

**RMTD 400: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS**  
**Summer 2020 online**

Hui Xu, PhD/Dr. X  
[hxu2@luc.edu](mailto:hxu2@luc.edu) (best contact method)  
LT 1142

**Course Description**

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

**Course Objectives**

As a result of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explore the role of educational research in society and your own setting
2. Understand the similarities and differences between quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research traditions, including paradigms, designs, methods, sampling techniques, and so on
3. Analyze and evaluate the research questions, design, findings and validity of existing educational research
4. Understand the legal and ethical issues in educational research
5. Conduct a review of relevant literature that synthesizes the knowledge from several research studies around the central idea or research question
6. Effectively engage in an online learning community

**Required Text**

Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2016). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (7th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN-10: 1544337833, ISBN-13: 978-1544337838

Please note: The 6 edition is comparable to the 7<sup>th</sup> edition, so you are welcome to use it. Please be aware that the order of Ch. 8 and Ch. 9 have been flipped 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Other minor changes are evident throughout the chapters.

This book comes with an extremely helpful open-access student study website: <http://www.sagepub.com/bjohnson5e/>. It has self-quizzes, eFlashcards, and many other materials that will help you understand the content in each chapter. I encourage you to explore the material during the first week of class, and use some, if not all, of it throughout the semester to enhance your understanding of educational research.

## **Recommended Text**

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C.

## **Supplemental Readings**

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

## **Online Format**

This course includes only online activities, which are primarily not in a designated class time (asynchronous). To learn more about technology support for online course activities go to: <http://www.luc.edu/online/resources/technology/>.

When you take a class online, you do not have a teacher talking directly to you at a set time each week, unless there is a synchronous session. 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 online courses, some students put off studying, fall behind, and find that they can't catch up. Everything built into 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, activities, 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 include blocking out time on multiple days each week. 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

While you will be using certain technologies and course materials within the Sakai learning management system, you may require additional technology support. The Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk provides general technology support. Please note that while the ITS Help Desk provides extended hours of support, it is not a 24-hour service. To learn more about Help Desk services and the hours of operation please go to: <http://www.luc.edu/its/helpdesk/>.

**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. For questions about the course or an assignment, please include the instructor and graduate assistant in the email. For questions about a grade, please contact the instructor.

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 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.* Many conventions have already been established about electronic communication. 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

Class participation	10 points
Weekly self-study	30 points
Final mini-proposal	60 points

Class participation (10%). Class participation consists of participation in class discussion and weekly comment paper. At the end of the class, students will write a brief paper about any reflection, questions, or feedback related to the class material and turn it in. The comment paper should be at least two sentences, so the grading focus is on the completion of the paper instead of the length. The comment paper will serve as a tool to enhance students' reflection and interaction with the instructor. The instructor will address typical or important questions selected from the comment papers in the next class.

Weekly self-study (30%): You will take a weekly quiz (open book) to ensure you gradually build the knowledge foundation through the course. There are six quizzes in total, and each quiz focuses on information covered in the corresponding week. You can find the quiz in the Tests and Quizzes section of Sakai. Once you start a quiz, you will have only 30 minutes to answer FIVE multiple choice questions. So it is recommended that you read the textbook before taking the quiz. You will only have one chance for each quiz and will be able to see the immediate feedback for your answer after the quiz.

Final mini-proposal (60%): The assignments mentioned above will form the basis for the final mini-proposal. The proposal will consist of 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. Proposals will be evaluated in terms of the adequacy (content coverage), accuracy (validity of points), organization (writing clarity and cohesion), and integration of research questions and methods. A guideline for requirements for each section will be provided in the assignment section of Sakai.

Mini-proposal assignments: Two assignments are designed to prepare you for the final mini research proposal. Formative feedback will be provided on assignments, rather than points toward your final course grade. *First (research question and literature review)*, you will identify a problem of practice and define a research question in which you are interested. Additionally, you will locate literature (e.g., research articles) related to your selected question. *Second (annotated bibliography and research method)*, you will summarize useful information from the literature to support your research question. Additionally you will propose a possible method for studying the unanswered research question. A guideline for requirements for each assignment will be provided in the assignment section of Sakai.

