

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
College of Education and Human Development
Counseling and Development Program
EDCD 601: Introduction to Research in Counseling, Fall 2009

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Class Meeting: Wednesday, 7:20 PM-10:00 PM, Thompson Hall 121

Dates: September 2, 2009 through December 9, 2009

Course Description

Enhances knowledge of and involvement in counseling research by introducing techniques and principles used to design, implement, and evaluate research projects and program development in community and school settings. *No prerequisites required.*

Course Overview

This course will provide an introduction to research methods, questions, and trends in the field of counseling. Readings and discussions will be used to explore the research process and highlight its role in the field of counseling. Students will be required to write a research proposal. Students will be encouraged to plan a proposal that could serve as the basis for an independent study, dissertation, or development of a school- or community-based counseling program. Consistent with the mission of the Counseling and Development Program, the course strives to develop in students a counseling perspective that incorporates a focus on multiculturalism, advocacy, leadership, and social justice.

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

EDCD 601 prepares students to understand research design and evaluation, including basic statistics, so they can use published research to inform practice in schools and agencies. The course also introduces students to research methodology, enabling them to design and conduct research in academic and community settings. EDCE 601 fulfills the research and evaluation requirement for Virginia state school counseling licensure and for the Virginia Licensed Professional Counselor credential. EDCE 601 meets CACREP standard II.K.h (Research and Program Evaluation) and the Graduate School of Education (GSE) standard of research and scholarship.

Expectations

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students will 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 for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <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 or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. Students desiring assistance with writing papers may contact the Writing Center at 703-993-1200.

Professional Dispositions

The American Counseling Association (ACA) code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. The George Mason University Counseling & Development Program has adopted a set of professional performance criteria that is consistent with the ACA code of ethics. Please refer to these dispositions, which may be found at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/resources>.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of both the George Mason University code of honor and the expected professional dispositions of the Counseling & Development Program. The GMU English Department has developed the following statement regarding plagiarism: “Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinion, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writer's own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious, and what is common knowledge for one audience may be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being reader friendly. In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers and establishes credibility, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism.”

Student Outcomes

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

- Demonstrate an understanding of methodological and theoretical issues driving the field of counseling research today.
- Demonstrate competence in critically evaluating counseling research.
- Write using the APA style.
- Conceptualize and design a research proposal, including demonstrating the ability to identify research problems, develop testable questions and hypotheses, and communicate design and analysis plans.
- Explore the research process with a positive attitude.

Nature of Course Delivery

This class will use lectures, class discussions, small group discussions, readings, homework assignments, research proposals, and individual presentations to accomplish student outcomes.

Required Texts

Hoyle, R.H., Harris, M.J., & Judd, C.M. (2002). *Research methods in social relations* (7th ed.). Belmont Drive, CA: Wadsworth.

Salkind, N. (2008). *Statistics for people who (think they) hate statistics* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Each student will:

- Attend each class and complete reading assignments before class. Each student is expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire class period.
- Participate in class discussions and be a contributing member of a peer review/learning group.
- Write a research proposal. Please select a topic that interests you and that could be of use to you in your career (see suggestions above in the Course Overview). Additional details and a rubric will be provided in class. The research proposal is considered the benchmark assignment for this course and is a performance-based assessment. The research proposal reflects the GSE priority of research and scholarship.
- Make an oral class presentation of the research proposal. Additional details and a rubric will be provided in class.
- Complete all statistics homework assignments, having them ready for class discussion and submission on the due date. Homework details will be discussed in class meetings.

Students in Counseling & Development courses are expected to use APA style for written papers. Links to additional information regarding APA guidelines may be found on the Counseling & Development resource page, <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/resources>.

Grading

Participation in class discussions and activities	10 points
Participation in peer review/learning group	10 points
Written research proposal	40 points
Oral presentation of research proposal	20 points
Homework (statistics assignments)	20 points

In accordance with the George Mason University Grading Policy, the following grades may be achieved: A (100 to 96 points), A- (95.9 to 92 points), B+ (91.9 to 88 points), B (87.9 to 84 points), B- (83.9 to 78 points), C (77.9 to 74 points), F (below 74 points).

Late homework assignments will be subject to a penalty of 20%. If a student wishes to rework homework, one rework per homework assignment will be accepted. The final score for reworked homework will be a maximum of 80% of the assignment's point value. The research proposal paper will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day if turned in late.

Attendance

In accordance with the policies of the Counseling and Human Development Program, on-time attendance at every class meeting is expected. **Two or more unexcused absences may result in loss of course credit.** Any attendance issues should be discussed with the instructor as soon as possible, preferably *before* the class is missed.

Class Meeting Schedule and Reading Assignments

Meeting	Date	Topics	Assignments
#1	09/02/2009	Course overview Ways of knowing Role of statistics	RMSR: 1 STAT: 1

#2	09/09/2009	Evaluating social science theories and research Ethical principles Levels of Measurement Measures of central tendency	RMSR: 2, 3 STAT: 2, 6
#3	09/16/2009	Fundamentals of measurement Modes of measurement Measures of variability	RMSR: 4, 5 STAT: 3
#4	09/23/2009	Randomized experiments Laboratory setting <i>Statistics HW due: Central tendency; variability</i>	RMSR: 11, 12
#5	09/30/2009	Nonrandomized designs Applied Research Graphical illustration of data	RMSR: 13, 14 STAT: 4
#6	10/07/2009	Fundamentals of sampling Probability sampling methods Normal curve, z-scores	RMSR: 8, 9 STAT: 8
#7	10/14/2009	Reviewing research reports Hypothesis testing Statistical significance <i>Statistics HW due: Normal curve; z-scores</i>	RMSR: 19 (483-87) STAT: 7, 9
#8	10/21/2009	Writing the research report Tests between means (t-tests)	RMSR: 20 STAT: 10, 11
#9	10/28/2009	Writing & reviewing research reports, cont. Scatterplots Correlation coefficients <i>Statistics HW due: Statistical significance; t-tests</i>	STAT: 5, 14 Wilkinson article Blanton & Jaccard article (on reserve)
#10	11/04/2009	Question content and wording Rating scales Linear regression	RMSR: 6, 7 STAT: 15
#11	11/11/2009	Observational and archival research Qualitative research Analysis of variance Nonparametric tests <i>Statistics HW due: Regression; correlation</i>	RMSR: 15, 16 STAT: 12, 16
#12	11/18/2009	Other statistical procedures <i>Submit complete draft of written research proposal for instructor feedback (optional)</i>	STAT: 13, 17
	11/25/2009	Thanksgiving Holiday – no class meeting	
#13	12/02/2009	Student presentations <i>Submit final version of written research proposal if complete draft was NOT submitted by 11/18</i>	none
#14	12/09/2009	Student presentations <i>Submit revised/final version of written research proposal if complete draft was submitted by 11/18</i>	none