EDFN 5301 – Introduction to Research

**Instructor**  Dr. Nancy J Smith

**Office**  Faculty Center 221

**Phone**  361-825-2308

**E-mail**  nancy.smith@tamucc.edu

**Office Hours**  Mon & Thurs 1:00-4:00

I will respond to emails within 24 hours. We can also arrange phone or Skype appointment

---

The graduate level course is offered in support of graduate degree programs in the College of Education. It is designed to introduce the student to the fundamentals of research in education and applied behavioral sciences. That is, students will explore what research involves, the various types of research, the techniques for conducting research studies, ethical behavior in the conduct of research, and research in educational settings. Descriptive and inferential statistics will be presented in the context of the research study. Social issues related to educational research will also be presented and discussed.

**II. RATIONAL:**

All educators are either practitioners or consumers of research. It is important that students of education know and understand the elements of research in order to be able to evaluate critically and/or conduct research to enhance one's skills and advance the knowledge of the field. This course will provide the student with a basic framework for understanding and evaluating educational research studies. It will also provide knowledge of the various types of research designs used in educational research and the procedures for conducting research studies. The course is applicable for all students who will make professional use of educational research or conduct research studies.

**III. STATE ADOPTED PROFICIENCY DOMAINS:**

The following state adopted proficiencies for mid-management administrators are covered in this course.

- Learner-Centered Leadership
- Learner-Centered Professional Development

**IV. TExES COMPETENCIES: N/A**

**V. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of the course, the student should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

1. The historical and social antecedents of research studies
2. The basic skills required to comprehend and apply research studies in a variety of educational and clinical settings
3. The professional skills and competencies that researchers and users of research studies must master
4. The basic measurement, statistical, and research skills needed to understand and conduct research studies
5. The different types of research designs and their appropriate usage
6. Ethical standards and considerations in conducting research in an educational setting

The course is also designed to meet the following CACREP Standards II-G-8-a-f:

**RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION**—studies that provide an understanding of research methods, statistical analysis, needs assessment, and program evaluation, including all of the following:

a. The importance of research in advancing the counseling profession;
b. research methods such as qualitative, quantitative, single-case designs, action research, and outcome-based research;
c. statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation;
d. principles, models, and applications of needs assessment, program evaluation, and the use of findings to effect program modifications;
e. the use of research to inform evidence-based practice; and
f. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for interpreting and reporting the results of research and/or program evaluation studies

**Major Learning Outcomes**
- Students will have the knowledge and understanding of research methods such as qualitative, quantitative, single-case designs, action research, and outcome-based research.

**Secondary Learning Outcomes**
- Students will have the knowledge and understanding of statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations.
- Students will have the knowledge and understanding of the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession.
- Students will have the knowledge and understanding of statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation.
- Students will have the knowledge and understanding of the use of research to inform evidence-based practice.
- Students will have the knowledge and understanding of the principles, models, and applications of needs assessment, program evaluation, and the use of findings to effect program modifications.
- Students will have the knowledge and understanding of ethical and culturally relevant strategies for interpreting and reporting the results of research and/or program evaluation studies.

**VI. Course Topics:**
- Process and approaches of research
- Identifying a research problem
- Literature reviews
- Research purpose and questions or hypothesis
- Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data
- Research designs
- Reading research reports

**VII. Required Texts:**

**Resources:**
OWL at Purdue – [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)

**VIII. Instructional Methods and Activities:**
- Lecture & discussion
- Individual assignments
- Research proposal design
IX. EVALUATION, GRADE ASSIGNMENT, AND DELIVERABLES:
Grades will be calculated based on A = 90-100%; B = 80-89.9%; C = 70-79.9%; D = 60-69.9%; F < 60%
Discussion and Participation 35%
Weekly Quizzes 30%
Final Research Design 35%

DELIVERABLES:
- Discussion and Participation
  - Reactions to readings and class discussions questions
- Weekly Quizzes
  - 5-10 questions from textbook & lecture material and one open ended question
- Final research proposal design
  - Will be a culmination of your weekly discussion and open ended quiz questions

REQUIREMENTS FOR DELIVERABLES:
Detailed instructions and rubrics for each assignment will be provided in the Overview for each week, which can be found in the Weekly Folders under the Content link in Blackboard. Additionally, you will receive an email invitation to join our class Dropbox folder during the first week of class.

X. COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES:
1. Attendance and Participation: This class requires you to invest time for preparation, assignments, and application of critical concepts in research. You will need to stay on top of things in order to perform well. While you might be an independent learner, and perhaps a strong performer, the research is consistent on the value of social learning and reviewing difficult concepts through discussions with others. Your respectful and meaningful participation in discussions will be required for your final grade.
2. Competencies: There are some basic competencies that I expect you will have in order to perform well in this class. These are:
   a. Ability to proof read your work before submitting
   b. Ability to use APA style to write and cite references when making general and/or specific statements that are not entirely your own
   c. Ability to communicate effectively when you do not understand the instruction or expectations about assignments
   d. Ability to connect to the Internet, download required materials, and transmit required materials as needed. I will not entertain excuses emerging from last minute computer troubles. Therefore, plan ahead and have back up plans in place should something go wrong.
3. Special Accommodations: It is the policy of the Texas A & M Corpus Christi’s to accommodate students with disabilities pursuant to federal law, state law, and the University's commitment to equal educational opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example in seating placement or in arrangements for examinations, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course with a letter from Disability Services in Driftwood 101 (361-825-5816). I will not be able to make accommodations without a letter from disability services. Texas A & M Corpus Christi does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its programs and activities, as specified by federal laws and regulations. The student has the responsibility of informing the course instructor (at the beginning of the course) of any disabling condition, which will require modification to avoid discrimination. Faculty is required by law to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to
discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

