

EDUC 622 – RESEARCH METHODS IN EDUCATION

Summer 2010 University Hall Room 442
Wednesdays 6:00-10:10 pm

Mission Statement of the College of Education, 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*).

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Course Description

This course is designed to introduce educational practitioners to the fields of educational research and evaluation. We will explore quantitative and qualitative methods of designing and conducting research in the context of educational settings. We will further examine measurement, assessment, common statistical techniques and methods for critiquing research and program evaluation studies. Students will write a research proposal, including the first three chapters, references and appendices. During the course, students will increase their: understanding of various research methodologies and statistical techniques, ability to critique educational research, knowledge of educational research, skills in planning research, and ability to summarize and interpret research.

Objectives

This course enables students to become effective, confident creators and consumers of research 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:

- 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.
- Develop a working understanding of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques;
- Design a proposal for a research study; and
- Utilize correct APA style writing and citations.

Course Requirements

Required Texts Assigned texts and readings must be brought to all class sessions.

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition*. Washington, DC: APA.

Mertler, C.A. and Charles, C.M. (2010). *Introduction to educational research*. 7th Edition. Boston: Pearson Publishing.

*Several other readings are required and will be available for download.

Assignments

All assignments are due on the dates indicated. Assignments must be submitted via Moodle, double-spaced, and with standard margins. Style will follow APA format, as appropriate. It is expected that all assignments will reflect graduate-level expectations for composition and exposition. Use of electronic spelling and grammar checking is encouraged. The Writing Center is available for support (Kellogg Library 1103, 760-750-4168).

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 face-to-face class meeting; participate wholly in classroom and online dialogue—including peer review activity; and attend to the variety of ongoing activities, assignments, and discussion forums.

Article Critiques (10 points). Because your ability to find and use published literature is paramount to your understanding of research methods, you will be reading, summarizing, and interpreting a variety of published articles. This practice will prepare you for the literature review portion of any research project and strengthen your critical analysis skills as a consumer of published research. For two articles in particular, you will summarize and critique the research. The second of these will also be assessed for your Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).

- Write a 3-5 page paper based on your review and critique.
- Include name of journal, author(s), and title of the article; research problem/questions; highlights of the literature review; name of the methodology and key elements of the research design and methods; describe the findings of the research; and state the author's recommendations (why those findings are important to educators and how the findings can inform education).
- After this summary, complete a thoughtful critique, focusing on what you believe to be the strengths and weaknesses of the research. The critique could be on any portion of the work, research problem/question, literature review, methodology, findings and/or recommendations.

Methods Presentation (20 points). In pairs, depending on the size of the class, you will be responsible for leading an “instructional conversation” on a chapter from the required text. You will organize an online module that serves to both highlight and supplement the course text. Further, you will utilize all of your considerable teaching skills to develop a small number of tools to help classmates connect to and retain ideas and terminology pertinent to your research method.

- Create a multimedia presentation of your research method.
- This presentation should have some interactive aspect, something that helps the learner in two ways: be engaged, and test understanding.
- There should be a summative assessment as well, meant as simple feedback for the learner.
- Create a 2-page (single spaced) “Executive Summary” of the ideas and terminology needed to understand the method.
- The complete project will be submitted Week 5 for review and feedback. The revised version will be posted online (class Moodle page) prior to the method's assigned week.

More details will follow.

Research Proposal & Action Plan (50 points). To prepare you for future research, you will complete key components of a research proposal. These key components will include: Title Page, Table of Contents, Chapter 1: Statement of Problem, Chapter 2: Literature Review and Chapter 3: Methodology, References and Appendices. (Time Schedule, Budget, Instruments, IRB, and other possible components are optional.) Additionally, you will conduct a brief presentation of your working research proposal along with an action plan (i.e. an explanation of next steps). The proposal must conform to APA 6th edition style guide throughout.

