



EDUC 5307 Graduate Research  
Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College  
Spring 2016

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### **Course Description**

This course is designed to broaden the perspectives of graduate students and introduce them to the techniques of research. The design of the class is to both enable the learner to effectively read and interpret research and research design and to facilitate best writing practices using the style manual utilized by those in the Social Sciences. Students pursuing a Master's Degree should have an understanding of the research process at various levels including research for individual classroom purposes, extensive library research, as well as writing proposals in American Psychological Association (APA) format. The major emphasis of the writing section of the course will be the composing of a student research proposal.

### **Prerequisites**

This course is to be taken during the first 12 hours of graduate coursework so that the learner will have tools with which to understand the research content of the remaining coursework in the specific program. Assessment of course objectives will be covered in the student's oral examination, as well as this specific course, upon completion of the program.

### **Required Textbooks**

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN:978-1-4522-2610-5

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association  
ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5

### **Instructional Objectives**

As a result of course readings, activities, and assignments students will:

- utilize and demonstrate competence in American Psychological Association writing style for all course written assignments
- understand the ethical issues in research
- develop an understanding of research approaches
- identify strengths and weaknesses of research methods

- develop appropriate research questions, review of literature and methods to conduct a proposed study
- present and defend a comprehensive research proposal project

### **Class Expectations**

Throughout the course students will be required to complete written assignments, participate in class discussions, and prepare oral presentations. Student performance will be evaluated by various written and/or oral assessments as well as class participation and preparedness. Students will be expected to participate and contribute to class discussions, read all assigned readings, prepare oral presentations, and complete assignments in a timely manner.

### **Class Requirements**

There are a total of 100 possible points for this course and they are as follows: **Points**

1. Class Attendance and Participation	5
2. Research Question	5
3. Annotated Bibliography	20
4. Introduction	20
5. Literature Review	20
6. Method	10
7. Oral Defense of Research Proposal	10
8. Revisions	10

<b>Course Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>A</b>	90 - 100
<b>B</b>	80 - 89
<b>C</b>	70 - 79
<b>D</b>	60 - 69
<b>F</b>	below 60

### **Attendance and Contribution**

Regular attendance and participation are required. There is no distinction between an excused and unexcused absence in college, therefore, do not feel the need to request permission to be absent or provide an excuse upon returning. Being present at each scheduled class will reflect your commitment to successfully complete this course. Arriving late and/or leaving early will also influence attendance credit. Any three accumulated absences will result in being dropped from the course. Additionally, class participation should be active and relevant to the topic of discussion. Students should be prepared for class discussions and activities by reading the assigned chapters and journal articles each week, asking insightful questions, remaining focused on the topic, being respectful of others' comments and ideas, and challenging others' ideas in a constructive and professional manner.

### **Dropping a Class**

During the course of a semester, circumstances can often prevent students from completing a class successfully. Dropping a class may be necessary and/or wise in your specific case. Please feel free to contact me regarding if it is in your best interest to drop the class. Should dropping the class be the best course of action, you are responsible for completing the necessary actions to do so by April 8, 2016. A professor can also drop a student for non-participation which will result in an "F".

## **University Instructional Resources**

As an active student at RGC, you have access to several services (free of charge) intended to support your instruction and learning. Smarthinking is an online tutorial service where you can locate a one-on-one tutor for a variety of content subjects. They also offer a variety of writing support services like proofreading and editing your papers prior to submission. Each campus also has a writing center if you would rather sit with an actual tutor and have them assist with reviewing assignments and writing tasks. Additionally, as an RGC student, you each have access and use of Office 365 which offers a wide range of applications. In addition to online use, you have the ability to download the suite on up to 5 computers (PC or Mac). In addition to all the most updated functionality of programs you are accustomed to using (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Skype, etc...) this subscription offers you 1 TB of cloud-based storage. I encourage you to become familiar with Office 365 as we will be utilizing many of the application this semester. There will be a handout made available in Blackboard which details login information and includes instructional support videos.

## **Academic Integrity**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct, for which a student is subject to penalty, includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. Plagiarism is unacceptable and, for the purpose of this course, is defined as using in part or in whole any material written or designed by someone other than the student, unless appropriate credit is given to the person or resource material used. This includes, but is not limited to: lesson plans found on the Internet, lessons provided by classroom teachers, materials located in any form of publication (books, magazines, internet sites, etc.), book reviews, and coursework completed by previous students. Disciplinary action for academic misconduct will first be considered by the faculty member assigned to the course and can result in failure of individual assignments and/or course credit.

*Sul Ross State University – Rio Grande College is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact the Student Support Specialist on their campus.*

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

**Written Assignments:** should reflect all aspects of the project, be free of grammatical errors, well organized, and typed double-spaced using a **12 point Times New Roman** font. All written assignments should follow the guidelines indicated by the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> edition). All assignments are due at the **beginning of class or by the specific deadline posted for Bb assignments. Late assignments will not be accepted.**

### **1. Research Question**

Students will complete and submit an assignment on the development of a research question. The research question for the research proposal should reflect the student's insightful thinking regarding an educational issue. The final research question will be approved by the instructor.

