AEC 6767 - Research Strategies in Agricultural Education & Communication
Section 7824
Spring 2013
(3 credit hours)

Instructor
Brian E. Myers, PhD
Associate Professor & Associate Chair
Office Location: 307A Rolfs Hall
Office Phone: 352-273-2567
Email: bmyers@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 9:00 am – 12:00 pm or by appointment

Time and Location
Wednesday
Periods 6 – 8 (12:50 – 3:50 p.m.)
306 Rolfs Hall

Course Description
This course focuses on applying the principles, practices, and strategies for conducting research in the social sciences, particularly dealing with the interface of the human dimension in the agricultural and natural sciences.

Course Objectives
At the completion of the course, the learner will be able to:
1. integrate the scientific process associated with research.
2. critically evaluate research studies.
3. describe how instrumentation and data collection procedures relate to the entire research process.
4. apply the concepts of qualitative and quantitative research.
5. develop instruments to collect valid and reliable data.
6. integrate instrumentation and data collection methods for various types of research problems and contextual situations.
7. identify a problem area of interest, develop constitutive and operational definitions associated with a study, ascertain an appropriate research design, and develop a research proposal.

Course Delivery
This course is delivered in a blended format. Important components of the course are delivered both during the face-to-face class meetings and via online, asynchronous methods (UF eLearning: Sakai). Students are to complete all assigned learning activities (readings, narrated lectures, assignments) prior to each class face-to-face meeting. Class sessions will focus on the application of the concepts discussed in the online materials.

Required Texts

Supplemental Texts and References
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & DESCRIPTIONS

**Research Workgroup**
Scientific research is not an individual endeavor. It requires the engagement of the community of scientists. Thus, each student will be assigned a research workgroup. The research workgroup will provide support, critique, and feedback to each member to assist in the development of the major assignments of the course. Students will be evaluated on their contributions to their research workgroup. This involves quality and timeliness of feedback.

**Module Quizzes**
Short quizzes on key ideas are included within each module.

**Article Reviews**
Select two (2) articles from peer-reviewed, AEC-related research journals. Draft a review of each article using the guidelines in the “Guidelines for Evaluating Quantitative Research” and “Guidelines for Evaluating Qualitative Research” provided in class. Both reviews should be contained in one MS Word document uploaded to the course Sakai site. In addition to creating article reviews, each member of the Research Workgroup will evaluate and provide feedback on the article reviews of the other members of the Research Workgroup.

**Research Ideas**
Develop a draft problem statement for three (3) possible research ideas. Each statement should be 1-3 pages (double spaced). Use the information found in Chapter 3 of your textbook to help you in the development of your draft problem statements. All three statements should be contained in one MS Word document uploaded to the course Sakai site. In addition to creating problem statements, each member of the Research Workgroup will evaluate and provide feedback on the research ideas of the other members of the Research Workgroup. The Research Problem Statement rubric should be used to guide the critique.

**Research Problem Statement**
Develop a full problem statement from one of the research ideas. This statement will be the foundation for the Research Prospectus assignment. The guidelines for this assignment will be provided via the grading rubric.

**Research Prospectus - 1st Submission**
A research prospectus, essentially a preliminary mini-proposal, outlining a research study you wish to conduct and the rationale and methodology behind it, will be developed by each student and presented to the class during the course poster session. The prospectus is to be typed, double spaced (12 pt font, 1 inch margins). The guidelines for this assignment will be provided via the grading rubric. Each member of the Research Workgroup will evaluate and provide feedback on the research prospectus of the other members of the Research Workgroup.

**Research Prospectus - Revised Submission & Revision Letter**
In addition to the revised prospectus, the author must also include a letter stating how comments/suggestions made on the first draft were addressed.

**Research Poster Presentation**
Develop a research poster based on the Research Prospectus assignment. The research posters will be presented during the AEC Research Poster Session. The guidelines for this assignment will be provided via the grading rubric and the call for posters.

**Research Design Outlines**
Develop a brief study design outline for a research study utilizing the assigned research method for that class meeting. A total of four (4) research design outlines will be created throughout the course. The research outlines will be discussed in class and reviewed by the Research Workgroup.

