



# Introduction to Graduate Research in Education

EDF 6481 \* Spring '04

 Dr. Robert Lange and Ms. Rebecca Fiedler

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## Course Description from Catalog

Review and critique of research literature, use of library resources for educational research, and introduction to the concepts of research design and data analysis.

## Course Goal:

- ◆ To help educators become critical consumers and users of educational research.

## Course Objectives:

- ◆ Use research vocabulary correctly.
- ◆ Improve ability to critically read and evaluate educational research and claims of benefits derived from educational practice.
- ◆ Improve ability to think critically about your own professional practices and increase efforts to obtain evidence of the consequences of your professional actions.
- ◆ Consider the manner in which changing social and demographic conditions impact the research and practice of education and the actions of professionals who serve a diverse population.

## Required Text

Patten, M. L., 2004, *Understanding research methods: fourth edition*. Los Angeles: Pyczak Publishing.

## Supplemental Text


American Psychological Association, 2001. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Washington, D.C.

## Library Resources

- ◆ We will be using the library's electronic databases. Be certain to activate your library card immediately. You can do this at the library or online at [http://www.library.ucf.edu/Circulation/activation\\_request\\_form.htm](http://www.library.ucf.edu/Circulation/activation_request_form.htm)
- ◆ To acquaint you with some of the library resources, you will be assigned a library treasure hunt as a homework assignment. This may be completed at your convenience, but no later than February 11, 2004. See the course website for more details.

## Homework Assignments

Most homework assignments, along with their due dates, are described on the class web site. The following homework assignment may be completed at your convenience and turned in once completed. It is due no later than Week 13, April 4, 2004.


 Your **choice** of one:

- ◆ Library PERC session **or**
- ◆ Consultation at the University Writing Center




Library PERC sessions can be scheduled through a number of different channels. PERC sessions are available at some branch campuses. Visit <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction/perc.htm> for more details.

University Writing Center appointments can be scheduled online. Visit <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu> for details about location, operating hours, and the online scheduler.

## Evaluation Procedures

Grade Categories	Description of the requirements	Weight toward final grade
Homework	Out of class assignments, usually brief. Should be typed or word processed and professional in appearance.	20%
Participation	Participation in class and online.	20%
Term paper	Choice of research proposal or literature review. Should be typed or word processed and professional in appearance.	20%
Quizzes	There will be a total of three quizzes administered throughout the course. See tentative schedule.	20%
Presentation	You will give an 8-10 minute presentation of your paper during one of the last two classes	10%
 Presentation critiques	You will evaluate your peers' presentations during the last two classes	10%

## Technology Requirements:

Technology	Expectations for Use
 E-mail:	Students may contact either Becky or Dr. Lange via email for assistance with assignments or to notify of an upcoming absence.
 Nicenet:	<i>Nicenet</i> will be home to the class discussion board. Students may discuss course readings and collaborate on assignments using this tool.
Special tools: 	<i>EndNote</i> bibliography management software is available as a free download from the UCF Library web site. Using it will greatly simplify completion of the course project.

## Additional Policies

Grading and evaluation	Assignments receiving a grade lower than a B will not be accepted. Such assignments will receive a grade of Incomplete and must be resubmitted.
Attendance and participation	Attendance is important. Participation in frequent in-class activities comprises 20% of the final grade.
Deadlines	January 9 Last day to drop classes with full refund February 27 Withdrawal deadline March 8-12 Spring Break April 20-26 Final exams week
Academic integrity	All students are expected to abide by UCF's Golden Rule. More information is available at <a href="http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/">http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/</a>
Plagiarism statement	There are a variety of web sites that sell term papers of low quality. Do conscientious work and earn a respectable grade rather than "buying" a poor grade. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Instances of plagiarism will be handled individually, depending on the severity of the offense.
Accommodations	Students with documented disabilities will need to contact the instructor to discuss necessary accommodations.
Cell phones and beepers	Please turn them off or set them to vibrate during class. Return phone calls during break or after class.

## Strategies for Success


1. **Read and reread:** Remember that research and data analysis language takes some practice. You will need to read, and reread, practice the language, and ask questions. More successful students often read the assigned material several times in order to better grasp the concepts.
2. **Schedule time.** Plan to spend several hours every week in out of class study, library work, online, and writing. Make a schedule and try to keep it. Study and work every week, stay ahead in your reading, and make notes so you can ask questions and discuss the material.
3. **Check other sources:** The primary text is limited to brief presentations of key concepts. From time to time you may want to read a more complete discussion of the topic. Cross-reference the content from different texts and credible online sources. A slightly different or more complete presentation of the material could be just what you need.

### The UCF Creed

Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

<b>Integrity</b>	I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.
<b>Scholarship</b>	I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.
<b>Community</b>	I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.
<b>Creativity</b>	I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.
<b>Excellence</b>	I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

## Tentative Time Line for Class Activities

	Topic	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research	Statistics	Due – Text Topics
1 1/7	Intro & Overview: Paradigms	Quantitative overview: variables	Qualitative overview: interviews	Intro & Types of Data	1, 5, 6, 8, 39, 41
2 1/14	Ethics & the IRB; Choosing a topic	Descriptive studies	Observations & field notes	Normal distribution	4, 9, 10, 12, 45 HW 1
3 1/21	<b>Quiz 1:</b> Hypotheses	Causal-comparative	Oral history	Measures of Central Tendency	2, 3, 7, 40, 46-48 HW 2
4 1/28	Finding, documenting & evaluating sources	Experimental designs & managing threats	Phenomenology	Variability: SD & IQ Range	14, 15, 18, 34 – 36, C, F HW 3
5 2/4	<b>Work session</b>				
6 2/11	Writing the lit review	Sampling	Case studies	Are they different? Chi-square, t-test	16, 17, 19 – 24, 43, 44, 50, B HW 4
7 2/18	<b>Quiz 2;</b> Data collection	Experimental pt. 2	Grounded theory	Effect size, & practical significance	13, 42, 53 – 55, G HW 5
8 2/25	Instruments & Validity	Quasi-experimental	Ethnography	ANOVA	25-31, 51, 52, A HW 6
9 3/3	Proposing & planning research	Correlational studies	Historical research & program evaluation	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	11, 49, 56 HW 7
Break 3/10	Spring Break	If you plan to work in the library during this time, be sure to check the hours. The library reduces hours of operations during Spring Break. 			
10 3/17	Evaluating research reports	Common study designs	Action research	Meta-analysis	37, 38, 57-59 HW 8
11 3/24	<b>Quiz 3:</b> Synthesis activity				HW 9
12 3/31	<b>Work session</b>				
13 4/7	Presentations				Papers due HW 10
14 4/14	Presentations				HW 11
Finals week 4/21	Pick up class materials				