This proposal should be considered no more than a **draft** of the first three chapters your Masters thesis or project. It is strongly encouraged it is written with the guidance of your thesis/project chair. The COE provides a rubric to guide your writing for each of the chapters. Make sure you read the rubric before you begin writing and revisit the rubrics to help you self assess as you make revisions to your chapters. Each component of your working proposal will be reviewed by two classmates **before** the final submission is reviewed by the professor. Specific details and requirements follow:

- **Chapter One: Introduction & Statement of Problem.** Chapter 1 is the Statement of the Problem of the Research Proposal and it should begin with a “Narrative hook” to introduce the topic. Expand that narrative to include the purpose statement and research question(s) following the guidance of Creswell on pages 65-76 & 116-118. Chapter I should include the following components: background information, statement of the problem, purpose of study, rationale, research questions, significance of study, applications, limitations, definition of terms and a summary paragraph leading into Chapter 2: Literature Review. Your writing should “flow” and you should not label each component, although all components should be present. See Chapter 1 Rubric for more guidance.
- **Chapter Two: Literature Review.** Your review of literature should be organized around common themes that you found in your research articles (not by individual articles). You should talk about the articles within the subheadings of your common themes. You are writing one overview of all of the articles together, not each one separately. Remember to discuss common themes or threads that run through all or some of the papers; do not have one separate paragraph about each paper. If a paper included something unique and significant, you can certainly discuss it. Follow correct guidelines for citing: Be sure to give the authors credit if you take something directly from their paper. Make sure you use quotation marks and include the page number if you are taking an exact quote. Make sure that all of your articles were about research studies conducted by the author(s). How do you know if it was research? The authors will discuss the research question(s), how they collected and analyzed data, and the results, implications and conclusions.

Chapter 2 should have an introduction that ties the review of literature to your research question. The body of the chapter should be organized by underlying themes or threads (subtopics) that your articles address. You should have a summary at the end that summarizes the review of literature and how it is linked to your research question, and which leads the reader into Chapter 3: Methodology. See Chapter 2 Rubric for more guidance.
- **Chapter Three: Methodology.** Your methodology chapter will consist of an introduction to your methods, description of your methodological design, participants, materials, procedures, data analysis process, and a summary. See Chapter 3 Rubric for more guidance.

Grading Standards

Grades will be based on the following grading scale:

A	.....	90	–	100%
B	.....	80	–	89%
C	.....	70	–	79%
D	.....	60	–	69%
F	.....	Below		60%

The course is writing intensive, and success depends on keeping pace with course writing structures and due dates. As such, work submitted late, but within one week of the due date will be reduced by one letter grade. Work received over one week late will be recorded at half the graded value. *Note:* assignments are due whether or not you are present in class that day.

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.).

College of Education 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.* Should the student have extenuating circumstances, s/he should contact the instructor as soon as possible. *(Adopted by the COE Governance Community, December, 1997).*

Course-Specific Participation and Attendance Policy: This course approaches content in a variety of ways. Structured interactions, group processes, oral presentations, guided discussion of readings, and peer review exercises are the norm. Students are expected to have read assigned materials by the date indicated in the syllabus, and should come 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 COE Attendance Policy is amplified as follows:

- Missing one class meeting will result in the reduction of one letter grade.
- Arriving late or leaving early on more than two occasions will result in the reduction of one letter grade.

Inform the instructor *prior* to an absence. Notification of absence does not warrant an excuse.

Course Load

In all master course work, it is expected that for every one hour of contact time, you will complete at minimum one hour of work outside of class. Please plan accordingly.

Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement

All CSU graduate students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. At California State University San Marcos, students complete the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) through an acceptable standardized test score or submission of a paper. The student's writing should demonstrate graduate level skills in (1) style and format, (2) mechanics, (3) content and organization, and (4) integration and critical analysis. The paper will be scored using a 4-point rubric in each of the aforementioned four areas. The minimal acceptable combined score from all of the four sections is 10 points, with no scores of "1" on any section, resulting in a minimum of a 2.5 average for all sections. A master's program may establish a higher minimum average score for passing. *The second Article Critique assignment in this course will be used to meet this requirement.*

Students with Disabilities Requiring Reasonable Accommodations

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disable Student Services (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 presentation 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."

