

California State University San Marcos
Research Methods in Education – EDUC 622
Fall 04 Mondays 5:30-8:15 p.m.

Dr. Kathy Norman
Office Hours:

311 University Hall
after class and by apt.

knorman@ csusm.edu
(760) 750-4314

Required Textbooks: How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education, 5th Edition
by J.R. Fraenkel and N.E. Wallen, McGraw Hill

Fundamentals of Descriptive Statistics
By Z.C. Holcomb, Pyczak Publishing

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association.

The Elements of Style.
by W. Strunk and E.B. White, New York: MacMillan

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 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)

COE 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.

In this course, several classes are held on WebCT. It is important to “attend” the WebCT classes and do the assignments as directed. It is also very important not to miss the “on-ground” classes. If two on-ground class sessions are missed, a student cannot receive a grade of “A”. If three class sessions are missed, the highest possible grade that can be earned is a “C”. Late arrivals and early departures each count as ½ absence. If extenuating circumstances occur, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements. Late assignments are

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.

E-mail

You must use your CSUSM e-mail account for this course.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce educational practitioners to the fields of educational research and evaluation. 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

Students will increase their:

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

Assessment of Course Objectives

| | |
|------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. INITIAL RESEARCH ARTICLES AND SUMMARY | 5% |
| 2. DISCUSSION ANSWERS & PARTICIPATION | 20% |
| 3. OBSERVATION | 10% |
| 4. INTERVIEWS | 10% |
| 5. VIDEOTAPING ANALYSIS | 10% |
| 6. JOURNAL ARTICLE CRITIQUE | 10% |
| 7. RESEARCH STUDY PRESENTATION | 10% |
| 8. RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND PRESENTATION | 25% |

Assessment 1

INITIAL RESEARCH ARTICLES AND SUMMARY

Bring copies (full text, not abstracts) of 3 articles about different research studies on a topic you are interested in. These should be from professional journals in education. Write one 1-2 page summary of the 3 articles and staple on top of the 3 articles. Be sure to put your name on the summary and to list the bibliographic information of each article (see APA book for proper format). These will be returned to you.

Assessment 2

DISCUSSION ANSWERS & PARTICIPATION

Each student will prepare 8 written reactions to assigned readings and class work. As with all written assignments, reactions must be word processed with correct spelling and grammatical usage. Each response should be approximately one page in length. Some of the discussions are “live,” meaning that the reactions are word-processed and brought to class on the due date. The other discussions are posted in discussion rooms on WebCT. In each discussion room, one team member is responsible for facilitating the discussion about the readings and the written reactions produced by team members. Every member of the team facilitates at least one of the discussions. Explicit requirements for each discussion entry will be provided prior to dates you should work on them.

Performance Criteria for Successful Participation of WebCT Discussions

- You agree with your teammates upon a deadline by which the reading reaction will be posted for others to read (e.g., sent by 9 p.m. on Monday evening) and a “window of time” after your postings during which you will engage in dialogue in your base team’s discussion room (e.g., from Wednesday at 4 p.m. through Saturday at 9 p.m.).
- You post your reading reaction on or before the posting deadline.
- You read all of your teammates’ reactions and are prepared to engage in the discussion board dialogue during the designated “window of time” to which your teammates have agreed.
- By the start of your “window of time,” the facilitator will have posted two questions or prompts to which you will REPLY (not compose) with at least one response that reflects your perspective and your

reading of your teammates' reactions. Of course, additional postings are desirable and greatly encouraged. It is important to reply, rather than compose a new response, so that all of the dialogue regarding a particular question stays with that question. This is good online communication etiquette and avoids confusion.

- The criteria for a quality discussion board posting are as follows. The posting must clearly show that you have read each of your teammate's reflections. You may show this by making reference to classmates' statements in your posting. Even if you disagree with a teammate's perspective, your comments should always be respectful and professional in language and tone. Your dialogue should evidence your use of higher level reasoning skills (i.e., application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation). You also may pose your own questions to teammates.
- Within this time frame, the facilitator also will post a "group processing" question to which you will need to respond within the designated window of time.

