I. Course Description:
This course is the first of four required core research courses and provides an overview to the steps in the process of educational research. In this course, students will explore common research designs appropriate to answering questions related to public education and to participate in a small group research project exercise that will include each of the steps in educational research, including identifying research problems, systematically reviewing relevant literature, selecting a research design, and identifying the appropriate methodology.

Course Credit Hour Justification:
This 3-credit hour course is an introductory core research requirement (12 credit hrs total). Each week of a 15-week semester, doctoral students will engage in 3 hours of instructor-directed activities, including but not limited to lectures and discussions of readings, case studies, and selected research projects. Additionally, the class will require students to devote a minimum of 6 hours to reading material and completing the necessary course requirements, such as but not limited to out-of-class discussions, recorded presentations, readings, developing small-group research projects, and writing academic papers. [total instructor-directed activities=45 hrs and total out-of-class activities=90 hrs; grand total of approximately 135 hrs for the 3 credits]

Diversity Statement: The James I. Perkins College of Education Diversity Statement is found at the following link: http://coe.sfasu.edu/about-us

II. Intended Learning Outcomes/Goals/Objectives
This course also supports the mission of the Human Services and Educational Leadership Department, which is to prepare competent, successful, caring, and enthusiastic professionals dedicated to responsible service, leadership, and continued professional and intellectual development.
Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

**Students graduating with an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership will be able to:**
1) use data, policy and research to lead continuous improvement and drive transformative change and innovation in P-20 education settings (RSCH 6314)
2) demonstrate knowledge of ethical and moral responsibilities of leadership (EDLE 6342)
3) apply theory and contextual knowledge to educational practice (EDLE 6341)
4) practice analytical and communication skills in leadership roles (EDLE 6345)
5) understand, design, and conduct research in educational leadership (EDLE 6199)

**Students graduating with an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction will be able to:**
1) conduct and evaluate both qualitative and quantitative research.
2) advocate on behalf of rural communities and educational systems
3) synthesize curricular theory as it relates to curriculum communities and educational systems.
4) synthesize research based instructional practice.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
1. Understand the process of research.
2. Define a research problem and explain its importance.
3. Conduct a study of the literature and write a literature review.
4. Know the steps in the process of data collection.
5. Understand a variety of research designs and determine preferred research methodology for a particular study: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods.
6. Use the most current version of APA appropriately including but not limited to references and citations.

III. Course Assignments, Activities, Instructional Strategies, use of Technology

**Reading**
Reading course materials (i.e. the book and module material) will impact students’ grades because knowledge of the reading material will be required for activities, assignments, exams, and class discussions.

**Evaluation of Five Journals**
This assignment involves identifying and evaluating five widely-read journals in your program area. Please download the “Five Journals” template from the D2L. The form asks the name of the journal, as well as information that can be used to evaluate it as a source (e.g., impact factor). Gather this information for five different journals and then submit the findings using the Journal Review Submission Form into the appropriate Dropbox folder.

Note that I do NOT expect you to be able to provide an answer for each question for each journal. That’s OK. If a journal provides very little information for you to use to
evaluate it, consider it a sign that it is probably not a strong journal: most journals love to promote their impact factor, even if it’s low, because it at least means that they’re sufficiently recognized to have one. If you can’t find one piece of information, simply leave it blank – but take that into consideration when you provide your final evaluation of the source.

You probably already have some idea what journals to select just by reading the articles assigned in your program area courses. Note that I am deliberately NOT asking for “top” journals. I want you to tell me what you think people in your field are reading then gather some evidence regarding each. It’s OK if you find out that a widely read source is actually not a very strong journal or that it has low standards – just recognize that and report it.

Finding Research Articles
For this assignment I will provide you with several topics, and you will need to use online article search tools to find articles relevant to each topic and provide the citation (author, year, title, journal, page number). The purpose is for you to gain some first-hand experience using online article search engines as a tool for helping you to find answers to research questions.