Incidents of Academic Dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students. Sanctions at the University level may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism: As an educator, it is expected that each student will do his/her own work, and contribute equally to group projects and processes. Plagiarism or cheating is unacceptable under any circumstances. If you are in doubt about whether your work is paraphrased or plagiarized see the Plagiarism Prevention for Students website <http://library.csusm.edu/plagiarism/index.html>. When relying on supporting documents authored by others, cite them clearly and completely using American Psychological Association (APA) manual, 6th edition. Failure to do so may result in failure of the course. If there are questions about academic honesty, please consult the University catalog.

Electronic Communication Protocol

Electronic correspondence is a part of your professional interactions. If you need to contact the instructor, e-mail is often the easiest way to do so. It is my intention to respond to all received e-mails in a timely manner.

Please be reminded that e-mail and on-line discussions are a very specific form of communication, with their own nuances and etiquette. For instance, electronic messages sent in all upper case (or lower case) letters, major typos, or slang, often communicate more than the sender originally intended. With that said, please be mindful of all e-mail and on-line discussion messages you send to your colleagues, to faculty members in the College of Education, or to persons within the greater educational community. All electronic messages should be crafted with professionalism and care.

Things to consider:

- Would I say in person what this electronic message specifically says?
- How could this message be misconstrued?
- Does this message represent my most professional and courteous self?
- Am I sending this electronic message to avoid a face-to-face conversation?
- Can this message be more concisely and/or precisely stated?

In addition, if there is ever a concern with an electronic message sent to you, please talk with the author in person in order to correct any confusion. For more guidance see Core Rules of Netiquette at <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.

EDUC 622 Summer 2010 Lawler – Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment to be completed BEFORE Class Session
Week 1 06/02/10	<i>Welcome & Orientation to Educational Research</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Building • Syllabus Review • Introduction to Education Research • Ch 1, 3 	Mini Biography / Proposal (in class)
Week 2 06/09/10 <i>online</i>	<i>Locating Published Research</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch 4, 5 • Introduction to APA 	Review Ch 1, 3 Read Ch 4, 5
Week 3 06/16/10 <i>online</i>	<i>Designing A Research Project</i> <i>Orientation to IRB Process – Ethics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRB online • Ch 8, 9, APA 	Read Ch 8, 9 Reading from APA (TBD) Article Critique #1 due
Week 4 06/23/10	<i>Interpreting and Summarizing Published Research</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch 5 • Introduction to Peer Review – Article #2 	(Re-)Read Ch 5 <i>Draft Article Critique #2</i>
Week 5 06/30/10	<i>Data, Analyses, and Presentation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch 2, 6 & 7 	Read Ch 2, 6, 7 Article Critique #2 due Research Methodology Presentation due*
Week 6 07/07/10	<i>Qualitative Research Methodologies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review – Lit Review Chapter 	Read Ch 10 <i>Draft Chapter 2</i>
Week 7 07/14/10 <i>online</i>	<i>Procedures and Exemplars in Qualitative Research Methodologies</i>	Read Ch 11 & ____
Week 8 07/21/10	<i>Quantitative Research Methodologies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review – Methods Chapter 	Read Ch 12-13 <i>Draft Chapter 3</i>
Week 9 07/28/10 <i>online</i>	<i>Procedures and Exemplars in Quantitative Research Methodologies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review – Research Proposal (Ch 1-3) 	Read ____ <i>Draft Research Proposal (Ch 1-3)</i>
Week 10 08/04/10 <i>online</i>	<i>Procedures and Exemplars in “Other” Research Methodologies</i>	Read Ch 14-16 Research Proposal due
Week 11 08/11/10	<i>Presentations of Culminating Experience & Next Steps</i>	Culminating Experience Presentation due

While this schedule and syllabus has been carefully planned, either may require modification in response to the needs and interests of the class.