**BASIC METHODS IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH**

**(ERMA 7200)**

**Fall 2015**

Instructor: Kamden K. Strunk, Ph.D. Phone: (334) 844-3084

Class hours: Wednesdays Email: kks0013@auburn.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays, 9AM-11AM Office Address: 4018 Haley Center

Wednesdays, 9AM-11AM

Or By Appointment (appointments recommended during office hours)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Major modes of inquiry in contemporary educational research including experimental, casual comparative, descriptive, qualitative inquiry, and action research models.

**COURSE OVERVIEW:**

Reading, applying, and conducting research are critical components of many education and counseling careers. All of these tasks require an understanding of the scientific process, basic research methods and designs, and the conventions of scholarly writing. In this course, you will develop a working knowledge of these processes of research through the course readings, classroom instruction, in-class and out-of-class activities, and individual projects. A major focus of the course will be to gain the knowledge, understanding, and applied skills needed to inform practice.

**Required Course MATERIALS:**

Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., Hyun, H. H. (2011). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (8th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Other course readings may be required, and will be posted on Canvas.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Understand research questions and hypotheses.
2. Be able to review the research literature related to particular research questions.
3. Understand and apply research ethics and ethical codes.
4. Understand and apply descriptive and inferential statistics.
5. Work with various quantitative research designs.
6. Describe qualitative research goals and approaches.
7. Apply research design principles to field-relevant research problems.

**Mode/Style of Teaching:**

The teaching style for this class is based on a four-domain holistic education model, wherein education is targeted toward the whole person. In this model the “whole person” is conceptualized as the body, mind, soul, and heart, or the “doing”, “thinking”, “creating”, and “feeling” functions. Weekly discussions and course projects are all designed to target these domains and functions to encourage development and growth in all of these areas. This class is also built on a constructivist and social learning model, wherein students are expected to learn from the textbook, from the instructor, and from each other. This is accomplished through a reciprocal social interaction process where students contribute their understanding and knowledge to each other, thus enhancing the overall understanding of everyone in the class and allowing everyone to construct a more complete base of knowledge than would otherwise be possible.

**Course Assignments:**

1. **Projects:** For this course, you will identify a potential research problem, review the research literature on that problem, write an integrative literature review, and propose a potential research design to address the research problem. This will be done through several projects that build on one another throughout the course. A full description of this semester-long effort is provided separately.
2. **Exams:** There are two exams in this course, each worth 200 points (20% of the final course grade). Exams will be administered on Canvas. You may use your textbook, notes, copies of your projects, and feedback from the instructor. However, group work on exams is absolutely disallowed, as is any kind of collaboration or sharing of materials. Any collaboration, sharing, copying, or ‘helping’ on exams will result in an automatic grade of ‘zero’ on the exam, and will be regarded as academic misconduct. Exams are timed, and must be completed within the allotted time, as well as before the deadline (e.g., if the due date is 11:59PM, and you have 120 minutes to complete the exam, you must start the exam no later than 9:59PM or you will not have the full time). Exam content will be reviewed in the week prior to each exam during a brief review session, but roughly follows the content of the course, and will include multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and essay items.

**Grading Structure/Requirements:**

There are a total of 1000 points in the course, which means you can take your total points and divide by ten to determine your percentage grade in the course. The grading structure is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assignment Type** | **Total Points Possible** |
| Projects | 600 |
| Exams | 400 |
| **TOTAL POINTS** | **1000 points** |

The course is graded as follows: A = 1000-900, B = 899.9-800, C = 799.9-700, D = 699.9-600, F < 600.

**CLASS PREPAREDNESS:**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and prepared for required coursework. This means arriving prepared for in-class activities that may require the use of the textbook, spare paper, and copies of out-of-class assignments. You may also wish to print copies of class notes that are pre-posted to Canvas to aid in understanding/note-taking.

**LATE WORK POLICY:**

Late work is not acceptable in graduate work. However, if you find that you are falling behind in your coursework, it is of the utmost importance that you immediately contact your instructor. As soon as you know there is any problem, immediately contact the course instructor. This is the best way to stay caught up with the course, and to achieve the highest possible grade.

If you find that you need to submit late work **it is required that you contact the instructor before submitting any late work.** Any late work submitted without first contacting the instructor to discuss the work and form a plan for getting caught up to date with coursework will not be accepted. This is to make sure that you receive all information you need about which assignments will take priority in getting caught up, and what, if any, credit can be given to late work before beginning. Communication is the key in getting caught up if you find yourself behind on work, so call, email, or stop by, whatever you need to do to get in contact!

