Basic Methods in Education Research

## ERMA 7200

3 credit hours Course Syllabus – Fall 2020

**Instructor:** Sarah Flint, PhD, LPC  
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**Office Hours:** Zoom meetings available by appointment

**Meeting Time and Space:** This course is being offered in a “blended” format. Much of the course will be offered using both synchronous (Zoom) and asynchronous online formats (Canvas), with the possibility of meeting in-person later in the course assuming that circumstances are conducive to doing so. **This course meets Tuesdays 5:00-7:50pm** (Haley Center 1435).

# 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. By the end of the semester, students should attain the following learning goals:

1. Understand the fundamentals of social science research.
2. Pose research questions about their areas of interest.
3. Design an empirical study that can answer the questions that are posed.
4. Evaluate and critique the research that others have done.
5. Learn from perspectives that are not your own.

# Texts

### Required

There are two required texts for this course. Other readings will be assigned and provided as needed.

Privitera, G.J., & Ahlgrim-Delzell, L. (2019). *Research methods for education.* Sage.

ISBN-13: 978-1506303321; ISBN-10: 1506303323

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (*7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

ISBN-13: 978-1433832161; ISBN-10: 143383216X

# Course Activities and Deliverables

### Class Attendance

Attendance in class Zoom meetings is expected (and in person, should we be able to move to in person meetings later in the semester). If you are not going to be able to attend the Zoom meeting, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor prior to the start of class. This course will meet via Zoom during the scheduled course time, unless otherwise notified.

### Partners

Each student will be assigned a partner for the semester. The research proposal peer reviews described below are to be completed with your assigned partner. It is your responsibility to email your drafts and feedback directly to your peer partner each of the three times required this semester. Partner assignments will be found in the Announcements section of Canvas.

### Research Proposal

Each student will prepare a *quantitative* research proposal. This will be the primary deliverable for the course. The paper will be completed in three parts initially and then formally turned in as one document at the end of the semester.

The first part of the proposal assignment will discuss:

* The identification of a researchable problem
* A review of related research
* The research question(s) and corresponding hypotheses

The second part of the proposal will discuss:

* The research design and methodology
* The sampling approach
* Measurement issues

The third part of the proposal will discuss:

* Data collection procedures
* Data analysis plan
* Limitations

There will also be a peer review component to the research proposal assignment. Prior to each part of the proposal’s due date, students will exchange a draft of their paper with their partner and provide feedback based on a rubric available in Canvas. Each pair of students should create a plan for this exercise to ensure mutual expectations are established for when drafts should be exchanged and when peer reviews should be completed. The peer reviews are required for all three parts of the proposal. Specifications for this will be found in Canvas.

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 research proposal must be on a topic that is professionally relevant to each student, and the study that is designed must be feasible to carry out given adequate resources and time. Each student will give a brief presentation for their research proposal during a Zoom meeting at the end of the semester during the last class. Specifications for this can be found in Canvas.

### Assignments

During most class sessions, there will be an assignment that needs to be completed or uploaded in Canvas. Students must be in attendance to receive credit for these. Only students with documented emergencies and situations approved by the instructor in advance of the date in question will be allowed to make up this work.

There are also a number of assignments that need to be completed prior to class. These assignments are marked with an asterisk in the Course Schedule, found on pages 6 and 7 of this syllabus. The first of these assignments is due for Week 2, and it simply requires each student to come up with a tentative topic for their research proposal. Assignments that are due by the start of class will receive no credit if they are not submitted by the start of class. Our class activities will build on the work you have done outside of class for each of these assignments; as such, completing them prior to class is important. All other assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date listed.

### 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 to conduct research. **You should not pay anything to complete this.** For this course, you will be required to:

1. Register with CITI at [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org/)
2. Choose to register as a member of an affiliated organization; type in Auburn University.
3. Complete the following course:

IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher - IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel (ID 72746)

This can be found under the Human Subjects Courses option.

1. Upload your certificate of completion by February 4, 2020.

### Quizzes

There will be **six** quizzes during the semester that will be posted and taken in Canvas. The quizzes will be open-book and open-notes; however, these are to be completed individually. Giving or receiving assistance from anyone on the quizzes will be considered a violation of Auburn’s Academic Misconduct policy and violations will be referred.