Performance Criteria for Successful Facilitation of WebCT Discussions

You will serve as discussion board facilitator at least once during the semester. You may have an option to facilitate a second time for extra points that count toward the 10 points of one Discussion entry. Specific responsibilities and success criteria for a facilitator are below.

- The facilitator "convenes" the exchange and reading of reflections. This means first communicating with teammates to jointly select a deadline for posting reading reactions (e.g. post by 9 p.m. on Monday evening).
- If necessary, the facilitator prompts teammates who do not post by the designated time in order to ensure timely delivery and reading of reflections. If adjustments in the deadline needs to occur because of an unexpected crisis on the part of a team member, it is the responsibility of the facilitator to help the team negotiate a new deadline.
- Prior to the agreed upon discussion board start and end dates and times, the facilitator reads all of the reflections and based upon all teammate's remarks, formulates two questions or discussion prompts that should stimulate construction exchanges of ideas. As with the reflections themselves, the questions or prompts should activate higher level reasoning skills (i.e., application to real life situations, analysis of concepts or issues, synthesis of divergent perspectives, and evaluation that includes a justification for assessments and judgments).
- The facilitator "convenes" the discussion board dialogue regarding the readings and reading reactions. This means getting agreement among teammates as to a "window of time" within which the facilitator's two questions or prompts will be posed and responses to the facilitator's prompts be posted (e.g., if reading reactions were posted on Monday by 8, p.m. prompts might be posted two days later on Wednesday at 5 p.m. and all exchanges may be expected to be completed by 9 p.m. on Saturday).
- The facilitator posts both of the discussion prompts or questions. Responses must stay within the same thread, so if a teammate does not "reply" but instead composes a reaction, the facilitator must prompt that teammate to reply. This ensures that all discussion comments stay with the particular question or prompt to which they refer. As the window for posting nears an end, if a teammate has not posted, the facilitator is to check in with the team member and, if necessary, negotiate a solution to whatever issue has arisen.
- Within the same "window of time" and after at least one contribution from each team member (including the facilitator), the facilitator posts a "group processing" prompt that is appropriate to the conversation and topic.
- The final and culminating responsibility of the facilitator is to compose a summary of the reading reactions, the discussion board dialogue, and the group processing (of approximately 1.5 to 2 pages in length) and to send this summary to the course instructor. This summary must include:
 - a) a quote of at least one point from each reflection (including the facilitator's reflection) and a comment on why you selected it to highlight in the summary,
 - b) the two discussion prompts and at least two key discussion points per prompt,
 - c) the group processing prompt and a summary of the participant's processing, and
 - d) a personal reflection on the experience of performing the facilitator role (i.e., learnings, challenges, ways in which to improve in the future, what to teach others about how to be an effective facilitator).

- If any team member fails to submit a reading reaction, engage in the discussion room, or group process, this summary is where the facilitator reports to the instructor as well as what the facilitator and team did to encourage and support that team member's work completion and participation. If no such report is included in the summary, it is assumed that all base team members participated fully and with the highest of quality.
- This summary should be submitted to the instructor as the last entry in the WebCT Reading Reaction room within 72 hours of the end of the discussion and group processing.

DISCUSSION 1 QUESTION (to be brought to class on Sept. 13th)

What might you focus on if you were planning a research study to learn more about what is occurring in your classroom or in your school? What information would you need to collect? What might the purpose of collecting the data be? How would this improve teaching/learning/education? Based on the 1 page handout on research methods, and the introduction to research methodologies in your text, what research method(s) might you use? Why would you use this method(s)?

Assessments 3-8 instructions will be provided on WebCT prior to dates you should work on them.

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.

