Basic Methods in Education Research

## ERMA 7206-CO1

3 credit hours

Course Syllabus – Fall 2020

**Instructor:** Sarah Flint, PhD, LPC  
 [sam0058@auburn.edu](mailto:sam0058@auburn.edu)

**Office Hours:** Zoom meetings available by appointment

# 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 Participation

This is an online course, so there are no class meetings to attend. However, it is very important that you keep up with the work this semester.

### 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. A date and time that is convenient for everyone will be decided by the class and set early in the semester. Specifications for this will be found in Canvas.

### Discussion Assignments (10 points each)

Five Discussion assignments are assigned during the semester. Each of these assignments have two due dates. The first is for the initial posts that are required. These are due each week on a Sunday.

Individuals are required to post at least **two** comments for each discussion thread, and comments are always due by Tuesday night by 11:59pm. This allows everyone to have the opportunity to read all of the initial posts prior to adding comments.

No late Discussion assignments will be considered for a grade. It is important to keep up with the work, and it is important to be sure to communicate with the instructor when issues arise.

After each discussion thread, the instructor will post a video in Canvas responding to the discussion about the article. These videos will be approximately five minutes in length and will address the most important issues raised in the discussion.

### Quizzes (10 points each)

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. No late quizzes are accepted, and quizzes are due by 11:59pm on Tuesdays. 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.

### CITI Training (20 points)

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. Select Human Subjects Courses.
4. Complete the IRB #2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis – AU Personnel – Basic/Refresher course (ID 72746)
5. Submit your certificates of completion via Canvas by Tuesday, September 8th.

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

# Late Assignments Policy

All assignments are due at 11:59pm on the date they are due. Late assignments will receive a deduction of 10% for each day they are late. The only exceptions will be documented emergencies and situations approved with the instructor in advance of the due date. Assignments will not be accepted if they are over one week late; assignments over a week late will receive the grade of a zero. No assignments will be accepted after Friday, December 4th at 11:59pm.

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 15th class day with no grade assignment. From the 15th 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; however, advanced notice will be given if that applies. 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. Reading assignments where only a chapter is listed will be from the Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell text.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | TOPIC(S) | TO BE COMPLETED |
| Week 1 August 18 | Course introduction | * Review syllabus and establish course expectations * Honor Pledge |
| Week 2  August 25 | The nature of empirical research; Literature searches | * Ch. 1 * Jansen (2018) * Villarroel (2016) critique discussion * Research topic due in Canvas |
| Week 3 September 1 | Ethics in research | * Ch. 2-3 * Ethics Discussion * Literature Matrix due in Canvas |
| Week 4  September 8 | Measurement & Instrumentation | * Ch. 4-5 * Quiz 1 * CITI Training due in Canvas |
| 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 |
| 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 and qualitative research assignment |
| Week 15  December 1 | No lecture; Presentations during a Zoom meeting | * Research proposal presentations (slides due in Canvas by 4:59pm) * Qualitative Research Assignment due * Research proposal revisions due |