#### **Grading Rubric**

Research question assignment	2
Final research question	3
Total	5

### **2. Annotated Bibliography**

Students will identify 12 peer-reviewed empirical studies related to their research question. The studies will be used to complete the annotated bibliography template. Students will follow APA formatting when referencing the studies.

#### **Grading Rubric**

APA formatting	5
Identification of 12 empirical studies	5
Complete Annotated Bibliography Template	10
Total	20

### **3. Introduction**

Students will write an introduction (2-3 pages, excluding title and reference page) to their research proposal delineating the background of the study. Attention should be devoted to include crucial elements of an introduction for the particular research approach (i.e., quantitative or qualitative) selected. An APA title and reference page will be included and APA writing style (i.e., citations, headings, etc.) will be adhered to throughout the assignment.

#### **Grading Rubric**

APA formatting	5
Discussion of study's background (thoroughness & inclusion of crucial elements)	15
Total	20

#### 4. Literature Review

Students will use the 12 empirical studies to write a comprehensive literature review (6-8 pages, excluding title and reference page) based on the identified themes among the studies. The review will demonstrate organization of thought and topic, contain headings for the identified themes and sections, and present a conclusion of the research studies. The literature review should depict what is known about the topic. It should discuss the strengths and weaknesses of prior research. APA writing style should be adhered to (i.e., citations, headings, etc.) throughout the assignment.

##### Grading Rubric

APA formatting	5
Synthesis and coverage to include advanced organizer, identified Themes, and conclusion	15
Total	20

#### 5. Methods

Students will provide a thorough discussion of the methodology (2-4 pages, excluding title and reference page) selected to answer the research question. Attention should be devoted to include crucial elements of the particular research approach (i.e., quantitative or qualitative) selected. An APA title and reference page will be included and APA writing style (i.e., citations, headings, etc.) will be adhered to throughout the assignment.

##### Grading Rubric

APA formatting	5
Thoroughness and specificity of appropriate research approach	5
Total	10

#### 6. Oral Defense of Research Proposal

Students will prepare a presentation (no more than 10 minutes) on their research proposal. The presentation should include information on the study's background/context, literature review, and methodology. Students should be prepared to answer questions at the conclusion of the presentation.

##### Grading Rubric

Inclusion of required content & adherence to time limit	5
Clear communication of proposal's main components	5
Total	10

#### 7. Revisions

Students will make suggested revisions to all sections of the proposal.

##### Grading Rubric

Revisions	10
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## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment
1/25	Course Introduction Why “do” research?	Syllabus, Welcome & Introductions, Course Overview, Elements of a Proposal, Discuss research question assignment, Article Search (2 studies due) Homework: Creswell Ch. 1
2/1	Getting Started <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Question</li> <li>• Annotated Bibliography</li> </ul>	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research question</li> <li>• Demonstrate database to search peer-reviewed articles</li> <li>• Complete sample Quan./Qual. annotated bibliography</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search and locate articles for Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>• <b>Research question due on BB 2/5</b></li> </ul>
2/8	Research Approach	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Final Research Question</li> <li>• Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>• Power Point Presentation on research approaches</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creswell – Ch. 5</li> </ul>
2/15	Introduction	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review students’ work on Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>• Discuss Introduction</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creswell – Ch.6 &amp; 7</li> <li>• Introduction section</li> <li>• Complete Annotated Bibliography</li> </ul>
2/22	Purpose Statement Introduction- Continued	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Annotated Bibliography due on BB</b></li> <li>• Review students’ work on Introduction</li> <li>• Discuss Purpose Statement &amp; Research Questions</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Introduction</li> <li>• Creswell – Ch. 2</li> </ul>
2/29	Literature Review	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction due on BB</b></li> <li>• Discuss Literature Review</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature Review</li> </ul>
3/7	Literature Review-Continued	<b>No Class Meeting: Individual Writing Conferences</b> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Literature Review</li> <li>• Creswell – Ch. 8</li> </ul>
3/21	Literature Review-Continued	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Conferencing</li> </ul>
3/28	Literature Review-Continued	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Conferencing</li> </ul>
4/4	Quantitative Methods	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Literature Review due on BB</b></li> <li>• Discuss Quantitative Methods</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creswell – Ch. 9</li> </ul>

4/11	Qualitative Methods	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Qualitative Methodology</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creswell - Ch. 10</li> </ul>
4/18	Mixed Methods Individual Conferences	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed Methods</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on Methods section</li> </ul>
4/25	Methodology	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodology section writing conferences</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue work on Methodology</li> </ul>
5/2	Proposal Defense	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Methodology due on Bb</b></li> <li>• Discuss proposal defense</li> </ul> Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal Defense Presentation</li> <li>• Revisions and Final Submission of entire proposal <b>Due 5/6</b></li> </ul>
5/9	Presentations	Classwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal Defense</li> </ul>