**AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

**SYLLABUS**

**Spring 2025**

**Course Number:** COUN 8300

**Course Title:** Research Design in Counseling

**Credit Hours:** 3 Semester hours

**Prerequisites:** COUN 7320, COUN 7100 or 7950

**Course Schedule:** Wednesdays 4-6:50pm, 1221 Haley Center

**Date Syllabus Prepared:** January 2020; May 2020; May 2021; January 2024; January 2025

**Instructor:** Jill Meyer, PhD

Email: [jmm0079@auburn.edu](mailto:jmm0079@auburn.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment

**Required Texts:**

Creswell, J. W. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual for the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

**Recommended Texts:**

Heppner, P. P. & Heppner, M. J. (2004). *Writing and publishing your thesis, dissertation & research.* Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning

Silvia, P. J. (2007). How to write a lot: A practical guide to productive academic writing. American Psychological Association. Washington, D.C.

**Articles:**

Balkin, R. S., & Lenz, A. S. (2021). Contemporary issues in reporting statistical, practical, and clinical significance in counseling research. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *99*(2), 227-237. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12370>

Creswell, J. W., & Inoue, M. (2024). A process for conducting mixed methods data analysis. *Journal of General and Family Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jgf2.736>

Flinn, R. E., & Kalkbrenner, M. T. (2021). Matching variables with the appropriate statistical tests in counseling research. Teaching and Supervision in Counseling, 3(3), 4. https://doi.org/10.7290/tsc030304

Giordano, A. L., Schmit, M. K., & Schmit, E. L. (2021). Best practice guidelines for publishing rigorous research in counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *99*(2), 123-133. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12360>

Hays, D. G., & Wood, C. (2011). Infusing qualitative traditions in counseling research designs. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *89*(3), 288-295. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00091.x>

Hays, D. G., Wood, C., Dahl, H., & Kirk‐Jenkins, A. (2016). Methodological rigor in Journal of Counseling & Development qualitative research articles: A 15‐year review. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *94*(2), 172-183. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12074>

Hunt, B. (2011). Publishing qualitative research in counseling journals. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *89*(3), 296-300. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00092.x>

Kalkbrenner, M. T. (2022). Guidelines and Recommendations for Writing a Rigorous Quantitative Methods Section in Counseling and Related Fields. *Professional Counselor*, *12*(3), 217-231. <https://doi.org/10.15241/mtk.12.3.217>

Kalkbrenner, M. T. (2021). Alpha, Omega, and H internal consistency reliability estimates: Reviewing these options and when to use them. *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation, 14*(1), 77–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21501378.2021.1940118>

Marshall, D. T., Elmer, J. W., Hebert, C. C., & Barringer, K. E. (2024). Counseling Research Trends: A Content Analysis 2016–2020. *Journal of Professional Counseling: Practice, Theory & Research*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15566382.2024.2368647>

Trusty, J. (2011). Quantitative articles: Developing studies for publication in counseling journals. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *89*(3), 261-267. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00087.x>

Wester, K. L. (2011). Publishing ethical research: A step-by-step overview. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *89*(3), 301-307. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00093.x>

Wood, A. W., Dorais, S., Gutierrez, D., Moore, C. M., & Schmit, M. K. (2021). Advancing the counseling profession through contemporary quantitative approaches. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *99*(2), 156-166. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12363>

**Course Description:**

This class will cover issues related to research in counseling. The general goals for this course include acquisition of knowledge about traditional and recent developments in research methods, and demonstration of this knowledge through discussion, design, and evaluation of research.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate these learning outcomes:

1. Identify the ethical and legal issues in counseling research (CACREP 6.B.4.m)
2. Identify and select appropriate research methodology and design (CACREP 6.B.4.a)
3. Demonstrate the ability to formulate research questions appropriate for professional research and publication (CACREP 6.B.4.g)
4. Grant proposals and other sources of funding (CACREP 6.B.4.k)
5. Demonstrate the ability to create research designs appropriate to quantitative and/or qualitative research (CACREP 6.B.4.a)
6. Develop a research proposal, including introduction and methods sections (CACREP 6.B.4.a)
7. Identify issues related to counseling and educational research regarding the use of human subjects, including but not limited to subject selection, risks to participants, and participants’ rights (CACREP 6.B.4.j)
8. Identify issues related to counseling and educational research regarding cultural, gender, orientation, economics, racial, ethnicity, and other important cultural considerations in counseling (CACREP 6.B.4.1)

**Assignments/Projects:**

This course emphasizes the development and implementation of research. The emphasis is also on *application* so that all assignments are oriented towards the development of research skills. This will require students to complete a significant amount of reading and work outside of class times.

APA style 7th edition formatting is required on all assignments.

1. **CITI Certification (5 pts; due 01/31/25 11:59 pm)**
2. CITI Certification – (individual assignment)
3. **Dissertation Study Plan**
   1. **Research Plan (5 pts; due 02/21/25 11:59 pm).** Provide a written summary of your potential dissertation study on the following areas:
      1. Identification of research area and problem to be addressed (Need)
      2. Statement of significance/intention of your study (why this topic important…so what factor)
      3. Identification of tentative research design
      4. Identification of tentative questions to be explored
      5. References
   2. **Introduction (20 pts; due 03/07/25 – 11:59 pm) – Full APA** 
      1. Title Page
      2. Abstract (draft)
      3. 5-7+ page review of the problem and previous studies
      4. Statement of significance & purpose of your study
      5. Define terms as you use them- integrated throughout the paper
      6. Provide a brief literature review on the topic
      7. Use of scholarly sources, including reference section
      8. Include complete citations and Reference page (add citations and references as you complete both sections-Intro & Methods)
   3. **Methods Section (20 pts; due 04/11/25 – at 11:59 pm) – Full APA** 
      1. Complete Methods Section due (4-5 pages) (Update all references)
      2. Research Area and Importance
      3. Research Questions
      4. Methodology
         1. Description of design
         2. Rationale for design
         3. Participants & Sample Size (who they will be, consenting procedures). Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
         4. Instruments- complete description of psychometrics or interview protocol
         5. Procedures (sampling, recruitment, administration, etc.)
         6. Expected Analyses
      5. Concerns or limitations
   4. **Qualtrics Survey or Qualitative Survey (15 pts; due 04/18/25 – at 11:59 pm)**

This assignment is based on the research proposal, especially the instruments. Upload your surveys in CANVAS. Your survey should include the following:

* + 1. Formal introduction to the study and inclusion of IRB draft document (MS Word)
       1. Explanation of significance
       2. Purpose statement of your research project
       3. Benefits and cost to participants
       4. Other required information/documents required by IRB (e.g., informed consent or information letter, recruitment flyer)
    2. Demographics related to the project that would be important to know (Qualtrics)
       1. e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, etc.
    3. Quantitative Study - Surveys (Qualtrics)
       1. Create new block in Qualtrics for each questionnaire and include instructions at the beginning
       2. Each survey item should be entered with the scale/options
       3. You must provide the instructor access to your survey in Qualtrics for grading
    4. Qualitative Study – Protocol (MS Word)
       1. Create an interview/focus group protocol that includes the detailed script and interview questions

1. **Presentations of Research Proposal (15 pts; on 04/23/25)**
   1. Provide 30 min presentation on Dissertation Research Proposal
      1. See rubric for detail to address
      2. Identify a potential question(s) you may want to ask to the class
2. **Conference Proposal (Group Project. 10 pts; due 04/30/25 - at 11:59 pm)**

You work with the class to identify a potential research topic that can be presented to a conference (e.g., ACA, ALCA) and develop a proposal document that can be actually submitted to the conference.

