

## Practical Research

McNair 4905

University of Florida, Summer B 2007

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Class Location: TBA

Office Location: 304 Ustler Hall

Meeting Times: M & W 11:00 - 12:15

Office Hours: TBA

### **Course Purpose:**

The aim of this course is to introduce students to the process of planning, designing, and conducting empirical research. During this semester, we will examine both quantitative (survey studies), and qualitative (subjective) research. Although some of you may already be familiar with the research process, this course covers the basics of ethical conduct of research, while also introducing you to primary administrative responsibilities of an investigator.

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this session, you should be able to: clearly demonstrate your understanding of the requirements for confidentiality and informed consent; discuss the issues associated with research abuses and their impact on how research is presently conducted; distinguish between quantitative and qualitative research methods; develop a brief summary of your research and working hypotheses; and begin planning your mentored-research activities for the upcoming academic year. If you are a second year student, this class should help you present relations between major themes in the *Practical Research* text and research resources in your own discipline.

### **Required Text:**

Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. (2001). *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition.

### **Grading Policy:**

This course is NOT FOR CREDIT. However, your performance in this course will be reflected in the final grade that you receive in ENC 3254. There is a possible 200 points. After the second absence, you will receive a grade penalty of 20 points.

Facilitation of chapter: 50 points

Five structural assignments: 100

Five short content papers: 50 points

### **Facilitation of chapter:**

Students will work in teams to present a brief summary of each chapter. Each student will have 4-5 minutes each (no more) but as a group you will decide who will address what points in the chapter and each student will explain how the chapter relates to their own academic discipline.

**Late Assignment Policy:** Late or partially completed work will NOT be accepted. Do not wait until the last minute to do assignments. There are no exceptions for late work (even on the certifications).

### **Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:**

Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Dean of Student's Office. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations.

**UF Honor Code:** – Read it, Know it, Obey it; no exceptions, no excuses. You cheat, you fail.  
“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment”

### **Reading Assignments and Course Schedule**

Read all assigned chapters BEFORE class, bring your textbook to class each week, and be ready to work.

#### **Week 1**

##### Monday

Personal and professional introductions. Explore how research in various disciplines is impacted by federal regulations and professional standards of conduct. Discuss potential negative and positive impact of research by becoming familiar with the "Researcher Responsibilities"

<http://irb.ufl.edu/researcherresponsibilities.htm> and the UF Institutional Review Board's (IRB) "Federal wide Assurance" <http://irb.ufl.edu/FWA.htm> - these documents introduce UF's standard approaches to human subjects research. Preview lecture on "What is Research?"

**\*\*\*SIGN UP FOR FACILITATION DATES\*\*\***

##### Wednesday

Discuss Chapter 1, "What is Research?"

*Homework: Structure - HIPAA (20 points, due Monday)*

Complete the **15-minute computer based training** on HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996 (**HIPAA**). This exercise will address professional handling of private information. Complete the online HIPAA training and certification. Bring a printed copy of your certificate of completion. Locate the training at

<http://privacy.health.ufl.edu/training/research/online.shtml#> (click "Begin HIPAA for Researchers").

*FYI only:* The "Protection of Human Subjects" the complete Federal Code is located at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm> - for general information.

#### **Week 2**

##### Monday

Discuss content of HIPAA in relation to students' academic disciplines. Continue to consider potential implications of research by exploring the *Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research* (1979) <http://www.fda.gov/oc/ohrt/IRBS/belmont.html> - Discuss the "why" and "so what" of research.

*Homework: Content - Funding (10 points, due Wednesday)*

Write a one-page essay on the discoveries you make by searching for potential funding for your research. Search the following foundations: Gates, Rockefeller, NSF, NIH, Ford.

##### Wednesday

Discuss Chapter 2, "Tools of Research"

*Homework: Structure - Human Subjects (20 points, due Monday)*

Complete the online training and certification in Human Subjects Research. Bring print copy of your certificate of completion. Access the **computer based training for "Human Participant Protections"** at the National Cancer Institute website: <http://irb.ufl.edu/education/dhhstrain.htm> - Though not all will be working with "human subjects," all research has implications for communities outside of the researcher's laboratory, library, or classroom.

