



# FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

*Instruction that moves, leadership that inspires,  
scholarship that makes a difference for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

## **Methods of Research for Higher Education Professionals Fall 2015**

### **Instructors:**

Dr. Lara Perez-Felkner  
Office: Stone Bldg., Room 1205-C  
Office Phone: 850-645-8450  
Office Hours: Fridays, 1-2pm  
or by appointment.  
E-mail: [lperezfelkner@fsu.edu](mailto:lperezfelkner@fsu.edu)

Shermin Murji, TA  
Office: Stone 1204 conference room  
Office Hours: Thursdays 2:30-3:30pm  
Or by appointment  
E-mail: [sm13ab@my.fsu.edu](mailto:sm13ab@my.fsu.edu)

- A. EDH 5931-0003, Fall 2015, Methods of Research for Higher Education Professionals, 3 credits**
- B. Prerequisites or Co-requisites** EDH 5068 Outcomes of Undergraduate Education
- C. Objectives/Description**

### ***Objectives:***

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

- (1) Communicate the logic and objectives of empirical research in education;
- (2) Introduce how research is used in education policy making and practice;
- (3) Articulate a rationale for choosing among a full range of methods used by educational researchers;
- (4) Convey responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) principles; and
- (5) Develop skills for the evaluation and critique of research studies.

### ***Description:***

This course introduces students to the role that educational research – and empirical research, in particular – can play in solving educational problems. Throughout the semester, students will explore questions such as: What is educational research? What are its purposes? What are the methods used in educational research and the assumptions that underlie them? How is research conducted? What can we do to ensure that it is conducted responsibly and ethically? And, how might research improve education policy, planning and administration? Because this course is specifically targeted to the training of future higher education professionals primarily undertaking research in the form of assessment, there will be particular attention to applications of educational research and assessment within the context of the practice of higher education administration.

#### **D. Required Texts, Readings, and/or other Resources**

Timm, D. M., Davis Barham, J., McKinney, K., and Knerr, A. R. (Eds.). (2013). [Assessment in Practice: A Companion Guide to the ASK Standards](#). ACPA: College Student Educators International. – Available online through ACPA or Blackboard

Recommended Reading/Knowledge Building:

Visit the free on-line study resource at <http://www.sagepub.com/bjohnsonstudy/index.htm>

#### **E. Topical Course Outline**

The course introduces students to educational research. Understanding the range of research methods used in education is central to graduate students' development as scholars and practitioners. Students will be instructed in a set of foundational knowledge about the key elements of educational research, and master the vocabulary and methodological concepts inherent in a variety of research designs. Opportunity for in-depth study of methodologies and analytical techniques will come later in your graduate studies (e.g., EDF 6475 Qualitative Methods for Education), research assistantships, and/or thesis/dissertation development.

**F. Teaching Strategies** The methods of instruction for this course include lecture, large and small group discussion, video, and guest speakers.

**G. Field/Clinical Activities** Students will complete an assessment project employing primary or secondary data collection/analysis.

#### **H. Expectations/Attendance**

##### **University Attendance Policy**

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

##### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on a person's gender. Sexual harassment is contrary to the University's values and moral standards, which recognize the dignity and worth of each person, as well as a violation of federal and state laws and University rules and policies. Sexual harassment cannot and will not be tolerated by the Florida State University, whether by faculty, students, or staff; or by others while on property owned by or under the control of the University.

##### **Course Expectations**

- a. Expectations.** Please plan to arrive on time and attend class for the entire class session. If you need to use your laptops for any educational/disability-related reason, let me know. Because this is a long evening course, we will have a short break midway through each class. Finally, we have a rich diversity of professional, academic, and life experiences to draw upon in this course and enrich our examination of the readings and studies we will discuss. This is an asset. As such, we will be attentive to treating one another with respect.

- b. Participation.** We meet only once per week, therefore attendance and full participation in class will be of key importance. One absence per semester will be automatically excused. Please consult with instructor regarding excused absence requests. Regardless of the reason for the absence (sickness, bereavement, religious holy day, conference attendance), the student is responsible for making up all work that is missed. Please consult with classmates and the slides posted each week on Blackboard as an additional reference. University-wide policy requires all students to attend the first class meeting of all classes for which they are registered.
- c. Assignments, Extensions, and Due Dates.** Assignments are due on the date given. Extensions of up to one week will be granted if requested. For every three days an assignment is not in, 5% of the maximum grade will be deducted.