**Assignment due dates**

Due dates for assignments are listed on the course schedule at the end of the syllabus. The rubrics for these assessments will be provided under assignments in Sakai. All assignments must be submitted via Sakai by **noon on the indicated due date**.

**Late Assignment Policy:** Given that the materials build on prior works in a tight schedule, late papers/projects/posts will NOT be accepted without previous permission of the instructor. If an extension is granted, grades will be lowered by 10% for every day the paper is late and my feedback will be limited (unless there are extenuating reasons). Therefore, any anticipated situations that may affect turning in materials on time should be discussed with the instructor.

**Grading:**

Final course grades will be assigned on the following basis:

90.0-100% = A

87.0-89.99% = B+

80.0-86.99% = B

77.0-79.99% = C+

70.0-76.99% = C

60.0-69.99% = D

<60% = F

**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.

## Course Schedule

Week	Topic Area	Readings	Assignments Due (Friday noon)
Introduction			
5/18- 5/22	Module 1	1: Introduction to Educational Research	JC, Ch. 1
	Module 2	2: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Research	JC, Ch. 2
Planning of the research study			
5/25- 5/29	Module 3	4. How to Review the Literature and Develop Research Questions	JC, Ch. 4
	Module 4	5. How to write a research proposal	JC, Ch. 5, (1) Research question & Literature search + (2) Weekly self-study
	Module 4	6. Research Ethics	JC, Ch. 6
Selecting a research method: how to examine the issue			
6/1-6/5	Module 5	12. Experimental Research 13: Quasi-experimental and Single-Case	JC, Ch. 12 & 13
	Module 6	14: Nonexperimental Quantitative	JC, Ch. 14

Selecting a research method: how to examine the issue

6/8- 6/12	Module 7	15/16: Qualitative	JC, Ch. 15, 16	(1) Annotated Bibliography & Research method + (2) Weekly self-study
	Module 8	17: Mixed Methods	JC, Ch. 17	

Foundations of research: how to collect data

6/15- 6/19	Module 9	7. Standardized Measurement and Assessment	JC, Ch. 7	Weekly self-study
	Module 10	8. Methods of Data Collection	JC, Ch. 8	
	Module 11	10. Sampling	JC, Ch. 10	
	Module 12	11. Qualitative and Quantitative Validity	JC, Ch. 11	

Analyzing the data: how to analyze data

6/22- 6/26	Module 13	18: Descriptive Statistics	JC, Ch. 18	(1) Final Mini Proposal + (2) Weekly self-study Due Friday, June 26, 2020 (noon)
		19: Inferential Statistics	JC, Ch. 19	
		20: Qualitative Analysis	JC, Ch. 20	

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

**Conceptual Framework and Conceptual Framework Standards**

The community of the School of Education developed Conceptual Framework Standard to drive curriculum and program development as well as providing overall goals for candidate learning outcomes. For Introduction to Research Methods, the conceptual framework is addressed through the attainment of basic methodological knowledge and the ability to critically apply this information and skills to current literature as well as develop own relevant research ideas.

SOE Conceptual Framework Standards (CFS)

- CFS1: Candidates critically evaluate current bodies of knowledge in their field.
- CFS2: Candidates apply culturally responsive practices that engage diverse communities.
- CFS3: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of ethics and social justice.
- CFS4: Candidates engage with local and/or global communities in ethical and socially just practices.

**Smart Evaluation**

Towards the end of the course, students will receive an email from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as a reminder to provide feedback on the course. Students will receive consistent reminders throughout the period when the evaluation is open, and the reminders will stop once the evaluation is completed.

- The evaluation is completely anonymous. When the results are released, instructors and departments will not be able to tell which student provided the individual feedback.
- Because it is anonymous and the results are not released to faculty or departments until after grades have been submitted, the feedback will not impact a student's grade.
- The feedback is important so that the instructor can gain insight in to how to improve their teaching and the department can learn how best to shape the curriculum.

**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/](http://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*.

### **Center for Student Access and Assistance (CSAA)**

*Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE Referral for yourself or a peer in need of support: [www.LUC.edu/csaa](http://www.LUC.edu/csaa). If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a referral on your behalf.*

### **Privacy Statement**

Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Students will be informed of such recordings by a statement in the syllabus for the course in which they will be recorded. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording. Recordings including student activity that have been initiated by the instructor may be retained by the instructor only for individual use.