

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Educational Psychology

EDRS 590.DL2 – Educational Research

3 Credits, Fall 2020

Online, Blackboard, Synchronous - Wednesdays, 7:20pm

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

None.

University Catalog Course Description

Develops skills, insights, and understanding to perform research, with emphasis on interpreting and applying research results. Critiques, research, and uses findings in educational settings.

Course Overview

This introductory research course examines connections among theoretical frameworks, research questions, methods of data collection, analysis and reporting. The purpose of this course is to introduce an understanding of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods inquiry. This will involve reading about research. Students will be introduced to the basics of research design, including identifying a problem, conducting a brief literature search, describing data collection and analysis, writing, and ethics. A general intent of the course is to help learners to become better consumers of research, and to understand the ways education research relates to instructional practice and school improvement.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using a combination of synchronous and asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available no later than Monday, August 24th. Synchronous sessions will occur in Zoom through Blackboard.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:

<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting Started/Browser Support#supported-browsers>

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting Started/Browser Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems>

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method (phone or video conference) and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

- Gain critical perspectives in order to understand the validity of education research;
- Use appropriate reference sources to locate publications relevant to a topic of their choice;
- Understand measures of central tendency and dispersion and their application to important education outcomes;
- Develop an informed perspective on issues in education that is grounded in contemporary research;
- Understand how teachers or administrators can use research to enhance instruction and inform practice;
- Use various social science perspectives as the foundation for advocacy and change; and
- Be able to apply technology to the task of conducting education research.

Professional Standards

Across the many courses in the Educational Psychology, a number of standards are addressed. These standards are noted below. Those emphasized most strongly in this course are in bold text.

1. Candidates will demonstrate an understanding of principles and theories of learning, cognition, motivation, and development as they apply to a wide variety of contemporary learning contexts.

2. Candidates will use their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to apply principles and theories of learning, cognition, motivation, and development to analyze and develop instruction in applied settings.
- 3. Candidates will demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts, principles, techniques, approaches, and ethical issues involved in educational research.**
- 4. Candidates will use their knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methodology to critically read and evaluate quantitative and qualitative research articles.**
- 5. Candidates will use their knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methodology to develop a research proposal and conduct research.**
- 6. Candidates will demonstrate critical thinking, oral presentation, technological, and writing skills as they are used in the profession. These include:**
 - Knowledge and use of APA style
 - Oral presentations
 - Poster presentations
 - Article abstracts
 - Research proposals
 - Literature reviews
 - Technological skills (including library/reference skills, interactive displays skills, data analysis skills)

Required Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Concise guide to APA style (7th ed.)*. Washington, DC. **If you already have the APA manual, you may use that instead and ask the professor for equivalent reading assignments.*

McMillan, J. H. (2016). *Fundamentals of educational research (7th ed.)*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

It is expected that each student will:

1. Read all assigned course materials
3. Participate in all online activities in a way that reflects critical reading of materials
4. Critique and/or discuss assigned readings fully
5. Submit all written assignments on time via Blackboard

When you are using cell phones, laptops, etc., please be respectful and do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions may affect your participation grade.

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

HSRB CITI and Academic Integrity Training Modules (10%). GMU requires a Mandatory Training for Persons Conducting Research Using Human Subjects. Seven learner modules in the Basic Course are required prior to applying to conduct any research at Mason using human subjects. For this course, you will be required to complete the Basic Course. GMU also has a web-based training module on Academic Integrity that will be required for this course.

Critique of Two Empirical Research Articles (10% each). Students will write a critique of one quantitative study and one qualitative study obtained from a peer-reviewed journal. The critiques should include the following parts: purpose, methods, results, and critical comments as well as your reflections about the article (see Blackboard site for specific instructions).

Research Proposal Checkpoints (10%). Students will write a research proposal (introduction, literature review, and method sections). This proposal should build on existing research and may replicate and extend previous research studies. Checkpoints throughout the semester require students to submit drafts for feedback at certain points throughout the semester (noted on class schedule).

Research Proposal Paper (30%). The proposal will contain relevant sections specific to the research design. Be sure to refer to the APA manual as well as similar work in your field to help you determine what is critical to include in your own proposal.