## I. Grading/Evaluation

<p><b>Participation</b></p> <p>Participation grades will be based on your projected engagement in class activity – being there but also looking attentive, raising constructive and interesting ideas and questions, and being a <u>contributing (vs. distracting)</u> member of class. Grades will <i>reward quality, not quantity/frequency of participation</i>. To earn an A or higher in attendance/discussion for each week, you are expected to tie your comments to course readings and concepts.</p>	<p><b>10%</b></p>
<p><b>Community Action Activity (Group)</b></p> <p>Engage all students in a 10-15 minute reflection on the learning scheduled for that lecture. For example, the summary activity might include a few reflective questions, a skit, a media presentation, or a piece of art or music relevant to the concept from that week (e.g., ethical research, mixed methods, etc.); or an interactive learning activity. Creativity is encouraged and students are reminded that the activity must in some way connect to the course material for that week. Consultation with the instructor or TA at least one week prior to conducting the activity is encouraged. Student will be marked on their engagement of the class, the link to concepts for the week, time management, team work and creativity. The rubric used for grading will be shared on Blackboard.</p>	<p><b>10%</b></p>
<p><b>Progress Reports</b></p> <p>To provide students an opportunity to prepare for weekly discussions and assignments, each week, a progress report is to be completed prior to class. The progress report will include 1-3 questions pertaining to the readings, previous discussions, and the final project. Please bring completed hard copies to each class, as they will be collected weekly.</p>	<p><b>20%</b></p>

<p>Graded comments will be made four times per semester, on a random schedule. To obtain full points, a student must have submitted progress reports on all collection days. If a student will be absent, please inform the instructor or TA as soon as possible to make other arrangements.</p>	
<p><b>IRB/Ethics preparation</b></p> <p>Students will need to complete and pass the NIH Ethics Training module for research. Subsequently, each student will be asked to prepare and complete (official submission to human subjects review optional, depending on research intent) an IRB proposal for their project.</p>	<p><b>15%</b></p>
<p><b>Midterm brief (2 pages)</b></p> <p>Midway through the semester, students will prepare and upload a clear, accessible brief with initial findings and status of their projects. The brief will be written as if submitted to their supervisor. At least one original table and/or figure should be present to detail the status of data collection and analysis. Two pages single-spaced in 12 point font is an absolute maximum for text, including any references or tables/figures.</p>	<p><b>15%</b></p>
<p><b>Presentations (2 minutes, maximum)</b></p> <p>Students will have a firm two minutes or less to present an elevator speech (with or without visual aid) on the summary findings of their assessment project, as it pertains to the primary audience(s)/beneficiaries of their assessment.</p>	<p><b>5%</b></p>
<p><b>Final course paper (with results, assessment plan)</b></p> <p>Using sample reports provided by the instructor as a guide, students will complete a 20-page assessment report (appendices/supplements optional). Students are welcome to draw on the framework of their Outcomes of Undergraduate Education paper. This report will need to include a clear rationale and purpose, methodology, findings, and implications from the assessment.</p>	<p><b>25%</b></p>

**GRADE SCALE**

**A = 93-100%**

**A- = 90-92%**

**B+ = 87-89%**

**B = 83-86%**

**B- = 80-82%**

**C+ = 77-79%**

**C = 73-76%**

**C- = 70-72%**

**D+ = 67-69%**  
**D = 63-66%**

**D- = 60-62%**  
**F = below 60%**

### **Free Tutoring from FSU**

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options - see <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring> or contact [tutor@fsu.edu](mailto:tutor@fsu.edu). High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

### **J. Honor Code**

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>.

Please be aware that using social media to collaborate on and share course exams or assignments with other students that are not identified by the course instructor as group work is a violation of the FSU Academic Honor Policy.

### **K. ADA Requirements**

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center  
874 Traditions Way  
108 Student Services Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
[sdrc@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:sdrc@admin.fsu.edu)  
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

### **L. Syllabus Change Policy**

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

## **M. Additional Resources**

### Quantitative Research Websites

Statistical methods glossary: <http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/stathome.html>

Another statistical methods glossary: [http://www.cas.lancs.ac.uk/glossary\\_v1.1/main.html](http://www.cas.lancs.ac.uk/glossary_v1.1/main.html)

Correlation explanation: <http://glass.ed.asu.edu/stats/lesson4/>

### Qualitative Research Websites

These URLs provide lots of qualitative links:

<http://www.qualitativeresearch.uga.edu/QualPage/>

<http://kerlins.net/bobbi/research/qualresearch/>

<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/web.html>

### Mixed Research Websites

Mixed research page: <http://www.fiu.edu/~bridges/>

Mixed research methods glossary: <http://www.fiu.edu/~bridges/glossary.htm>

This is an on-line book titled "User-Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations":

<http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/start.htm>

Qualitative tools for mixed research: <http://www.npi.ucla.edu/qualquant/>

Causation: <http://www.pitt.edu/AFShome/s/u/super1/public/html/lecture/lec7741/>

### **TABLEAU – Quantitative Data Visualization**

<http://www.tableau.com/academic/students>

### **Nvivo – Qualitative Data Organization & Analyses**

### **EndNote, EndNoteWeb, Zotero, Mendeley, RefWorks**

Reference & Document managers – get one, use it often!