

The University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of Educational Administration

**305-825, Advanced Research Methods
Spring 2008**

1158 Educational Sciences Bldg., Tuesday, 4:40–7:10 PM

Geoffrey D. Borman
1161D Educational Sciences Bldg.
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Phone: 608-263-3688
Fax: 608-265-3135

Email: gborman@education.wisc.edu

Home page: www.education.wisc.edu/edadmin/people/faculty/borman.htm

Office Hours:

By appointment.

Course Objectives:

This advanced course in research methods has two distinct, but complementary, objectives. First, the course is designed to build on quantitative and qualitative methods classes that students have completed. This course focuses on helping students to appreciate how and why researchers apply these methodological tools and approaches to understanding complex research questions in education. Second, the course guides doctoral students through the dissertation proposal writing process. Over the course of the semester, students will use the course to build a draft dissertation proposal that may be revised and refined with their faculty advisor. Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Better understand and appreciate the characteristics and purposes of various forms of quantitative and qualitative research methods;
2. Better appreciate how and why different methods are used to understand problems in education;
3. Formulate a testable hypothesis or answerable question and develop a plan for researching it;
4. Feel better prepared for the challenges of the dissertation process.

Course Requirements:

Students will:

1. Participate in all class activities (notify instructor of any absences in advance, whenever possible) and complete all assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them in class;
2. Complete four assignments that contribute to a final research prospectus;

3. Lead an in-class discussion of an assigned reading;
4. Read the work of other students and provide feedback;
5. Complete a draft dissertation proposal.

Grading Student Work:

Each student’s final grade for the course will be based on the instructor’s evaluation of the following:

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------|
| 1. | Class participation | 20 points |
| 2. | Completion of: (a) Research Question Assignment, (b) Outline of Literature Review Assignment, (c) Conceptual Framework Assignment, and (d) Draft Research Proposal | 10 points each |
| 3. | Final Draft Dissertation Proposal | 40 points |

1. Class Participation. The course objectives cannot be realized without regular attendance and participation. Please note that class participation accounts for 20% of your final grade and that there are no provisions for making up for absences. Credit for class participation is based on four factors: (1) regular attendance; (2) regular participation in class and contributions to class discussions; (3) leading one in-class discussion of assigned readings; (4) providing written reviews/critiques of a classmate’s 4 assignments.

Students will take an ongoing responsibility for leading discussions of some class reading material. During 8 classes [see syllabus agenda for each “student-led discussion of article” and an asterisk (*) for the article that the students will discuss], I will ask for two volunteers to “team up” in leading the class in a discussion of the article. I will ask for volunteers at least one week prior to the class during which the article will be discussed – so, students will have a chance to prepare for this. Students may prepare a brief summary of the article and, to facilitate the dialogue, students leading the discussion will prepare a *thought-provoking* activity that we will do in class. The activity may be a list of approximately three questions that we will discuss concerning the article. These questions might involve asking students how certain points raised in the article apply to real-world examples of research projects or general questions about how students interpret the meaning or importance of a certain point or concept raised in the article. Hands-on activities, small-group discussions, staged debates, and other creative activities or interactive ways of discussing the topics are *especially encouraged*. In some cases, discussion may be facilitated by preparing questions or a description of the activity and sending it to students via email by at least the day prior to the in-class discussion (i.e., Wednesday). Also, let me know if there is anything I can do to help, such as supplying materials, making photocopies, etc. The discussion may occupy only about 30 minutes of class time, or longer if it leads to interesting and engaging topics.

Group discussions of your research projects also are a significant form of class participation. We will work together to form groups with which you will engage in an ongoing dialogue about your research over the course of the semester. Fellow group

members will share their perspectives on the research process and will also serve as friendly critics of your research.

Finally, when handing in each of the 4 assignments over the course of the semester, always bring in an extra copy to exchange with a fellow group member. After exchanging assignments with a classmate, you will be expected to provide a careful written review and critique of your classmate's assignment. Bring the written review to class during the week specified in the syllabus and be prepared to discuss it. Hand in one copy to Dr. Borman.

2. Assignments completed on time. There will be four assignments due prior to the final prospectus. They are related to developing the four major sections of the prospectus: a research question, literature review, conceptual framework, and methodology. In order to meet the significant demands on my time of reading and reviewing student work, it is critical that all assignments be completed on time. Therefore, for each assignment, two types of credit will be given: 2 points for submitting the assignment on time (see course schedule for due dates) and 8 points for the quality of the work.

