AEC 6767 – Research Strategies in Agricultural Education & Communication

Section 7824
Spring 2014
(3 credit hours)

Instructor

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Time and Location

Face-to-Face component: Wednesday Periods 7 – 8 (1:55 – 3:50 p.m.) 306 Rolfs Hall
Asynchronous online component: At your convenience (1 period)

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 (2 periods face-to-face; 1 period asynchronous online). Important components of the course are delivered both during the face-to-face class meetings and via online, asynchronous methods (UF eLearning). Students are to complete all assigned learning activities (readings, videos, 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

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C. K., & Walker, D. A. (2014). *Introduction to research in education*. (9th Edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN 9781133596745

Supplemental Texts and References

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication Manual.* APA. (6th Edition).
Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2009). *Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method.* (3nd ed.). New York: Wiley.

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.

Each workgroup will also be responsible for developing and leading a 10 minute summary/review of content for the assigned module delivered on the course Sakai site. The workgroup will also develop 2-3 questions to guide a 5-minute class discussion on the session topic following the summary/review.

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. The guidelines for this assignment will be provided via the grading rubric.

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.

Exams

There will be two exams. Both will follow a "take home" discussion format.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS	Points
Research Workgroup	100
Module Quizzes	30
Article Reviews (2)	20
Research Ideas (3)	30
Research Problem Statement	100
Research Prospectus – 1st Submission	20
Research Prospectus – Revised Submission & Revision Letter	400
Research Poster Presentation	100
Exams (2 @ 100 points/each)	200
Total Points	**1000**

Grading Scale

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

Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Absences and Make-Up Work

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following 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.*" You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.*"

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see:
http://www.dso.ufl.edu/SCCR/honorcodes/honorcode.php.

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. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides 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.

- *University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575,*
  www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/
  - Counseling Services
  - Groups and Workshops
  - Outreach and Consultation
  - Self-Help Library
  - Training Programs
  - Community Provider Database
- *Career Resource Center,* First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, **www.crc.ufl.edu/**

Services for 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. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation
0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, **www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/**

Course Calendar

Dates	Topics / Learning Experiences	Assignment Due
Jan 8	The Nature of Scientific Inquiry	Module #1 Quiz
Jan 15	Research Designs & Evaluating Research Articles	Module #2 Quiz
Jan 22	The Research Problem	Article Reviews (2) Module #3 Quiz
Jan 29	Coverage and Sampling	Research Ideas (3) Module #4 Quiz
Feb 5	Research Workgroup	Research Idea Feedback
Feb 12	Fundamentals of Measurement	Problem Statement Module #5 Quiz
Feb 19	Experimental Research	Problem Statement Feedback Module #6 Quiz
Feb 26	*No class meeting – submit exam online*	Exam #1
Mar 5	Spring Break	
Mar 12	Non-experimental Research	Module #7 Quiz
Mar 19	Survey Research	Module #8 Quiz
Mar 26	Qualitative Research	Module #9 Quiz
Apr 2	Mixed Methods and Communicating Research	Research Prospectus – 1st Submission Module #10 Quiz
Apr 9	Research Workgroup	Research Prospectus Feedback
Apr 16	Research Prospectus Poster Session	Research Poster
Apr 23	*No class meeting – submit prospectus online*	Research Prospectus – Revised
Apr 30	*No class meeting – submit exam online*	Exam #2