

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

**EDUC 622: Research Methods in Education
Fall 2005
CRN 21966**

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Class Meeting times/Location: Monday, 5:300-8:15; Academic Hall 319

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
- be introduced to 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 1 class meeting 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 and context (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).

Other research articles assigned by the instructor.

OPTIONAL TEXT

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

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. Attendance and Participation	20 points
2. Conference attendance/data analysis	20 points
3. Journal Article Critique/Presentation	10 points
3. Research Proposal (Chs. 1-3)	50 points

1. Attendance and Participation. (20 points) As graduate students, you are expected to take an active role in class and class activities. The quality of this course rests on the quality of YOUR participation. Toward this end, you are expected to attend every class and participate fully in activities.

Please download the Latino Summit (SDCOE) and API (CDE) data sets for your school and/or district and bring to class on September 12, 2005. We will take time in class to examine this information. Please think in the following:

- Analyze the data for the strengths and challenges of the school and/or district.
- Compare the information in each data set—do they match or are there discrepancies?
- Tell the story behind the data—what story is the data telling? What story is missing?
- What is the focus from the data?
- What other information would you need or want in order to be able to make recommendations to the school, district, county, etc?

2. Conference Attendance/Analysis of Data. (20 points).

Part I. (Individual Assignment). For this assignment, you will need to attend the Border Pedagogy Conference scheduled for Saturday, September 24, 2005 in the Dome at Cal State San Marcos. (If unable to attend this conference due to other commitments, please speak with the instructor for an alternative assignment). You are expected to be an active participant during conference activities, which include “conversations that matter” about border education issues with educators from Tijuana. You will need to write a 2-3 page reflection on the day, to include your reaction to the event, the primary issues you see on border pedagogy, and what you learned of significance from your participation. You will need to make a hard copy of your reflection for each member of class to be distributed on Monday, October 3rd, 2005.

Part II (Group Assignment—up to 4). In groups of up to 4 students, you will be asked to conduct a preliminary analysis of the conference reflections. Each group of students will be required to submit a 6-10 page paper based on the preliminary analysis.

3. Journal Article Critique/Presentation. (10 points) (Group Assignment—up to 4)

Part 1: Review and critique one journal article distributed by professor. Write a 3-5 page paper based on your review and critique. Include name of journal, author(s), and title of the 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.

Part 2: Present highlights of the article to class. The presentation must cover all sections of the article and include time for discussion. You will have no more than 20 minutes for your presentation – please plan accordingly (Time limit may be reduced according to the number of presentations scheduled).

3. Thesis Proposal (50 points) (Individual Assignment—peer reviewed)

You will write the first three chapters of a thesis/project in APA format. This proposal should be considered a **draft** of your thesis/project to be written with the guidance of your thesis/project advisor. You will give a 10-minute presentation of your proposal to class, including an action plan for how you will complete your proposed research at the end of the semester. Each chapter must be peer-reviewed by two classmates.

Thesis Proposal Outline

Title

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction to Study

Statement of the problem
Purpose of the study and rationale
Research questions and hypotheses
Significance of the study and applications
Limitations
Definitions of terms

Chapter II – Review of Literature

Introduction
Subtopic Sections (at least 3)
Summary of literature review

Chapter III – Methodology

Introduction
Design
Subjects
Materials
Procedure
Analysis

References

CHAPTER ONE: DEFINITION OF PROBLEM

This chapter will 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.

Thoughts for the Writer/Reader for Chapter One:

- 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 _____.
- Are there a minimum of 5 citations?
- Has the author cited research that represents the field and is supportive of the research question?
- Is the research 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 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.

Thoughts for the Writer/Reader for Chapter Two:

- Is all the research discussed relevant to the question presented in Chapter One?
- Do you understand the essential elements of each research/article cited? Did the author provide information on the methodology, subjects, and conclusions of each research/article? Did the author identify the theoretical framework the research comes out of or is influenced by? Did the author mention strengths and weaknesses of the research?
- Are the majority of the articles from professional, peer reviewed journals?
- Are there any gaps in the research presentation? For example did the author talk about multiple intelligences and not mention work by Howard Gardner?
- Are there transitions between the research projects presented? Does the chapter flow and do the research citations build on each other? Is it clear how the research described in the literature review supports the research for this thesis?
- Is the chapter written in past tense?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter 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.

