Introduction to Research Methods
Dept of Career & Technology Education
T&OE 5130
College of Education
University of Central Missouri

Spring 2010

(Jan 11 – May 7)

COURSE SYLLABUS

PROFESSOR: Dr. Shantia P. Kerr
E-mail: skerr@ucmo.edu
IM/other: shantia.kerr Skype www.skype.com
Telephone: (w): 660.543.4284
Office: Grinstead 212

Office Hours: Wed: 11:00am – 2:00pm (face-to-face) in Grinstead 212,
Thurs: 10:00am –12:00pm (virtual)
Virtual location: http://ucmconnect.ucmo.edu/kerrofficehours/
By Appointment - Please call or email to schedule a meeting time.

Communication
There are several modes of communication for this course. If you have general questions about the course, there is a designated area in Blackboard. Questions posted here enable the entire class to read the question and the response. Additionally, I check my email regularly so feel free to contact me via email at with any questions. Other means of contact may include phone, instant message, and office visits. I will usually respond within 24 hours (excluding weekends).

Class meeting times
This course is entirely online using Blackboard course management software. Course access is located at: http://courses.ucmo.edu

Description of the course
This course introduces theories, methods, and approaches of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods inquiry. The course exposes students to different paradigms of research and introduces designs for data collection and analysis. Students will also understand the history and need for ethical research of human subjects. This is a three credit hour course required for all Masters of Science (MS) Educational Technology students.
Purpose of the course
The purpose of this course is to provide graduate students with the foundations necessary to understand and conduct research. Content learned in this course is applied in the K-12, higher education, or corporate training settings. This course will support the design of a research proposal.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
Belief Statement
The Central educator is a competent, caring, reflective practitioner committed to the premise that all can learn.

Mission
As a cornerstone of the institution for over 130 years, the University of Central Missouri's Teacher Education Program develops teachers and other school professionals who are well grounded in theory, display competence in content knowledge and instructional strategies, and possess the dispositions to ensure success for all learners. The Teacher Education Program prepares individuals as professional educators for an ever-changing, culturally diverse population. Faculty and candidates provide support and service to schools in meeting their present and future challenges by developing communities that learn through research and scholarly activities. Educator preparation is a campus-wide responsibility, a commitment that reflects the honor and worth of serving a vital profession.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE
Upon the completion of this course the student will:
1. Understand educational research methods
2. Distinguish between quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method research approaches
3. Understand the purposes of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches
4. Search digital library databases
5. Develop skill in reading and evaluating reports of educational research
6. Formulate a research problem
7. Structure a research proposal
8. Identify and control threats to the internal and external validity of a research investigation
9. Understand human subjects and ethical research requirements

Structure of the course/Student responsibilities
The teaching method will require students to use the online classroom provided in Blackboard. The majority of course interaction will take place over this medium. It is expected that students will login a few times each week in order to stay informed and participate in class discussions. Furthermore, students are expected to check their student email regularly. Standard rules of conduct for netiquette are expected.
As a graduate level course, students are expected to fully participate in all online activities. For example, if a discussion board question is assigned at the beginning of the week. Students are expected to post a response prior to the discussion question due date. If students only log in and post their response to questions on the date that the discussion is due, it hinders the ability of other students to read postings and thoughtfully respond. This is unacceptable. Discussions should take place throughout the entire week.

When posting on the discussion board, comments should be thoughtful and substantive. While an occasional “Nice job” or “I agree” is always appreciated, your post should offer substantive commentary and provide an opportunity to further the conversation. Discussions may take many forms including reflective, affirmative (with examples), clarification questions, challenge (friendly challenges among colleagues), etc. Keep in mind the relationship between quality and quantity of posts.

Assignments must be word processed, spell checked, and adhere to APA guidelines (double spaced, 12 pt font Times Roman, 1” margins, citations in APA format). Documents shared with classmates should always be in a compatible format so that everyone in the class can view them: Microsoft Word 1997-2003 (.doc or .rtf), PowerPoint (.ppt), html, or Acrobat (.pdf). If you do not have Microsoft Office consider OpenOffice as an alternative (openoffice.org). Please do not save Word documents as .docx as many students do not yet have the latest version. Finally, name all of your assignments in the following manner – LastName.Project. For example, if I were turning in an article review assignment in Microsoft Word it would have the following name: kerr.articlereview. Or, if I were turning in a concept map assignment, using Inspiration software, it would have the following name: kerr.conceptmap. Always use your last name, the assignment, and do not put any spaces in the naming of your files.