**Exams**
There will be two exams. Both will follow a “take home” discussion format.
### COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Workgroup</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Quizzes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Reviews (2)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Ideas (3)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Problem Statement</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Prospectus – 1st Submission</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Prospectus – Revised Submission &amp; Revision Letter</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Poster Presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design Outlines (4 @ 10 points/each)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (2 @ 100 points/each)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale**

- **A** = 930-1000
- **A-** = 900-929
- **B+** = 860-899
- **B** = 830-859
- **B-** = 800-829
- **C+** = 760-799
- **C** = 730-759
- **C-** = 700-729
- **D+** = 660-699
- **D** = 630-659
- **D-** = 600-629
- **E** = below 600

*Note: This Web address references the UF grades and grading policies: [http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html](http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html)*

**Attendance and Make-up Exams and Assignments**

To receive the maximum number of points for an assignment, it must be completed and submitted by the due date. **No work will be accepted six or more days after its original due date,** unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor. Students who are absent from class for any reason will assume complete responsibility for obtaining information missed during their absence and for making up missed assignments and activities. College approved field trips and competitive and leadership development events (with prior instructor approval) are considered legitimate absences with documentation. Make-up work should be arranged prior to the expected absence. In case of emergencies, arrangements for completing make-up exams or assignments should be made immediately upon returning to class. **All make-up work must be completed within one week of the student's return to class.**

**Academic Honesty**

In 1995 the UF student body enacted a new honor code and voluntarily committed itself to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. When students enroll at the university, they commit themselves to the standard drafted and enacted by students.

In adopting this honor code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the university community. Students who enroll at the university commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the honor code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the honor code is bound by honor to take corrective action. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon community acceptance and enforcement of the honor code.

**The Honor Pledge:** We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied:
"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

The university requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors. A fundamental principle is that the whole process of learning and pursuit of knowledge is diminished by cheating, plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty. In addition, every dishonest act in the academic environment affects other students adversely, from the skewing of the grading curve to giving unfair advantage for honors or for professional or graduate school admission. Therefore, the university will take severe action against dishonest students. Similarly, measures will be taken against faculty, staff and administrators who practice dishonest or demeaning behavior.

Students should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the instructor, department chair, college dean or Student Honor Court.

(Source: 2011-2012 Graduate Catalog)

It is assumed all work will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as a group project, in writing by the instructor.

This policy will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course.

Software Use:
All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources
Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. Both the Counseling Center and Student Mental Health Services provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance. The Counseling Center is located at 301 Peabody Hall (next to Crisler Hall). Student Mental Health Services is located on the second floor of the Student Health Care Center in the Infirmary.

- University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, www.counsel.ufl.edu
- Career Resource Center, CR-100 JWRU, 392-1601 ext: 0, www.crc.ufl.edu/
- Student Mental Health Services, Rm. 245 Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, www.shcc.ufl.edu/smhs/
  Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)
  Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
  Center for Sexual Assault / Abuse Recovery & Education (CARE)
  Eating Disorders Program
  Employee Assistance Program
  Suicide Prevention Program

Students with Disabilities
The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues.

0001 Reid Hall, 392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics / Learning Experiences</th>
<th>Reference(s)</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 9</td>
<td>The Nature of Scientific Inquiry</td>
<td>Ary 1</td>
<td>Module #1 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>Research Designs and Evaluating Research Articles</td>
<td>Ary 2</td>
<td>Article Reviews (2) Module #2 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 23</td>
<td>The Research Problem</td>
<td>Ary 3 &amp; 5</td>
<td>Article Review Feedback Module #3 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 30</td>
<td>Coverage and Sampling</td>
<td>Dillman 3</td>
<td>Research Ideas (3) Module #4 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 6</td>
<td>Research Workgroup</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Idea Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 13</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Measurement</td>
<td>Ary 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Problem Statement Module #5 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>Research Workgroup</td>
<td></td>
<td>Problem Statement Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 27</td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 6</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 13</td>
<td>Experimental Research</td>
<td>Ary 10 &amp; 11</td>
<td>Research Design Outline Module #6 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Non-experimental Research</td>
<td>Ary 12 &amp; 13</td>
<td>Research Design Outline Module #7 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 27</td>
<td>Survey Research</td>
<td>Dillman 4 - 7</td>
<td>Research Design Outline Module #8 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Ary 15, 16, &amp; 17</td>
<td>Research Design Outline Module #9 Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 10</td>
<td>Mixed Methods and Communicating Research</td>
<td>Ary 18 &amp; 19</td>
<td>Research Prospectus – Draft Module #10 15Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 17</td>
<td>Research Workgroup</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Prospectus Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 24</td>
<td>Research Prospectus Poster Session - Location TBD</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Poster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Prospectus - Final</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>