INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Ala Samarapungavan
Office: BRNG 5128
Office Hours: M 9:30 - 11:30 a.m., by appointment
Office Phone: (765) 494 - 7321
e-mail: ala@purdue.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the basic principles of research design. The course emphasizes a conceptual understanding of how different research designs can be used to answer a variety of questions that are of interest to educators.

Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Explain the concepts and principles fundamental to educational research.
2. Conduct searches of the published literature.
3. Identify important reference sources in their respective fields.
4. Read, understand, and critically evaluate the research literature in their fields.
5. Use relevant educational research to guide decision-making and improve practice in applied settings.
REQUIRED READINGS


Supplementary Readings (Download and print electronic files from WebCT)

These readings serve as examples of different types of research conducted in education and will be used in group discussions and analyses of research.


GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Attendance, participation in class activities and discussions, and timely submission of assignments are required to maintain an A grade. Excellence is expected in all written work. All written assignments must be typed in accordance with the norms of the APA Publication Manual (4th Ed.). The APA manual is available from the HSSE and Psychology Libraries. Written assignments must be well-organized and proofread for spelling and meaning. Assignments which do not meet these criteria will not receive an A grade.

GRADING

A: 90-100 points; B: 80-89 points; C: 70-79 points; D: 60-69 points; F: < 60 points

BREAKDOWN OF TOTAL GRADE

Class Attendance & Participation (10 points)

Attendance and timely submission of assignments is worth a total of 10 points. Each unexcused absence or late submission of assignments will result in the loss of 2 points. Any student who has three or more unexcused absences or late submissions will lose 10 points. Additionally, 10 points are assigned for participation in class discussions and activities. Students are expected to have read the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. Participation in class activities is required. Students who miss more than 2 classes will have 2 participation points deducted for each additional absence even if the absence itself is excused.

Assignments (50 points).

Detailed instructions for assignments are posted on WebCT

1. Discussion of Assigned Readings (10 Points). For readings 3-7, please bring a completed critique worksheet for each assigned reading to class. Worksheets will be available on WebCT. Each worksheet is worth 2 points.

2. Doing a literature search (15 points). Identify a topic (relevant to education) that is of interest to you and conduct a computer-based search of the literature from 1990-2000.

3. Final Project (25 points): Identify a topic of interest and develop a proposal for research to address an important question relevant to that topic. The proposal should contain a statement of the problem, a brief literature review, a clear description of the purpose of the research and of the methodology that will be used (design, sampling, data collection and analysis). Anticipate some potential problems with the research design.
Final projects may be accomplished individually or collaboratively. For collaborative projects, all collaborators will receive the same grade. If you would like feedback on your project, a draft should be submitted. This draft will be returned with comments and a preliminary grade. You can use this information to revise and resubmit your project for a final grade. Please adhere to deadlines for submitting drafts and finalized projects on your schedule. **Projects turned in after the due date for drafts (but before the final deadline) may not be resubmitted and projects submitted after the final deadline will not be graded.** Projects should be 6-10 pages long.

**Exams (40 points)**

There will be 2 objective take-home exams (check schedule for dates). Each exam is worth 20 points. Both exams will be objective, short answer, open book exams designed to assess your ability to understand and apply key concepts relevant to educational research methodology.