EDUC 950: Approaches to Educational Research

-Last revised November 17, 2007-

Location: Room 3240, SFU Surrey
Office hours: By appointment (walk-ins welcome)
Course hours: Fridays 5:00-9:00 Saturdays 9:00-4:00

DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the philosophical, ethical, methodological, and analytic issues encountered in various approaches to research in education and leadership. Particular attention will be paid to the critical reading of research and exploration of research design possibilities in order to help students articulate a research topic and a defensible research plan. The course will involve extensive reading of research across methodologies as well as intensive writing and peer review.

REQUIRED TEXTS


**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**


SFU Doctoral research guides and supports: http://www.lib.sfu.ca/researchhelp/writing/thesesinfo.html
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Readings and participation (10%)

Note that there are a lot of readings for this class. You should read and be prepared to discuss all articles and page excerpts in the designated books. You should familiarize yourself with the general content of all the books and read particularly closely the chapters related to the research methods you feel that you may pursue. You do not need to memorize or read the textbooks verbatim, rather they are offered as a resource reference for you to use as you read research and design your own research topics. All books should be brought to the class for which they were the assigned reading. You should triangulate across all the provided texts and resources as you design your research proposals. Articles should be available in the courseware package by the time class begins. Other readings may be added as needed and reflections or writings in your Blogs may be used to evaluate your participation and completion of course readings. And if you still have questions, you can read about the Gutenberg Method: http://www.entropy site.com/morrison.html.

Reflective research log (10%)

Students are expected to maintain an on-line research log where they will share observations and ideas about specific issues in research. Completed notebook due Nov. 16. (although you should bring this to every class).

Exploring Statistics (10%)

Complete computational exercises in Salkind in a dedicated statistics notebook. Completed notebook due Nov. 16. (although you should bring this to every class).

Research presentations (3 at 10% each - 5% written brief, 5% presentation)

Each student will be required to write and present three research briefs based on a rubric. One piece of research will need to use quantitative data, one qualitative data, and one data of your choice. You may instead chose to present a research method for the third presentation, rather than writing a research brief (5% added to the final paper value). Due Sept. 21, Oct. 12, and Nov. 2. See ASCD’s ResearchBrief as an example.
Culminating paper (25%)
This paper will parallel the content of the first two chapters of a dissertation. For the paper, you will be required define a research question and situate it within the broader context of theory and research. You will also design one possible research plan to address the defined question. The total paper should not exceed 40 pages, double-spaced (20 pages each question, including references). Outline due October 29; draft due November 12; Culminating paper due November 25 (midnight--I start reading when I wake up!). A useful way to conceptualize the paper is as four mini-literature reviews.

Peer review paper (15%)
You will partner with one other classmate and act as a critical reviewer of their culminating research paper. Reviews should focus on evaluating the strength of the research question, appropriateness of the methodology for answering that question, and any gaps or shortcomings in the data analysis, to provide reflections that may be used to strengthen the author's research proposal. Due November 16.

COURSE MEETINGS

Part I: Scientific method

Pre-reading:
Through page 189, Klemke, Hollinger, Rudge, & Kline
Through page 33, Gall, Gall, & Borg.
http://www.aera.net/uploadedFiles/Publications/Journals/Educational_Researcher/3503/3592-03_Shulman_RN_C.pdf. (Also available in the courseware).
In your Blogs, briefly answer the question, "Is education a science, and are we as "education researchers" scientists?" Feel free (but not required) to respond to the blogs of your classmates.

September 7
Course expectations and web site. What is the EdD? What are the comps? Philosophy of science. Create peer support groups. Discuss presentations (see Rubric).
September 8

Part II: Qualitative research

Required texts:
Through page 152, Creswell, 2003
Through page 76 Salkind (data sets)
Survey Qualitative methods as interests dictate
Articles:
Kilbourn, B. *The qualitative doctoral dissertation proposal*

September 21
Presentations. Qualitative data and research designs.

September 22
Presentations continued. Qualitative data and research designs continued.

Part III: Quantitative research and Statistics

Required texts:
In your blogs post a qualitative research question, identify data needed to answer the question, and propose a method that could be used to gather that data
Entire book, Gliner & Morgan
Entire book, Gall, Gall, o& Borg
Pages 77-178, Salkind
Articles:
ERIC Digest: *Meta-analysis in educational research*.

October 12
Review and finish Qualitative data activities. Presentations continued. Exploration of statistics.

October 13
Presentations continued. Begin discussion of quantitative data and research designs continued.
October 29: Paper outlines due. Hand in via e-mail or your blogs (no class meeting).

Part IV: Research Designs

Required texts:
In your blogs post a quantitative research question, identify data needed to answer the question, and propose a method that could be used to gather that data
Entire book, Gliner & Morgan
Entire book, Gall, Gall, & Borg

November 2
Presentations continued. Discussion of quantitative data and research designs continued.

November 3
Presentations continued. Discussion of quantitative data and research designs continued. Discussion of your potential research questions (qualitative or quantitative), the data you will need to answer those questions, and the best methods to use for gathering and analyzing that data.

Part V: Research ethics and research writing

Required texts:
SFU Doctoral research guides and supports:
http://www.lib.sfu.ca/researchhelp/writingthesesinfo.html
CIHR, 1998
CIHR, 2005
Moving Ahead:
  Consultation: http://www.hrppc-pphrc.ca/english/consultation.html
Articles:
Hemmings, A. Great ethical divides: Bridging the gap between institutional review boards and researchers
SFU Office of Research Ethics: Ethics Presentation 01

November 12 (no actual class meeting) Culminating paper due (posted to the course bulletin board) For next class, read and comment on peer papers. Written peer-reviews should be brought to class Nov. 16.
November 16
Reviewing research.

November 17
Writers' workshops and share outcomes. Review research ethics.
HW: Revised culminating papers due November 25 (midnight--I start reading when I wake up!).

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