

RMTD 400
INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
(Fall 2018)

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Course Description

This course will utilize Sakai's online resources to introduce the concepts of inquiry and research methods used in education, psychology, and other areas in the social sciences. The course will cover three main methods of inquiry: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods.

Required Text

Johnson, R., B., & Christensen, L., (2016). *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches* (6th ed), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN-10: 1452244405, ISBN-13: 978-1452244402

This book comes with an extremely helpful open-access student study website:

<https://edge.sagepub.com/rbjohnson6e> . It has self-quizzes, eFlashcards, and many other material that will help you understand the content in each chapters. I encourage you to explore the material during the first week of class, and use some, if not all, of them throughout the semester to enhance your understanding of educational research.

Recommended Text

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.

Supplemental Readings

Links and citations for additional readings will be provided in Sakai via the library's electronic journals and publically available websites.

Online Format

When you take a class on-line, you do not have a teacher talking directly to you at a set time each week. Some students who have never taken an online course before think that online courses will be easier than in-person classes, but many students actually find the opposite to be true. This does not mean that this online course will be more difficult for you. However, you should be prepared for the possibility that the class will create challenges because of the online format, which is very different from face-to-face classes.

Below are a few study tips for this online course that have been suggested by other students and faculty:

1. **Block out specific times during the week to study.** You will learn better if you have a fixed time to study each week so that you know you have time to be on top of the

material provided to you. When taking on-line courses, some students put off studying, fall behind, and find that they can't catch up. Everything built in this course leads up to your final paper. Make sure you do not fall behind.

2. **Do not expect that the work load will be lighter when taking this course online.** Please anticipate that the course readings, quizzes, and assignments will take about **5-10 hours** each week to complete.
3. **Make good plans for studying.** It is strongly recommended that your study schedule for this class includes blocking out time on multiple days each week. **The materials for the week will be posted by 8am on Monday each week**, if not earlier. You may choose to block out an hour or two every day, or you may want to block out 5 hour stretches on two different days.

To ensure learning occurs in the online environment, there are certain requirements for this class:

1. *Required Access*
 - a. At least a stable DSL Internet connection
 - b. Loyola Email Account with reliable access
 - c. Sakai – All the materials for this class are posted in Sakai
2. *Required Familiarity*
 - a. Be able to download and attach files
 - b. Be able to use Microsoft Office Packages, especially Word and PowerPoint

Email will be used as the primary mode of correspondence for this course. I will respond to/be available for email communication between Monday and Friday. But please keep in mind that emails are not the same as direct communication. I will usually respond to your emails within 24 hours—unless you send me the email on a Friday. Friday emails will be responded to on the following Monday. It is imperative that you activate your Loyola University Chicago account. Please also check your Loyola spam mail and mail foundry to ensure course related messages are not misdirected.

In addition to hardware access and software utilization, the following represent factors that facilitate a productive and effective online learning experience (Material adapted from the University of Wisconsin Online website on Online Etiquette: <http://online.uwc.edu/technology/Etiquette.asp>).

- *Tone down your language.* Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.
- *Keep a straight face.* In general, avoid humor and sarcasm. These frequently depend either on facial or tone of voice cues absent in text communication or on familiarity with the reader.
- *Be forgiving.* If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the instructor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the instructor.

- *The recorder is on.* Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. Also, although the grammar and spelling of a message typically are not graded, they do reflect on you; your audience might not be able to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor before posting them.
- *Test for clarity.* Messages might often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, then even better.
- *Netspeak.* Although electronic communication is still young, many conventions have already been established. DO NOT TYPE IN ALL CAPS. This is regarded as shouting and is out of place in a classroom. Acronyms and emoticons (arrangements of symbols to express emotions) are popular, but excessive use of them can make your message difficult to read.

Assessments

Grades will be based on points accumulated over several activities. There will be 100 total possible points, which will be distributed as follows:

Point break down

Weekly quizzes	35 points
Assignments	30 points
Essay on research ethics	10 points
Final mini proposal	25 points

Weekly Quizzes: A multiple-choice quiz related to the readings will be given each week (usually due the Wednesday of the following week the material is assigned). The purpose of the quiz is to ensure you understand the content. The key for each quiz will be available to you right after you submit your work.

Assignments: There will be five assignments in this class. The five assignments are designed to prepare you for the final mini research proposal. *First*, you will define a research question in which you are interested. *Second*, you will locate literature (e.g., research articles) related to your selected question. *Third*, you will summarize useful information from the literature to support your research question. *Fourth*, you make an outline for writing a logical review of the literature. *Fifth*, you propose a possible method for studying the research question. More details will be provided when each assignment is assigned.

Essay on research ethics: Based on an article or case study that I provide, you will write a 2-3 page essay on an aspect of research ethics. The corresponding rubric is included at the end of the syllabus.

Final mini proposal: The assignments mentioned above will form the basis for the final mini proposal. The proposal will consist of the first three parts: (1) state the potential research

problem; (2) conduct a literature review; and (3) propose a potential research method to explore the defined question.

Assignment due dates

Due dates for assignments are listed on the course schedule at the end of the syllabus. The rubrics for these assessments are given at the end of this syllabus as well. All assignments must be submitted via Sakai by the indicated due date.

Late work

Late work will automatically be worth no more than half of its original point value unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor for turning in the assignment late. Note that for individual assignments, you will not be able to submit your work after 11:59 pm on the due date. Unlike traditional live taught classes, the option of turning in work late is not feasible because of rigid time constraints. As such, if a situation occurs and the need to turn in work late presents itself, it is imperative that the student contacts the instructor immediately.

