

**ERMA 7200**

**Basic Research  
Methods**

**Summer, 2010**

**EFLT Department  
College of Education**

Dr. James E. Witte

Work: 334-844-3054

Fax: 334-844-3072

E-Mail: [witteje@auburn.edu](mailto:witteje@auburn.edu)

Office Hours: Appointment Preferred

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



Faculty, staff and students  
strive to prepare and be professionals who are:

*Competent*

equipped with the knowledge, skills  
and technological expertise to help  
all individuals learn and develop

*Committed*

dedicated to the ethical practices and collaboration  
that serve as the foundation of a diverse  
and intellectually vibrant society

*Reflective*

devoted to analyzing their own past practices  
in ways that fuel ongoing learning  
and improve future practices

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**ERMA 7200**  
**Basic Methods in Education Research**  
**Auburn University**  
**College of Education**  
Summer, 2010

**Class Time:** Monday, 5:00 – 7:50 p.m.

**Location:** Duncan Hall Rm 112

**Instructor:** Dr. James E. Witte  
Haley Center, Rm 4010  
334-844-3054  
witteje@auburn.edu  
Office Hours: by appointment

1. **Course Number:** ERMA 7200

**Course Title:** Basic Methods in Educational Research

**Credit Hours:** 3 semester hours

**Prerequisites:** Departmental approval

2. **Date Syllabus Prepared:** June 2010

3. **Text:** Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. (2009) *Research methods in education*. (9<sup>th</sup> ed.)  
New York, Pearson.

4. **Course Description:** Major modes of inquiry in contemporary educational research including experimental, causal comparative, descriptive, qualitative inquiry and action research models.

5. **Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. State a research question amenable to research techniques using empirical methods
2. Develop where appropriate testable hypotheses based on these questions
3. Describe a research design appropriate for investigating each question
4. Choose an appropriate data analysis strategy for each design
5. Develop or choose appropriate measures for each variable
6. Plan for establishing the reliability and validity of each measure
7. Critique the research design of each research situation in terms of threats to internal and external validity of the design
8. Draw appropriate conclusions and interpretations of these analyses

9. Describe the differences and similarities in the assumptions underlying parametric and nonparametric analytical procedures
10. Integrate elements of the research process into a proposal
11. Review and critique articles or papers using these procedures in educational contexts

6. **Course Content / Requirements:**

**Research Article Analysis & Evaluation (30 points)**

You will find one original, primary educational research article and analyze it in detail. Your assignment includes:

- 1) a copy of the original article, which must fit the selection criteria and cite it correctly using APA format for references
- 2) a brief but clearly written summary of the article.
- 3) In addition to the summary, you will answer each of the following questions:
  - What is the purpose(s) of the research, the research question(s) or hypothesis(es)?
  - What type(s) or class of research is this (e.g. descriptive, experimental, etc.)?
  - Who or what is the population and sample being studied and how was the sample selected?
  - What type(s) of data were collected? What methods were used to collect data?
  - How were the data analyzed? What methods were used and if numeric data were collected, what statistical procedures or analyses were applied?
  - What was the researcher's interpretation or conclusion? Do the data and procedures support the interpretation or conclusion?

**Thesis/Dissertation Review (30 points)**

You will find at least one (you may need to examine several before making a final selection) Masters thesis or dissertation. These should align with your possible area of interest:

- Cite the thesis or project in correct APA reference style.\
- Describe the research question to be answered or problem to be solved or need filled.
- List the chapters, including titles, and appendices for the final thesis or project.
- Describe how the need for the project or importance of the research question were established in the first chapter.
- List the sections used to organize the review of literature (typically chapter two).
- Summarize the design of the study or project outlined in the third chapter.
- Describe the data collected, the analysis methods, and the conclusions in some detail and how the findings can be applied to teaching and learning.
- If you were to replicate the study, describe which aspects of the study could be conducted by you and what challenges you would anticipate.

**Literature Review (40 points)**

Select a single, focused topic and perform a resource search.

- Find at least 5 different sources of at least two different types (e.g. primary sources, reviews, books, on-line materials, ERIC documents, personal communications, etc.).
- Contact me if your topic doesn't appear to have a wide range of resources.
- Using these sources write a thematic review emphasizing ideas and trends, rather than dealing with each resource separately.

- The review will be evaluated on the bases of its focus and number and types of resources (5-10), correct and appropriate format, including citations and bibliography, the clarity and thematic nature of the review, and the quality of the writing.

## 12. **Evaluation:**

Academic dishonesty is an offense that will be reported to the Academic Honesty Committee (Tiger Cub). All portions of the Auburn University Honesty Code found in the Tiger Cub (Title XII) will apply in this class.

**Unexcused absences and tardiness** will result in the penalty of one letter grade from the final class average (a “B” instead of an “A”, etc.). It is your responsibility to notify the instructor beforehand or as soon as possible if you anticipate being absent or late for class.

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and participate in all classroom exercises (Tiger Cub). Should students need to be absent for any reason, please contact the course instructor before missing that class meeting. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work due to excused absences (Tiger Cub).

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

|                    |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| Article Analysis   | 30pts  |
| Thesis/Diss Review | 30pts  |
| Lit Review         | 40pts  |
| Total              | 100pts |

The following grading scale will be used.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 90pts - 100pts= | A |
| 80pts - 89pts = | B |
| 70pts - 79pts = | C |
| 60pts - 69pts = | D |
| Below 60pts =   | F |

## 13. **Methods:**

A variety of teaching techniques and strategies are employed in the instruction of this course. The principal methods to be utilized include, but may not be limited to lectures, video tapes, visual aids, peer teaching, experiences, guest lectures and group discussion. This is a professional education course in adult education. All students are considered adults and are expected to not only study but also practice andragogy - to take responsibility for their learning. Thus the student is expected to contribute to the class

setting by participating, and to be collaborative and supportive of all members of the learning setting. Adult education is not a place for passive learning but a place to explore, take risks and grow. Ignorance is not vested in the students while knowledge is vested in the instructor. Both are learners and have contributions to make to each other. Both are responsible for their own learning.

## 7. Class Policy Statements:

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 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, (334) 844-2096.

### Weekly Schedule

|                    | Date    | Chapter          | Activity   |
|--------------------|---------|------------------|--|
| Meeting 1          | May 24  |                  | Syllabus discussion & Class Expectations   |
| Meeting 2          | May 31  | Chapter 1        | Educational Research: Its Nature and Characteristics   |
| Meeting 3          | June 7  | Chapter 2        | Identification of Research Problem<br>Prepare two questions: submit electronically. ( as discussed in class) |
| Meeting 4:         | June 14 | Chapter 3:       | The Review of Literature   |
| Meeting 5:         | June 21 | Chapter 4 & 5:   | Communicating About Research & Evaluating Research Reports   |
| <b>*Meeting 6:</b> | June 28 | Chapter 6:       | Research Design in Quantitative Research   |
| <b>*Meeting 7:</b> | July 5  | Chapter 10:      | Research Design in Qualitative Research  |
| Meeting 8:         | July 12 | Chapter 14 & 15: | Sampling Designs & Measurement and Data Collection   |
| Meeting 9:         | July 19 | Chapter 16 & 17: | Data Analysis  |
| Meeting 10:        | July 26 |                  | Summary & Turn-in of materials   |

**NOTE: Meeting 6 and 7 will be Video Class.**