

EDF 800

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH DESIGN

Spring 2007

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Course Syllabus

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Prerequisites

There are two prerequisites for this course. The first is admission to the doctoral program in educational administration. The second is completion of EDF 600 (i.e., Introduction of Educational Research) or an equivalent course.

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Catalog Description

This course is an applied educational research class for those students pursuing an advanced degree in education administration. It is designed to provide students with an overview of the research paradigms used in education as well as opportunities to apply specific research methods related to these paradigms.

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Course Rationale and Goals

When teaching an educational research course, there is a need to prioritize two closely related goals based on the needs of students and programmatic considerations. These goals involve 1) mastering the content related to the paradigms and methods used by educational researchers and 2) developing specific research skills that facilitate the actual use of research methods in the context of a student's development as a researcher. The first goal, mastering content, often reflects a "consumer of research" perspective that is consistent with many programs at the masters level. It is aligned with course objectives that emphasize key research terms, practice in reading studies critically, a knowledge of the way design and procedures affect empirical findings, and an understanding of applied and evaluation research. Projects related to these objectives would include identifying problems that could be researched, conducting limited reviews of the literature, and critiquing quantitative, qualitative, and evaluation research papers.

Often students enroll in an introductory research course with some background in research. While they might have the ability to evaluate research and use it in their professional work, they have had little, if any, experience actually conducting research. The needs of these students are focused on the second objective, developing research skills. Objectives for this goal focus on the use of specific research methods. Projects might include developing an appropriate research problem, conducting a review of the literature, sampling subjects or participants, collecting data using appropriate instrumentation and interactive techniques, analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data, and writing a research report.

One of the prerequisites for this course is an introductory educational research course. This course typically focuses on the first goal discussed above. While some of the time spent this semester will address issues related to this first goal, the course emphasizes the second goal, that is, the development of research skills. It has been designed for beginning doctoral students who are required to complete a dissertation as a part of their program. The experiences provided over the course of the semester are intended to serve as a base upon which subsequent courses and experiences can build.

There are four specific goals of the course. The first involves knowledge of the paradigms from which current educational research efforts emulate. The second focuses on the development of a research topic of interest to the student. The third and fourth involve designing a quantitative and qualitative study to investigate some aspect of the topic mentioned above.

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Course Organization

The course is organized around five units that parallel the first five sections of the Gay, Mills, and Airasian text. The first focuses on an overview of educational research. This includes valuing research as a source of knowledge, the research paradigms used in educational research, the distinction between research purpose and method, selecting and defining a research topic, preparing and evaluating a research plan, and selecting samples and instruments. The second unit focuses on quantitative research methods. It addresses five common quantitative designs and their application to specific research problems. It also explores descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of data as well as post-analysis issues. The third unit is similar to the second except that the focus is on qualitative research methods. The fourth and fifth units explore the use of both mixed methods and action research designs.

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Required Text

Gay, L.R., Mills, G.E. and Airasian, P. (2006). Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application (8th. ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

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Reference Texts

American Psychological Association. (2004). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th. ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Creswell, J.W. (2002). Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Creswell, J.W. (1994). Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Cook, T.D. and Campbell, D.T. (1979). Quasi-Experimentation: Design and Analysis Issues for Field Settings. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Gall, M.D., Borg, W.R., and Gall, J.P. (1995). Educational Research: An Introduction (6th. ed.). New York: Longman.

Kerlinger, F.N. (1986). Foundations of Behavioral Research (3rd. ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

McMillan, J.H. (2004). Educational Research: Fundamentals for the Consumer (4th. ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

McMillan, J.H. and Schumacher, S. (2004). Research in Education: A Conceptual Introduction (6th. ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

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Technological Aspects of the Course

Course Site The following web site has been created for this class.

<http://www2.selu.edu/Academics/Faculty/joescher/EDF800>

This site contains information related to educational research in general and this class specifically. Here you will find the class syllabus, assignments, general information to help you search the internet and ERIC, links to the Prentice Hall and Blackboard web sites, and, perhaps most importantly, links to the PGA and other really, really important web sites. Please note the letters 'EDF' in the URL are upper case; please do not ask why!!!

Blackboard Site This course will use a Blackboard site to enhance your work. The site can be accessed through the following link.

<http://blackboard.selu.edu/>

The use of this site is important for four reasons. First, formative chapter quizzes will be available to self-assess your knowledge of the information being discussed in class.

These self-assessments will be used as a part of the formal evaluation of your performance in this class. The specific details related to these assessments and their use can be found in the [course assignments](#) section of the syllabus.

Second, the topics being discussed each week in class will be identified in detail. Specific objectives related to the topics and the appropriate preparation needed for your participation in class will be specified.

Third, all assignments will be posted on the site in a timely fashion. Specific details related to these assignments (e.g., criteria, scoring rubrics, grade assignments, etc.) will be available.

Finally, SELU policy requires all e-mail communication between you and the instructor to be handled through the services provided by the University. Blackboard facilitates such communication. Additionally it provides readily accessible discussion boards and other relevant communication devices. The site and its use will be carefully explained during one of the class meetings in the first weeks of the semester.

Prentice Hall Web Site You have the option of using the web site developed by Prentice Hall for the Gay, Mills, and Airasian text. It can be accessed through the following link.

