

EDHD 662: Educational Research Methods

Fall 2017

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Required Readings

- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th Ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Selected other resources.

Course Description

In this course, you will learn about research methods associated with studying the development, achievement, and school adjustment of children and adolescents in educational settings. You will learn the fundamentals of several qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches, although we will emphasize quantitative methodologies.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to

- Match research questions with the appropriate methodological approach;
- Describe several research methods, including key characteristics and considerations, ethical issues, the steps to conducting research with the method, feasibility for practicing teachers, and what can (and cannot) be inferred from the findings; and
- Systematically distill, analyze, and synthesize extant literature to frame research endeavors and identify valuable opportunities for further investigation.

Course Requirements

Quizzes

20%

Throughout the semester, you will demonstrate your growing knowledge about educational research methods by completing in-class quizzes on the material. These *cumulative* quizzes will reflect material discussed in class and in your assigned readings, and will consist of selected-response and short-answer questions. No makeup quizzes are allowed; however, students' lowest quiz score will be dropped.

Problem Statement

10%

At the beginning of the semester, you will clearly and compellingly describe the educational problem you want to solve. Throughout the course, you will use this research problem as a point of reference for learning and considering research methods.

The problem statement will be a combination two-page narrative and a one-page overview. A detailed assignment description and rubric will be provided.

Connection Papers

30%

Three times during the semester, you will draw connections between your chosen research problem and a research methodology. In these papers, you will choose a research method discussed in class; describe it in detail; develop an appropriate research question; describe how you would go about designing the study; and discuss feasibility and what could be concluded from your study.

For example, assume you are interested in solving the problem of underrepresentation of low-income parents in parent-teacher conferences. For your research method, you select grounded theory. In the connection paper, you would thoroughly explain grounded theory, develop a research question that can be answered by this method, and describe the steps you would take to use grounded theory to better understand what affords and prevents low-income parents from attending parent-teacher conferences.

To help you see what is gained and lost with different research methods, the research problem you select should be the same for all three connection papers—the problem won't change, but your approach to it will.

Connection papers should be at least three pages in length, allowing approximately one page to describe the research method, one page for the research question and methodology, and one page to discuss the feasibility and implications of the study. A detailed assignment description and rubric will be provided.

Discussion Coordinator

20%

Twice during the semester, you will work with one or two peers to plan and lead a class session. The focus of the class will be showing how a research method (or two) can be used to investigate an educational challenge. As part of this effort, your team will distill the research method into an accurate and attractive one-page overview. For the class session, you will plan discussion questions and activities that illustrate the research method and help your peers understand how that method can/should be used to solve problems.

Literature Table and Overlap/Gap Analysis

20%

At the end of the semester, you will demonstrate your command of research methods and your ability to systematically distill, analyze, and synthesize empirical studies. To do so, you will submit a literature table and a short presentation describing several overlaps and gaps you found from your analysis. A literature table helps summarize studies that frame your research and, more importantly, gives you the ability to easily synthesize your studies to identify themes (i.e., areas in which your studies overlap) and opportunities for further research (i.e., gaps in the literature that your study will fill).

Your literature table will include at least 15 peer-reviewed, empirical studies. A basic table template for the table, presentation description, and rubric will be provided.

Assessment Policies

Grading Scale

This is a three-credit, letter-graded course. Course grades are based on the following scale:

A+	98-100%	B+	88 – 89%	C+	78 – 79%	D+	68 – 69%	F	≤ 59%
A	92 – 97%	B	82 – 87%	C	72 – 77%	D	62 – 67%		
A-	90 – 91%	B-	80 – 81%	C-	70 – 71%	D-	60 – 61%		

Grade Dispute

If you have a question or concern regarding a grade, you need to document your concern in writing. *Within one week*, you must give me a scanned/photocopied version of the original assignment and a written rationale to explain why you believe your grade should be changed. In your rationale, be sure to explain how my decision to change your grade will be fair to everyone else in the class. My decision will be based upon your written argument.

Class Policies

Academic Integrity

The University of Maryland, College Park has a student-administered Honor Code and Honor Pledge. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. The code prohibits students from cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. Instances of this include submitting someone else's work as your own, submitting your own work completed for another class without permission, or failing to properly cite information other than your own (found in journals, books, online, or otherwise). Any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and any sign of academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate University officials.

