

RESEARCH METHODS IN COUNSELING

CPSY 535

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Dates: Sept 6, 2011—Dec 13, 2011

Lewis & Clark College

Moodle Password: Research

Tuesdays, 1:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.

Catalog Description:

In this course students are introduced to the foundations of psychological research. Students investigate qualitative and quantitative research processes and basic concepts. Topics include (1) elements of the research process; (2) types of designs, program evaluation; (3) ethical considerations of research: informed consent, research with diverse and vulnerable populations, research with children, human subjects review; (4) basic measurement concepts: validity, reliability, norms, score interpretation; and (5) basic statistical concepts: frequency distributions, central tendency, measures of variability, correlation, normal curve, hypothesis testing, significance tests. Students read and evaluate examples of published research.

Objectives:

By the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify various paradigms for conducting research (CC: 8b),
2. Identify each of the steps involved in the development of a research project (CC: 8b, 8c, 8d).
3. Write research questions and hypotheses (CC: 8b)
4. Understand ethical issues involved in working with human participants (CC: 8f)
5. Identify and describe various types of qualitative research designs (CC: 8b)
6. Identify and describe validity issues inherent in different types of research designs (CC: 8b, 8c, 8d)
7. Discuss the issues involved in conducting real world research (CC: 8a, 8e)
8. Discuss the impact of culture on various aspects of the research process (CC: 8f, 7f, 2c)
9. Critically evaluate published research articles
10. Design a proposal for a research project.

Overall Goal:

The primary goal of this class is for students gain a more complete understanding of the research process which would allow them to critically analyze published research and engage in research in or related to their own counseling practice.

Required Materials

Calculator

Weis, L. & Fine, M. (2004). *Working Method: Research and Social Justice*. New York, N.Y.: Routledge.

Mertens, D.M. (2010). *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology*. L.A., CA.: Sage Publications.

Week

Course Schedule
Assignments Due

Week 1 9/6/11	Welcome, Introduction, Syllabus	Handout Cammarota Article, INCITE	Handout Cammarota Article, INCITE
Week 2 9/13/11	Mertens: Chapter 1: An Introduction to Research Cammarota, J. & Fine, M. (2008). Revolutionizing Education: Youth Participatory Action Research. New York, N.Y.: Routledge. Ch 3: Participatory Action Research in the Contact Zone	Quiz 1	Quiz 1
Week 3 9/20/11	Weis & Fine: Ch 5: Participatory Action Research Update on Friendly House (Loren) 503-224-2640	Quiz 2 PAR Article Sum Due.	Quiz 2 PAR Article Reports Small Groups decide Human Subjects Make Groups: Lit Review, Survey Construction, Guide Questions, Etc.
Week 4 9/27/11	Mertens: Ch 3: Literature Review	Quiz 3 Human Subjects	Quiz 3 Human Subjects
Week 5 10/4/11	Mertens: Ch 4 & 5: Experimental Research / Causal Comparative Correlational Research	Quiz 4 Proposal /PAR Projects Topics Due	Quiz 4 Proposal /PAR Projects Topics Due
Week 6 10/11/11	Mertens: Ch 6 & 7: Survey Methods & Single-Case Research Weis & Fine: Ch 3: Civic Lessons	Quiz 5	Quiz 5
Week 7 10/18/11	Mertens: Ch 11 & 12: Quantitative Sampling and Data Collection & Analysis (351-366, 403-422)	Quiz 6 Research Article Critique Due	Quiz 6 Research Article Critique Due
Week 8 10/25/11	Mertens: Ch 8: Qualitative Methods (225-254) Weis & Fine: Ch 6: Extraordinary Conversations	Quiz 7	Quiz 7

	in Public Schools		
Week 9 11/1/11	Mertens: Ch 9: History and Narrative Study of Lives Weis & Fine: Ch 2: Race, Gender & Critique	Quiz 8	Quiz 8
Week 10 11/8/11	Mertens: Ch 12 (366-378) & Ch 8: (255-264) Weis & Fine: Ch 1: Dear Zora	Quiz 9	Quiz 9
Week 11 11/15/11	Mertens: Ch 10: Mixed Methods Weis & Fine: Ch 1: Dear Zora	Quiz 10	Quiz 10
Week 12 11/22/11	Experiential Project		
Week 13 11/29/11	Project Presentations		
Week 14 12/6/11	Project Presentations		

Course Requirements:

Participation in a Learning Community: Students are required to attend and *actively* participate in all scheduled class meetings. This includes being on time, reading all of the assigned material and discussing it, and otherwise engaging with colleagues as fellow professionals.

