

ETR 520 – Summer 2002
Introduction to Educational Research
Northern Illinois University

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Text URL: www.prenhall.com/gay/

Required Text:

Gay, L.R. and Airasian, R. (2000). Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application. 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

You should also obtain a copy of the APA Style Guide

Course Summary:

This subject introduces students to a range of key educational research designs and methods. Students critically review approaches to research in education and related theoretical and methodological issues. They understand key concepts from a range of research designs and approaches, and develop skills in related research techniques of data gathering and analysis. Ethical issues, critically reflexive perspectives and the politics of research are also considered. Students will develop and implement a small research project as a guide to thesis design.

Course Objectives:

1. Understand and articulate the scientific method and its use for the purposes of educational research.
2. Understand and articulate the legal and ethic principles involved in conducting research.
3. Understand how to plan, design, and conduct research.
4. Demonstrate the ability to use library databases and other research resources.
5. Understand how to and demonstrate the ability to read and critically evaluate published research in education
6. Understand and be able to articulate the variety of methodologies available to educational researchers.

Requirements:

- 1) Attendance in class is mandatory, as discussions, lectures, and activities are important parts of the course.
- 2) Each student is expected to complete all readings, assigned projects, and actively participate in activities and discussions.
- 3) Assignments are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with the instructor.

Assessment & Evaluation:

Late assignments are reduced a letter grade per day late.

Assignment	Percent of Final Grade
Chapter Quizzes (Online)	5%
Research Critique	10%
Research Proposal	30%
Literature Review	20%
Final Exam	30%
Class Participation	5%

Grading

To avoid misunderstandings, now ad at the end of the term, here are descriptions of grades for graduate courses.

A: Outstanding, superlative work

B: Fully satisfactory but not your best effort

C: Deficient for graduate level

D: Unacceptable for graduate level

Disabled Students: If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact the instructor as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the second week of classes.

NIU Conceptual Framework: The NIU Community of Learners build on knowledge, practice, and reflection to produce Exemplary Educators. The Community encompasses scholars, education professionals, and pre-service teachers in an interaction that develops the strengths that embody excellence in education. These strengths include creative and critical thinking, scholarship, and caring. Application of these strengths emerges through the collaborative efforts of a diverse community that supports lifelong learning

Course Outline

Date	Subject	Readings	Due
June 18	Course introduction and expectations Personal assessment & interest inventory	G&A, Chpt. 1	
June 20	Selection and definition of a research problem Creation of a research plan	G&A Chpt. 2 & 3	
June 25	Samples, validation, and reliability	G&A Chpt. 4 & 5	
June 27	Library research overview Meet in the smart classroom, room 297 Jennie Ver Stegg – Librarian	At NIU Library	
July 2	Qualitative research	G&A Chpt. 6 & 7	
July 4	No Class – Independence Day		
July 9	Qualitative research – cont.		Literature Review

July 11	Preparation of research reports	G&A Chpt. 15 & 16	
July 16	Descriptive research	G&A Chpt. 8	
July 18	Correlational research & causal-comparative research	G&A Chpt. 9 & 10	
July 23	Experimental research	G&A Chpt. 11	Research Critique
July 25	Statistics – descriptive	G&A Chpt. 12	
July 30	Statistics – inferential	G&A Chpt. 13 & 14	Research Proposal
Aug. 1	Action research & economic research	G&A Chpt. 17	
Aug. 6	Review	Review all	
Aug. 8	Course Evaluation Final Exam		

The Literature Review

This assignment is intended to provide you with an opportunity to practice your library research skills. This assignment is twofold. The first part of this assignment is to find approximately twenty articles, web site, or other sources that are on point regarding a research topic that we mutually agree upon. For the resources, you should provide a paragraph abstracting the content and potential use of the resource without your research study. You do not need to create one complete narrative; you will do that later as part of the research proposal. The second part of this assignment will be to articulate in no less than two and no more than four pages how you went about collecting resources for your literature review. This part of the assignment should identify your key search terms and search strategies. You need to ensure you cover all major sources for your topic and include both electronic and print materials as appropriate to your topic.

The Research Critique

This assignment is intended to provide you with an opportunity to critique another educator's published research. Select a research study to critique that you discovered during your literature review. Then write a formal critique of the study (article, paper, etc.) based upon the criteria outline in Chapter 16 of the Gay and Airasian text.

The Research Proposal

This assignment will provide you with an opportunity to create a research proposal that articulates the purpose, background and anticipated methodology for an education based research project. The instructor will provide some sample proposals, however, they should be viewed as informational and not as models to be followed. The proposal should be free from all mechanical error. Throughout the proposal, the student must adhere to the *APA Publication Manual, 5th Ed.*

The proposal needs to address the following issues:

1. Introduction and setting of the context of the proposed research
 - a. Problem statement
 - b. Significance of the problem
2. Purpose
 - a. Purpose of the study
 - b. Significance of the proposed study
 - c. Feasibility of the study
 - d. Research questions
 - e. Definition of terms
3. Background and Review of the Literature
 - a. Theoretical basis of study
 - b. Review of literature
4. Methodology
 - a. Hypothesis
 - b. Research method
 - c. Data Source/population
 - d. Sampling technique(s)
 - e. Human subjects compliance
 - f. Variables
 - g. Data collection
 - h. Data analysis techniques
 - i. Limitations
5. Implications
6. References and appendices (as necessary)

The Final Exam

The final exam will be designed to ensure that you can demonstrate a solid understanding of the material covered in the course.