Chapter Presentation
Each student will be assigned ONE chapter to present in class*. The student must:
   a) Read the chapter in its entirety;
   b) Prepare a brief, yet thorough, summary of the chapter to be presented and disseminated to the class in the discussion forum (PowerPoint or Google Slides are preferred);
   c) Present the summary to the class and be prepared to answer questions from the audience**
*Depending on the number of students enrolled in the course, groups of 2-3 students are permitted.
**Each student that is NOT presenting must prepare at least 1 (one) question for the presenter.

Written Assignments
This is split into two components. One part focuses on the development of an actual research problem. The other part focuses on developing a partial review of literature. All assignments build upon each other, offering multiple opportunities for feedback as you refine.

Research Problem Development
Research Questions: Develop 2 potential research questions. For each, explain why you are interested in exploring the topic or why the topic is important to study. The questions could relate to each other in some way, or they could be completely independent of each other. The purpose of this exercise is to help you identify researchable questions. I will
provide feedback regarding the plausibility of the question and perhaps give you some tips to help you get started.

**Background Outline:** The outline includes a research question (or questions), and an outline of the information you plan on including in the introduction, statement of the problem, and significance of the study sections of the document. This should be an outline only, using phrases to indicate only the nature of the content. The purpose of this assignment is to force you to consider how to build the initial sections of your document in a way that provides background to the reader and a justification for your study.

**Background Draft:** Using the outline you developed, write a draft of the document's background sections (introduction, statement of the problem, significance of the study, and research questions). All in-text citations should be in APA format. You will submit one copy of the draft to Dropbox for my general review, and you will be assigned to a small group in class that will provide feedback for each group member's work. The purpose of the assignment is for you to compose your thoughts early enough to make meaningful revisions based on peer feedback.

**Background:** This should be a refined version of the background sections, including a complete reference list in APA 7 format. The document must be no more than 7 double-spaced pages in length, plus references.

**Review of Literature**

**Annotated Bibliography:** Research always includes a review of the literature related to the area of interest. This provides the researcher with perspective and knowledge. The review serves as an overview of what is known about the topic and leads to a justification for the particular study. In lieu of writing a complete review of the literature, you will instead compile and organize an annotated bibliography of 7 studies that potentially could become part of such a review.

**Review of Literature:** In addition to the seven studies from the annotated bibliography assignment, you will add three more studies to those you've reviewed. You will also structure this assignment as a mini review of literature, meaning that you will reformat the information so it no longer reads as an annotated list. Begin the narrative with a brief introduction and end with a brief summary. In between, you will discuss the results of previous related research in narrative format.

**Theory:** Research is typically based upon a theory or theories that help to explain the underlying foundation behind the issue. It is important to recognize how theories explain the phenomena being explored. You will identify at least one theory related to your topic, and complete a [worksheet](#) that accompanies the assignment.

**Critical Analysis of a Quantitative Research Article**
In this assignment you will prepare and submit one critical analysis of a quantitative study reported in the research literature (i.e., published in a peer-reviewed journal). The purpose of the evaluation is to comment upon the adequacy of the article as a research report by analyzing each component of the study. For example, point out any errors or poor procedures you detect, as well as strengths or desirable procedures.

Use the outline below as a guide in your analysis.
- For items 2-16, you are to state whether the research report provides adequate information or whether the procedure used in the research study was adequate. It is required that you use a five-point Likert rating scale (very good to very poor) to indicate the overall adequacy of each item. You must justify your position on each item.
- The last three items (17-19) should reflect your overall opinion about the article.
- The date of publication for the peer-reviewed quantitative research article must be within the past three years.
- You must submit a copy of the article with the critical analysis.
- The critical analysis should be from 3-5 pages in length, and it must be double-spaced with standard margins and font style.