Special Needs

If you have a registered disability that will require accommodation, please see the instructor so necessary arrangements can be made. If you have a disability and have not yet registered with the University, please contact Disability Support Services in the Shoemaker Building (301.314.7682, or 301.405.7683 TTD) as soon as possible.

Absences and Missed Assignments

Religious Observances

The University of Maryland policy on religious observances states that students not be penalized in any way for participation in religious observances. Students shall be allowed, whenever possible, to make up academic assignments that are missed due to such absences. However, the must contact the instructor **before** the absence with a written notification of the projected absence, and arrangements will be made for make-up work or examinations.

Missed Single Class Due to Illness

Once during a semester, a student's self-authored note will be accepted as an excuse for missing a minor scheduled grading event in a single class session if the note documents the date of the illness, acknowledgement from the student that information provided in the note is correct, and a statement that the student understands that providing false information is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected to attempt to inform the instructor of the illness prior to the date of the missed class.

Major Scheduled Grading Events

Major Scheduled Grading Events (MSGE) are indicated on the syllabus. The conditions for accepting a self-signed note do not apply to these events. Written, signed documentation by a health care professional, or other professional in the case of non-medical reasons (see below) of a University-approved excuse for the student's absence must be supplied. This documentation must include verification of treatment dates and the time period for which the student was unable to meet course requirements. Providers should not include diagnostic information. Without this documentation, opportunities to make up missed assignments or assessments will not be provided.

Non-Consecutive, Medically Necessitated Absences from Multiple Class Sessions

Students who throughout the semester miss multiple, non-consecutive class sessions due to medical problems must provide written documentation from a health care professional that their attendance on those days was prohibited for medical reasons.

Non-Medical Excused Absences

According to University policy, non-medical excused absences for missed assignments or assessments may include illness of a dependent, religious observance, involvement in University activities at the request of University officials, or circumstances that are beyond the control of the student. Students

asking for excused absence for any of those reasons must also supply appropriate written documentation of the cause and make every attempt to inform the instructor prior to the date of the missed class.

Course Evaluations

As a member of our academic community, students have a number of important responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to submit course evaluations each term through CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. All information submitted to CourseEvalUM is confidential. Campus will notify you when CourseEvalUM is open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses. Please go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

Course Schedule			
(subject to change if situations warrant)			
Week	Date	Due Before Class (bolded items emailed by Sunday at midnight)	In-Class Topics
1	08/29	Read Ch. 1: Overview	Philosophical Orientation Research Methods Overview
Finding Focus for Your Research			
2	09/05	Read Ch. 2: Research Problem	Research Problems
3	09/12	Research Problem Statement Read Ch. 3: Literature Review, especially p. 91-103	Quiz (MSGE) Organizing Literature Working Session
Building Your Research Toolbox			
4	09/19	Read Ch. 10: Experimental Designs	Experimental Designs
5	09/26	Reread Ch. 10	Within-Subjects Designs Between Subjects Designs Quiz (MSGE)
6	10/03	Connection Paper Read Ch. 11: Correlational Designs	Correlational Designs
7	10/10	Reread Ch. 11	Explanatory Designs Prediction Designs Quiz (MSGE)
8	10/17	Connection Paper Read Ch. 12: Survey Designs	Survey Designs
9	10/24	Reread Ch. 12	Cross Sectional Designs Longitudinal Designs Quiz (MSGE)
10	10/31	NO CLASS—work on your literature table	
11	11/07	Skim Chs. 13-15 Connection Paper	Qualitative Designs
12	11/14	Reskim Ch. 13-15	Grounded Theory—Systematic Designs Ethnographic—Case Study Designs
13	11/21	Read Ch. 17: Action Research	Action Research
14	11/28	Reread Ch. 17	Practical Design Participatory Design Quiz (MSGE)
Putting It All Together			
15	12/05	Reread pp. 93-103	Overlap/Gap Analysis Presentation
	12/12	Literature Table and Overlap and Gap Analysis (due by Tuesday at midnight via email)	