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Fall 2015

EDFR 6700

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*University of New Orleans*

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Course Description

This course is an introductory research course for educators and those in other fields of human development. It is designed to provide students with the basic information needed to understand the process of systematically researching a problem and to enable students to evaluate and interpret the research of others. The course is taught using methods that provide the opportunity for theory to interact with practice. These concepts are outlined in the College of Education and Human Development conceptual model.

As professionals educators are called upon to use and develop standards of good practice or benchmarks of performance. To develop these standards, professionals must rely on a sound knowledge base from which decisions are made. As professionals, educators must know proper techniques, strategies, and methods to guide our practice. Research has an important role in developing that sound knowledge base and determining the methods that are most effective in professional practice.

This course is designed to provide a foundational knowledge in educational research skills and methods. From this foundation, students could develop further skills in quantitative methods, qualitative methods, or evaluation. Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Explain why knowledge of research methodology can be of value to educators.
- Describe the basic components of the research process and how research can inform practice.
- Understand the basic elements and aspects of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research, including the various approaches to data collection, design, and reporting.
- Explain the importance of validity and reliability for educational research.
- Calculate descriptive and basic inferential statistics and understand their importance to interpreting data.
- Understand the ethical principles associated with the use of human subjects.
- Understand and develop a basic research proposal.

Note: Aspects of this syllabus were adapted from the syllabi of other faculty.
Conceptual Framework for the College of Education Curriculum

**College Mission:**

The mission of the College of Education and Human Development is to improve teaching and leadership, advance lifelong learning, and promote health and wellness through enhanced community partnerships. The unit’s purpose is to prepare reflective practitioners who develop, implement, and evaluate effective education and human development programs/services through a program of study grounded in the interaction of theory, practice and research.

**Conceptual Framework:**

Our conceptual framework, the theory-practice-research interaction model, permeates the programs preparing candidates for professional roles in school settings. As candidates progress through their professional studies, they are introduced to formal theories and concepts that are validated by research, which along with their personally held beliefs and assumptions, inform their professional practice. The role and responsibilities set out the broad domains for developing competencies of teacher candidates viewed through the lens of the theory-practice-research interaction model.

As candidates engage in various clinical and field experiences included in their program of study, observation and study of professional practices inform and refine the educational theories and concepts they construct. Our goal is to have our candidates internalize the theory-practice-research interaction model, as they develop into reflective practitioners constantly reassessing the educational theories, beliefs, and assumptions they embrace.

**Objectives Alignment with Unit and State Standards**

In addition to the identified goals and objectives, this course addresses UNO Teacher Roles and Louisiana State COMPASS Standards.

**COEHD Conceptual Framework -“Theory-Practice-Research-Interaction”**
Goal: Preparing Reflective Practitioners

Roles and Responsibilities of Professionals in Teacher Education

1. Effective teachers manage classroom contexts and environments.
   - They establish a culture for learning.
   - They create an environment of respect and rapport.

2. Effective teachers design curriculum and instruction.
   - They understand and use curriculum and instruction.
   - They communicate effectively.

3. Effective teachers deliver instruction and assess learning.
   - They engage students in active learning.
   - They integrate disciplines into instruction.
   - They use assessment in instruction.
   - They embed diversity in decision-making.

4. Effective teachers participate in professional responsibilities.
   - They advocate for children, in terms of services and supports.
   - They collaborate to improve professional practice.
   - They reflect on teaching and learning

Required Readings


Additionally, selected articles, documents, and book chapters will be available on the course Moodle website. Please visit the site often to read announcements and access course materials (Power Point presentations, assigned readings, syllabus, etc.). If you’re unfamiliar with Moodle, you can find online tutorials at: http://www.uno.edu/moodle/. You must have a UNO access account to use our Moodle system. If you need help with your access account, please see the Help Desk: http://ucc.uno.edu/helpdesk/. The Moodle login page is: http://uno.mrooms3.net/

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance:

While I realize that life situations occur that prevent students from attending every class, since we are meeting only once per week, students are expected to attempt to be present as much as possible. Students are only able to miss two classes without penalty. Each additional absence, regardless of reason, may result in a one half letter grade deduction from your final grade. If you will be absent for any reason (e.g., illness, personal or family issue, religious observance, attendance at professional or scholarly conferences), please inform me as soon as possible.

Classroom Decorum Policy:

Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged. All individuals, students and instructor alike, are expected to demonstrate courtesy and respect for one another. Behavior that interferes
with either teaching or learning is not acceptable. Rude, impolite, or offensive behavior or language will not be tolerated. Students may be barred from participation as a result of behavior that, in the opinion of the professor, is inappropriate or negatively affects the learning/work environment. While the use of laptop computers, iPads, and similar devices as aids in learning are encouraged, please do not inappropriately use such items, including cell phones, during class for non-instructional purposes. Such activity as surfing the web, instant messaging, reading and answering emails, and/or watching videos or listening to music, is unprofessional and considered an affront to the professor and other students in the class. These behaviors will be considered as a lack of engagement on the part of the student and, on the discretion of the professor, may result in a penalty to the class participation grade. In situations of violations of this policy by multiple students, it is the professor’s prerogative to ban electronic devices from class.