* 1. Identify a specific conference organization and the presentation format (e.g., concurrent session, poster)
  2. Obtain the instructions for the proposal document
  3. Complete the proposal following the conference presentation proposal format

1. **Grant Proposal (Group Project. 10 pts; due 04/30/25 - at 11:59 pm)**
   1. Identify a potential funding agency for your group research
   2. Obtain all instructions for submitting a grant
   3. Complete a narrative for the specific announcement based on your research
      1. Follow funder guidelines for formatting

**Rubric and Grading Scale:**

The final grade for the course will be based in the following:

CITI Certification 5

Dissertation Research Plan 5

Dissertation Introduction 20

Dissertation Methods Section 20

Dissertation Survey 15

Research Proposal Presentations 15

Conference Proposal 10

Grant Proposal 10

Total 100

**All assignments are due by the announced date**. **Assignments are due as scheduled. Late assignments will be penalized 1 point for each day it is late. Exceptions to this policy will only be given in cases of medical or personal emergencies.** The following scale will be used:

90-100% =A

80-89% =B

70-79% =C

60-69 =D

Below 60% =F

**Course Schedule:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Content** | **Readings** | **Assignment** |
| 1/15/25 | **Class Orientation**  **Syllabus and Assignment Review** | Creswell Ch.1 | Review syllabus and ask questions for assignments |
| 1/22/25 | **Developing a Research Plan**  Conceptualizing research  Identifying and operationalizing research topics  Components of the research proposal  Introduction | Creswell Ch.5  Giordano et al., 2021  Theory & Writing  Silvia Ch. 1, 2 & 5 | **\*Look at our dissertation format options\*** |
| 1/29/25 | **Developing a Research Plan**  Research practicum and dissertation  Nature of research in the helping professions  Integrative Literature Reviews  Components of the research proposal | Creswell Ch. 2-3  Marshall et al., 2024 | ***CITI Certification Due (1/31)*** |
| 2/5/25 | **Developing a Research Plan**  Developing and writing purpose statement/research questions  Critiquing research | Creswell Ch. 6-7 | **\*Bring in a research article that has an exemplary introduction/literature review and one that you believe warrants improvement from a counseling journal. Identify the purpose statements and research questions in these articles for discussion.** |
| 2/12/25 | **Legal and Ethical Issues in Research**  Ethics and research in the helping profession  Cultural, ethnic, racial, LGBT, and gender sensitive research  Human Subjects and Research  Developing IRB protocols | Creswell Ch. 4  Wester 2011 | **Individual presentation (Ch. 4)**  **In class-view AU IRB site and proposals** |
| 2/19/25 | **Individual Meetings – Research Plan & Topics** |  | **Dissertation and Group Project Topics**  ***Dissertation Project - Research Plan Due***  ***(2/21)*** |
| 2/26/25 | **Research Design and Methods**  Research Methodology  Research Procedures  Designing Quantitative Research | Creswell Ch. 8  Balkin & Lenz, 2021  Flinn & Kalkbrenner, 2021  Kalkbrenner, 2022  Trusty 2011 | **Discussion on Methodology & Design Choices** |
| 3/5/25 | **Research & Writing (Introduction Due)**  **NO CLASS** |  | ***Dissertation Project - Introduction/Lit Review***  ***Due (3/7)*** |
| 3/12/25 | **NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK** |  |  |
| 3/19/25 | **Research Design and Methods**  Research Methodology  Research Procedures  Designing Qualitative Research | Creswell Ch. 9  Hays & Wood, 2011  Hays et al., 2016  Hunt 2011 | **\*Bring in 2 published articles with research designs that are similar to one you are considering. Identify the strengths and areas for improvements in each article for discussion.** |
| 3/26/25 | **Research Design and Methods**  Research Methodology  Research Procedures  Designing Mixed Methods Research  Your Methods Section  Design Validity  Instruments – Reliability & Validity  Effect size & Power | Creswell Ch. 10  Creswell & Inoue, 2024  Kalkbrenner, 2021 |  |
| 4/2/25 | **Individual Meeting – Research design and Methods** |  |  |
| 4/9/25 | **Research & Writing**  **NO CLASS** |  | ***Dissertation Project - Methods Section Due (4/11)*** |
| 4/16/25 | **Writing Grants**  How to search, conceptualize, & organize  Review funders and applications  **Qualtrics Survey** |  | **\*Identify 2 funders for your research and bring to class to explore**  ***Dissertation Project –***  ***Survey Due (4/18)*** |
| 4/23/25 | Dissertation Study Presentation |  | ***Presentations*** |
| 4/30/25 | Course Wrap-Up |  | ***Conference Proposal***  ***Grant Proposal Due (4/30)*** |