Thoughts for the Writer/Reader for Chapter Three:

- 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.?
- Are the following addressed: sampling, site, selection, in what ways is the author an insider/outsider with this sample/site data collection, analysis, validity, member checks, reciprocity, human subject review, who benefits/loses, study limitation, usefulness,
- Did the author explain the methodology choice and how the methodology is a good match for the research question?
- 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: (Please include the comments of your reviewers in your thesis. Each class member will do at least two (or more) reviews of theses.**

- APA format should be followed. Read APA for important information on such things as spacing, margins, headings, 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? Are there parts that seem floating and need support?
- 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 methodology clear and consistent?
- Is there an introduction/preview for each chapter?
- 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 40 words 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.
- Did the author use citations to their full potential, explaining how the citation is important to this study, or did the author just paste a quote in with no or little explanation?
- 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. Chapter 1 is in present tense, Chapter 2 can be present or past, Chapter 3 is in past tense. The main thing to remember is to be consistent within chapters.

Presentation and Action Plan

For the final class you will give a 10-minute presentation of your research and articulate the action plan you will follow to complete your thesis. Please be prepared with an evaluation instrument or process that you give the audience for your presentation.

To prepare for this address the following questions:

- Where are you in the research process?
What is completed and what still needs to be done?
- Outline your research agenda
- What is your next course of action?

- What is your timeline?
- What obstacles are in your way?
- How might you work through/around any possible obstacles?
- When did/will you submit your research proposal to the IRB?
- Have you chosen an advisor? Who?
- Have you chosen the rest of your thesis committee?
- When will you submit your Chapters 1, 2, &/or 3 to your advisor?
- Do you have a peer group to continue to serve as a writing group for your master project completion? If not start to identify who might be useful to you in this process. And approach them before the end of this class.
Your best support during this process will be your peers.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

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

DATE	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	READING ASSIGNMENT
Session 1 8/22/05	<i>Introduction to Educational Research</i> Community Building Syllabus Review Other Educational Research Books—in-class Presentations	Chs. 1 & 2 & 3
Session 2 8/29/05	<i>Planning the thesis/ Research Study:</i> <i>What is extant data? How can I use Extant data?</i> Research Question & Proposal	Readings in Class: Chs. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
Session 3 9/12/05	<i>Telling the story—examining issues/questions that matter</i> Ethics Qualitative Research Bring Data from Latino Summit/API—conduct preliminary analysis IRB Procedures & Process Research Question DUE	Ch. IRB Guidelines/Application---download from webpage Latino Summit/API data from your district/school
Session 4 9/19/05	<i>Peeling the onion</i> Presentations of Latino Summit/API findings	Chs: 4 & 5 & 13
Session 5 9/26/05	<i>Foundations of Research:</i> Measurement & Data Collection Journal Article Critique Due/Presentations	Chs: 14 & 15
Session 6 10/03/05	<i>Foundations of Research</i> Sampling & Validity Bring Extant Data from your school/district—discuss your data with group	Chs. 16 & 17
Session 7 10/10/05	<i>Research Methods</i> Experimental Research	Chs. 18
Session 8 10/17/05	<i>How does a literature review work?</i> <i>What is action research?</i>	Chs: 20
Session 9 10/17/05	<i>Action Research</i> Literature Review DUE	Chs. 21
Session 10 10/24/05	<i>Other Research Methods</i> Qualitative Research Article Presentation	Chs. 22
Session 11 10/31/05	<i>Research Methods</i> Mixed Methods Methodology Thesis chapter	Chs: 19

	DUE	
Session 12 11/06/05	<i>Analyzing the Data</i> Grounded Theory Constant Comparison	Grounded Theory Article: http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/grounded.html#a_gt_intro
Session 13 11/14/05	<i>Analyzing the Data</i> Qualitative Analysis	Labor Relations Article— Please copy
Session 14 11/21/05	Time for Completion of thesis proposal	
Session 15 11/28/05	Thesis Presentations Thesis Proposal DUE	
Session 16 12/05/05	Thesis Presentations Closure	