**Expectations for written assignments:**

All written assignments are expected to follow to the guidelines and reference formats specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 6th edition. An excellent resource for APA style, among others, is the Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/). Every single assignment must be word processed, double-spaced, using 12-point font Times New Roman, and carefully edited and proofread prior to submission. All papers should have a title page, running head, appropriate margins (1 inch) and spacing, headings for sections, proper citations, pagination, and references. Papers not meeting require length or those excessively exceeding the page limit may be given a lower grade. Assignments must not be longer than the specified page limit and additional pages beyond the page limit may not be graded. All written work should be submitted to me via email. Please submit MS Word documents only (not PDF files) so that I may provide feedback using track changes and the comments function. All work submitted for this class must be your own and I reserve the right to upload your assignments to Turnitin.com to check for possible plagiarism. If you would like to improve your writing skills, please contact the UNO Writing Center at 280-7154. The instructor may refer students to the Writing Center. Finally, late work may be penalized up to 5% per day beyond the due date (one-half a letter grade).

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information. The Code is available online at [http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu](http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu).

**Students with Disabilities:**

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the
Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to http://www.ods.uno.edu.

### Teaching Philosophy and Instructor Responsibilities

My personal teaching philosophy centers on placing a high value on student-focused teaching that harnesses a culture of learning based on diverse viewpoints and academic excellence. I firmly believe that students should learn to embrace diverse opinions, which can partially be achieved by an understanding of the methods and concepts of a variety of academic disciplines. I believe that the classroom is the perfect setting for open discourse and introducing students to a diversity of opinions. Embracing a diversity of opinions not only allows students to consider alternative stances, but helps them learn to evaluate evidence and dissect scholarly arguments. It is a difficult task at times, as students are often hesitant to not only criticize others, but can be paralyzed by their own fear of criticism. I am an ardent supporter of the Socratic Method, as I feel it’s open dialogue and discussion engages students, facilitates student learning, and introduces students to the varying viewpoints of their classmates.

One of my primary goals in teaching is to improve students’ understanding of the methods of conducting research, enhance their knowledge of current trends, to develop their ability to recognize and construct evidence-based arguments, and to strengthen their ability to write. In pursuing this goal, I feel incorporating the methods and theories of a variety of disciplines will equip student with the proper tools to engage in scholarly research. I want students to focus on developing their own ideas, backed with evidence, to aspire to become a great scholar themselves. Our field is filled with a litany of great scholars-I want students to join those ranks. I feel a good teacher helps awaken their students’ awareness of their own potential to contribute to their field’s scholarship. While I push students hard to excel, I believe that creating a culture of scholarly creativity in the classroom with assist them in acquiring an expertise in their area.

To become innovative scholars themselves, students must begin their mastery of the material presented in both their courses and own research. By expecting disciplined excellence of students, a good teacher will help them acquire the skills and dispositions needed for their future professional success. Such mastery often requires repeated exposure to material, which helps ensure that content will not be quickly forgotten. It also requires an in-depth analysis of course readings. While some teachers adhere to a “more is better” approach to assigning course readings, I feel mastery of selected works is not only more beneficial, but will provide students with the scholarly foundations to build upon.

I not only have high expectations for my students, but also myself as an instructor. Students should expect that I will:

1) Be prepared for class, read and return your work in a timely manner, and be interested and engaged in your work;
2) remember that each of you brings a different background, experience, and perspective to this course
3) learn from you and your diverse perspectives;
4) meet with you individually or in groups upon request and be available in person, by telephone, and by e-mail.
Assignments

Topic Quizzes (5 points each/30 total points):

Each week students will take quizzes to assess their learning about the topics covered in class. The quiz will open at 8 p.m. on the Thursday we begin a new topic and will close at 8 p.m. on the following Thursday. Each quiz will be timed: once you begin, you will have 60 minutes to complete the quiz. The format for the quizzes will be objective (multiple choice).

Topic Questions (15 points):

To illustrate their understanding of the course material, each student will develop questions related to the various topics we will discuss in class. The questions must be multiple choice with 3-5 responses (you must denote the correct response). Each assignment is due by 8 p.m. on the appropriate dates (no submissions will be allowed after this time). Each question is worth 1 point and the breakdown of the questions, per topic, is as follows:

1-Foundations of Research (2 questions)
2-Literature Reviews & Research Problems (2 questions)
3-Sampling, Validity, and the Ethics of Research (2 questions)
4-Data Collection in Quantitative Research (2 questions)
5-Data Analysis in Quantitative Research (3 questions)
6- Qualitative Methods (4 questions)

The final exam will be drawn primarily from these questions.

Weekly Assignments (5 points each/30 total points):

During the semester, students will complete weekly assignments to evidence their mastery of topics discussed. Each assignment is due by 8 p.m. on the appropriate dates.

