

This syllabus will be negotiated on the first day of class and throughout the semester.

Spring 2007
EDEC/EDEL/EDMS 9630/7650

Critique of Educational Literature in Early Childhood/Elementary/Middle School Education.

Instructor: Deborah J. Tippins, Ph.D.
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Office: 212 Aderhold Hall
Class Schedule: Tuesdays
Room: 430 Aderhold Hall
Time: 5:00 – 7:45 p.m.

College of Education Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the College of Education states that the college “prepares exemplary, reflective professionals to serve a diverse global community; it achieves that end through teaching, scholarship, outreach, and partnership at the local, national, and international levels.” This course supports the work of the college.

Course Overview

Welcome to the Critique of Educational Literature course in Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School Education. This course is intended to help you pursue advanced, specialized study of an educational topic in depth. The main purpose of this course is for you to complete an analytical review of the literature on an educational topic and summarize the results in a written form. The course builds on the following prerequisites: You already understand the nature of educational research, the purposes and procedures of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms, and the process of reviewing educational literature; in particular, you can find, read and interpret research studies related to your professional interests. You also are familiar with university library facilities, including GIL, GALILEO, electronic journals, and the actual materials stored in campus library buildings. This course is about how to select, from what you find, literature that is worthy of being included in a review and how to organize and write the review.

Course Materials

You will be expected to read and critique relevant articles as part of your review of literature. The following books are required:

Hart, Christopher (2003). Doing a Literature review: releasing the social science research imagination. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage publications (**required**)

Galvan, H. (2006). Writing literature reviews (3rd. edition). Glendale, Ca: Pyrczak Publishing. (**required**) ***(This will serve as the primary text for the course)**

Recommended resources:

American Psychological Association (2001). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). Washington, D.C.: author. **(strongly recommended)**

Rudestam, K. E., & Newton, R.R. (2001). Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process. (2nd. Ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. **(recommended)**

Pellegrino, V.C. (1987). A writer's guide to transitional words and expressions. Wailuku, HI: Maui Arthoughts. **(recommended)**

Course Goals

- To complete an analytical review of the literature on an educational topic
- To organize and draft a literature review
- To distinguish among different types of literature.
- To develop tools for examining and critiquing literature.
- Develop and demonstrate skills in using library sources to review and critique the educational research literature in the topic area of your dissertation or specialist project.

Expectations

- Participate actively in small group support processes
- Complete all written work at an acceptable level of scholarship
- Read and reflect critically on assigned readings
- Share resources, readings and insights
- Demonstrate reflection through discussion and writing
- Attend all course sessions
- Be prompt in attendance
- Familiarize yourself with APA guidelines for referencing expression of ideas, editorial style, and manuscript preparation.

Attendance

Class participation is a very important aspect of the course. Class sessions will include opportunities for you to share and discuss your writing and your substantive progress on reviewing the literature in your area of interest. In this regard, you are responsible for attending all class sessions. Please arrive at class in a prompt and timely manner.

Equally important is your advance preparation for each class. You will be expected to write each week. Your careful preparation and enthusiastic participation will contribute to the course. If it is necessary for you to miss a class due to an emergency, please make every effort to notify me in advance.

Course Requirements

1) Written Review of Research Literature and oral presentation (70%)

The most important course requirement is the completion of a written review of research literature in a particular area. The quality of the review will be the largest factor in your course grade (e.g., does the review have a clear purpose? Is the review search-and-selection process presented? Are individual studies well described? Are studies linked in order to present clear and consistent research findings? Are conflicting findings discussed? Does the review include section headings, transitions, and summaries that help the reader? Is the review written in the form of an argument [or a story]? Is the review presented in APA style?). The ability to critique studies will be important not so much in criticizing studies you include in the review as in deciding which studies to include. That is, you should include only what you consider to be good studies and not include those studies you think are bad, where good and bad refer to the quality of the study and not to whether the conclusions agree with your own beliefs. The consequence of having to make such judgments is that you will have to read more studies than you actually include in the written review.

The review you submit for this course should be at least 25 pages in length and include at least 60 references that you have found, read, and synthesized into a coherent whole. Those studies you see as most important and relevant to your purpose should be described in detail in the review. Some studies may receive only a brief mention. The crucial point is that you include in your review only works that report research and only what you have read yourself. Do not simply use what another writer has said about a particular study, and do not include what you do not understand and cannot explain in your own words. The argument you make (or the story you tell) in the review must be uniquely yours. It is possible to quote, paraphrase, and summarize (with proper credit given) the works of others while telling a story that reflects your ideas and is substantially in your own words. In addition to the journal articles that will make up the bulk of your references, your review should include at least one dissertation and one paper presented at a professional conference (ideally in 2005 or 2006). You may also cite two or three other reviews of the literature in your area, but, again your review should make clear your own point of view. A rubric will be provided for grading purposes.

2) Class participation (30%)

Each week you will be assigned readings with corresponding tasks designed to facilitate your understanding of the literature review. You should be prepared in advance for class meetings by completing all readings and corresponding tasks. Participation in and preparation for class will constitute 2% of your grade each week.

Grading

Your grade in this course will be based on two assignments: a) written review of research literature with oral presentation, and b) class participation including timely completion of readings and associated tasks. Your review of literature and oral presentation will be evaluated using a rubric. The following grading scale will be used.

93-100% – A	76-79% - C+
90-92% - A-	73-75% - C
87-89% - B+	70-72% - C-
84-86% - B	67-69% - D+
80-83% - B-	64-66% - D
	60-63% - D-

Academic Honesty

Instructors are committed to the principles of academic honesty and subscribe to the UGA Academic Honesty Policy guidelines for the definition and process of academic integrity. All students are subject to these academic guidelines; instructors have and will initiate academic dishonesty proceedings if in their courses they find reasonable cause to do so. All students are encouraged to read and understand A Culture of Honesty (The UGA Academic Honesty Policy) found at http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm.

Important Dates

Classes begin: January 8
Martin Luther King Holiday – January 15
Spring break: March 12-16
Classes end: April 30
Exams begin: May 2
Commencement: May 12

Conferences

AERA – April 9-13
NSTA – March 29-April 1
NARST – April 15-18
GSTA – February 15-17