**Justification for Graduate Credit:**

This course includes content as specified by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP, 2024). All academic content approved by CACREP is for advanced Masters and/or Doctoral graduate study. This includes rigorous evaluation standards of students completing the student learning outcomes specified in this syllabus.

**SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER:**

Due to the nature of this course, the instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed due to the developmental needs of the students.  In the event that changes are deemed necessary, the instructor will inform students at the earliest date possible in class or via email.

**Class Policy Statements:**

1. Attendance: Students may miss up to one class for any reason without penalty. Additional absences will result in a 5 point grade reduction. Students will be held responsible for any content covered in the event of an absence. Students are expected to be on time for class.
2. Zoom attendance: When we meet on Zoom, your attendance, attention, and participation are expected. Zoom participation requires you to keep your video on and your microphone muted when you are not speaking. Although you may be participating from your domicile, our Zoom meetings are professional interactions. You should dress and behave as you would be in a normal F2F classroom. To the extent possible, please minimize distractions in the background. I reserve the right to dismiss anyone from a Zoom meeting whose environment or behavior is distracting or problematic. If you have any issues with sharing your video feed, adhering to this policy, or anything else related to your use of Zoom please notify me via email in the first week of class. I am happy to consider and provide accommodations, but you will need to be in communication with me.
3. Excused absences: Students are granted excused absences from class for the following reasons: illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student’s immediate family, trips for student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for university classes, trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoena for a court appearance, and religious holidays. Students who wish to have excused absences from class for any other reason must contact the instructor in advance of the absence to request permission. The instructor will weigh the merits of the request and render a decision. When feasible, the student must notify the instructor prior to the occurrence of any excused absences, but in no case shall notification occur more than one week after the absence. Appropriate documentation for all excused absences is required. Please see Student Policy eHandbook [www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](http://www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies) for more information on excused absences.
4. Course communication: Canvas will be used as the medium to transfer educational materials for this course. Students will upload completed assignments to Canvas and bring them to class only when instructed. University e-mail (**NOT** messages through Canvas) will be the primary avenue of communication with the instructor in between class sessions.
5. Make-Up Policy: Arrangement to make up a missed major examination (e.g., hour exams, mid-term exams) due to properly authorized excused absences must be initiated by the student within one week of the end of the period of the excused absence(s). If you miss an assignment you have one week to contact the instructor and address the issue. Except in extraordinary circumstance, no make-up exams will be arranged during the last three days before the final exam period begins.
6. Academic Honesty Policy: All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the Student Policy eHandbook [www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](http://www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies) will apply to university courses. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.
7. Educational Accessibility Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and 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 Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).
8. Diversity Statement: It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements for you.

Many people might go by a name in daily life that is different from their legal name. In this classroom, we will refer to people by the names that they go by. Pronouns are a way to affirm someone's identity. They are simply a public way in which people are referred to in place of their name (e.g.**,** **“**he**”** or **“**she**”** or **“**they**”** or **“**ze**”** or something else). In this classroom, you are invited to share what pronouns you go by, and we will refer to people using the pronouns that they share.

1. Course contingency: If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to illness, emergency, or crisis situation, the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.
2. Professionalism: As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:
   1. Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
   2. Contribute to collaborative learning communities
   3. Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
   4. Model and nurture intellectual vitality
3. Use of Electronics: Cell phones must be put on silent and stored during class times, unless the instructor is notified of special circumstances (e.g., on-call professional services, family emergencies). **Computers and electronic notepads are needed, but may be used for class purposes only and must not be a distraction.**