Items to Include in the Critical Analysis:
1. APA style reference
2. Title
3. Description of the Problem
4. Significance of the Problem
5. Analysis of Literature Relevant to the Problem
6. Identification of Independent Variables and Dependent Variables
7. Statement of Operational Research Question(s) or Hypotheses
8. Definition of Terms
9. Population and Sampling Procedures
10. Data Sources and Data Collection Procedures
11. Instrumentation or Measurement Devices – Validity and Reliability Information
12. Data Tables and Data Analysis
13. Presentation and Interpretation of Findings
14. Conclusions and Recommendations
15. Summary or Abstract of the Study
16. Suggestions for Further Research in the Problem Area
17. Strengths of the Study (your opinion)
18. Weaknesses of the Study (your opinion)
19. Suggestions for Improving the Study (your opinion)

IV. Evaluation and Assessment (Grading)
*All decisions about the evaluation/grading of student material rest with the professor.
**Certain assignments are foundational for future assignments so it is critical to complete all assignments.
ASSIGNMENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Discussions (x8)</td>
<td>45 (5 pts each)</td>
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<td>Animoto Self-Introductions</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Five Journals</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Locating Research Articles</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter Presentation</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Background Outline</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Background Draft</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Background Final Draft</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of Literature</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory/Concept</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis of Quantitative Research Article</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Total Available Points 220

Grade | Points
---|---
A | 220-198
B | 197-176
C | 175-154
F | Below 154

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY
It is the expectation that all assignments will be submitted on time; however, certain critical situations may warrant an extension. These situations must be communicated with the instructor in advance, and the discretion for an extension rests with the instructor.

V. Tentative Course Outline/Calendar
The tentative course outline is aligned to the designated assignments, due dates, discussion topics and other related activities. The student should note that the instructor has the flexibility to modify assignments and/or the schedule/deadlines of activities/assignments. The professor will notify the student of any changes. Please find the timeline in the “Getting Started Module” in Brightspace.

VI. Attendance/Engagement
Students are expected to be in attendance for all meetings (face-to-face or online), actively engage in discussions, complete all readings assigned for class discussions, complete all activities as assigned for in class and/or outside class.

VII. Readings (required and possibly recommended)
Selected course readings include but are not limited to the following required books. Other readings such as articles and chapters may be given throughout the semester.
**Required:**


*Other recommended and required readings will be placed in D2L.

**VIII. Course Evaluations**

Near the end of each semester, students in the College of Education electronically evaluate courses taken within the COE. Evaluation data is used for a variety of important purposes, including: 1. Course and program improvement, planning, and accreditation; 2. Instruction evaluation purposes; and 3. Making decisions on faculty tenure, promotion, pay, and retention. As you evaluate this course, please be thoughtful, thorough, and accurate in completing the evaluation. What does the instructor need to know about aspects of the course that went well and should be continued? What does the instructor need to know about aspects of the course that need more attention or should be replaced? What aspects of the course provided the greatest learning opportunity? Please know that the COE faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and continued improvement. Therefore, your response is critical!

In the College of Education, the course evaluation process has been simplified and is completed electronically through MySFA. Although the instructor will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

**IX. Student Ethics and Other Policies**

**Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Policy 6.1 and 6.6**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 936-468-3004 as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

**Student Academic Dishonesty: Policy 4.1**

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members must promote the components of academic
integrity in their instruction, and course syllabi are required to provide information about penalties for cheating and plagiarism, as well as the appeal process.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:
- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment;
- helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:
- submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source;
- incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

**Penalties for Academic Dishonesty**

Penalties may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.

**Student Appeals**

A student who wishes to appeal decisions related to academic dishonesty should follow procedures outlined in Academic Appeals by Students (6.3).

**Withheld Grades: Policy 5.5**

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work by the deadline set by the instructor of record, not to exceed one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Military Service Activation (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Student Code of Conduct: Policy 10.4**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This policy applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class
regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program at SFA.

Mental Health Information

SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
SFASU Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

Crisis Resources:
Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741