3. Research Proposal. Each student will complete a detailed plan to conduct an original educational research project. For most students, this will serve as a draft of your dissertation proposal. The proposal will include: (1) research question; (2) a literature review; (3) a conceptual framework; and (4) a methodology section. You will have the opportunity to complete and receive feedback on parts of the proposal throughout the course. The final version of the proposal is due on May 5. Papers submitted late will be accepted but penalized a full letter grade until May 12; late papers will not be accepted after May 12.

Full Inclusion:

I wish to include fully persons with disabilities. To enable all students to participate fully, please inform me if you need special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assignments for this course. All information will remain confidential.

Required Readings

National Research Council (2002). *Scientific research in education*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

The readings from the publication, *Scientific Research in Education*, can be accessed on-line at: <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309082919/html/> or you may purchase the book at this site for \$22.50.

Additional required readings are noted below and will be made available at Dr. Borman's web page: www.education.wisc.edu/edadmin/people/faculty/borman.htm (See the bottom of the web page under the heading "Teaching").

Other Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Bolker, J. (1998). *Writing your dissertation in fifteen minutes a day: A guide to starting, revising, and finishing your doctoral thesis*. NY: Henry Holt and Company. Imagine, all it takes is 15 minutes per day!

Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. This is an encyclopedic volume that can be helpful for people planning qualitative research.

Pedhazur, E. J., & Schmelkin, L. P. (1991). *Measurement, design, and analysis: An integrated approach*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. This book is recommended for anyone doing quantitative research.

Course Schedule:

Date	Agenda, Assignments Due, and Readings to be Discussed
------	---

Jan. 22	Agenda
---------	---------------

- Introduction to the class
- The dissertation: Cautions, hopes, and expectations
- Elements of a research proposal
- Geoffrey Borman—the story of my research

Jan. 29	Agenda
---------	---------------

- Writing about research
- The research process
- Problem identification
- Student-led discussion of reading

Readings

Becker, H.S. (1986). Freshman English for graduate students: A memoir and two theories. In H.S. Becker, *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article* (pp. 1-25). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kerlinger, F.N. (1986). Problems and hypotheses. In F.N. Kerlinger, *Foundations of behavioral research* (pp. 15-25). New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

*Lamott, A. (1995). *Bird by bird*. New York: Anchor Books. Part 1: Writing, pp. 3-32.

Sample Problem Statements

Guidelines for Developing a Problem Statement

Feb. 5 **Agenda**

- What constitutes ‘good’ research?
- Setting the context: The “awful” reputation of educational research
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

Kaestle, C. (1993). The awful reputation of educational research. *Educational Researcher*, 22(1), 23, 26-31.

*Burkhardt, H., & Schoenfeld, A.H.. (2003). Improving educational research: Toward a more useful, more influential, and better-funded enterprise. *Educational Researcher*, 32(9), 3-14.

National Research Council (2002). *Scientific research in education*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Chapter 3: Guiding principles for scientific inquiry, pp. 50-79.

Feb. 12 **Assignment Due**

- Research Question due

Agenda

- Matching a research approach to your research question
- Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods forms of inquiry
- Guest speaker, Nancy Linh Karls, Ph.D., UW Writing Center
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

Maxwell, J.A. (1998). Designing a qualitative study. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 69-100). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Caracelli, V.J., & Greene, J.C. (1997). Crafting mixed-method evaluation designs. In J.C. Greene & V.J. Caracelli (Eds.), *Advances in mixed-method evaluation: The challenges and benefits of integrating diverse paradigms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

*National Research Council (2002). *Scientific research in education*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. Chapter 5: Designs for the conduct of scientific research in education (pp. 97-126).

Feb. 19 **Assignment Due**

- Written review and critique of classmate’s Research Question assignment

Agenda

- Narrative reviews of the literature and meta-analysis
- Guest speaker, Beth Graue, professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction (research review)

(February 19 agenda and readings continued on next page)

Feb. 19 (February 19 readings continued)

- Exchange peer review feedback on your Research Question assignment with classmate
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

Cooper, H.M., & Lindsay, J.L. (1998). Research synthesis and meta-analysis. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 315-337). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cooper, H. (1985). Literature searching strategies of integrative research reviewers. *American Psychologist*, 40, 1267-1269.

Lather, P. (1990). To be of use: The work of reviewing. *Review of Educational Research*, 69, 2-7.

*National Research Council (2002). *Scientific research in education*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. Chapter 2: Accumulation of scientific knowledge (pp. 28-49).

Sample Literature Reviews

Feb. 26 **Agenda**

- Sampling
- Surveys
- Validity and reliability of measurement
- Guest Speaker, John Stevenson, Associate Director of the UW Survey Center (survey research in education)
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 155-159.