The grade ranges in terms of percentage are:

100.0-90.0 = A	84.9-80.0 = B+	69.9-65.0 = C+	54.9 and below = F
89.9-85.0 = A-	79.9-75.0 = B	64.9-60.0 = C	
	74.9-70.0 = B-	59.9-55.0 = C-	

Note that no additional work will be given to make up any point that was lost. Contact me as soon as possible if you experience difficulty learning.

School of Education Conceptual Framework

Our School's Conceptual Framework – *Social Action through Education* – guides the curricula of School of Education programs in the preparation of carrying out the mission of social justice. These dimensions of the conceptual framework also serve as the foundation to the School of Education – standards that are explicitly embedded in major benchmarks across all SOE programs. Our conceptual framework is described here: www.luc.edu/education/mission/. Social inequities exist for many subgroups within the population (including but not limited to subgroups based on race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, ethnicity, and ability). This course will help students develop the foundational knowledge needed to carry out research that could offset social inequities that exist in our society for one, some, or all groups.

IDEA Objectives

IDEA is an evaluation system that our School uses to assess whether a class reaches its major goals by the end of the semester. The essential objectives for this course are:

1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)
2. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
3. Learning how to find, evaluate and use resources to explore a topic in depth

4. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
5. Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making

**Loyola University Chicago
School of Education
Syllabus Addendum**

IDEA Course Evaluation Link for Students

Each course you take in the School of Education is evaluated through the IDEA Campus Labs system. We ask that when you receive an email alerting you that the evaluation is available that you promptly complete it. To learn more about IDEA or to access the website directly to complete your course evaluation go to: <http://luc.edu/idea/> and click on **STUDENT IDEA LOGIN** on the left hand side of the page.

Dispositions

All students are assessed on one or more dispositional areas of growth across our programs: **Professionalism, Inquiry, and Social Justice**. The instructor in your course will identify the dispositions assessed in this course and you can find the rubrics related to these dispositions in LiveText. *For those students in non-degree programs, the rubric for dispositions may be available through Sakai, TaskStream or another platform.* Disposition data is reviewed by program faculty on a regular basis. This allows faculty to work with students to develop throughout their program and address any issues as they arise.

LiveText

All students, *except those who are non-degree*, must have access to LiveText to complete the benchmark assessments aligned to the Conceptual Framework Standards and all other accreditation, school-wide and/or program-wide related assessments. You can access more information on LiveText here: [LiveText](#).

Syllabus Addendum Link

- www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/

This link directs students to statements on essential policies regarding *academic honesty, accessibility, ethics line reporting and electronic communication policies and guidelines*. We ask that you read each policy carefully.

This link will also bring you to the full text of our conceptual framework that guides the work of the School of Education – ***Social Action through Education***.

Course Schedule

Week of	Topic Area	Readings	Assignment due
1 8/27	Introduction of educational research	J & C, Chapter 1	
2 9/3	Research paradigms	J & C, Chapter 2	
3 9/10	Research questions, literature reviews, and literature search	J & C, Chapter 4	
4 9/17	Ethics in research Research misconduct	J & C, Chapter 6 The Belmont Report (see below for the link to the Belmont report)	Assignment 1: Research question due Wednesday 11:59pm
5 9/24	Measurement/Assessment	J & C, Chapter 7	Essay on research ethics due Wednesday 11:59pm
6 10/1	Data Collection	J & C, Chapters 8 & 9	
7 10/8	~ ~ ~ Fall Break ~ ~ ~		
8 10/15	Sampling	J & C, Chapter 10	Assignment 2: Literature search due Wednesday 11:59pm
9 10/22	Qualitative and Quantitative validity	J & C, Chapter 11	
10 10/29	Experimental research & Quasi-experimental designs	J & C, Chapters 12 & 13	Assignment 3: Annotated bibliography due Wednesday 11:59pm
11 11/5	Non-experimental designs	J & C, Chapter 14	
12 11/12	How to write a research proposal	J & C, Chapter 5	Assignment 4: Outline due Wednesday 11:59pm
13 11/19	Qualitative designs: Narrative inquiry and case study	J & C, Chapter 15	
14 11/26	Mixed Method designs	J & C, Chapter 17	Assignment 5: Methodology due Wednesday 11:59pm
15 12/3	Analyzing data	J & C, Chapters 18 & 19	
16 12/10	Finals Week		Final Mini Proposals Due Wednesday (12/13) 11:59pm

Link to the Belmont Report:

<https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/index.html>

Evaluation of Disposition in RMTD 400

Rubric

Area	Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Systematic Inquiry AEA A.3	Candidate communicates effectively and appropriately with faculty and peers.	Candidate is working on communicating effectively and appropriately with faculty and peers.	Candidate is unable to communicate effectively and appropriately with faculty and peers.
Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare AEA E.3	Candidate's written work is appropriate and effective for the course.	Candidate's written work is sometimes appropriate and effective for the course.	Candidate's written work is inappropriate and ineffective for the course.
Timeliness	Candidate is able to meet all deadlines.	Candidate is sometimes able to meet all deadlines.	Candidate is unable to meet all deadlines.
Integrity/Honesty AEA C.5	Candidate appropriately represents procedures, data, and findings – attempting to prevent misuse of their results.	Candidate represents procedures, data, and findings in a manner that is likely to allow the misuse of their results.	Candidate misrepresents procedures, data, and findings. There is minimal attempt to prevent misuse of their results.