4. **Professional Conduct and Academic Honesty:** Professional conduct is expected in this course. Professional conduct includes, among others, interactions with peer colleagues, faculty, timely completion of assigned tasks and responsibilities; adherence to professional ethical standards; and adherence to University policies regarding plagiarism. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary actions.

All written work submitted must be the student’s original work and conform to the guidelines of the *American Psychological Association* (APA) available online and via their publications. This means that any substantive ideas, phrases, sentences, and/or any published ideas must be properly referenced to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency in the selling of term papers of other academic materials. It is the student’s responsibility to know all relevant university policies concerning plagiarism. Any documented cases of plagiarism can and will result in dismissal from the course with a failing grade, and may result in other more serious sanctions by the College of Education and the University.

5. **Diversity Statement:** The department aspires to create a safe and diversity-sensitive learning environment that respects the rights, dignity, and welfare of students, faculty, and staff. Diversity means the fair representation of all groups of individuals, the inclusion of minority perspectives and voices, and appreciation of different cultural and socioeconomic group perspectives. We aspire to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Departmental courses will strive to provide opportunity for all students to discuss issues of diversity including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

6. **End of Semester Negotiations:** I will support you in every way possible during the semester to ensure that you perform well in the class if you communicate any difficulties or concerns with the material with me. Therefore, I recommend that you take full advantage of a supportive learning environment designed to ensure your success. However, I will not entertain any end of semester negotiations about grades, and your grade in the course is a direct reflection of your engagement in your own learning process.

Please understand that, despite the strict expectations and policies outlined above, I do care about you as an individual and am always willing to listen and be flexible in order to help you have a successful semester if you are faced with unusually difficult circumstances. I encourage you to get in touch with me if you want a conference to explain your circumstances. Do not wait until you have accumulated absences, fallen behind, and failed to do the required work to discuss any personal difficulties that are affecting your performance.
### XI. Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic &amp; In-class Activities</th>
<th>Required Reading and Deliverables Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WK 1 – 1/21-1/27</td>
<td>Introduction to Research &amp; Conducting Research</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>Syllabus discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUE – Quiz 1-1/27</td>
<td>Preface to Creswell Handouts – Library navigating, Annotated Bib format, and writing up research FINAL Research Design Projects – Steps in the Research Process Creswell – Chapter 1: The Process and Approaches of Research APA – Citations, references, and academic writing</td>
<td>DUE – Step 1 Research topics list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>WK 2 – 1/28-2/3</th>
<th>Research Problem</th>
<th>Creswell – Chapter 2: Identifying a Research Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE – Quiz 2 – 2/3</td>
<td>Literature Reviews</td>
<td>Creswell – Chapter 3: Reviewing the Literature</td>
<td>DUE – Step 2 Annotated Bib</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>WK 3 – 2/4-2/10</th>
<th>Research Problem, Purpose, Questions or Hypothesis</th>
<th>Creswell – Chapter 4: Specifying a Purpose and Research Questions or Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE – Quiz 3 - 2/10</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Creswell – Chapter 7: Collecting Qualitative Data</td>
<td>DUE – Step 3 Research Purpose &amp; Questions/Hypothesis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 4</th>
<th>WK 4 – 2/11-2/17</th>
<th>Qualitative Data Analysis</th>
<th>Creswell – Chapter 8: Analyzing and Interpreting Qualitative Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE – Quiz 4 - 2/17</td>
<td>Quantitative Research</td>
<td>Creswell – Chapter 5: Collecting Quantitative Data</td>
<td>DUE – Step 4 Collecting Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 5</th>
<th>WK 5 – 2/18-2/24</th>
<th>Quantitative Data Analysis</th>
<th>Creswell – Chapter 6: Analyzing &amp; Interpreting Quantitative Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE – Quiz 5 - 2/24</td>
<td>The Findings</td>
<td>Creswell – Chapter 9: Reporting and Evaluating Research</td>
<td>DUE – Step 5 Analyzing &amp; Interpreting Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 6</th>
<th>WK 6 – 2/25-3/3</th>
<th>Research Designs</th>
<th>For your final Research Proposal, choose the research method which best fits your research purpose either Qualitative or Quantitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DUE – Quiz 6 - 3/3</td>
<td>– If you chose Qualitative – read Creswell Chapters 13, 14, &amp; 15 Qualitative – read Creswell Chapters 10, 11, &amp; 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 7</th>
<th>WK 7 – 3/4-3/10</th>
<th>Reporting &amp; Evaluating Data Work on Final Research Proposal Design Paper</th>
<th>Creswell – Chapter 16: Mixed Methods Designs; and Chapter 17: Action Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Parts of this syllabus may be subject to change based on class needs. Students will be notified of all changes. Additionally, I reserve the right to widen point ranges on assignments as needed.