

**California State University San Marcos
College of Education**

**EDUC 622: Research Methods in Education
Spring 2007
Section 2, CRN # 21257**

Instructor: Suzanne Moineau, Ph.D.
Office: University Hall, 323
Phone: (760) 750-8505
Office Hours: Thursday 4:00-5:00; Thursday -- after 8:15; or by appt.
E-Mail: smoineau@csusm.edu
Class Meeting times/Location: Thursday, 5:30-8:15pm, UH 440

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the College of Education Community is to collaboratively transform public education by preparing thoughtful educators and advancing professional practices. We are committed to diversity, educational equity, and social justice, exemplified through reflective teaching, life-long learning, innovative research, and ongoing service. Our practices demonstrate a commitment to student centered education, diversity, collaboration, professionalism, and shared governance. *(adopted by COE Governance Community October, 1997)*

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.

Course Objectives

This course enables students to become effective, confident consumers of research and evaluation by providing a foundation of knowledge in the area of research methods that will enable them to read research and program evaluation reports with enough understanding to determine a study's merits. In addition, students will write a research proposal for a thesis or project that will fulfill the requirements for earning a Masters in Education. Therefore students will:

- critique educational research
- understand various research methodologies
- gain knowledge of education research
- be able to summarize and interpret research
- gain knowledge of descriptive statistics
- gain knowledge of statistical techniques
- develop a research proposal that will serve as a draft for a Master thesis or project
- utilize APA style writing and citation

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Writing: In keeping with the All-University Writing Requirement, all 3 unit courses must have a writing component of at least 2,500 words (approximately 10 pages) which can be administered in a variety of ways.

Appeals: Every student has the right to appeal grades, or appeal for redress of grievances incurred in the context of any course. Disputes may be resolved informally with the professor, or through the formal appeal process. For the latter, consult Dr. P. Kelly, Associate Dean.

Ability: Every student has the right to equitable educational consideration and appropriate accommodation. Students having differing ability (mobility, sight, hearing, documented learning challenges, first language/English as a second language) are requested to contact the professor at the earliest opportunity. Every effort will be made to accommodate special needs. Students are reminded of the availability of Disabled Student Services, the Writing Center, technology assistance in the computer labs, and other student support services available as part of reasonable accommodation for special needs students.

Students with Disabilities Requiring Reasonable Accommodations. Students are approved for services through the Disabled Student Services Office (DSS). This office is located in Craven Hall 5205, and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, or TTY (760) 750-4909. Students authorized by DSS to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with their instructor during office hours or, in order to ensure confidentiality, in a more private setting.

CSUSM ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

“Students will be expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty and integrity, as outlined in the Student Academic Honesty Policy. All written work and oral assignments must be original work. All ideas/materials that are borrowed from other sources must have appropriate references to the original sources. Any quoted material should give credit to the source and be punctuated with quotation marks.

Students are responsible for honest completion of their work including examinations. There will be no tolerance for infractions. If you believe there has been an infraction by someone in the class, please bring it to the instructor’s attention. The instructor reserves the right to discipline any student for academic dishonesty in accordance with the general rules and regulations of the university. Disciplinary action may include the lowering of grades and/or the assignment of a failing grade for an exam, assignment, or the class as a whole.”

COLLEGE 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 s/he **may not receive a passing grade** for the course at the discretion of the instructor. Individual instructors may adopt more stringent attendance requirements. (Additionally, six points will be subtracted for every day of absence.) Should the student have extenuating circumstances, s/he should contact the instructor as soon as possible. (Adopted by the COE Governance Community on 12/19/97)