CLASS 1: Aug. 30th

Introduction to Research Class, Texts, APA format
 Overview of Types of Research Methods
 Research Questions and Problems
 Human Subjects Protection & Institutional Review Board
 Culminating Experience for Masters: Thesis vs Project
 Literature Reviews and Library Research
 Topic You are Interested In
 Research Question
 Search Terms

For 2nd class on Sept. 13:

1. Bring your school or school district Human Subjects Protection & Institutional Review Board (Research Permission) forms and instructions.
2. Read Chapters 1-3
3. Bring Initial Research Articles and Summary (See Assessment 1)
4. Bring Discussion 1 Answer (See Assessment 2: Discussion 1 Question)

RUBRIC FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

| <u>Category</u> | <u>Distinguished</u> | <u>Acceptable</u> | <u>Unacceptable</u> | <u>Your Score</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Organization | | | | |
| Completeness | | | | |
| Content | | | | |
| Relevance | | | | |
| Cogency | | | | |

Categories for Evaluation Explanation

1. Organization. Evidence of a logical and meaningful consistency in the structure of the response to the structure of the assignment, evidence of planned presentation having a clear flow from the beginning, through the middle, to the conclusion.
2. Completeness. Evidence of having covered all parts of the assignment in the response.
3. Content. Evidence of having developed the response from significant concepts and insights gained from the readings, drawing upon relevant theories, literature, and citing sources in APA form and style as appropriate.
4. Relevance. Maintenance of pointed and clear relationships in response to the assignment, avoidance of digression from the main points of assignment, avoidance of boilerplate or filler material, and avoidance of redundant matter and educational jargon.
5. Cogency. Depth and breadth of insight, reasoning, and understanding exhibited in response through the integration of thought and argument.

Levels of Performance Explanation

1. Distinguished
 - a. Few errors—proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
 - b. Clear focus and use of appropriate/consistent tense and tone.
 - c. Depth and complexity of ideas—details, reflection, analysis, and thought.
 - d. Use of references indicates substantial research.
 - e. Use of a variety of sentence length and structure (follows APA form and style).
2. Acceptable
 - a. Some errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation
 - b. Grammatical errors do not interfere with communication.
 - c. Focused on a purpose—suitable tone and use of historic present.
 - d. Depth of ideas supported by relevant details.
 - e. Use of references indicates ample research.
 - f. Logical organization.
 - g. Varied sentence structure—acceptable and effective language.
3. Unacceptable
 - a. Attempt to establish and maintain purpose and communicate with the audience.
 - b. Unelaborated idea development and repetitious details.
 - c. Unelaborated details.
 - d. Use of few references.
 - d. Use of non-current literature.
 - e. Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation
 - f. Lapses in focus and coherence.
 - g. Use of simplistic and awkward sentences.
 - h. Use of imprecise and simplistic language.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH SIGN-IN AND GRADESHEET

Name _____

Attendance: Sign in present, late or note when absent or left early.
Keep a copy in your notebook. A copy will also be in your class file.

| | |
|-------|-------|
| 8/30 | _____ |
| 9/13 | _____ |
| 9/20 | _____ |
| 9/27 | _____ |
| 10/4 | _____ |
| 10/11 | _____ |
| 10/18 | _____ |
| 10/25 | _____ |
| 11/1 | _____ |
| 11/8 | _____ |
| 11/15 | _____ |
| 11/22 | _____ |
| 11/29 | _____ |
| 12/6 | _____ |
| 12/13 | _____ |

Discussion Answers and Participation (10 points each participation; facilitation worth 20 pts.)

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | 8. |

Facilitation of WebCT discussion -

| Assessments | % | Your Grade | Points |
|------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. INITIAL RESEARCH ARTICLES AND SUMMARY | 5% | | |
| 2. DISCUSSION ANSWERS & PARTICIPATION | 20% | | |
| 3. OBSERVATION | 10% | | |
| 4. INTERVIEWS | 10% | | |
| 5. VIDEOTAPING ANALYSIS | 10% | | |
| 6. JOURNAL ARTICLE CRITIQUE | 10% | | |
| 7. RESEARCH STUDY PRESENTATION | 10% | | |
| 8. RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND PRESENTATION | 25% | | |

Final Grade _____