Evaluation of the course
Grades will be figured using the standard scale.
100-90% = A   89-80% = B   79-70% =C   69-60%=D   59% and below=F

Instructor created rubrics will be used to evaluate subjective assignments. Feedback will usually be provided via Blackboard, from the instructor and from other students. Occasionally, the instructor may need to email students for additional feedback. Up-to-date grades can be found through Blackboard within Tools | Check Grade. The student will always have the option to ask for additional feedback if desired.

Late work
Lacking substantial mitigating circumstances, late work will be reduced one letter grade per day late. Each day thereafter that the assignment is not turned in it will be reduced an additional letter grade. No late work will be accepted beyond three days after an assignment is due. Assignments must be submitted early if you know you will be unavailable when something is due. It is to your benefit to submit assignments earlier in the week rather than at the last minute in case technical problems or other difficulties arise. Incomplete grades for the course will NOT be issued upon request. Note: if Blackboard is down and it prevents you from posting assignments, please post as...
soon as possible after the system is back up. Blackboard failures, while rare, are possible
and you will not lose points if your assignment is late for that reason.

Technology
Students will need a web browser with Internet access, Microsoft Office or compatible,
Adobe Reader, and occasionally other plug-ins when visiting web sites. You may also
need a video camera, microphone, and headset.

Early Alert
As part of the College of Education commitment to building a positive, student-centered
learning community that supports the success of every student, the faculty member
instructing this course participates in the UCM Early Alert Program.

ADA
Students with documented disabilities who are seeking academic accommodations should
contact the Office of Accessibility Services, Union 222, (Voice and TTY) 660-543-4421.

Academic Honesty
Honesty in all endeavors is essential to the function of society. Honesty in the classroom
among students and between students and faculty is a matter that should concern
everyone in the University Community. Please see the Central Student Handbook for the
complete policy, student responsibilities, and procedures for enforcement
http://www.ucmo.edu/x71440.xml

Get help @ your library!
You may access your library account, the online catalog, and electronic databases from
James C. Kirkpatrick Library’s website at http://library.ucmo.edu. For research
assistance, you may contact the Reference Desk:

Phone: 543-4154 Email: reference@libserv.ucmo.edu
AIM: JCKLReference

Mailing list
Each student is expected to subscribe to the listserv maintained by the department.
Important information may be missed by students who are not subscribed.

