

Education 695: Research and Educational Practice (Fall 2005)

Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education University of Michigan School of Education

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Class: Fridays 1-4pm, 2218 SEB

Course Description

Education 695 is designed to serve as a first introduction to the design and practice of educational research. The course readings and lectures will examine fundamental issues of research design and practice from a variety of methodological perspectives — qualitative, experimental, and non-experimental multivariate methods.

Upon completion of this course you will be able to

- Appreciate the complexity of the issues that are faced by educational researchers, and understand how different methodological traditions approach these issues;
- Critically analyze research literature and evaluate the evidence on which generalizations are made in the published literature; and,
- Use appropriate reasoning to synthesize a body of literature.

We will, by necessity, use some basic math along the way in order to better understand the statistical concepts we will be studying, but please note that our primary focus will be on developing a conceptual understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Since educational research is usually a group activity, there will be some group work during the course. You will be encouraged to collaborate during and outside of class periods on course projects described in detail below.

Course Requirements

Class Participation. As in any graduate course, students and faculty need to be co-owners of the class and collectively responsible for its quality and outcomes. I will take responsibility for the overall design and direction of the course and for the academic requirements, but the course will be facilitated as an inquiry in which all participants hold themselves and each other accountable for a strong and rich intellectual enterprise and dialogue.

Your attendance is essential to a successful collective experience. The format of the class requires that each person come prepared to take an active role in class. This means not only having read the assigned materials, but also being prepared to discuss the salient issues, questions, and problems emerging from the readings, to utilize your knowledge and professional experiences in addressing the readings and any class activities. Class

participation also involves opening oneself to challenge and to be challenged by the ideas and topics of the session. The quality of your class participation is worth 20% of your final grade.

Article/Paper Critiques. You will be asked to provide critical evaluations of a published article in the field, and two of a fellow student's literature review. Descriptions of how to conduct the critiques will be provided in class. These will be worth 30% of your grade.

1. The first critique will be of Steele & Aronson (1995). This should be approximately 8 pages, double-spaced. This is due **October 21st**.
2. You will also critique two of your fellow student's final papers. These will be submitted to the student and the instructor on either **December 1st or 8th**. These papers will be two pages each, single-spaced.

Literature Review. The intent of this assignment is to give you a chance to prepare your own analysis of a research issue in postsecondary education. This paper must consist of a review of the literature on an *empirical* research question in the field, on the topic of your choice. This paper should be approximately 20-25 pages (double-spaced), excluding references and appendices. I will provide you with feedback throughout the process.

1. A brief description of the topic is due in class **October 14th**. Please feel free to meet with me individually as you develop your topic.
2. The final paper is due **November 28th**. Copies will be provided for other students in the course to read prior to the presentations (40% of grade).

Presentation. Each student will make a formal presentation to the class about the paper they have written and the major analytical issues that the paper addresses. These will be approximately 10 minutes each, with 10 minutes for questions and comments, similar to an academic conference. Presentations will be **December 2nd & December 9th**. (10% of grade)

Policies on Late Papers, Missed Classes, and Other Bad Behavior

Late papers are accepted, with a penalty of half a grade, regardless of reason. The grade penalty is non-negotiable, although petitions for sympathy may be considered at the instructor's discretion. Missed classes will hurt the class participation grade, also regardless of reason. Students who miss four class sessions will need to withdraw from the course. The instructor has a thing about plagiarism and proven academic misconduct will result in both failure of the course and a report to the dean's office. Students who do none of these things will have a special place in my heart, but imperfect students may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Citations

I despise APA (American Psychological Association) citation format, but it dominates the field and needs to be learned. All papers must be submitted using APA (5th edition) citations. You may buy the APA Publication Manual, or use one of many internet resources, such as <http://apaguide.net>.

Course Texts

Jaeger, R.M. (1990). *Statistics: A spectator sport* (2nd edition). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fink, A. (2004). *Conducting research literature reviews* (2nd edition). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Additional Readings

The remainder of the course readings are available electronically through University Reserves. Please download and print out these articles at your own convenience. You may find it useful to have the readings bound or otherwise organized for the course.

Course Schedule

September 9: Introduction to the Course

Part I: Understanding Quantitative Research

September 16: Statistics Review

Special Guest Star: Nate Daun-Barnett

Jaeger, Chapters 1-4

September 23: Conceptual Issues in Quantitative Research

Jaeger, Chapters 5-6

Keller, G. (2001). The new demographics of higher education. *Review of Higher Education*, 24, 219-235.

Diaz-Guerrero, R., et al. (1976). Plaza Sésamo in México: An evaluation. *Journal of Communication* 26: 145-54.

September 30: Using Research Databases

Special Guest Star: Marija Freeland, Education Librarian

Special Location: Instructional Lab, 4th Floor, Undergraduate Library

Fink, Chapter 1

October 7: Statistical Inference and Estimation

Jaeger, Chapters 7-9

Antonio, A.L., Chang, M.J., Hakuta, K., Kenny, D.A., Levin, S.L., & Milem, J.F. (2004). Effects of racial diversity on complex thinking in college students. *Psychological Science*, 15 (8), 507-10.

FAQ: <http://www.stanford.edu/group/diversity/faq.htm>

October 14: Testing Hypotheses

Jaeger, Chapters 10-12

Manns, C.L., & March, J.G. (1978). Financial adversity, internal competition, and curriculum change in a university. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 23, 541-552.

Frank, D.J., Schofer, E., & Torres, J.C. (1994). Rethinking history: Change in the university curriculum, 1910-90. *Sociology of Education*, 67, 231-242.

Topic Description Due

October 21: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Jaeger, Chapters 13-14

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797-811.

Article Critique Due

October 28: Linear Regression & Factor Analysis

Jaeger, Chapter 15

Bellas, M.L. (1994). Comparable worth in academia: The effects on faculty salaries of the sex composition and labor-market conditions of academic disciplines. *American Sociological Review*, 59, 807-21.

Hearn, J.C. (1991). Academic and non-academic influences on the college destinations of 1980 high-school graduates. *Sociology of Education*, 64, 158-171.

Interlude: Writing Literature Reviews

November 4: Literature Reviews and Presentations

Fink, Chapters 2-4 (skim for review), Chapter 5 (pp. 185-200)

Tufte, E.R. (2003). *The cognitive style of PowerPoint*. Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press.

Part II: Understanding Qualitative Research

November 11: Qualitative Research Designs

Merriam, Chapters 1-3

Antonio, A.L. (2004). When does race matter in college friendships? Exploring men's diverse and homogeneous friendship groups. *Review of Higher Education*, 27, 553-75.

Deil-Amen, R., & Rosenbaum, J.E. (2002). The unintended consequences of stigma-free remediation. *Sociology of Education*, 75, 249-268.

TWO WEEKS OFF – ASHE AND THANKSGIVING

November 25: Interpreting Qualitative Research

Merriam, Chapter 10

Maxwell, J.A. (1992). Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62, 279-300.

Evans, N.J., & Herriott, T.K. (2004). Freshmen impressions: How investigating the campus climate for LGBT students affected four freshmen students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 45, 316-32.

Rhoads, R.A. (1995). Whales tales, dog piles, and beer goggles: An ethnographic case study of fraternity life. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 26, 306-23.

December 2 & 9: Paper Presentations

Two page critiques due each week to other members of your group

Revised: June 29, 2005