



Research Methods in Education
Ed 622 Course Syllabus

Fall 2002

Wednesday 7:30 - 10:15
University Hall 442

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Mission of the College of Education at CSUSM. 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 on-going service. Our practices demonstrate a commitment to student-centered education, diversity, collaboration, professionalism and shared governance.

(adopted by COE Governance Community, October 1997)

Authorization to Teach English Learners. This credential program has been specifically designed to prepare teachers for the diversity of languages often encountered in California public school classrooms. The authorization to teach English learners is met through the infusion of content and experiences within the credential program, as well as additional coursework. Students successfully completing this program receive a credential with authorization to teach English learners.

(approved by CCTC in SB 2042 Program Standards, August 02)

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.

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

Attendance Policy: Due to the dynamic and interactive nature of course in the COE, 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. If two class sessions are missed, or if the student is late (or leaves early) more than three sessions, s/he cannot receive a grade of "A". If three class sessions are missed, the highest possible grade that can be earned is a "C+". If extenuating circumstances occur, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is 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 good 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. Therefore students will:

- Develop a working understanding of research methods and designs for educational settings;
- Learn formal and informal approaches to classroom assessment that can be applied to improve pedagogy and enhance accountability;
- Enhance their practical understanding of both quantitative and qualitative research methods (descriptive statistics, ethnography, case studies, etc.);
- Be able to analyze the strengths and limitations of educational research studies;
- Be able to refer to appropriate sources to find the answers to research and evaluation problems and produce a comprehensive review of the literature; and
- Design and conduct an original research project.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Educational Research Fundamentals for the Consumer, third edition by James H. McMillan, but many sources will be used to cover the weekly topics.

Publication Manual of the American Psychology Association, Fourth Edition.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Journal Article - Read, review and summarize **one journal article**, reporting primary research. Papers should be no more than two pages, 1 inch margins, 12 font, Times New Roman. Include name of journal, authors and title of article. Include research problem, highlights of the literature review, elements of the research design/methodology and describe the findings of the research and why those findings are important to educators. Include three questions you have about the research. Observe APA guidelines. (10 pts)

Due September 25

2. ERIC Search - Collect 20 abstracts on **a topic** and turn in a summary of the abstracts. Papers should be no more than two pages, 1 inch margins, 12 font, Times New Roman. Attach abstracts. (10 pts)

Due October 2

3. Submission of Research Problem – Write a succinct, focused paragraph describing your research problem. For those pursuing a Master’s in Educational administration, your research problem must have leadership implications. For those pursuing a Master’s in other areas, your research problem must have relevance and import to your chosen field. Apply the “so what” test. (5 pts)

Due October 9

4. Literature Review - Do a Lit Review on **a topic**, utilizing primary research – Prepare a review of no more than 5 pages, 1 inch margins, 12 font, Times New Roman (15 pts). Include a minimum of 10 sources from at least 7 different authors. Observe APA guidelines. Attach a reference page at the end of the review. This page can be the sixth page of your paper.

Due October 30

5. Research Proposal - Prepare a formal research proposal as part of the class (35 pts)

Due November 20:

1. Introduction (intro to topic, research question, rationale)
2. Review of Literature
3. Methodology
4. Bibliography
5. Appendices
 - ◆ Time Schedule
 - ◆ Budget
 - ◆ Instruments

6. Presentation-Present proposal (10 pts)

Due December 11

Class Participation – Students are expected to prepare and contribute their insights and questions to the conversations during class. (15 points)

GRADING CRITERIA:

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

CLASS MEETING ASSIGNMENTS

The primary text, *Educational Research*, contains the core information that will be the subject of class activities. Students are encouraged to prepare short answers to questions at the end of each chapter. Students are encouraged to independently respond to the sample test questions at the end of each chapter and, after scoring using the appendices, use the result of the “quiz” to review chapter material as needed. Internet sources will also be noted in the syllabus.

At times, a class meeting assignment will note a “special emphasis.” These topics are considered crucial to successfully “consuming” research and to the successful completion of a master’s thesis.

September 4

Introduction, Syllabus, Course Overview

When the only tool you own is a hammer; every problem begins to resemble a nail.

Abraham Maslow

September 11

Introduction to Research in Education

Entities must not be multiplied beyond what is. A problem should be stated in its basic and simplest terms.

William of Occam (1284-1347)

Chapter 1 and 2 Chapter 13, pp.304-308

Special emphasis: “scientific inquiry,” “quantitative and qualitative” research, variables, research problem, hypothesis.

September 18

Locating and Reviewing Related Literature: Brick and Mortar and Internet

A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.

- James Madison

Chapter 3 and 4
CDE Website
WestEd Website
ERIC

Special emphasis: purposes of literature review, primary and secondary sources

September 25 Assignment 1 Due
Subjects, Participants and Sampling

It is easy to be honest enough not to be hanged. To be really honest means to subdue one's prepossessions, ideals -- stating things fairly, not humoring your argument -- doing justice to your enemies . . . making confession whether you can afford it or not; refusing unmerited praise; looking painful truths in the face.

Aubrey De Vere, 1897

Chapter 5, Chapter 13, pp. 309-322

October 2 Assignment 2 Due
Protection of Human Subjects – Dr. Gina Grimshaw

It is the lying at the top levels of our society that concerns me the most because morality, like water and unlike money, really does trickle down. I am concerned that some at the top have adopted a concept that lying for the higher good is all right--that dishonesty in the name of righteousness is just fine.

Jim Lehrer, June 12, 1989

October 9 Assignemnt 3 Due
Types of Measures

Figures won't lie, but liars will figure.

Charles H. Grosvenor

Chapter 7

Special Emphasis: observations, interviews, questionnaires and tests

October 16
Foundations of Educational Measurements

There are two kinds of statistics, the kind you look up and the kind you make up

Rex Stout.

Chapter 6

Special Emphasis: Descriptive Statistics, Validity and Reliability

October 23 Assignment 4 Due
Nonexperimental Quatitative Research Designs

Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please.

Mark Twain

Chapter 8

Chapter 13 p.323-338

October 30

Experimental And Single Subject Research Designs

The degree of one's emotion varies inversely with one's knowledge of the facts -- the less you know, the hotter you get.

Bertrand Russell

Chapter 9

Chapter 13, pp. 323-338

Due: Lit Review

November 6

Analyzing Statistical Inferences

Education is what you get from reading the fine print. Experience is what you get for not reading it.

Anonymous

Chapter 10

November 13 Assignment 5

I have little patience with scientists who take a board of wood, look for its thinnest part, and drill a great number of holes where drilling is easy.

Albert Einstein

Special Topics Based on Student Need and Interest

November 20

Qualitative Research Designs

If language is not correct, then what is said is not what is meant; if what is said is not what is meant, then what must be done remains undone; if this remains undone, morals and art will deteriorate; if justice goes astray, the people will stand about in helpless confusion. Hence there must be no arbitrariness in what is said. This matters above everything.

Confucius

Chapter 11

November 27 – Individual Conferences

December 4

Analyzing Discussion and Conclusion

During the last century, and part of the one before, it was widely held that there was an unreconcilable conflict between knowledge and belief. The opinion prevailed among advanced minds that it was time that belief should be replaced increasingly by knowledge; belief that did not itself rest on knowledge was superstition, and as such had to be opposed. According to this conception, the sole function of education was to open the way to thinking and knowing, and the school, as the outstanding organ for the people's education, must serve that end exclusively.

Albert Einstein

Chapter 12

December 11 Assignment 6 Due and Presentations of Proposals Conclusion

Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts.

Sign hanging in Einstein's office at Princeton

SCORING FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Proposals will be holistically scored according to the following rubric. All written work must be in APA format. In order to receive 35 points, research proposals must receive a score of 5 or 6.

6= 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 uses lively and concrete language appropriate to the paper's purpose. The author clearly communicates the leadership implications of the proposed study. The author observes all elements of APA rules.

5= 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 communicates the leadership implications of the proposed study. The author observes most elements of APA rules.

4= 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. Leadership implications of study are vague. The author observes some elements of APA rules.

3= 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. Leadership implications of study are unclear. Use of APA rules is haphazard.

2= 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.

1 = 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.