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

The course deals with complex material processed in a variety of ways. Structured interactions, group processes, oral presentations, guided discussion of readings, and self-disclosure exercises are the norm. **Students are expected to have read assigned materials by the date indicated in the syllabus, and should be prepared to discuss readings individually or in variously structured groups.** The degree of your engagement in these processes forms the basis for points assigned. Due to the fast paced and highly interactive nature of the course, regular attendance and full participation are expected: teaching and learning is difficult (if not impossible) if one is not present for and engaged in the process. Therefore, the above College Attendance Policy is amplified as follows: 1. Missing more than 2 class meetings will result in the reduction of one letter grade. 2. Arriving late or leaving early on more than two occasions will result in the reduction of one letter grade. 3. Illness and emergency circumstances will be considered/negotiated on a case-by-case basis. These measures should not be considered punitive, as students are expected to establish appropriate personal, academic and career-ladder priorities. Therefore these measures should be viewed as taking appropriate individual responsibility for one's own learning in a democratic, collaborative and reciprocal-learning environment.

GRADING STANDARDS

Grading Scale:

- A = 90 -100 points
- B = 80 - 89 points
- C = 70 - 79 points
- D = 60 - 69 points

Submission Schedule: Work submitted late, but within one week of the due date will be reduced by one letter grade. Work received over one week late receives no credit.

Grading Emphasis: Each written assignment will be graded approximately 80% on content (detail, logic, synthesis of information, depth of analysis, etc.), and 20% on mechanics (grammar, syntax, spelling, format, uniformity of citation, etc.). All citations, where appropriate, will use APA format. Consult Library Services for the *Manual of Citation of the American Psychological Association*, or <www.apastyle.org/index.html>

REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS

Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasia, P. (2006). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*. Columbus, Ohio: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall. (Eighth Edition).

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th edition*. Washington, DC: APA.

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Other research articles as assigned.

NOTE: Assigned texts and readings **MUST** be brought to **ALL** class sessions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments:

All assignments are due on the dates indicated. Assignments must be typewritten/word processed, double-spaced and with standard margins. It is expected that all assignments will reflect university-level composition and exposition. Use of electronic spelling and grammar

checking is encouraged. Students who are not doing a traditional thesis must discuss possible alternatives with the instructor as soon as possible.

1. Summary/Presentation of Problem	100 points
2. Section 2 – Literature Review	100 points
3. Section 1 – Introduction	100 points
4. Section 3 – Methodology	100 points
5. Research Proposal	300 points
6. Presentation of Proposal	100 points

1. Summary/Presentation of the Problem (100 points)

You will be required to present both a written and oral summary of the current problem that you see in the field of education, that you are interested in exploring. The written summary should be a brief synthesis of at least 5 journal articles that address the current topic that are you interested in exploring. This synthesis should explain what the general area of investigation is, what has been found, what remains to be found, and where you think you will go with the research question. You will come to class and present a **strict 5 minute (no longer)** explanation of what you found and where you are going.

2. Section 2 –Literature Review (100 points)

The purpose of the literature review is to 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 work into a theoretical context. What theories/ principles are you basing your project on? 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. **You must have at least 10 relevant peer-reviewed articles for this draft.**

Criteria:

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

3. Section 1 – Introduction/Statement of the Problem (100 points)

Define the research question/problem or project focus. What issue is to be addressed? Why is this issue critical to the field of education? Explain what you hope to accomplish in your thesis/project. Articulate how this research will fill a need in education and who might benefit from this work. Definitions of terms must be very clear. Do not assume that your reader knows what you mean when you use educational jargon. You must use APA format.

Criteria:

- Are terms and definitions clear?
- Is the question *very* clear? Do you understand exactly what the author hopes to find?
- Is the section written in present tense? (With the exception of citations of other research; use past tense or present perfect tense for these--see APA)

4. Section 3 – Methodology (100 points)

The Methodology section describes the research or project design and data collection. How will the research/project be conducted? What must be done in order for you to accomplish your goals? In the introduction to this section, you must cite research that supports using the

methodology you have selected and a clear rationale for using that methodology.

Criteria:

- 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 section written in future tense?
- Think about how well the section holds together. Does it all seem relevant and necessary? Could any parts be cut?
- Does it all make sense? What needs clarification?
- Is there a clear and easy to follow organization? Are large pieces of text broken up with subheadings? Are the subheadings indicative of the content?
- 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 indenting both margins.
- Are there too many or too few quotes? Most 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 sections. The main thing to remember is to be consistent within sections.