<http://www.prenhall.com/gay>

This site is organized around each of the twenty-two (22) chapters in the Gay, Mills, and Airasian text. Each chapter provides specific objectives, web destinations, Power Point slides, and short selected-response self-assessments. Most of this material can be considered "supplemental" in nature, but you might find it helps clarify some of the more difficult concepts we will be discussing.

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Course Assignments

Two different types of objectives will be addressed in this course. The first relates to the core objectives for each chapter in the textbook. These objectives address important, prerequisite knowledge that is necessary to apply specific research skills. Some examples of these objectives are the identification of specific sampling procedures, data collection techniques, data analyses, and technical issues related to specific designs (e.g., internal validity, external validity, site entry, emergent designs, etc.). The second type of objective relates to the application of specific quantitative and qualitative methods to a problem in which each student expresses some interest. Examples of these objectives include the identification of a research problem and a conceptual framework within which that problem is important, the use of specific quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data, or the choice of specific research designs to provide credible answers to specific problems.

A series of short multiple choice quizzes have been developed to assess mastery of the core objectives for each of the relevant chapters in the Gay, Mills, and Airasian text. These quizzes are available on the Prentice Hall web site. They can be accessed by students at any time they feel prepared to take a quiz. Each student is required to demonstrate mastery by scoring a minimum of 80% on each quiz. Only scores of mastery or non-mastery will be used by the instructor. Students can take each quiz as many times as necessary to demonstrate mastery.

Applied objectives will be assessed through a series of three performance assessments related to the development of a research proposal. The first is the identification of a specific research problem and a discussion of the conceptual framework around which it is developed. This problem will be one in which the student has expressed an interest. The second and third are explorations of specific quantitative and qualitative research designs as they relate to the problem. The intent of these activities is to fully explore the strengths and weaknesses of several types of research designs so that students can develop an appreciation of the relationship between research problems and designs. Each of these assignments will be scored and returned to the student for additional revisions should they be necessary. Final scores will be based on the revisions of these assignments.

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Assessment and Evaluation

Course grades will be computed as follows: 1) core objective quizzes (20%), 2) applied objective assignments (70%), and 3) class participation (10%). Scoring rubrics for all assignments will be discussed prior to assigning them. Grades will be assigned on a ten (10) point scale (i.e., 90-100 A, 80-89 B, etc.).

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Class Attendance, Decorum, and Academic Integrity

Your success in this class is in part dependent upon your attendance and participation in class. Both are expected as this course will require important interactions between the instructor and your colleagues. Please notify the instructor in the unlikely event of an absence. Also be aware that excessive absences will affect your grade.

Free discussion, inquiry, and expression is encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of beepers, cellular telephones, or other electronic devices; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking; or arguing in a way that is perceived as "crossing the civility line." In the event of a situation where a student legitimately needs to carry a beeper/cellular telephone to class, prior notice and approval of the instructor is required. Classroom behavior which is deemed inappropriate and cannot be resolved by the student and the faculty member may be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs for administrative or disciplinary review as per the Code of Student Conduct which may be found at [Student Affairs Handbook](#).

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Behavior that violates these standards is not acceptable. Examples are the use of unauthorized material, communication with fellow students during an examination, attempting to benefit from the work of another student and similar behavior that defeats the intent of an examination or other class work. Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, improper acknowledgment of sources in essays and the use of a single essay or paper in more than one course without permission are considered very serious offenses and shall be grounds for disciplinary action as outlined in the current [General Catalogue](#).

The class will meet formally from 5:00 to 7:50 on Monday evening in the TEC 2022 on the SLU campus. A schedule of specific class meetings can be found on the [course schedule](#) at the end of the syllabus.
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Appointments and Office Hours

Some students might desire additional clarification and/or information on some of the topics discussed in class. Formal office hours have been scheduled in TEC 209 on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday afternoons (2:00 - 5:00) and Monday and Wednesday evenings (8:00-8:30). Specific appointments can be arranged at other times convenient to your schedule.
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ADA Information

If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Disability Services in Room 203 of the Student Union. No accommodations will be

granted without documentation from the Office of Disability Services.

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Important SLU Dates

- **Thursday, February 15nd**, last day to withdraw from Term I classes.
- **Friday, March 16th**, last day to withdraw from regular term classes.
- **Thursday, April 19th**, last day to withdraw from Term II classes.
- **Monday, May 14th**, last day to return rental textbooks.

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Important Dates

- **January 21, 2007** [NFC Championship Game](#)
- **February 4, 2007** [Super Bowl XLI](#)

- **February 20, 2007** [MLB Spring Training](#)
- **April 1, 2007** [MLB Opening Day](#)
- **Any date the** [St. Louis Cardinals](#) **or** [Boston Red Socks](#) **play and win.**
- **Any date the** [Atlanta Braves](#) **or** [New York Yankees](#) **play and lose.**
- **July 28, 2002 -** [Ozzie Smith](#) **inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame**

- **April 5, 2007** [The Masters](#)
- **April 19, 2007** [The Zurich Classic](#) **of New Orleans**
- **May 10, 2007** [The Players Championship](#)
- **May 24, 2007** [The Senior PGA Championship](#)
- **Any date I play even a single hole of golf.**
- **Any date I shoot par or better.** [Back to Top](#)

Class Schedule

The following schedule of classes provides an overview of the topics being discussed for each class.

Class Schedule - [Spring 2007](#)

The learning objectives for each topic can be located on the web site. All readings, slide shows, and assignments for each class are to be completed before class meets. This is critically important as the formal class meetings will focus on applying this material.

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