COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to educational and social research for practitioners in schools and human services. The focus will be on fundamental issues in empirical research—that is research based on, concerned with, or verifiable by observation or experience, rather than theory or pure logic—including research methodology and research techniques (e.g., data collection, analysis and interpretation). This is not a research design or statistics course. In this course we will focus on: (a) developing an understanding of various kinds of educational and social research; (b) developing skills that will facilitate critical reading of educational and social research; and (c) exploring the role and use of research techniques to reflect upon and improve practice.

The course includes “qualitative” and “quantitative” approaches to research. The terms “qualitative” and “quantitative” are commonly used to distinguish between experimental and non-experimental approaches, however, the difference between these “families” of research are more complex. Throughout the course we will explore the methodological (e.g., epistemological, ontological, political and value assumptions) as well as the technical differences between the two.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

(A) CLASS PARTICIPATION (15%):

Students are expected to complete all readings and other assignments as scheduled, attend and participate in each class.

Classroom discussion and research explanation activities
Much of our in-class time will be spent doing various learning activities that extend the readings. Class discussions will include assessments of the content and concepts from the reading, questions you have about the material, your personal experiences relevant to topics, suggestions of how we might confirm or disconfirm what is being argued, thinking about what produces the phenomenon being described (broader school and societal factors), criticisms of the authors’ arguments and observations, implications of the reading for changing schools, and reflections on the relationship among the readings. While not required I suggest keeping a journal of your reading, which will help you in class discussions and improve your understanding of the topics being considered. You might include notes taken as you read, analytical reflections on what you’ve read, and your preparation for discussion.

There are two “shared pair” research explanation activities, January 21st and January 28th. Participation in the research explanation activities is a requirement for successful completion of the course.
Application problems/quizzes
At various times during the semester I will present you with application problems to solve in-class or for homework. The nature of these problems will vary, but will be related to the readings and may be “open book.” Please bring a calculator to class for use in solving simple statistical problems (I’ll let you know in advance when this will be necessary). I may also give periodic quizzes.

Self Evaluations
You will be asked to formally assess your own performance—describing the quality of your work, your understanding of the material, your strengths and weaknesses in dealing with the subject matter, the hours you devoted to the course, and the timeliness of your assignments. I will take this self-evaluation into account when assigning grades. Maximum length one single-spaced page.
DUE: April 1st Required for successful completion of the course.

(B) RESEARCH TOPIC (10%)
Identify a research topic, problem, question or hypothesis, clearly defining concepts and/or variables, which will be the focus of your research review paper. Your one page single-spaced paper should include: a description of topic/problem; a rationale for investigating the topic (why is it important?); a list of database search terms related to the topic; and at least three sample citations of relevant research reports.
DUE: January 28

(C) RESEARCH STUDY CRITIQUES (45%, each critique 15%)
You will select and critique three research articles (one “review of research”, one “qualitative” study and one “quantitative” study) on a topic of interest to you. The report of your critique will consist of two parts: (1) an oral presentation to a peer group and (2) a written report.

Format for Written Critiques: Use the 12-step format described in the Chapters 7, 11, and 13 of Reading and Understanding Research (Lock, Silverman, and Spirduso, 2010). Each critique should: (a) briefly answer each of the 12 questions, (b) include a critical/explanatory summary, and (c) include a graphic tool/flowchart. Your critique should be typed with pages stapled in top left corner (no folders, envelopes or binders). Be sure that you have spell-checked and proof read the paper. Graphic/flowchart may be submitted in readable freehand. In preparation for presentations read Locke et al. Chapter 8. See examples of completed critiques in the Locke et al. text.

Presentation and written critique of a research review article
DUE: February 4

Presentation and written critique of quantitative study
DUE: February 25
In critiquing a “quantitative” study consider the type of quantitative study you are analyzing (e.g., experiment, quasi-experiment, causal-comparative, correlational, survey). See the appropriate chapters of your texts. Describe and analyze the study on the following points: (1) purpose of the study; (2) internal validity; (3) practical significance of differences reported between groups; (4) validity of outcome measures; (5) assumptions about schooling and/or learning; (6) external validity.
Presentation and written critique of a qualitative study
DUE: March 18
In critiquing a “qualitative” or naturalistic study, draw on classroom lectures and handouts well as the text's discussion of qualitative research. Because of their idiosyncrasies, applying uniform standards to naturalistic studies may be inappropriate. Nevertheless, studies do vary in quality. The following issues may be considered about the qualities of naturalistic studies: (1) time spent collecting data; (2) access to data; (3) “naturalness” of the data; (4) researcher self-criticism; (5) logical validity; (6) confirmation; (7) descriptive adequacy; and (8) significance.

(D) RESEARCH REVIEW PAPER (30%)

Select a topic to examine and write a review of selected research in that area. You should locate, read, and evaluate a minimum of 5 to 7 original, empirical research studies on a specific issue [that is, research reports written by the researcher(s)]. Your research review paper should include at least: (a) one review of research; (b) one qualitative research study and (c) at least one research report that is correlational, causal-comparative, or experimental. Your paper should present a brief descriptive synthesis of the findings from the studies you examined and include a discussion that compares and contrasts the various methods used to examine the issue under investigation and how these methods affect the ways in which the issue is investigated, the findings of the studies, and the implications of the research for practice.

The paper should be no more than 10 double-spaced pages (2,500 words). Append a reference list (APA style) of studies included and a completed 12-step form, flowchart, and critical/explanatory summary for each of the studies.

Presentation to group and written paper DUE: April 1st

Attendance at all classes is required. All assignments should be typewritten unless otherwise specified. I do NOT generally accept late work. If you anticipate a problem meeting any due date, please contact me in advance to discuss if there are alternatives.
READINGS

**Required Text**

**Recommended Text**

**Optional Text**

**Additional Required Readings**


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1 Other reading may be assigned to address issues that arise during the term.
CLASS SCHEDULE

January 7  Introduction to EDUC 500
In class activity: Library research backgrounder

January 14  Sources of Research Ideas: Selecting, Reading, and Evaluating Research Reports
Reading: Locke, et al., Chapters 2-4
In class activity: Library Workshop
Prepare For Explaining Research Activity #1

NOTE: Class will be in Scarfe 1006 for this class meeting only.

January 21  Perspectives on Research
Reading: Locke, et al., Chapter 1, 5 & 8
Explaining Research activity articles:
   b. Kanevsky (2011)
In class activity: Explaining Research—Shared Pair Activity #1
Prepare For Explaining Research Activity #2

January 28  Research Ethics
Reading: Explaining Research activity articles:
   a. Tierney (2014)
   b. Wirkala & Kuhn (2011)
Freeman & Mathison (2009), pp. 19-36 & 69-85
Research Ethics: A Guide for Graduate Students
(http://www.grad.ubc.ca/handbook-graduate-supervision/research-ethics-guide-graduate-students)
In class activity: Explaining Research—Shared Pair Activity #2
Assignment due: Research Topic Statement
Complete UBC Human Ethical Review requirements: (1) Register with RISe; (2) Complete the TCPS 2 Introductory Tutorial (CORE)
http://research.ubc.ca/ethics/you-apply
February 4  Reviews of Research
Reading: Locke et al., Chapter 13
In class activity: Explanation of research review study to peer group
Assignment due: Critique of Research Review Study

February 11  Quantitative Research (Part 1)
Reading: Locke et al., Chapter 6-7 & 9

February 18  NO CLASS—Reading Week

February 25  Quantitative Research (Part 2)
Reading: Locke et al, Appendix B (Statistics: A Beginners Guide)
In class activity Explanation of quantitative study to peer group
Assignment Due: Critique of Quantitative Study

March 4  NO CLASS—Library Research Week

March 11  Qualitative Research (Part 1)
Reading: Locke et al., Chapter 10-12

March 18  Qualitative Research (Part 2)
Reading: Morgan (2007)
In class activity Explanation of qualitative study to peer group
Assignment due: Critique of Qualitative Study

March 25  NO CLASS—Library Research Week

April 1  Presentations/Wrap-up
Assignment due: Presentation To Group
Final Papers
General Guidelines:

Plagiarism
Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is a form of cheating that can lead to a failing grade for the course and to suspension from the University. As defined within UBC policies (http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/policies.htm), and as outlined in the UBC Calendar, plagiarism is a serious “form of academic misconduct in which an individual submits or presents the work of another person as his or her own”. As a form of intellectual theft, plagiarism involves taking the words, ideas or research of another without properly acknowledging the original author. Students need to become familiar with the many different forms that plagiarism can take, including accidental and intentional plagiarism. For more information see http://www.arts.ubc.ca/Plagiarism_Avoided.373.0.html OR www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism/for-students.doc OR http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml

Please take care to acknowledge your sources, including the Internet, using APA Style (American Psychological Association).

Non-sexist Language
Please incorporate and use non-sexist language [also called gender inclusive language] in your oral and written language. This language positions women and men equally, it does not exclude one gender or the other, nor does it demean the status of one gender or another. It does not stereotype genders [assuming all childcare workers are female and all police officers are male], nor does it use false generics [using mankind instead of human kind, or using man-made instead of hand crafted]. In addition, this language requires an attention to gender balance in personal pronouns, for example, use "he and she” rather than "he" or balance gendered examples in a paper, referring to both male and female examples. You may also recast subjects into the plural form, e.g., when a student raises his hand Š when students raise their hands.

Person First Language
Please incorporate and use person first language in your oral and written language. Disabilities and differences are not persons and they do not define persons, so do not replace person-nouns with disability-nouns. Avoid using: the aphasic, the schizophrenic, stutterers, the hearing impaired. Also avoid using: cleft palate children, the hearing impaired client, the dyslexic lawyer, the developmentally disable adult. Instead, emphasize the person, not the disability, by putting the person-noun first: the lawyer who has dyslexia, persons who stutters, the children described as language impaired, the teacher with a hearing impairment.

Students with Disabilities
We strive to include all students, including those with special learning needs in this course. Please let us know (or have the UBC Disability Resource Center let us know) if you have a disability documented with the UBC Disability Resource Centre and/or if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessment of this course to enable you to fully participate. We adhere to UBC Policy 73: Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. This information is located at: http://www.students.ubc.ca/access/drc.cfm. We will respect the confidentiality of the information you share and work with you so your learning needs are met.