

California State University San Marcos  
College of Education

EDUC 622: Research Methods in Education  
Spring 2008  
CRN 22360

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Class Meeting times/Location: Tuesdays, 5:30-8:15pm; UH 373

Office Hours: by appt.

## 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)*

## 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

### 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."

### 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.

### Students with Disabilities Requiring Reasonable Accommodations

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 need. 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 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 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. The assignments for this course meet this requirement.

### Plagiarism

All work submitted for this course should reflect students' efforts. When relying on supporting documents authored by others, cite them clearly and completely using American Psychological Association (APA) manual, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Failure to do so may result in failure of the course.

### E-mail & Online Discussion Protocol

Email & On-Line Discussion Protocol Electronic correspondence (e-mail and on-line discussion) is a part of your professional interactions. If you need to contact instructor or other students, 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 form of nuances and meanings. For instance, electronic messages sent with all upper 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. Here are a few things to consider: Would I say in person what this e-mail specifically says? How could this e-mail be misconstrued? Does this e-mail represent my highest self? Am I sending this e-mail to avoid a face-to-face conversation? In addition, if there is ever a concern with an electronic message sent to you, please talk to that person face-to-face to correct any confusion. For more guidance see Core Rules of Netiquette at <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **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 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: (based on percentages of the available points)

- A = 100 – 94
- A- = 93 – 91
- B+ = 90 – 88
- B = 87 – 84
- B- = 83 - 81
- C = 80 - 71

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](http://www.apastyle.org/index.html)

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

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| <b>NOTE: Assigned texts and readings MUST be brought to ALL class sessions.</b> |
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American Psychological Association. *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Washington, DC: APA.

Mertler, C. A. and Charles, C. M. (2008). *Introduction to educational research*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston: Pearson Publishing.

## **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Hubbard, R. S. and Power, B. M. (2003). *The art of classroom inquiry: A handbook for teacher-researchers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: CA. Jossey-Bass.

## 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. Moreover, The Writing Center (Kellogg Library 1103 – 760-750-4168) is available to support your individual requirements.

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Attendance and Participation              | 100 points |
| 2. Working Research Proposal and Action Plan | 225 points |
| 3. Weekly Article Response                   | 30 points  |
| 4. Mini Biography                            | 15 points  |
| 5. Reflective Journal                        | 30 points  |

1. Attendance and Participation. 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.

2. Working Research Proposal & Action Plan. To prepare you for future research, you will complete key components of a research proposal. Additionally, you will provide a brief presentation of your working research proposal and include an action plan (i.e. an explanation of next steps). Each component of your working proposal will reviewed by two classmates **before** it is reviewed by the professor. Specific details and requirements will be provided.

3. Weekly Article Response. 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. Each week, you will select an article that interests you and provide a written response following the specified criteria. Additional details and requirements will be provided.

4. Mini Biography. Each person comes to the research experience with a unique set of experiences and understanding. To make known your background, experiences, concerns, and ideas about research, you will write a 1-page biography. Specific details and requirements will be provided.

5. Reflective/Interactive Journal: Throughout the research process, many thoughts come in and out of your mind. In order to focus your thinking, discover patterns of interest, and develop a reflective practice you will keep a reflective/interactive journal. In this journal, you will note musings, questions, concerns, observations, lessons, conversations, and interactions that surface while attending this class. Some of your entries may be shared with others. Although I will not read your journal, it is expected that you will write in your journal on a regular and consistent basis. Moreover, it is expected that you will bring your journal to every class session.

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

| DATE                 | TOPIC/ACTIVITY   | READING    | DUE   |
|----------------------|--|------------|---|
| Session 1<br>1/22/08 | <i>Orientation to Educational Research</i><br>Community Building<br>Syllabus Review                              |            | Bring all required textbooks and printed copies of assignments to class   |
| Session 2<br>1/29/08 | <i>Types of Educational Research and Corresponding Sources of Data</i><br><br>Introduction to APA                | Ch. 1 & 2  | Mini Biography  |
| Session 3<br>2/05/08 | <i>Finding References Electronically</i><br>Locating Published Research<br>Meet in Kellogg 3400                  | Ch 4 & 5   | Research Strategies Checklist   |
| Session 4<br>2/12/08 | <i>Orientation to IRB Process - Ethics</i><br><i>IRB Workshop – 5:30 – 7:00</i><br>Meet in Commons 206           |            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Article Response #1</li> <li>o 5 Citations that relate to your topic of interest</li> </ul>          |
| Session 5<br>2/19/08 | <i>Interpreting and Summarizing the Literature</i><br><br>Selecting, Refining and Proposing a topic for research | Ch. 5 & 3  | Article Response #2   |
| Session 6<br>2/26/08 | <i>Action Research and Evaluation Research</i><br><br>Annotating Reference Citations                             | Ch 15      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Article Response #3</li> <li>o Post 5 research questions to the WebCT</li> </ul>                     |
| Session 7<br>3/4/08  | Qualitative Research Methods   | Ch. 10     | Article Response #4   |
|                      | <b>Spring Break</b>  |            |   |
| Session 8<br>3/18/08 | <i>Survey Research</i><br><br>Quantitative Research  | Ch 11 & 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Article Response#5</li> <li>o 5 Citations that relate to your potential research question</li> </ul> |
| Session 9<br>3/25/08 | <b>Online/Peer Review Session</b><br>Work on Annotated Reference and Summary of Findings                         |            | Annotated References and Research Question (Draft)  |
| Session 10<br>4/1/08 | <i>Designing a Research Project</i><br>Procedures and Tools for Gathering Data                                   | Ch. 6 & 7  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Article Response#6</li> <li>o Mini Survey</li> </ul>   |

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE Continued

| DATE                  | TOPIC/ACTIVITY  | READING     | DUE   |
|-----------------------|---|-------------|---|
| Session 11<br>4/08/08 | <b>Peer Review Session</b>  |             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Methodology rationale, description, and sample (Draft)</li> <li>o Annotated References and Summary of Findings (Draft)</li> </ul>  |
| Session 12<br>4/15/08 | <i>Experimental, Quasi-Experimental, and Single-Subject Designs</i><br><br>Mixed-Methods Research Designs<br><br><b>Peer Review Session</b> | Ch. 13 & 14 | Introduction, statement, purpose, and question (Draft)  |
| Session 13<br>4/22/08 | <i>Analyzing Research Data and Presenting Findings</i><br><br>Preparing a Research Report<br><br><b>Conferencing</b>                        | Ch 8 & 9    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Bring drafts of all components of your Working Research Proposal</li> <li>o Bring Questions you have about your project</li> </ul> |
| Session 14<br>4/29/08 | <i>Putting it all together</i>  |             |   |
| Session 15<br>5/06/08 | <i>Presentations – Action Plan</i>  |             | Working Research Proposal<br>DUE  |

This schedule may be adjusted to accommodate student and/or instructor needs.