

St. John's University
Center for Educational Leadership and Accountability
Oakdale Campus

EDU 7901 Advanced Educational Research Design
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Course Objective: The purpose of this course is to extend students understanding of the research process and to sharpen their ability to design either a quantitative or qualitative study as a possible research strategy focused on a question of educational importance.

In addition to a careful study of text materials, a workshop on the use of the library/internet as research tool, critical class discussions of alternative approaches to research, a practical assignment to engage students in the production of a research proposal, we anticipate that there will also be opportunities to exchange with several individuals who have recently conducted or are in the process of conducting educational research.

Future school leaders need to develop a solid foundation of understanding of the role of research in guiding and informing administrative practice and the habits of mind that foster inquiry and the active pursuit of school improvement. In this course, students will study the major concepts and strands of research methodology and their applications in the school setting. They will also learn to become skilled consumers of educational research by reviewing and critiquing current research reports involving school organizational and leadership issues. Finally, each student will develop a formal research proposal. This proposal will be further developed in the dissertation seminar class that follows this course.

General Approach: Research is a vital and dynamic force that is indispensable to modern progress; it is not an academic banality (Leedy & Ormrod). Lecture will not be the dominant mode of instruction in this course

in keeping with the constructivist model of the conceptual framework. In the constructivist spirit of inquiry the emphasis will be on research conversations geared to problem identification and significance, and the theoretical underpinnings that will prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to effectively plan, design, develop and implement a research project. The emphasis will be on active student participation. Learning is the responsibility of the student. Creating the conditions that promote learning and providing opportunity for study, analysis, discussion, and personal reflection is the responsibility of the professor. The professor's role is to actively guide, model, provide examples and settings, pose problems to solve, and to engage in dialogue and discourse with the community leaders. Communicating clearly, orally and in writing, are critical leadership skills; students will be required to practice those skills in a variety of activities and assignments. The professor will meet individually with students regarding progress on the projects and course outcomes.

Expected Course Outcomes: At the end of this course, the student will understand and be able to:

1. Articulate the relationship between theory and practice and the integral role of research in development and implementation;
2. Use educational research data with others to be skilled and discriminating consumers and implementers of change;
3. Use the techniques of research to analyze, understand, and test new programs and strategies designed to improve practice;
4. Discuss the potential and the limitations of research as an approach to understanding and addressing leadership and educational issues;
5. Demonstrate the recognition of theory in guiding research and promoting improved practice by presenting evidence in a critique of a piece of research;
6. Develop a formal research proposal on a current school leadership issue.

Required Text for Class Sessions:

Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, Practical Research: Planning and Design. Eighth edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005.

References and resources for class discussions:

A.P.A. Manual

Strunk and White's Elements of Style

Robert K. Yin, Case Study Research: Design and Methods. Sage Publications. Various editions.

Suggested Reading:

Battie, E.R. (1995). The Practice of Social Research. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Inc.

Bogdan, R. and Biklin, S.K. Handbook of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gay, L.R. & Airasian, P. (2003). Educational Research. Competencies for Analysis and Applications. NY: Merrill Prentice Hall.

English, F.W. (1994). Theory in Educational Administration. NY, NY: Harper Collins College Publishers. ****this is a classic

McMillan, J.H, & Schumacher, S. (1997). Research in Education. NY, NY: Longman.

Oja, S.N. & Smulyan, L. (1989). Collaborative Action Research: A Developmental Approach. London: The Falmer Press.

Stake, R. E. (1995). The Act of Case Study Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Wolcott, H. F (1990). Writing Up Cumulative Research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Professor Policies:

- Students are required to be on time for and attend all classes. The nature of this course is highly interactive.
- Students are expected to complete all assignments on time.
- All products must be submitted in hard copy.

- All products will be checked for spelling and grammar errors and APA format **By the Student** before submitting to the professor.
- Students are encouraged to maintain regular communication with the professor.

Performance Assessment: Students will

Write a formal research proposal on a current leadership topic

Write/present a critique of a piece of research

In a small group, present the analysis and results of a major piece of research design and use a qualitative process as an example of action research.

Research Project Proposal: This is the major assignment for the course. You will develop a research project proposal shaping a topic of your choice as a proposed study. The topic chosen can be anything that relates to your career or academic interest as long as it involves some type of research strategy. The oral presentation of this assignment comprises 30% of your grade. The written proposal comprises 40% of the course grade. The final project paper will include the following sections:

- I. Title page (see St. John's website for official title page)
- II. Chapter I Introduction
 - A. Background
 - B. Purpose and rationale
 - C. Statement of the problem
 - D. Research Questions
 - E. Significance or importance
 - F. Limitations/Delimitations
- II. Chapter II Review of the Literature
 - A. Research studies (at least 10-15 referenced sources) connected to your topic
 - B. Narrative presentation analyzing and critiquing the literature
 - C. In some instances-conceptual rationale
- III. Chapter III Methodology
 - A. Setting
 - B. Subjects

- C. Data Collection Procedures, including pilot study where necessary, qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodologies
 - D. Validity and reliability
 - E. Data Analysis Procedures
- IV. Chapter IV-Findings*
 - A. Tables and figures (as appropriate)
 - B. Statistical presentation (as appropriate)
 - V. Chapter V Conclusions and Recommendations*
 - A. Support or nonsupport of hypothesis
 - B. Practical and theoretical implications
 - VI. References-APA*
 - VII. Appendices (A,B, C, etc)*

*Understand that the actual research proposed is not yet implemented, these sections (Ch. 4 & 5) are to be generally discussed, not necessitating in-depth analysis at this time.