Henry, G.T. (1998). Practical sampling. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 101-126). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fowler, F. J. (1998). Design and evaluation of survey questions. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 343-374). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

*Messick, S. (1995). Validity of psychological assessment: Validation of inferences from persons' responses and performances as scientific inquiry into score meaning. *American Psychologist*, 50, 741-749.

Mar 4 **Assignment Due**

- Outline of Literature Review and Revised Research Question – SIGNED (OR OTHERWISE APPROVED) BY ADVISOR

Agenda

- Experimental design
- Implementing experiments in the “real world” of schools
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

Boruch, R. F. (1998). Randomized controlled experiments for evaluation and planning. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 161-191). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

*Cook, T.D., & Payne, M.R. (2002). Objecting to the objections to using random assignment in educational research. In F. Mosteller & R. Boruch (Eds.), *Evidence matters: Randomized trials in education research* (pp. 150-178). Washington, DC: Brookings.

Mar.11 **Assignment Due**

- Written review and critique of classmate’s Outline of Literature Review and Revised Research Question assignment

Agenda

- Conceptual frameworks and theoretical models
- Exchange peer review feedback on your Literature Review and Revised Research Question assignment with classmate
- Guest speaker, Clif Conrad, Professor of Higher Education, Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (applying theory to research in education)

Readings

Becker, H. S. (1993). Theory, the necessary evil. In D. J. Flinders & G. E. Mills (Eds.), *Theory and concepts in qualitative research* (pp. 218-229). New York: Teachers College Press.

Suppes, P. (1974). The place of theory in educational research. *Educational Researcher*, 3, 3-10.

Sample Conceptual Frameworks

Mar. 18 **NO CLASS—UW SPRING BREAK**

Mar. 25 **NO CLASS—AERA ANNUAL MEETING IN NEW YORK CITY**

Apr. 1 **Agenda**

- What makes a good quantitative study?
- Definitions of “scientifically based research”
- Quasi-experimental design
- Can education become an evidence-based field?
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

Reichardt, C. S., & Mark, M. M. (1998). Quasi-experimentation. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 193-228). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lipsey, M.W., & Wilson, D. B. (1993). The efficacy of psychological, educational, and behavioral treatment: Confirmation from meta-analysis. *American Psychologist*, 48, 1181-1209.

*Slavin, R.E. (2002). Evidence-based education policies: Transforming educational practice and research. *Educational Researcher*, 31(7), 15-21.

Apr. 8 **Assignments Due**

- Conceptual Framework due

Agenda

- What makes a good qualitative study?
- Guest speaker on qualitative research, TBD
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

Anfara, V.A. Jr., Brown, K.M., & Mangione, T.L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher*, 31(7), 28-38.

*Janesick, V.J. (2000). The choreography of qualitative research design: Minuets, improvisations, and crystallization. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 379-399).

Lareau, A. (1989). *Home advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education*. New York: Falmer Press. (pp. 187-223).

Apr. 15 **Assignment Due**

- Written review and critique of classmate’s Conceptual Framework assignment

Agenda

- Qualitative Data Collection
- Focus Groups

(April 15 agenda and readings continued on next page)

Apr. 15 (April 15 agenda and readings continued)

- Interviews
- Observation
- Exchange peer review feedback on your Conceptual Framework assignment with classmate
- Student-led discussion of article

Readings

- *Morse, J. M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 1(2), Article 2. Retrieved 1/15/08 from <http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/index>
- Stewart, D. W., & Shamdasani, P. N. (1998). Focus group research: Exploration and discovery. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 505-526). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Apr. 22 **Assignment Due**

- Draft Proposal with Methodology Section Due

Agenda

- Case study research
- Tentative guest speaker, Patricia Burch, assistant professor, Educational Policy Studies (case study research)
- Student-led discussion of article

Reading

- *Yin, R. K. (1998). The abridged version of case study research: Design and method. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 229-260). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Apr. 29 **Assignment Due**

- Written review and critique of classmate's Draft Proposal with Methodology Section assignment

Agenda

- Ethically Responsible Research
- Human Subjects Procedures
- Exchange peer review feedback on your Draft Prospectus with Methodology Section assignment with classmate
- Guest speaker, Lil Larson, Office of Research Services, College of Letters and Science, University of Wisconsin—Madison

(April 29 readings continued on next page)

Apr. 29 (April 29 readings continued)

Readings/Assignments

Sieber, J. E. (1998). Planning ethically responsible research. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 127-156). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Please complete the UW Human Subjects Tutorial on the web:

<https://my.gradsch.wisc.edu/citi/index.php>

May 5 **Assignment Due**

- Final version of proposal due

Agenda

- “Surviving the Dissertation Process:” A Discussion with a Panel of Current and Former Dissertators