

The University of Georgia
College of Education

Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, & Policy
Program of Educational Administration & Policy

EDAP 7600: Research in Educational Administration and Policy

Course Syllabus
(Spring Semester, 2006)

Instructor: *Dr. Olajide Agunloye*

Department: Educational Administration and Policy
850 College Station Road, Rivers Crossing
Athens, Georgia 30602

Office: UGA, Gwinnett University Center (hours by appointment only)

E-mail: agunloye@uga.edu

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course. Modifications to the syllabus may be necessary as progress is made during the course.

Course Description:

In this introductory course, students will develop a working knowledge of major educational research methodologies; differentiate between research, evaluation, and assessment; become familiar with current issues in education research; and understand the opportunities and challenges of using research to inform policy and practice in education.

NOTE

The course does not require mastery of statistical analytical methods.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, the student will be able to

- Differentiate research studies from non-research studies
- Identify and describe major research methodologies
- Understand the assumptions underlying different research methodologies
- Be able to make informed decision on which research method(s) can be used for different studies based on the contexts
- Understand the stages of the research process
- Critique components of various research studies
- Explore, critique, and synthesize literature in educational research.

- Identify and discuss current issues in educational research as they relate to instruction, assessment, evaluation/productivity, and accountability.
- Discuss the roles and limitations of research in informing policy and practice in education.
- Develop an action research plan that may be implemented in a school setting.

Concepts, Essential Questions, and Performance Expectations

By the end of this course learners should be able to answer the questions and perform the activities outlined in the following domains:

CONCEPT I:

Catalogue and Explain Various Educational Research Methodologies

1. How is a research study different from a non-research study?
2. Provide an inventory of the major types of research methodologies.
3. Pick two major research methodologies of your choice. Explore their applications, implications, and limitations (*Minor Assignment #1*).

4. *Major Assignment #1*

You will be given three reported research studies (a qualitative, quantitative, and a meta-analysis).

Your Tasks:

Critique each study separately. In your critique, focus on the following:

- Background information and rationale for the study (including relevant literature review)
- Clear statement of the problem
- The conceptual framework - the theoretical grounding on which the study is based and approached
- Clear statement of the research question, hypothesis tested, and/or research problem addressed
- The research methodology used, to include:
 - Experimental or non-experimental
 - Qualitative or Quantitative (primary/meta-analysis)
 - Description and appropriateness of the research method
 - Choice, appropriateness, and limitations of any analytical method(s) used.

- Critical review of the conclusions made as it relates to the actual results from the study.
- Explain the relevance of the research to informing educational policies.

- Explain any implications of the study for future research study.
- Present your critique to the class

CONCEPT II:

Identify and Discuss Current Issues In Education Research: Curriculum-Instruction, Assessment, Evaluation, & Accountability/Productivity

1. Identify and discuss the scope and limitations of the scientific approach in education research.
2. Discuss current research trends in the area of curriculum-instruction and Accountability/Productivity.
3. Compare and contrast assessment and evaluation/productivity in education.
4. Outline current research trends on assessment (Minor Assignment #2 - part 1).
5. Describe the current role of assessment in education policy and practice (Minor Assignment #2 - part 2)
6. Outline the current research trends on education evaluation/productivity
7. Describe the current role of education evaluation/productivity in education policy and practice
8. Explore the issue of accountability under the NCLB Act from a research perspective.

CONCEPT III:

Use Research to Inform Education Policy and Practice.

Major Assignment #2:

Investigate and report on: “The Roles and Limitations of Education Research in Informing Education Policy and Practice”

CONCEPT IV:

Research Proposal Writing and Action Research

Major Assignment #3: Demonstrate the Research Process knowledge using an Action Research Project

Your Task:

You have finished just your first year as an administrator. During the year, you identified a particular problem in your school that has constantly 'bugged' you. The problem has also been the subject of discussion between you and your principal on various occasions. You have now made up your mind to investigate this problem with the purpose of making valid and research-based suggestion(s) to your principal on possible solution(s) to the problem.

Using all the knowledge and skills of research you have acquired, you are to develop and complete a detailed Action Research Proposal to address the identified problem with the purpose of making informed suggestions to your school principal. You will also be required to defend your Action Research proposal to a panel (the class).

The product of your Action Research will be scored on the degree of attention and the relevance of information provided in the following areas:

- Background information and rationale for the Action Research (including relevant literature review)
- Clear statement of the problem and purpose of the Action Research
- The conceptual framework. This is the theoretical grounding on which the approach to the Action Research is based.
- Clear statement of the research question or hypothesis to be tested and/or problem(s) to be addressed.
- Explanation of and rationale for research methodology used to include:
 - Whether Experimental or non-experimental
 - Whether Qualitative or Quantitative
 - Description and appropriateness of the research method
 - Choice, appropriateness, and limitations of the statistical analytical method(s) to be used.
 - Statements about the general assumptions and limitations of the Action Research.

Defend your Action Research proposal

*Required Text:

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Razavieh, A., & Sorensen, C. (2002). *Introduction to research in education* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
[ISBN #0-534-55537-3]

*Students are strongly advised to seek and consult other resources and readings outside of the required text in order to competently complete the required assignments.

Specific Course Requirements: Students are required to attend all scheduled class meetings, participate in class discussions, and complete required assignments (including the major assignments) and any other readings/assignments.