The paper is to be submitted no later than the last day of class and will comprise 40% of the course. Continued work on this paper will occur in Dissertation Seminar in July.

Discussion of Scholarly Research Articles: Each team (3) of students will read and lead class discussion about one article. Articles must be chosen from peer-reviewed journals. The presentations and discussions should include: content and design of the study, statement of the problem, methodologies used, thoughts about validity and reliability of the research report, and critical commentary and analysis about the article. All 3 teams will submit a written analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the articles. 30%

Grading Criteria:

- A Exemplary doctoral work, worthy of sharing with a wider audience
- A- Very good quality doctoral work, some areas of improvement are needed.
- B+ Satisfactory doctoral work with one or two important weaknesses identified
- B Satisfactory doctoral work, a few major weaknesses identified

B- Does not meet criteria sufficient for doctoral quality
Below a B- Unacceptable, major shortcomings.

Attendance and work performance:

Students are expected to attend all sessions, be prepared for the topic to be discussed, and actively participate in all activities. All assignments are expected to be completed in accord with the due date* (to be discussed in class)

Sequencing: Since we believe that the acquisition of knowledge is based on a constructivist model, students' needs, concerns, and experiences will direct the class through the course. We believe that metacognition and social settings which facilitate interactions with other thinkers, provide feedback, and cultivate participatory learning and problem-solving are crucial in the development of thinking and judgment, and to the acquisition of knowledge. It is therefore difficult to predict the exact pacing of content. It is the instructor's intent to cover all of the key concepts but student background and experience of the learners will determine the length of time spent on a topic.

Class sessions are organized in terms of the Chapters of a Dissertation

Session 1: Friday Evening

The Nature of Research: From Leedy

Paradigms of Research:

Standards of Adequacy for the Problem Statement

Distinctions Between Quantitative and Qualitative Research

The Nature of Educational Research

The Research Problem:

Questions Worth Asking: Model, Data Collection

Initial Statements from Cohort Members: Please, come prepared to present the research question that will be the focus of your dissertation.

Guest Speakers, First Weekend:

Dr. Donna Watkins

Dr. Susan MacDonald

Dr. Christopher Gitz

Session 2-Saturday morning

Review of the Research Report: Its Sections and Functions

Focus of the Session: What does your research question mean? How does it relate to professional knowledge? How do you want another professional to interpret it?

Converting Good Question into Variables/ Key Concepts

Relationships: Independent and Dependent and Others

Search for Meaning: Literature

Possible Frames of Reference

Advocacy Design Center: IOGA

Bolman and Deal 4 Frames

Hines and Bishop- Presented by Samantha Gesuele, C.8

Deborah Stone's Political Policy Paradox

Popkewitz's Types of Culture

Other Frames Identified by the Cohort

Sources: Review of the Relevant Literature

Use of The Internet and the University Library.

Saturday Afternoon

Explaining how the question works.

Summary of Library Search for Concepts in Your Question

Construction of Visual Model of Concepts and Relationships for Chapter II

Presentation of Individual Models/Frameworks for Research

Session 3: Sunday Morning

Quantitative Approaches to Questions

Experimental Designs:

Characteristics and Requirements

Single Subject Research

Correlational Research

Prof. Hughes Almanac and MapInfo

Causal-Comparative Research

Survey Research

Data Analysis:

Descriptive Statistics
Inferential Statistics
Statistics in Perspective

Session 4: Friday Evening

Qualitative Approaches to Questions

Nature of Qualitative Research

Doing “Bins” as Inductive Research and as Typological

Applying and Presenting a Coding System

Session 5: Saturday Morning
20 Kinds of Qualitative Studies:

See copy for definitions

1. Ethnographies
2. Micro ethnographies
3. Ethnomethodology
4. Participant Observation Studies
5. Interview Studies
6. Focus Group Studies
7. Artifact Analysis
8. Historical Studies and Historiography
9. Grounded Theory Studies
10. Naturalistic Inquiry
11. Symbolic Interaction Studies
12. Narrative Studies
13. Educational Criticism
14. Phenomenological Studies
15. Case Studies
16. Action Research Projects
17. Collaborative Studies
18. Biography
19. Content Analysis
20. Assessment and Evaluative

Saturday Afternoon

Continuation of Qualitative Models

Session 6: Sunday Morning

Formal Presentations and Critiques of Proposals

Continuation: Formal Presentations and Critiques of Proposals