If any late work is accepted following communication with the instructor and establishment of a written plan, it will be worth a maximum of 50% of its graded point value. The exact percentage will be established in the written plan you make with the instructor.

**TENTATIVE Course Calendar:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Readings** | **Content** | **Project** |
| 1  08/19/15 | Ch. 1 & 2 | Introduction and Research Problems |  |
| 2  08/26/15 | Ch. 5 & 6 | Variables, Hypotheses, and Sampling | Project Part 1 Due |
| 3  09/2/15 | Ch. 3 & 4  Belmont Report | Reviewing the Literature & Research Ethics |  |
| 4  09/9/15 | Ch. 7 & 8 | Instruments, Validity, & Reliability |  |
| 5  09/16/15 | Ch. 10 | Descriptive Statistics | Project Part 2 Due |
| 6  09/23/15 | Ch. 11 & 12 | Inferential Statistics |  |
| 7  9/30/15 | Ch. 9 | Internal Validity & Exam Review |  |
| 8  10/7/15 | None | **EXAM ONE – ON CANVAS**  (Class does not meet – exam online) | **Exam One Due by 10/7 at 11:59PM** |
| 9  10/14/15 | Ch. 13 | Experimental Research Designs | Project Part 3 Due |
| 10  10/21/15 | Ch. 14 & 16 | Single-Subject and Causal-Comparative Designs |  |
| 11  10/28/15 | Ch. 15 & 17 | Correlational and Survey Research | Project Part 4 Due |
| 12  11/4/15 | Ch. 18 & 19 | Qualitative Research |  |
| 13  11/11/15 | Ch. 20 & 21 | Qualitative Research, Contd. | Project Part 5 Due |
| 14  11/18/15 | Ch. 23 & 24 | Mixed-Methods & Action Research |  |
| 15  11/25/15 | None | **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK** |  |
| 16  12/2/15 | None | Wrap-Up, Review content, Research Reports | Project Part 6 (In Class) |
| 17  12/9/15 | None | **EXAM TWO – ON CANVAS**  (Class does not meet – exam online) | **Exam Two Due by 12/9 at 11:59PM**  Final Project Due by 12/7/15 at 11:59PM |

*Note.* All readings other than the textbook can be found on Blackboard listed under the name of that week’s topic. Other outside readings may be added to this schedule as needed.

**Possible Changes to the Syllabus:**

This syllabus is your contract for production in the course. If changes are made to it they will be posted on Canvas and announced in class or by email. No changes increasing requirements will be made.

**Additional Information and Policies:**

Graduate study requires a high level of independence, accountability, and conscientiousness in order to achieve success both in their program and in careers that require graduate study. As such, a number of guidelines are helpful that make clear the expectations of graduate students.

1. Grades associated with incomplete course work or withdrawal from class will be assigned in strict conformity to University policy (see Auburn University Bulletin). If you wish to drop this course you may do so by the 10th class day with no grade assignment. From the 10th class day to mid-semester a W (withdrawn-passing) grade will be recorded in your transcripts. After this period withdrawal from the course will only be granted under unusual circumstances and must be approved by the Dean of the College of Education.
2. The Department of EFLT recognizes university policy regarding academic misconduct. Violations include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance during examinations, submitting another’s work product as your own, using another’s words as your own without appropriate citation, sharing unauthorized materials with another that contain questions or answers to examinations, altering or attempting to alter assigned grades. In accordance with University policy regarding academic misconduct, students may be subject to several sanctions upon violations of the Student Academic Honesty Code. See the Tiger Cub publication for the current year for specifics regarding academic misconduct as well as student’s rights and responsibilities associated with the Code.
3. Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the PSD office, but need accommodations, make an appointment with The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).
4. Students are expected to be in class for the entire class period every class meeting. If there is an unavoidable conflict (such as a professional conference that coincides with a class meeting) this should be communicated with the instructor as early as possible. In the event that you have a legitimate emergency that prevents you from attending class, you should: 1) contact the instructor by phone and/or email immediately upon learning you will be unable to attend class (this should be before the class meets), 2) take appropriate steps to catch up with in-class learning opportunities, 3) ensure that all of your work that was due during that class meeting makes it to the instructor before the class meeting ends (email it, have a friend drop it by the office, etc.). Failure to be in class during an exam without agreement from and prior arrangements with the course instructor will result in a grade of zero on the exam.
5. Students are responsible for checking their student email account regularly for course announcements and course-related communications.
6. This course uses Canvas as a tool to manage course readings and other materials not included in the required texts for this course and for online course discussions. Students are expected to have a working knowledge of Canvas in order to access materials and participate in online course discussion.
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