For more information see http://www.ucmo.edu/x100422.xml

Required Text

Recommended
Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington: American Psychological
Association.
The APA text is needed throughout the program for formatting papers in all courses.
## COURSE CALENDAR (Tentative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Overview of Major Readings &amp; Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Additional online activities posted in Blackboard under the Assignments link. Please check weekly.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1  | Jan. 11 - 16| Course Intro                  | Discussion board: Course introductions & research topics  
For next week: Narrow down the topic you would like to investigate. Consider your world view (as described in Ch 1 of our text) and a strategy of inquiry. |
| 2  | Jan 17 - 23 | Philosophical knowledge claims/Formulating Research questions | Review Ch 1, Read Ch 7, and additional resources  
**Due:** Identify one potential research topic. Create one quantitative research question and one qualitative research question for your topic. (Due 1/23) |
| 3  | Jan 24 - 30 | Digital Database/Lit Review   | Read: Chapter 2  
Explore JCKL digital library  
**Due:** Summarize and critically analyze two research articles (from peer reviewed journals) for your literature review. See Blackboard for specific information to include in your review. (1/30) |
| 4  | Jan 31 – Feb 6| Digital Database/Lit Review | Continue to explore JCKL digital library  
Independent assignment: Continue to summarize and critically analyze additional research articles (from peer reviewed journals) for your literature review. You will need a minimum of 5 articles for your small peer group submission (Week 6) and 10 articles for your final literature review (Week 15).  
**Due:** Outline of your literature review (2/6) |
| 5  | Feb 7 – 13  | Theoretical Framework         | Read Chapter 3  
Discussion board assignment  
Continue working on literature review |
| 6  | Feb 14 – 20 | Designing Research           | Read: Chapters 4 – 6  
**Due:** Draft of introduction, statement of purpose, literature review and reference page (APA format) to small peer group (2/20) |
| 7  | Feb 21 – 27 | Quantitative Methods         | Read Chapter 8  
**Due:** Return of introduction, purpose, literature review |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feb 28 – Mar 6</td>
<td>Quantitative Methods</td>
<td>Continued discussion of Chapter 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> 2nd draft of introduction, purpose, literature review and reference page (APA format) to instructor (3/6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 7 – 13</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>Read: Ch 9 and Internet sources for conducting qualitative research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mar 14 – 20</strong> Spring Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 21 – 27</td>
<td>Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>Continued discussion of Chapter 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mar 28 – Apr 3</td>
<td>Mixed Methods</td>
<td>Ch 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Draft of Methods section to your small peer group (3/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Apr 4 – 10</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Return of Methods section to your group member. (4/10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 11 – 17</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> 2nd draft of Methods Section to instructor (including instruments, although in the final paper instruments will be included in the appendices) (4/17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Apr 18 – 24</td>
<td>Quality and credibility</td>
<td>Reading: Assigned reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identification and discussion of quality and credibility issues including internal and external validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Discussion of interpretation, triangulation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Apr 25 – May 1</td>
<td>Ethical issues and considerations</td>
<td>Reading: Assigned reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Discussion board – Identify and discuss ethical issues and considerations Institutional Review Board Form and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete UCM Human Subjects training: <a href="http://www.ucmo.edu/graduate/invtraining.cfm">http://www.ucmo.edu/graduate/invtraining.cfm</a> (Due 5/1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Due:</strong> Final proposal (5/1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course Projects (Total possible points = 1000)

#### Assignment and Point Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Obtained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Online activities, discussion, and participation | 200
---|---
1. Article summaries and critiques (2) | 100
2. Research topic and question | 50
3. Outline of literature review | 50
4. Literature Review Draft 2 | 100
5. Methods Section Draft 2 | 100
6. Final Research Proposal | 200
7. UCM Human Subjects Training | 100
8. Course Reflection | 100
**Total** | 1000

**Online Activities and Participation (200 points)**
There will be online discussions and activities throughout the semester. This will include the general Discussion Board and Group Discussions, with some variation depending on the size of the class and specific activities. With each activity you are expected to respond to the initial questions as well as interact with classmates in a discussion. Grading is based on the frequency and regularity of logins (2-3 times per week is standard), ability to respond to at least 2 peers (unless otherwise noted), on time completion of all discussion board activities, and the quality and depth of online discussions. Please review the section of this syllabus titled “Structure of the Course/Student Responsibilities” for more information on expectations of discussion board discourse.

There will also be five synchronous 30 – 60 minute meetings throughout the semester. You are required to participate in one synchronous meeting. These meetings are designed to ensure that all students understand course expectations, have an opportunity to ask questions and promote collaboration among students. Please contact Dr. Kerr immediately if you are unable to participate. Please check Blackboard under “Start Here” for the tentative meeting dates.

**Online Grading Rubric:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of discussion posts</td>
<td>200 - 161</td>
<td>160 - 141</td>
<td>140 – 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posts multiple new threads and replies to other messages throughout week</td>
<td>Posts a single message per board per week</td>
<td>Does not post weekly on the discussions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of discussion posts</td>
<td>Participates in at least one or more synchronous session.</td>
<td>Participates in at least one synchronous session.</td>
<td>Does not participate in at least one synchronous session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ties together readings, concepts, experiences, and other posts, contributing to an in depth discussion.</td>
<td>Provides timely, substantial, thoughtful commentary to peers during group peer reviews.</td>
<td>Provides timely, thoughtful discussion and commentary to peers during group peer review.</td>
<td>Provides little or no feedback to peers during the peer review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blackboard logins</th>
<th>Logs in 2 or 3 times per week</th>
<th>Logs in 1 or 2 times per week</th>
<th>Logs in less than once per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Clarity | Posts are clear and easy to follow | Posts are readable and can be understood | Difficult to understand what the point of the messages are |

**Rating Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200 - 161</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160 – 141</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140 – 0</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>C or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommended Readings:**


