OBJECTIVES

Students will increase their:

- ability to critique education research
- understanding of various research methodologies
- knowledge of education research
- skills in planning research; and
- ability to summarize and interpret research.

TEXTBOOKS

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

Charles, C. M. (1998). *Introduction to Educational Research*. New York: Longman.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Foorman, B. R., Francis, D.J., Fletcher, J.M., Schatschneider, C., & Mehta, P. (1998). The role of instruction in learning to read: Preventing reading failure in at-risk children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 90, 1-15.

Pritchard, R. H. (1990). The effects of cultural schemata on reading processing strategies, *Reading Research Quarterly*, 25, 273-295.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. JOURNAL CRITIQUES

50 POINTS

Write a one page critique of each journal article listed above. Create a visual representation of the methodology section and put it on a large piece of paper to display in class.

2. FINAL PAPER

Chapter 1	50 POINTS
Chapter 2	50 POINTS
Chapter 3	50 POINTS
Presentation	50 POINTS

The final paper assignment is to write or revise the first three chapters of a thesis in *APA format*. You will give a 10 minute presentation of your paper *highlighting the methodology (Chapter Three)* at the end of the semester. Each chapter must be peer reviewed by two classmates.

Master Thesis/Project Guidelines

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION/FOCUS OF THE THESIS/PROJECT

This chapter will define the research or project focus. Explain what you hope to accomplish in your thesis/project. What issue is to be addressed? Definitions of terms must be very clear. Do not assume that your reader knows what you mean when you use educational jargon.

Thoughts for the Writer/Reader:

- Are terms and definitions clear?
- Is it clear what the focus of the research will be? One of two formats should be used:
1) The research shows X, Y, and Z, but it doesn't show _____. -or- 2) This research will help build upon the research of X, Y, and Z by _____.
- Is the question *very* clear? Do you understand exactly what the author hopes to find?
- Is the chapter written in present tense? (With the exception of citations of other research; use past tense or present perfect tense for these--see APA)

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter will put the research or project in context with what is already known. Review what is currently known (and not known) about the issue. Where is the field in

terms of what is happening with the topic? Put your project/issue into a theoretical context. What theories/ principles are you basing your projection? What are your assumptions? The review of the literature puts the project in perspective and lets the reader know why the project is of significance. It also provides a *critical analysis* of the research.

Thoughts for the Writer/Reader:

- Is all the research discussed relevant to the question presented in Chapter One?
- Do you understand the essential elements of the each article cited? Did the author provide information on the methodology, subjects, and conclusions of each article? Did the author mention strengths and weaknesses of the research?
- Are the majority of the articles from professional, peer reviewed journals?
- Is the chapter written in past tense?

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research or project designs and data collection. How will the research/project be conducted? Why did you select that design? What must be done in order for you to accomplish your goals? In the introduction to this Chapter, cite Charles identifying the methodology you have selected and a clear rationale for using that methodology.

Thoughts for the Writer/Reader:

- Are descriptions of the methodology specific enough that someone could replicate?
- Is it clear who did what and when? Is it clear how these decisions were made?
- Whenever possible, did the author use examples of classroom scenarios, student work, teacher lesson plans, etc.?
- Is the chapter written in past tense?

If a project, did the author list conclusions from the review of literature and list specifically how those conclusions will be implemented into the final project?

General Guidelines for Peer Review:

- APA format should be followed. Read APA for important information on such things as spacing, margins, etc.
- Give the author specific feedback on what you understood and what you didn't understand
- Think about how well the chapter holds together. Does it all seem relevant/necessary? Could any parts be cut?
- Is it clear? Does it all make sense? What needs clarification?
- Is there a clear and easy to follow organization? Are large pieces of text broken up? Are there appropriate subheadings?
- Is the theoretical orientation of the writer clear?
- Is there a summary and/or a concluding paragraph? This should be a transition to what will follow.

- Are all necessary terms defined? (Assume someone familiar with education will be the reader, but do not assume that they will understand all professional jargon).
- Did the author use spell check?
- Did the author cite properly? Are all citations in the reference page? Anything that is quoted needs a page number. Quotes longer than five lines are set apart by single spacing and indenting both margins.
- Are there too many or too few quotes? Many times it is preferable to paraphrase and then cite an author.
- As much as possible, did the author find the original source and cite them (rather than citing what someone else cited). However, if the author used a secondary source, did he or she follow the guidelines?
- Did the author use proper tense? APA suggests different tenses for different chapters. The main thing to remember is to be consistent within chapters.

4. ATTENDANCE

100 POINTS

Points for overall attendance and participation will be determined at the end of the semester.

COE Attendance Policy

*Due to the dynamic and interactive nature of courses in the College of Education, all students are expected to attend all classes and participate actively. At a minimum, students must attend more than 80% of class time, or student **may not receive a passing grade** for the course at the discretion of the instructor. Individual instructors may adopt more stringent attendance requirements. Should the student have extenuating circumstances, s/he should contact the instructor*

IMPORTANT: You cannot receive an "A" if you miss more than two classes. You cannot receive a "B" if you miss more than three classes.

Grading Scale (based on percentages of the above points):

100-94	A
93-91	A-
90-88	B+
87-84	B
83-81	B-
80-71	C