

**University of Wisconsin-Madison**  
**Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis**  
**ELPA 825: Advanced Research Methods in Educational Administration**  
**Summer 2008**

Class Meets Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:10 to 6:10  
July 14 to August 6, Room 1252 Educational Sciences Building

***Instructor:***

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***Office Hours:***

I am generally available by appointment. Please email or talk to me in class to set up appointments as needed.

***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 develop approaches to inquiry that will enable them to contribute to advancing the theory and practice of educational leadership. Students will recognize the unique contributions of a variety of 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 prepared to engage in meaningful inquiry that contributes to the knowledge base in educational leadership and policy analysis;
- ✚ Better understand and appreciate the characteristics and purposes of various forms of quantitative and qualitative research methods;
- ✚ Be sensitive to critical ethical issues in educational research;
- ✚ Be able to formulate meaningful research questions and develop research plans to effectively address these questions;
- ✚ Feel prepared for the challenges of the dissertation process.

***In Preparation for the Course:***

The four week format of the summer course means that time moves very quickly. Doing some thinking, some reading, and discussing your topic with your advisor before the

course begins, will greatly facilitate your progress during the course. To maximize benefits of the course, you should come to the course with:

- a draft dissertation research question that has been discussed with your advisor;
- access to key research related to your topic, and some general understanding of the knowledge base that relates to the topic.

***Course Requirements:***

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) a problem statement; (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.

Successful students will come to class with a clear idea of the research question or topical area you would like to research. Ideally, you should also have done preliminary reading on your topic. If possible, meet with your advisor to identify and approve the general direction and focus of your specific research question.

Course grades will be based on:

1. Attendance (10%)
2. Successful completion of:
  - (a) Draft Problem Statement (Due July 18) (10%)
  - (b) Revised (a) plus a section of your Literature Review (Due July 25) (20%)
  - (c) Revised (b) plus Conceptual Framework and outline of Methods (Due August 1) (20%)
  - (d) Draft Dissertation Proposal (Due August 13) (30%)
3. Leadership and participation in discussion of course readings (10%)

***Accommodations:***

I wish to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to fully participate. I will try to maintain the confidentiality of the information you share with me.

Students move through the process of identifying and developing a research proposal at different paces, and with uniquely different obstacles and opportunities throughout the process. Consequently, I try to recognize and accommodate individual student circumstances in assessing student performance in this course. My expectation is that students will commit themselves to successful completion of course assignments in a timely manner, while recognizing the need for flexibility to accommodate individual circumstances.

**Required Texts:**

- Conrad, C.F. & Serlin, R.C. (Eds.). (2006). *The Sage Handbook for Research in Education: Engaging Ideas and Enriching Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Green, J.L., Camilli, G. & Elmore, P.B. (Eds.). (2005). *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Schneider, B., Carnoy, M., Kilpatrick, J., Schmidt, W.H. & Shavelson, R.J. (2007). *Estimating Causal Effects Using Experimental and Observational Designs*. American Educational Research Association. Available at <http://www.aera.net/AERAShopper/ProductDetails.aspx?productID=AERWECE>

**Recommended Texts:**

- American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). (2005). *The Sage Handbook for Qualitative Research (Third Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kaplan, D.W. (Ed.). (2004). *The Sage Handbook of Quantitative Methodology for the Social Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Locke, L.F., Spirduso, F.F. & Silverman, S.J. (2007). *Proposals that Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals (Fifth Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rea, L.M. & Parker, R.A. (2005). *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

**Assignments by Class Session**

**Week 1 – July 14-16: Introduction to Inquiry**

**Assignment 1 Due Friday, July 18 by email**

- ✚ The dissertation: Fears, hopes, and expectations
- ✚ Building your research tool kit
- ✚ Elements of a research proposal and discussion of course assignments
- ✚ Resources for dissertators: Writing Center and Library Resources
- ✚ Dissertation Calculator: <http://www.lib.umn.edu/help/disscalc/>
- ✚ Inquiry, Problem Identification, and Problem Statements
- ✚ Foundational Literature
- ✚ Discussion of Problem Statements and Readings from Conrad & Serlin

**Readings:**

Conrad & Serlin, Preface and Parts I & II

**Week 2 – July 21-23 Refining the Problem and Research Designs, Part I**

**Assignment 2 Due Friday July 25 by email**

- ✚ Discussion of Chapters from the Handbook of Complementary Methods in Educational Research.
- ✚ Causal Designs
- ✚ Inductive and Explanatory Research Designs

*Readings:*

The Readings for this Week will be Divided Among Students. You will be asked to summarize your readings and lead the discussion regarding that reading in class.

Schneider, Carnoy, Kilpatrick, Schmidt & Shavelson  
Green, Camilli & Elmore

***Week 3 – July 28-30 Conceptual Frameworks and Instrument Design***

***Assignment 3 Due Friday, August 1 by email***

- + Survey Design
- + Discussion of Student Drafts, Questions and Concerns

*Readings:*

Conrad & Serlin, Sections III, IV & V  
Rea & Parker (Handout)

***Week 4 – August 4-6 Research Quality and Ethical Considerations***

***Assignment 4 Due Wednesday, August 13 by email***

- + Indicators of Quality
- + Statistical Power, Type I and Type II Error
- + Null Hypotheses
- + Protection of Human Subjects
- + Panel of Dissertators Discuss the Dissertation Process (August 6)

*Readings/Assignments:*

Complete Human Subjects Training if you have not done so already; Develop draft IRB submission

Ethical Standards of the American Educational Research Association (Handout)

National Research Council. (2003). *Scientific Research in Education*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. Chapters 3 & 4. (Handout)

Conrad & Serlin, Section VI

### **Additional References**

- Bickman, L. & Rog, D.J. (Eds.). (1997). *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cohen, J. (1990). Things I have Learned (So Far). *American Psychologist*, December, pp. 1304-1312.
- Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 155-159.
- Huck, S.W. (2000). *Reading Statistics and Research (Third Edition)*. New York: Longman Press.
- Kirk, R.E. (1996). Practical significance: A concept whose time has come. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 65, 746-759.
- Levin, J. R. (1992). Tips for publishing and professional writing. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, 5, 12-14.
- Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

6/10/08