Grading: All written material is graded according to assignment requirements and applicable course objectives. LATE REPORTS lose 1 pt every day.

Quizzes: 5 points each	50
PAR Article Summary	10
Action Research Project or Proposal	30
Research Article Critique.....	10

Quizzes: There will be 10 quizzes on assigned material due that date. These quizzes have as their main focus the assessment of the primary concepts of the reading.

Research Project Proposals: In this class you get to decide to write a research project proposal or to engage in a Participatory Action Research Project and write it up. Guidelines for both projects will be handed out.

Participatory Action Research Article Summary

Find a Participatory Research Article published in a peer-reviewed journal that interests you and that is relevant to counseling. Please demonstrate your awareness of the role that PAR can play in our profession. In one-two single-spaced pages, summarize your article by answering the following questions. Include citation of article (use APA style). Include: Author, date, article title, source, page numbers.

- What is the mission/purpose of the study? Why is this project important? Does the introduction state a problem and how is it going to be researched? What are the methods of measurement that the authors identify?
- Participants: How does the investigator describe the population? What were the sampling procedures (if they had any)? What are the characteristics of this population?
- Methods: How did this research project proceed? What were the participants required to do? Were instruments of measurement involved and if so, how so? How did the project change? How did the population taking action do that?
- Discussion: Was the research question answered? State the answer in your own words. How has the investigator interpreted his/her findings? Are the results tied the original research question and to other research in the field? Does the investigator suggest a next step? What is it?
- Significance: What is the significant of the project and its “results”? What is the author’s interest in offering their findings (e.g. further research, generalizability)? What is your critical appraisal of this research?

ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT/PROPOSAL OVERVIEW:

In small groups you will engage in an action research project and organize the findings, or write a proposal for such a project.

Action Research includes:

1. Your Action Research Project topic and question
2. Introduction defending the legitimacy of your area of research
3. Your Action Research Project literature review
4. Your Action Research Project data collection method (actual or planned) ideas
5. A time-line plan for implementing your project, if you were to implement it. Remember, it is not a requirement to implement the project, but you are encouraged to do so.
6. Description and examples of data collection formats or instruments you are going to use (actual guide questions, actual surveys, a list of interview questions, portfolio contents, graphs of comparative data aggregated by ethnicity, grade level, gender, etc.)
7. Outcomes and evaluation criteria. Describe what you might (did) find and what the results might (do) mean for your school.
8. Present with a Power Point presentation.

1. Identify your Action Research Question

- Develop a topic, using the guidelines provided in class, to pose a question. Hopefully one that is relevant to your internship site, population served, or .
- Write the question in a way that follows the "Criteria for a good action research question" guidelines.
- Include a description of *how/why* your Action Research Question addresses an *equity issue* for your internship site. You can choose to describe this in the "School Profile" section if it fits better there.

2. Write the Literature Review

- The literature review should be a collection of previous research that supports the research topic that you are addressing in your project.
- You must use 4-6 journal articles, books, or book chapters in your literature review.
- It may be helpful to read over the literature review sections of journal articles that you locate, to get a sense of the content and writing style usually included in a Literature Review section.

You can follow these basic guidelines as suggestions for writing your literature review:

For an Introduction, summarize literature that answers the question: *In general, why is this topic important?*

For another early paragraph, summarize literature that answers the question: *How is the topic defined or described, what does it look like, or what does it mean?*

The rest of your Literature Review should summarize the previous research that is relevant to your topic. Describe the extent of the problem or issue. Be sure to describe the issue in terms of the impact at various levels: *societal or community level; school-wide level; and individual student level*. Also address issues of the *achievement gap* in your literature review.

You may also want to summarize literature that answers the question: *What solutions have been developed or implemented to address this issue? What are examples of ideas, programs, interventions, or important considerations that might work? What are the goals or outcomes?* This is different than you proposing your own solutions (#4 below), but it is important that you demonstrate knowledge of others' solutions.

You might want to introduce your action research question here, or restate it. It should sensibly tie together with the literature that you just presented.

