Basic Methods in Education Research

ERMA 7206

Course Syllabus - Fall 2017

**Instructor:** David T. Marshall, Ph.D.

dtm0023@auburn.edu

**Office:** 4084 Haley Center

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 11:00-12:15 by appointment

Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 by appointment

**Research is the open pursuit of knowledge.**

**Our aim is to learn something beyond what *we thought we knew* before we began.**

**Course Description and Objectives**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a conceptual understanding of the basic concepts and procedures in educational research. Students will learn to read and evaluate research and plan an empirical study. The emphasis of the course is on the methodology and evaluation of educational research, and will require a minimum of computational skills. The fundamental research principles are applicable to other fields of study as well. No prerequisite courses are required. Specifically, course objectives include student attainment of the following:

1. An understanding of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches to research.
2. Knowledge of basic, applied, and evaluation research.
3. Ability to select a research problem and formulate appropriate research hypotheses or questions.
4. Ability to conduct a review of educational literature using electronic databases.
5. Identification of independent, dependent, and extraneous variables.
6. Knowledge of sampling procedures.
7. Knowledge of fundamental principles of measurement and data collection techniques.
8. An understanding of descriptive statistical techniques such as measures of central tendency, standard deviation, and correlation.
9. Knowledge of nonexperimental, experimental, and quasi-experimental research designs.
10. Knowledge of basic inferential statistical logic and procedures.
11. Ability to critically read and evaluate empirical research.

**Texts**

**Required**

There is only one required text for this course. Other readings will be assigned and provided as needed.

McMillan, J.H. (2015) *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer*. Seventh Edition. Boston: Pearson Education.

ISBN-10: 0134013492; ISBN-13: 978-0134013497.

**Recommended**

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Assoication (*6th ed.). American Psychological Association.

Sheperts, C.J., Young, J.S., & Daniels, M.H. (2017). *Counseling research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods.* Second Edition. Boston: Pearson Education.

ISBN-10: 0134025091; ISBN-13: 9780134025094

## Course Activities and Deliverables

**Research Proposal**

Each student will prepare a quantitative research proposal. This will be the primary deliverable for the course. The research proposal is designed to offer students the opportunity to apply what has been learned in the course. Students do not have to carry out the study that they propose for this course; there is not enough time in the space of a semester for this to be a practical requirement.

The final paper will include: 1) identification of a problem, 2) review of related research, 3) research question and hypothesis, 4) research design including sample, measurement, and procedures, 5) procedures for interventions and/or gathering data, 6) analyzing data, and 7) limitations. The paper will be completed in three parts. Students are allowed one revision per part to improve their work.

**Required Meetings**

Each student is required to meet with the instructor once during the month of September to discuss

his or her research proposal. This can take the form of a face-to-face meeting or can take place through an online forum (i.e. Google Hangout). Dates and times to sign up will be announced a minimum of a week in advance of when they begin.

Each student is also required to meet with the instructor once between October 29 and November 10. These meetings can take the form of a face-to-face meeting or can take place through an online forum (i.e. Google Hangout). The purpose of the second meeting is to review progress in the course.

**Assignments**

There will be assignments given throughout the semester that offer opportunities to apply your learning. These will be posted a week in advance of their due date.

**Discussion Activity**

Each student will complete discussion assignments. Some of the discussion assignments will involve critiquing and examining research articles. The initial posts for the research articles are to be completed *in your assigned groups*. All comments, as well as the initial posts for the library assignment and reflection assignment, are to be completed *individually*.

**CITI Training**

The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) offers training in conducting ethically sound research. Most institutions of higher learning, including Auburn University, require individuals to be up-to-date with their CITI training in order to conduct research. For this course, you will be required to:

1. Register with CITI at [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org)
2. Complete the Responsible Conduct of Research course.
3. Complete the Human Subjects Research course.
4. Email your certificates of completion to me by September 10, 2017. Completion of CITI training is required and will be considered an Assignments grade.

**Grading Procedure**

The grading procedure is criterion-referenced, that is, grades are determined by performance as compared to standards. Final grades that are borderline will result in the higher grade for the course. All assignments are due at 11:59pm Central Time on the due date.

Grades will be determined by the following weights:

Research Proposal Problem Statement 5%

Research Proposal Literature Matrix 5%

Research Proposal Part 1 15%

Research Proposal Part 2 15%

Research Proposal Part 3 15%

Discussion 15%

Assignments 30%

**Grading Scale**

100 - 90 A

89 – 80 B

79 – 70 C

69 – 60 D

59 and below F

**Late Assignments Policy**

All assigned work is expected to be received by 11:59pm on the data it is due. Open communication is the key. If you have a situation that interferes with your ability to complete an assignment on time, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as you are aware of this. Life happens, and individual circumstances will be taken into consideration.

Assigned work that is turned in late will receive a reduction of 5 points per day. The only exceptions will be documented emergencies and situations discussed with the instructor in advance of the due date. All work is expected to be typed. The late penalty will be applied to work completed in writing and then turned in late in a typed format.

**Incompletes and Withdrawals**

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 day of class to mid-quarter 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.

Note that a new incomplete grade (IN) policy is in effect. The new policy requires that students complete a form requesting an IN grade be assigned. If this form is not completed and given to the instructor of the class, a grade will be assigned with a score of zero (0) for work that has not been completed and turned in by the time the instructor reports grades.

**Academic Misconduct**

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 assigned 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.

**Disability Accommodations**

Students who need special accommodations in class, as provided for by the American Disabilities Act, should arrange a confidential meeting with the instructor during office hours in the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. You must bring a copy of your Accommodation Memo and an Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have these forms but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096.