# Grading

Signed Honor Pledge 5 points

Quizzes (6x10 points each) 60 points

Discussion Board Posts (5x10 points each) 50 points

CITI Training 20 points

Research Proposal Topic 10 points

Literature Matrix 20 points

Research Draft Part One 50 points

Research Draft Part Two 50 points

Research Draft Part Three 50 points

Research Final Draft 180 points

Peer Partner Review (3x20 points each) 60 points

Research Proposal Presentation 30 points

Qualitative Research Assignment 25 points

**Total Possible Points: 610 points**

# Grading Scale

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 100 | – 90 | A |
| 89.99 | – 80 | B |
| 79.99 | – 70 | C |
| 69.99 | – 60 | D |
| 59.99 | and below | F |

**Late Assignments Policy**

Late assignments will receive a deduction of 10% for each day they are late. Assignments that are due at the start of class will not be accepted late. Failure to complete these prior to class will result in the grade of a zero (0) for the assignment. The only exceptions will be documented emergencies and situations approved with the instructor in advance of the due date. No work will be accepted that is more than one week late without prior approval from the instructor.

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 considered on a case-by-case basis.

All work is expected to be typed. The late penalty will be applied to hand-written work and then turned in late in a typed format. All electronic documents submitted for the course are expected to be in Word 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 Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology 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 Student Policy eHandbook 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 Americans with 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.

# Course Schedule

This represents a schedule of the assignments and activities for the semester. This schedule is subject to change. Assignments and activities may be added to the schedule per the needs of the learning community. The third column represents the readings, assignments, and activities to be completed by the date listed. Chapters referenced without author names are found in the Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell text.

* indicates that an assignment is due by the start of class instead of 11:59pm

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| **DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **TO BE COMPLETED** |
| **Week 1** August 18 | Course introduction – review of syllabus, establish course expectations | * Honor Pledge |
| **Week 2**  August 25 | The nature of empirical research; Literature searches | * Ch. 1 * Villarroel (2016) critique discussion * Jansen (2018) critique discussion * Research topic due |
| **Week 3** September 1 | Ethics in research | * Ch. 2-3 * Ethics Discussion * Literature Matrix due |
| **Week 4**  September 8 | Measurement & Instrumentation | * Ch. 4-5 * Quiz 1 * CITI Training due |
| **Week 5**  September 15 | Sampling approaches | * Ch. 6 * Kramer (2014) critique discussion * Rough draft Part 1 due |
| **Week 6**  September 22 | Quantitative research designs | * Ch. 7-8 * Quiz 2 * Peer review 1 due |
| **Week 7**  September 29 | Quantitative research designs | * Ch. 9, 13-14 * Quiz 3 |
| **Week 8**  October 6 | Quantitative Data analysis | * Ch. 19 * Quiz 4 * Rough draft Part 2 due |
| **Week 9**  October 13 | Internal validity | * McMillan (in Canvas) * Peer review 2 due |

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| **Week 10**  October 20 | Qualitative Research | * Ch. 10-12 * Quiz 5 |
| **Week 11**  October 27 | Qualitative Research | * Ch. 20 * Weiner critique discussion * Rough draft Part 3 due |
| **Week 12**  November 3 | Mixed Methods Research | * Chapter 15 * Zumbrunn & McMillan * Peer review part 3 due * Suldo critique discussion |
| **Week 13**  November 10 | Program Evaluation; Applied Research Designs | * Ch. 16-17 * Quiz 6 |
| **Week 14**  November 17 | No lecture; work on full research proposal (due Friday 11/20) | * Full research proposal due Friday 11/20 by 11:59pm |
| November 24 | No lecture – work on proposal revisions and presentation slides | * Work on proposal revisions and presentation slides |
| **Week 15**  December 1 | No lecture; Presentations via Zoom meeting | * Research proposal presentations (slides due in Canvas by 4:59pm) * Qualitative Research Assignment due * Optional research proposal revisions due |