Grading Policy: Final grades will be based on the three major assignments, two minor assignments, one final class test, and class participation weighted as follows:

Major Assignment 1	75 points
Major Assignment 2	75 points
Major Assignment 3 (Performance Assessment)	100 points
Two Minor Assignments (10% each)	100 point
Final Class Exam	100 points
Participation	50 points
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>500 points</u>

450-500 = A
400-449 = B
300-339 = C
less than 300 = F

Attendance Policy: Attendance and punctuality are expected. If a rare, unavoidable occurrence will prevent you from attending a class or will cause you to be late, please notify the instructor in advance.

Policy for Make-Up of Examinations: Should a make-up be needed due to an unavoidable emergency, the instructor and the student will make arrangements that are mutually satisfactory. The student is solely responsible for initiating this conversation and for making sure that an agreement is reached.
All work must be completed by 12:00 noon on Saturday, April 29.
Final Exam Date, Saturday, May 6.
Exams may not be taken early.

The Conduct of Class:

I believe that learning occurs in a friendly but challenging environment of open discussion, exchange of ideas and knowledge. I also believe that classrooms are excellent place to discuss all sides of an issue. Learners should come to class with open a mind, a willingness to listen to what others have to say, and a willingness to contribute to the conversations and discuss of the day. All students are to be respected, and no one person should dominate the discussion sessions. I like to play the devil's advocate and to push the reasoning and reasons for expressed or implied knowledge and ideas.

Students with Disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the professor.

Class Meetings - Readings are to be read *prior* to class. In some cases, data are to be downloaded and brought to class for discussion and use during class time.

Academic Honesty:

All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." All students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm

Weekly Activities:

- January 14 Course Introduction
Research Methodologies
- January 21 Research Methodologies (cont.)
Begin work on Minor Assignment #1
- January 28 Research Methodologies (cont.)
Minor Assignment #1 Due
- February 4 Research Methodologies (cont.)
Begin Major Assignment #1
- February 11 Research Methodologies (cont.)
Major Assignment #1 (cont.)
- February 18 Research Methodologies (cont.)
Major Assignment #1 Due with Presentation (cont.)
- February 25 Current Issues in Education Research
- March 4 Current Issues in Education Research (cont.)

Begin Minor Assignment #2

- March 11 Spring Break - no classes
- March 18 Current Issues in Education Research (cont.)
Minor Assignment # 2 Due
Using Research to Inform Education Policy
Major Assignment #2 Begins
- March 25 Using Research to Inform Educational Policy
Individual work on Major Assignment #2 (cont.)
(no formal class meeting)
- April 1 Using Research to Inform Educational Policy
Major Assignment #2 due
Individual work on Major Assignment #3 begins
- April 8 Putting Research Knowledge into Educational Practice
Individual work on Major Assignment #3 (cont.)
(no formal class meeting)
- April 15 Putting Research Knowledge into Educational Practice (cont.)
Major Assignment #3 (cont.)
- April 22 Putting Research Knowledge into Educational Practice (cont.)
Major Assignment #3 (cont.)
- April 29 Individual Defense of Major Assignment #3:
Class Presentation
- May 6 Final Class Exam

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Scope and Sequence Framework

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CONCEPT I: Research Methodologies

Defining Research (ch. 1: 2-5)

The Scientific Approach to Research (ch. 1)

Educational Research (ch. 1:16)

Basic Components of Research:

- The Research Problem (ch. 3)
- Literature Review (ch. 4)
- Research Question & Hypothesis (ch.5; ch. 7: 180-181)

Research Methodologies:

A. Quantitative

- Experimental: Randomized & Non-randomized (chs. 10 &11)
- Quasi-experimental (ch.11:341)
- Non-Experimental: Correlational, Regressional, Meta-analysis (chs.12 & 13)

B. Qualitative

- Characteristics, Types, & Designs (ch.2:28-29; chs. 15 & 16)

C. Quantitative & Qualitative Compared

Sampling & Sample Size (ch. 7: 167-176)

Validity & Reliability (ch.9)

Using Surveys (ch.14)

Analysis

- Descriptive Statistics (ch.6)
- Inferential Statistics (ch.7)
 - Hypothesis Testing and Error Types
 - Levels of Significance and Directions of Tests
 - Statistical Power & Sample Size
- t-tests - contextual applications (ch.7:189-196)
- ANOVA & ANCOVA - contextual applications (ch.7: 197-202)
- MANOVA & MANCOVA - contextual application (directed sources)

- Correlation - contextual application (ch.13)
- Regression - contextual application (ch. directed sources)
- Analyzing Qualitative Research (ch.19)

Writing and Reporting Research - Significant Tips

- Quantitative (directed sources)
- Qualitative (ch. 19)

CONCEPT II. Current Issues in Educational Research (directed sources)

- Limitations of Research in Education
- Research Trends
 - Curriculum
 - Instruction
 - Assessment
 - Evaluation
 - Education Productivity
- Role of Assessments
 - Tests (ch.8: 223-224)
 - Assessment for Learning (directed sources)

CONCEPT III. Using Research to Inform Educational Policy (directed sources)

CONCEPT IV: Research Proposal Writing and Action Research

- Research Proposal Writing (ch.18)
- Action Research (ch. 17)