#1 Paradigm Reflection: Write a 1 page reflection on the paradigm you feel the most affinity to. Do you find yourself intrigued or more comfortable with one more than another (and why)? Discuss your response in terms on the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions of each paradigm.

#2 Research Topic and Sources: Write a one paragraph overview of a research topic that interests you and provide a list of 5 peer-reviewed journal articles (in APA format) related to that topic.

#3 IRB Training: Complete the online IRB Training and send your completion certificate. The website is: https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php.

#4 Survey Critique: You are to complete a survey I hand out in class. As part of this assignment, you should write a 2 paragraph critique of the survey (both what was good and bad) based on what we’ve learned about survey research.
#5 Interpretation of Quantitative Graphs: I will provide 2-3 graphs/histograms of quantitative data and you need to provide a 1 paragraph interpretation of each graph: what do the numbers mean?

#6 Interview Reflection: You are to conduct a short interview of 1 individual (based on questions we develop in class). This 1-2 page critical reflection should detail what you learned about education from this individual and how you can use this information in your own professional development. You should also write about lessons you learned about interviewing and qualitative research by performing this exercise.

**Final Exam (25 total points):**

During the last class of the semester students will take an exam to assess their learning on the topics covered in class. The exam will be given online on Moodle and will be timed. Each exam will open at 5 p.m. and close and 8 p.m. the day given. The format of these quizzes will be objective (multiple choice, etc.). Access to notes during the exam is permitted but each student must complete the exam independently (no working together).

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**Grading Rubric**

Each assignment will be given a letter grade and an associated point value in accordance with the quality it reflects:

**A (90-100% of points)** – Excellent/Outstanding. At the high end of the scale, the work at this level is extraordinary, surpasses expectations for the assignment, and is essentially error free. At the low end of the scale, the work is thorough, well-reasoned, and creative. Work is of excellent quality and has minimal errors.

**B (80-89% of points)** – Good/Very Good. At the high end of the scale, represents strong work for a graduate student that illustrates creativity and is generally thorough and well-reasoned, but evidences a few errors and/or minor conceptual weaknesses. At the low end of the scale, represents sound work for a graduate student that meets the basic objectives of the assignment and demonstrates a general understanding of and application of concepts. Work has some errors and/or conceptual weaknesses.

**C (70-79% of points)** – Borderline/Adequate. At the high end of the scale, represents adequate work for a graduate student that evidences strengths in some areas, but these are offset by errors or conceptual weaknesses in other areas. At the low end of the scale, weak work for a graduate student. Work just meets the minimal expectations for the assignment, but understanding of salient concepts is somewhat incomplete and work evidences errors in several areas.

**D (60-69% of points)** – Inadequate. Work fails meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstanding of important concepts.
**F (Below 60%)** – Unacceptable. Work is far below expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is incomplete, contains copious errors, and disregards important concepts.

### Final Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60%</td>
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</tbody>
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### Weekly Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td>August 20</td>
<td>Introductions, expectations, and setting the stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>August 27</td>
<td>Foundations of Research (in class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Foundations of Research (online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 4</td>
<td>September 10</td>
<td>Literature Reviews &amp; Research Problems (in class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 5</td>
<td>September 17</td>
<td>Literature Reviews &amp; Research Problems (online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 6</td>
<td>September 24</td>
<td>Sampling, Validity, and the Ethics of Research (in class)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Read: Mertens, pages 1-34.*

*Read: Mertens, Chapter 3.*  
*Read: Mertens, pages 361-365, 394-415 and Chapter 11.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 7</td>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>Sampling, Validity, and the Ethics of Research (online)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Quiz 3</td>
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<td>Weekly Assignment #3 (#3 IRB Training) Due</td>
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<td>Topic Questions #3: Sampling, Validity, and the Ethics of Research Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 8</td>
<td>October 8</td>
<td>Data Collection in Quantitative Research (in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 9</td>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NO CLASS: Fall Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 10</td>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>Data Collection in Quantitative Research (online)</td>
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<td>Quiz 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Weekly Assignment #4 (Survey Critique) Due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Topic Questions #4: Data Collection in Quantitative Research Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 11</td>
<td>October 29</td>
<td>Data Analysis in Quantitative Research (in class)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Read: Mertens, pages 165-177 &amp; 418-437.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 12</td>
<td>November 5</td>
<td>Data Analysis in Quantitative Research (online)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Weekly Assignment #5 (Interpretation of Quantitative Graphs) Due</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Topic Questions #5: Data Analysis in Quantitative Research Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 13</td>
<td>November 12</td>
<td>Introduction to Qualitative Research (in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 14</td>
<td>November 19</td>
<td>Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis (in class)</td>
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<td>Read: Mertens, pages 378-387, &amp; 437-446.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 15</td>
<td>November 26</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 16</td>
<td>December 3</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods (online)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Quiz 6
Weekly Assignment #6 (Interview Reflection) Due
Topic Questions #6: Qualitative Methods Due

| Class 17 | December 10 | Final Exam |

Final Exam on Moodle