Proposal Requirements (Organizational headings may vary depending on your research design and the specifics of your individual study):

- Introduction & Literature Review
 - Brief introduction to the topic & literature review. (If you are replicating and extending a previous study, you should be sure to describe the original work).
- Statement of purpose and research questions.
- Method
 - Research Design
 - Participants (when applicable, include setting, subjects, interventionists)
 - Measures
 - Intervention (when applicable, include control/alternate treatment)
 - Procedures (when applicable, include study procedures, data collection procedures, scoring procedures, fidelity of treatment procedures)
 - Ethical Considerations
 - Proposed Preliminary Data Analyses
- Limitations
- References

Exam (20%). One exam will cover the material from the class and textbook and include multiple choice as well as short answer questions.

Participation and Attendance (10%). Some weekly modules will require participation in the form of discussion board activities or quizzes. Quizzes will not be graded but will be evaluated for general effort and quality to earn participation points. Discussion board activities will involve addressing the initial prompt and responding to classmates' posts, either individually or as part of a group. Students will be graded based on their level of participation with critical thought in these discussions. Students will ensure that they create a thread (thread should be named with the student's name) and provide comments on a specified number of classmates' posts in order to receive full points. To build a rich learning community through individual and group discussions, the following areas will be assessed for EACH module discussion board post: 1) promptness and initiative; 2) quality of individual work in terms of relevance and contribution to the learning community; and 3) quality of critical reflection on peers' posts.

- **Other Requirements**

Format for written work:

- 1-inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font.
- Include the following information: title, name, date, professor, course number.
- Fully proofread for spelling, grammar, and clarity errors; citation and references in APA format.

As a general rule, late assignments will not be accepted. If you believe you have EXCEPTIONAL circumstances and wish to negotiate to have extra time to complete course work, you must discuss this with me before the day the assignment is due. (Negotiating means that you will be sacrificing a portion, perhaps substantial, of your grade for extra time).

- **Grading**

Your final grade for this class will be based on the following:

A+ 98 – 100%	A 93 – 97.99%	A- 90 – 92.99%
B+ 88 – 89.99%	B 83 – 87.99%	B- 80 – 82.99%
C 70 – 79.99%	F < 70%	

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

Class Schedule

Beginning of the Week	Topic	Reading	Key Due Dates (Weekly Module Activities Expected Each Week)
Aug. 26	Intro: What is Research? Types of Research	McMillan, Chap. 1 APA, Chap. 1	
Sept. 2 No Synchronous Class this week	Ethics	McMillan, Chap. 2 APA, Chap. 8	CITI Training and Academic Integrity Training
Sept. 9	Research Questions, Variables, and Hypotheses	McMillan, Chap. 3 APA, Chap. 2 & 3	
Sept. 16 No Synchronous Class this week	Literature Review	McMillan, Chap. 4 APA, Chap. 9 & 10	Checkpoint 1: Research questions/ variables/ hypothesis
Sept. 23	Sampling	McMillan, Chap. 5 APA, Chap. 4 & 5	
Sept. 30	Measures, Reliability, & Validity	McMillan, Chap. 6 (138-142, 155-168) & Chap. 7	Checkpoint 2: Annotated Bibliography with 5 or more articles
Oct. 7	Statistics Exam Review	McMillan, Chap. 6 (143-153) APA, Chap. 6 & 7	
Oct. 14 No Synchronous Class this week	EXAM -- You will be given 2 days in which to take the timed exam, beginning Wednesday at 7:20pm, ending Friday at 11:59pm		Checkpoint 3: Sampling
Oct. 21	Quantitative Design	McMillan, Chap. 8 & 9	
Oct. 28	Quantitative Design & Data Analysis	McMillan, Chap. 10	Checkpoint 4: Introduction and Literature Review
Nov. 4	Qualitative Design	McMillan, Chap. 11	
Nov. 11	Qualitative Design & Data Analysis	McMillan, Chap. 12	Quantitative Critique

Nov. 18	Mixed Methods	McMillan, Chap. 13	INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS via sign-up posted on blackboard
Nov. 25 University closed for holiday	NO MODULE – Enjoy the break! Work on your papers 😊		Qualitative Critique
Dec 2	Conclusions	McMillan, Chap. 15	Checkpoint 5: Design and Methods
Finals Period	No Module --- Research proposal due by 11:59pm on December 15		

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see
<https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .