George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education  
Program: Special Education

EDSE 590(section 606) Special Education Research  
Instructor: Dr. Randy Knack  
Email: rknack@gmu.edu  
Office Phone: 703-580-4059  
Meeting Dates/Time: Fall, 2004, Tuesdays  
September 14-November 23, 2004, 4:30-8:30PM  
Class Location: GMU, Prince William Campus, Bull Run Building Room 252  
Credit: 3.0

Course Description

This course describes the fundamental concepts and practices in educational research in special education. Specific applications of educational research methods to problems in special education will be covered. Emphasis is on reviewing and critiquing special education research, and applied classroom research for teachers.

Nature of Course Delivery

Learning activities include the following:
1. Class lecture, discussion, and participation.
2. Videotapes and other relevant media presentations.
3. Study and independent library research.
4. Applications with relevant hardware and software.
5. Application activities
6. Class presentations of papers and research projects.

Student Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and understand different models of educational research suitable for different research purposes in special education
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of quantitative experimental and quasi-experimental research in special education
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of survey research in special education
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of single-subject research in special education
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of qualitative research in special education
• Describe and implement teacher applications of classroom research to address specific classroom problems.

**Relationship of Courses to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

EDSE 590 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Masters Degree Program.

**Representative Required Texts**


Other readings relevant to special education applications assigned by instructor.

**College of Education and Human Development Statement of Expectations:**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [http://mail.gmu.edu](http://mail.gmu.edu) and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

**Professional Disposition Criteria**

Please see the attached document for the standards of professional competence and moral character expected by the Virginia Department of Education expected of applicants seeking licensure.
NOTE:
This syllabus may change according to class needs.
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with instructor or need special arrangements, please call and/or make an appointment with instructor as soon as possible.

Course Requirements, Performance-Based Assessment and Evaluation Criteria.

Homework
1. An essential part of the course study is provided “on-line” at www.ablongman.com/mcmillan4e as indicated on p. xvii of the McMillan text. Prior to class the following several activities should be completed. Students should log into the website and select the chapter they will be studying, review and if possible print the objectives/outline, read/study the respective chapter in the McMillan text, and take the self-assessment quiz. Score the quiz electronically. If you achieve 70% or higher on the quiz, you have passed. Print and save your quiz and send an email copy of the quiz to yourself for your records. If you achieved less than 70% on the quiz, review your incorrect answers, study the text, and retake the quiz. You may retake the quiz as many times as you wish until you achieve the passing score. Grading is pass/fail only. A hard copy of the self-assessment quizzes is due at the beginning of class according to the schedule provided. Since in order to earn credit you must pass the quiz(es) prior to the class time, allow sufficient time to study/retake the quiz if you do not pass the first time. If for some reason you are unable to attend class, you may email your saved copy of the quiz to the instructor’s email prior to class to receive credit. Under normal circumstances, there are no allowances for late self-assessment quizzes.

2. Critique of research articles: Students will select, read and critique a research article each week related to a question of interest. Please submit a hard copy of the critique and the original article at the beginning of class for credit. The copy of the original article is necessary so the instructor will be able to review the article as necessary to evaluate the critique. As with the self-assessment quiz, if you must miss a class you may email copy of your critique (only) to the instructor. Please use MS Word format only for the attached file. Grading is pass/fail.

3. Other assignments: Additional assignments related to application of the concepts of the course may be given in class as appropriate.

Class Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend class and participate in all assignments, group activities, presentations and class discussions. The success of any course in this field stems largely from the scholarly and collegial culture created by our
attendance and commitment to the class. Attendance for each hour of class and active participation during that hour comprise this part of the grade. **Grading is one point for each hour of participation.**

While we realize that we all have busy lives and personal and professional commitments outside of this course, you have made a commitment to be present for the course and to complete the requirements therein. Therefore, choose someone as a “buddy” whom you can depend on to take notes/pick up materials for you if you must be absent. Notify that person in sufficient time for them to be of assistance to you.

If an emergency occurs for you during this semester, please refer to the official GMU incomplete/withdrawal policies.

**In-Class Quizzes**

Seven (7) quizzes are planned to be administered during class based for the most part on the material covered since the last quiz. The lowest quiz score is dropped. There are no planned “make-up” quizzes. **Grading is percent correct of the total.**

*Research Project and Oral Presentation*

Students will employ appropriate research methodology to investigate a problem of interest in a classroom, using group-experimental or quasi-experimental, single-subject, survey, or qualitative methodology. Students will prepare a research report on this project using format recommended by the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). **Grading rubric will be provided in class.**

Students will present the results of their research project to the class in a formal research presentation. Students are expected to understand their study sufficiently to answer questions from students and the instructor. **Grading rubric will be provided in class.**

*These assignments are probable entries for the student portfolio

**Late Work:** There is no provision for late work. Assignments are due as specified. However health and family emergencies do occur. Please contact the instructor immediately if this occurs. If you plan to finish the course, complete the homework and submit it even if it is late. This completed homework, will be considered as a “good faith effort” if the student is at or near a cut point on the grading scale at the end of the course.
Evaluation

1. 35% = Homework: Chapter reading and website based “self-assessment” quizzes; assigned study questions; literature reviews; applications
2. 20% = Class attendance and participation
3. 20% = Seven (7) in-class quizzes. Lowest score is dropped. No retakes.
4. 20% = Research project-written form
5. 5% = Research project-class presentation and oral defense

_It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE MR program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes that documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the CEC performance based standards._

Final Grade Criteria

95 –100% = A  
90 – 94% = A-
85– 89% = B  
80-84% = B-
70-79% = C  
< 70% = F
## COURSE TOPICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Reading Assignments and Self-assessment quizzes prior to class</th>
<th>Critique of Research prior to class and other notes</th>
<th>In-Class Quiz and other notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td>Intro to Research in Education; Research Problems, Variables &amp; Hypotheses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>Locate &amp; Review Research Literature; Internet Use in Research</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2, Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Critique #1</td>
<td>Quiz #1 Chap. 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td>Educational Measurement and Measures</td>
<td>Chapters 6 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Critique #2</td>
<td>Quiz #2 Chap. 3, 4</td>
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<td>October 5</td>
<td>Subjects, Participants, Sample; Non-experimental Quantitative Research Designs</td>
<td>Chapters 5 &amp; 8</td>
<td>Critique #3</td>
<td>Quiz #3 Chap 6 &amp; 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 12***</td>
<td>Experimental and Single Subject Research Designs</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Critique #4</td>
<td>Quiz #4 Chap 5 &amp; 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Analyzing Statistical Inferences</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Critique #5</td>
<td>Quiz #5 Chap 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 26</td>
<td>Qualitative and Mixed-method Research Designs</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Critique #6</td>
<td>Quiz #6 Chap. 10</td>
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<td>November 2</td>
<td>Review key concepts listed above/writing</td>
<td>Revisit Chapters 4 &amp; 5 **</td>
<td>Critique #7</td>
<td>Quiz #7 Chap. 11</td>
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<td>November 9</td>
<td>Review key concepts listed above; writing</td>
<td>Revisit Chapters 8 &amp; 9 **</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Review key concepts listed above; writing</td>
<td>Revisit Chapters 10 &amp; 11 **</td>
<td>Research Project Due – written form</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 23</td>
<td>No reading assignment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
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**There are no self-assessment quizzes for weeks listed as “Revisit Chapters”

***Note Room Change for October 12: Meet in Bull Run Room 253 PW Campus