### **Week 3**

Monday

Discuss Chapter 3, "The Research Problem"

*Homework: Content - Katrina (10 points, due Wednesday)*

Write a one-page essay on how your scholarly research interest could interact with the issue of Hurricane Katrina. Be clear about what data sources you might utilize for a research project and explain what potential impact research in your field could have in understanding the disaster and impacting the ongoing recovery efforts.

Wednesday

Discuss Chapter 4, "Review of the Literature"

*Homework: Structure - Research Summary (10 points, due Monday)*

One of the most important aspects of a successful research agenda is the development of sound hypotheses or a research problem to guide your study. However, this is one of the greatest challenges facing researchers. Outline important guidelines for identifying and stating your research problem. Submit a two-page summary of your proposed research project.

### **Week 4**

Monday

Discuss Chapter 9, "Descriptive Research"

*Homework: Content - National and International News (10 points, due Wednesday)*

Write a two-page essay on a story in a major newspaper (NY Times, Washington Post, Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, Miami Herald, or LA Times) that is of relevance to your academic field (general) or research topic (particular). Then find a story in the BBC (or other major international news source) relevant to your research.

Wednesday

Discuss Chapter 8, "Historical Research"

*Homework: Structure - Five Hypotheses (20 points, due Monday)*

Quantitative research methods typically involve the relationship between two or more variables. This method is generally hypothesis-driven, or at least driven by a set of research questions. Also, quantitative approaches to research usually are grounded in a theoretical or explanatory framework. Your hypothesis will indicate what you expect to find in the relationship between variables. For example, "poor people in the United States are poor because they are lazy" is a common explanation to describe relationships between American economic institutions and individual achievement. Develop five (5) hypotheses relating to some association between variables in your field of study.

### **Week 5**

### Monday

Discuss Chapter 7, "Qualitative Research"

*Homework: Content - Movie, Song, and Novel (10 points, due Wednesday)*

Write a two-page essay on a movie, song, and novel that are relevant to your academic area. Interpret this theme broadly: have fun. However, be sure to detail some thematic or theoretical connections...go deeper than just connecting the topic.

### Wednesday

Discuss Chapter 5, "Planning Your Research Design"

Although there may be some discipline specific approaches to research, in general, the procedure is basically the same: 1) pose a question for which there is no apparent answer, 2) clearly articulate this question in a statement of a research problem, 3) construct a series of working hypotheses, 4) review the relevant literature and critically evaluate the findings, 5) identify your data source(s) and clarify your methodology, 6) analyze and interpret the data, 7) determine whether the data answer the problem, 8) determine whether the data support or fail to support the hypotheses.

*Homework: Structure - IRB (20 points, due Monday)*

In contrast to survey research methods, qualitative research presents subjective meanings of phenomena. For example, you might ask study participants an open-ended question such as, "what does it mean to live in a low-income community?" With this type of question you do not have an exact expectation of what the answer might be. Rather, you are looking to the respondents to provide the answer. There are a number of different ways to conduct a qualitative study (focus groups, in-depth interviews, content analysis, or narrative analysis for example). For your final structural assignment, develop an IRB protocol, including the Informed Consent, for a proposed research study. Find the UF IRB website at: <http://irb.ufl.edu/irb02/> (click " [Preparing a UFIRB protocol for review](#)" - then, download the form (in Word <http://irb.ufl.edu/irb02/Doc/protocol.doc> ).

## **Week 6**

### Monday

Movie: *Real Genius*

*Homework: Content - Law and Ethics (10 points, due Wednesday)*

Write a two-page essay on a court case or law that is relevant to your research topic and discuss ethical issues that may arise from your work.

### Wednesday

Finish "*Real Genius*" and discuss connection to your research

Closing statements about research, professional development, and academic success.

*Homework : HAVE A PRODUCTIVE YEAR (AND CAREER) OF RESEARCH!*