5. Research Proposal (300 points)

The final paper assignment is to write or revise drafts of a research proposal in the form of the first three sections of a thesis/project in APA format. ***[PLEASE NOTE: This proposal should be considered a draft of your thesis/project to be written with the guidance of your thesis/project advisor – it is NOT your actual thesis – it is an exercise that teaches you about research. Final approval comes from your thesis advisor.]*** The paper should be approximately 10 pages in length. For each of the three sections, you will have them peer reviewed by two classmates before a review by the professor.

Research Proposal Outline

Title

Table of Contents

Section 1 – Introduction to Study/Statement of the Problem

Section II – Review of Literature

Section III – Methodology

Subjects/Participants

Materials

Design/Procedure

Analysis

References

APA FORMAT: You will be expected to follow APA for the following:

	<i>5th Edition</i>
Title page	p. 10, 306
Levels of headings	p. 113, 307-8
Page numbers & headers	p. 12, 288
Writing numbers	p. 122
Citations in text	p. 207-214
Reference Page	p. 215-281, 313
Block Quotes	p. 121, 117-119

6. Presentation of Proposal (100 points)

Presentations will be made during the last 2 classes. You will be expected to give a 10-minute presentation of your research and articulate the action plan you will follow to complete your thesis. You will be expected to highlight the methods that you will use to carry out your research.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

(This schedule is tentative subject to negotiated changes in response to class demands)

ASSIGNMENTS ARE TO BE COMPLETED FOR THE DATE SPECIFIED

DATE	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	ASSIGNMENT
Session 1 1/25/07	<i>Introductions, Course overview (review syllabus;), Research interests, Question Development; An Introduction to the Research Process</i>	Chapter 1 – together in class
Session 2 2/1/07	<i>Selecting and Defining a Research Topic; Preparing and Evaluating a Research Plan; (structure of a literature review – examples from readings)</i>	Chapters 2 & 3 Be thinking about 2-3 topics you may pursue for your proposal in this class.
Session 3 2/8/07	Library Meeting <i>We will meet in the library for a tutorial on how to use the search engines/how to do a literature review</i>	Arrive with 5 possible research questions in mind – you will be researching them. You SHOULD leave the library with at least 5 articles on the topic you are interested in.
Session 4 2/15/07	<i>Summary and Presentation of the problem you are investigating</i>	5 minute presentations on the problem. Summary of the problem, and prepared presentation Due
Session 5 2/22/07	<i>Selecting a Sample and Measuring Instruments; Discussion of APA; looking at literature together</i>	Chapters: 4 & 5
Session 6 2/29/07	<i>Qualitative Methods: Overview and Data Collection Peer-review of Section Two</i>	Chapters: 14 & 15: First Draft Section Two with cover page (2 hard copies)
Session 7 3/8/07	Library Time	Work on revisions of Section Two based on peer-reviewed feedback
Session 8 3/15/07	<i>Qualitative Methods: Narrative & Ethnographic Research</i>	Chapters: 16, 17: Second Draft of Section Two to be turned in to professor in class (1 hard copy)
Session 9 3/22/07	<i>Qualitative Methods: Data Analysis; Action Research Peer-review Section One</i>	Chapters 18 & 20: First Draft Section One with cover page (2 hard copies)
3/29/07	Spring Break	Work on revisions of Section One based on peer-reviewed feedback
Session 10 4/5/07	<i>Quantitative Methods: Descriptive, Correlational, and Causal-Comparative Research</i>	Chapters 6-8: Second Draft of Section Two to be turned in to professor in class (1 hard copy)

Session 11 4/12/07	<i>Quantitative Methods: Experimental Research, Single-Subject Research</i>	Chapters: 9 & 10: First Draft Section Two with cover page (2 hard copies)
Session 12 4/19/07	<i>Quantitative Methods: Descriptive & Inferential Statistics; Post-analysis</i> <i>IRB</i>	Chapters: 11-13
Session 13 4/26/07	<i>Presentations</i>	Final draft of Sections 1-3 to be turned in with cover and reference pages to professor during class (1 hard copy)
Session 14 5/3/07	<i>Presentations</i>	
Session 15 5/10/07	No Class – CNS conference	