3. Intervention for Proposal

Based on ideas from your literature review and from your own research, what ideas for a solution to your problem/question would you like to implement? You might come up with a single solution or several solution strategies that get at the problem from different systemic levels (e.g., individual student, classroom level, building level, district level). Explain the ways that you intend to address the problem, in terms of program development, interventions, or policy changes. How do you hope the solution will impact the problem?

4. Intervention for Project

Based on ideas from your literature review and from your own research, what intervention are you going to implement? You might come up with a single solution or several solution strategies that get at the problem from different systemic levels (e.g., individual student, classroom level, building level, district level). Explain the ways that you intend to address the problem, in terms of program development, interventions, or policy changes. How do you hope the solution will impact the problem?

5. Select Initial Ideas for Data Collection Methods

How are you going to measure the results? Describe the ways that you are going to collect data. Choose multiple methods from the ideas described in class.

For each data collection method:

- ✓ Describe the method that you are using (“interviews using 4 questions”),
- ✓ Describe the kind of information that you are gathering (“student perceptions of the impact of the group on the development of their social skills”),
- ✓ Describe who is providing the data (“5 students participating in the social skills group”) and
- ✓ Describe the procedures of the method (“I will develop the interview questions and conduct the interviews myself”).

You can write this in sentences or create a table if you prefer.

You do not have to include drafts or examples of the data collection methods (e.g., a version of the survey, the list of questions you will ask in the interviews, a sample observation) for this assignment. You only have to state your intentions for the data collection methods.

**All of the sections 1-5 can be reordered if it improves the flow of your paper. The order of the sections isn't as important as the presence of each section.

6. Create a Title for Your Project

Be sure to give your project a title. It may be helpful to title your project after you have written the paper, then go back and add it. If you would like to, you can change your title later for the Macro class requirement.

7. Analyze results

State your findings. What are the multiple ways participants' experienced the intervention? You will likely need to organize your findings into different sections. Use examples from your data to support your reflections.

8. Power Point Presentation

You are required to present your project to your classmates as a Power Point Presentation during the final two classes. The guidelines above provide a nice structure for your presentations, in terms of content ideas and order of ideas. As your audience, we want to be supportive of your idea, and we want to see the passion and thought that have gone into your plan thus far.

You are responsible for bringing a back-up version of your presentation, just in case you are unable to access it from your original method, which may include

email (to yourself and/or instructor), Webdisk, CD, flashdrive, or your own laptop computer. Flashdrives work well in the colleges classrooms.

Evaluation and Assessment (Criteria, 100 total points):

Distinguished (A is 94-100%, A- is 90-93%)

Indicates that you are consistent, active, and thoughtful in your participation during class sessions. You come prepared for class with all reading and assignments completed. You demonstrate leadership in class discussions and your thoughts reflect understanding of course material. Your fellow classmates are able to learn from your contributions to class. You have completed all assignments as stated, addressing all the components specified in the instructions. Evidence of thoughtful attention to the intent of the assignment. Completed work demonstrates an understanding of the intention of the assignment as a learning process including: Engagement with the material and resultant learning or insight. Outside research and use of resources other than class texts where specified. Clear presentation of written work. Key concepts or themes of the completed assignment are clear and well articulated.

Proficient (B is 84-89%, B- is 80-83%)

Indicates that you are prepared when you come to class; you have read the material and completed the assignments. You actively participate in class discussions. You are able to use what you have learned. You have completed all assignments as stated, addressing all the components specified in the instructions. Evidence of thoughtful attention to assignments, engagement with the material and resultant learning or insight, with some lack of clarity or inaccuracies in communicating learning or insight. Clear presentation of written work requiring some revisions.

Progressing (C is 74-79%, C- is 70-73%)

Indicates that you are not always prepared when you come to class. You do not participate in discussion or add to the understanding of the material presented in class. In some cases you may attempt to take over or dominate group discussions. You have limited or minimal understanding of some of the concepts. Your writings do not show understanding of key concepts.

Unsatisfactory (Below 70%)

Indicates that you do not have either the will or the ability to complete the assignments. You are either not participating in the class or are a distraction to classroom discussions. Your writings are missing or poorly written. You have not demonstrated an understanding of the course content or objectives.

* Class attendance is required. Your attendance and active class participation are critical to successful completion of the course. Please contact instructor to pre-arrange any absence.

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