



Research Methods in Education

Ed 622 Course Syllabus

Fall 2003

Wednesday 5:30 – 8:15

Jennifer Jeffries, Ed.D. Assistant Professor
Telephone: 760-750-8510 Email: jjeffrie@csusm.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 4 – 5:30 PM and by appointment University Hall 305

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 courses 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. 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:

- Develop a working understanding of research methods and designs for educational settings;
- Enhance their practical understanding of both quantitative and qualitative research methods;
- Be able to analyze the strengths and limitations of educational research studies;
- Be able to determine the appropriate use of educational research in addressing student achievement issues in schools;
- 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 a proposal for a Masters thesis or project with a clear connection to educational leadership.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Understanding and Evaluating Educational Research James H. McMillan and Jon F. Wergin

Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Qualitative and Quantitative
John W. Creswell

Publication Manual of the American Psychology Association, Fifth Edition.

OPTIONAL TEXT:

Living the Question: A Guide for Teacher Researchers Hubbard, Power, Kader & Hubbard

GRADING CRITERIA:

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

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Journal Article - Read, review and summarize **one journal article**, reporting on primary source 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 24**

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 1**

3. Literature Review - Do a Lit Review on **a topic**, utilizing primary source research – Prepare a review of no more than 5 pages, 1 inch margins, 12 font, Times New Roman 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. (15 pts).
Due October 15

4. Submission of Research Problem – See #5a below for elements of the Research Problem. Three-four pages, , 1 inch margins, 12 font, Times New Roman. Your research problem must have leadership implications. State them overtly. Apply the “so what” test discussed in class. (5 pts)
Due October 29

5. Research Proposal - Prepare a formal research proposal (35 pts)

- a. Statement of the Research Problem (intro to topic, research problem, justification for the research problem, deficiencies in the evidence, relating the discussion to audiences – see p.79 in Creswell)
- b. Review of Literature (May be the same as submitted on October 29 or be expanded.)
- c. Proposed Methodology
- d. References
- e. Appendices
 - ◆ Time Schedule
 - ◆ Budget
 - ◆ Instruments

Due December 3

6. Presentation-Present proposal (10 pts)
Due December 17

7. Class Participation – Students are expected to prepare and contribute their insights and questions to the conversations during class. (15 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. Web based resources may also be introduced based on student need and interest.

The APA Manual is primarily a reference book, but should be brought to class each session.

The purpose of the *Understanding and Evaluating Educational Research* text is to give students a readily accessible source of samples of published articles. Students are encouraged to read the articles at their own pace to familiarize themselves with professional, research writing. Please note that the authors use a writing manual other than APA. When weekly sessions are focusing on research elements that are reflected in the articles, students are encouraged to come prepared to make the connections during class discussions.

Living the Question is recommended for students who pursue “action research” or projects as their Masters' culminating experience.

Please note: Adjustment to the syllabus may be made by the professor during the course.

September 3 Introduction, Syllabus, Course Overview

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

September 10 Locating and Reviewing Related Literature: Brick and Mortar and Internet

Entities must not be multiplied beyond what is. A problem should be stated in its basic and simplest terms.
William of Occam (1284-1347)

Orientation to Kellogg Library Resources for Research
Meet in the library at the entrance at 5:30 PM sharp.

Gabriella Sontag, Coordinator
Information Literacy

Assignment: 1. Read Creswell Chapter 4 pp. 85-123
2. Have two to three TOPICS in mind to practice with at the library

September 17 An Introduction to the Process of Research

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

Assignment: 1. Read Creswell Chapter 1 pp. 2 -41
2. Visit the Public Policy Institute of California (www.ppic.org)
Click on *Determinants of Student Achievement: New Evidence from San Diego*.
Print and read the two page “Research in Brief.” Bring it with you to class.
Scan the “Full Text” version.
Prepare two to three questions you have about this study.

September 24 Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

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

- Assignments:
1. Written Assignment 1 Due
 2. Read Creswell pp. 42 – 64 and pp. 602-632
 3. Dr. Jeffries will give info for 10-1 Gallup Poll activity

October 1 Protection of Human Subjects and Identifying a Research Problem

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

- Assignment:
1. Written assignment 2 Due
 2. Read Creswell pp.66-84
 3. Visit the Gallup Poll (www.gallup.com)
Go to “News Releases” and click on “Little Change in the Way Americans.....”
Print, read and bring to class. One additional visit will be assigned.

October 8 Specifying a Purpose and Research Questions or Hypotheses

Figures won't lie, but liars will figure.

Charles H. Grosvenor

- Assignment:
1. Read Creswell pp.124 -157
Focus: The student should be able to recognize and apply the similarities and differences between qualitative and quantitative research by the end of class.

October 15 Collecting Quantitative Data

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

Assignment: Creswell pp. 158-189

October 22 Analyzing and Interpreting Quantitative Data

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

Mark Twain

Assignment: Creswell pp. 220-255

October 29 Collecting Qualitative Data

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

- Assignment:
1. Written Assignment 4 due.
 2. Read Creswell pp. 190-219

November 5 Analyzing and Interpreting Qualitative Data

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

Assignment: Read Creswell pp. 256-283

November 12 Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs

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

Assignment: Read Creswell pp.313-359

November 19 Correlation 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

Assignment: Read Creswell pp. 360-394

November 26 – Individual Conferences As Needed

December 3 Topics of Interest/Class Discussion

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

Assignment: Written Assignment 5 is due

December 10 Topics of Interest/Class Discussion

Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts.
Sign hanging in Einstein's office at Princeton

December 17 Individual Oral Presentations

Assignment: Prepare a 5-7 minute presentation of your research proposal.

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.