Course Grading Criteria

1. Distinguished Category (Grade of A). Reserved for exceptional students. The student is superior in all areas of writing, presentations, and participation. Required research and assignments are superior in both content and writing with outstanding observations and explanations; use of complex, strong vocabulary, appropriate use of APA form and style. Student demonstrates scholarly demeanor, and interest in learning beyond the standard expectation. All papers are turned in on time and the student is actively present during entire class sessions.
2. Commendable Category (Grade of B). Very good in all areas producing the expected reports, writings, and presentations. The assignments are turned in on time.
3. Acceptable or Average Category (Grade of C). Performance is acceptable and meets the minimum requirements.
4. Unacceptable (Grade of F). Absences, late arrival and early departure from class, lack of active participation, student does not demonstrate adequate knowledge of the subject matter. Assignments are not turned in on time.

Research Proposal Grading Criteria

All written work must be in APA format.

90-100 The paper contains all required sections and attempts to answer the inquiry question posed by the author. The author demonstrates ease and facility in expressing ideas, observations, and feelings. The writing flows smoothly and naturally, and is understandable. The author stays on topic. The writing shows development of ideas that are interesting or provocative and creates a vivid image of thoughts or feelings through the use of details. The writing demonstrates insightful and reflective thinking. The author appropriately synthesizes the literature and presents a well constructed literature review. Appropriate references for all work/ideas attributed to others. The author observes all elements of APA rules.

80-89 The paper contains all required sections and attempts to answer the inquiry question posed by the author. The author demonstrates ease and facility in expressing ideas, observations, and feelings. The writing flows smoothly and naturally, and is understandable. The author generally stays on topic. The writing shows development of ideas that are interesting or provocative but may not create a vivid image of thoughts or feelings. The author explores ideas, but may be unwilling to take risks or to reshape his or her thoughts. The writing may demonstrate insightful and reflective thinking that is implied or stated. The author observes most elements of APA rules.

70-79 The paper contains all required sections and attempts to answer the inquiry question posed by the author. The author demonstrates proficiency in expressing ideas, observations, and feelings. The writing is generally understandable and coherent, but lacks complete coherence. The main idea may shift and be difficult to follow. He or she develops ideas in a somewhat predictable fashion but shows some exploration of thoughts. The author may attempt to convey interesting ideas or vivid images, but fails to develop ideas fully. The writing may show some evidence of insightful and reflective thinking. Incomplete referencing or lack of referencing when appropriate. The author observes some elements of APA rules.

65-69 The paper contains some of the required sections and attempts to answer the inquiry question posed by the author. The author develops few ideas and thoughts, and has difficulty expressing his or her ideas in a fluent manner. The author may construct rambling sentences or lists of ideas, is sometimes confused, and frequently presents an unfocused collection of generalized details. He or she makes weak or ineffective attempts to explore or create vivid impressions. The writing rarely shows evidence of insightful or reflective thinking. Science/math/technology education implications implications of study are unclear. Use of APA rules is haphazard.

60-65 There is limited evidence that the paper contains some of the required sections and attempts to answer the inquiry question posed by the author. The author demonstrates halting, fragmented expression of ideas resulting in unconnected and somewhat incoherent writing. It is brief, thin or insubstantial. Ideas and thoughts are barely developed and the author often relies on merely the title or a single word. There is little or no exploration of ideas. The author shows little or no evidence of insightful or reflective thinking.

<60 There is little or no evidence that the paper contains some of the required sections and attempts to answer the inquiry question posed by the author. The author demonstrates little or no evidence of fluency and little or no coherence. The writing may be garbled and impossible to understand, except for occasional words or phrases. The author relies on the title or a single word without development of ideas or thoughts.