TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
COMMERCE

EDCI 595: Research Literature and Techniques

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2015

According to State of Texas HB 2504, this course syllabus must be submitted in advance of the when the courses is actually scheduled to begin. Therefore, the instructor has the right to modify this syllabus and course calendar at any time between submitting it for publication and the first day of class. Furthermore, the instructor has the right to modify the syllabus at any time during the course itself provided that (1) such changes do not increase expectations or requirements beyond a reasonable equivalent and (2) students are given ample notification.

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials Needed for the Course

Textbook.
Mertler, Craig (2012). _Action Research: Improving Schools and Empowering Educators_ (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, ISBN: 978-1-4129-8889-6. (Paperback).
Quizzes, slide presentations, and other identified materials will cover reading assignments from this textbook. Therefore, you must purchase this book.

APA Manual. You need a reference manual source for this course. There are different options for selecting a writing resource. Select the method(s) below best suited for your needs as a writer. [Note: These books might be available at the University bookstores, but it was not ordered specifically for this class.]
1. American Psychological Association – APA (2009). _Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association_ (6th ed.). ISBN: 1433805618. (Paperback).
   You will use this book as your primary guide to writing your paper and citing your references. Cost of the hardcopy text is about $21 plus postage through Amazon.com and less expensive electronic versions are available.

2. Houghton, Peggy & Houghton, Timothy (2009). _APA: The Easy Way!_ (2nd ed.). Baker College: Flint, Michigan. ISBN: 0-923568-96-2. (Paperback).
   If you have strong writing skills, you may consider this 59 page quick reference guide instead of the larger APA Manual (hardcopy cost via Amazon.com is about $12 and electronic copies are also available). It has the citation information you need, however it does not cover writing skills and organization like the official APA Manual.

3. Online Resources: There are several different online reference sources for using APA formatting and citations in documents. However, there is little writing information; they are primarily for citation format information.

Course Description: This course provides a review of significant research studies produced by investigators in the student's major field with emphasis on the investigative and verification techniques employed. The student is required to demonstrate competence in using systematic research techniques through the investigation and formal report of a research problem.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the completion of the course, you will be able to:
1. Identify and elaborate on the basic components of a classroom action research study.
2. Utilize a systematic approach to brainstorm several challenging instructional, behavioral, and/or environmental problems facing classroom teachers, use a decision-making process for identifying the single most significant of those problems, and write research questions and associated sub-questions to be used in formulating a research proposal.
3. Conduct searches of the professional literature addressing the more pertinent issues surrounding the research topic and write a cohesive review of that literature using appropriate citations and references based on the American Psychological Association's (APA) format.
4. Communicate with colleagues in an intellectually stimulating environment for discussing educational problems, sharing ideas for conducting classroom action research, assisting with design, providing constructive feedback, and serving as a sounding board for others struggling with similar problems.
5. Submit a proposal and Final Research Report for an action research study that (a) includes the required components as outlined in the Stetson-Nix Model and (b) meets the expectations as identified in the Action Research Proposal and Final Report Rubrics.
6. Write a scholarly report of the action research study.
7. Write an abstract about the contents of the final report.
8. **Present** a summary of your Final Research Report to an audience of peers.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School of Texas A&M-Commerce requires all students in a master's program to satisfactorily complete six hours of 518 (thesis) or three hours of 595 (research methods). "A student's completion of a 595 course must result in a product available for reference in the department for a minimum of three years" (TAMU-C Graduate Catalog). That product in EDCI 595 is a research proposal and final research report.

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments
This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. Each week you will work on various combinations of assignments; worksheets, activities, readings, literature searches, etc. During the semester, you will focus on reading the text and identifying the particular topic for your proposal, drafting sections of the proposal, searching the literature related to the topic, finalizing a complete draft of the proposal,

seeking feedback from friends and good editors who will find everything wrong that they can, polishing your final project to perfection, submitting it for evaluation, and making a short presentation to a group of your peers. Below are more specific details about each of these components.

1. **Read Professional Course Materials and Take Quizzes over the Materials:**

   Student Learning Outcome #1: <u>Identify</u> and elaborate on the basic components of a classroom action research study.
   One of the most important aspects of the course is to learn how to write a proposal to conduct action research in the classroom or other related environments and write a final report based on your research. Two models for writing proposals will be learned in this class. One is the model fully explained in the required textbook. The second model is one by Elton Stetson and Karen Nix who created a carefully sequenced 10 step model for writing proposals.

   Assessment Method: You will have three quizzes over chapter readings (see Schedule of Assignments). Quizzes are taken online and consist of objective-type questions include multiple choice, matching, true-false, and short answer. Each quiz is fully explained including directions, time limits, scoring criteria, and the inclusive dates for taking each one.

2. **Complete Four Assignments Designed to Identify Main Research Questions and Related Sub-Questions:**

   Student Learning Outcome #2: <u>Utilize</u> a systematic approach to brainstorm several challenging instructional, behavioral, and/or environmental problems facing classroom teachers, use a decision-making process for identifying the single most significant problem, and write research questions and associated sub-questions to be used in formulating a research proposal and final report.

   You will complete a series of several short assignments, called worksheets, that have been created to provide you with carefully sequences steps to: (1) brainstorm possible problems you encounter with the curriculum, teaching, learning, behavior and/or the environment; (2) convert those problems to research questions; (3) select, from several generated, the single most significant problem to be used in the research project; and (4) create a series of sub-questions that are associated with the main question around which data will be collected and analyzed. Each worksheet has three parts: instructional information, guided practice, and independent work. All work is done on the worksheet itself and then submitted. These worksheets will be completed during the first few weeks of the term.

   Assessment Method: Each worksheet is submitted to the Dropbox and evaluated by the instructor. You will get the worksheet back with a grade and extensive feedback where needed.

3. **Submit a Summary of a Research Article on Your Topic:**

   Student Learning Outcome #3: <u>Conduct searches</u> of the professional literature addressing the more pertinent issues surrounding the research topic and <u>write a</u>

cohesive review of that literature using appropriate citations and references based on the American Psychological Association's (APA) format.

In your research proposal you will include a section titled "Review of the Literature." In this section you will report on a minimum of 10 different professional articles that you have read on your topic. You will submit a summary review of one of those 10 articles using a template that is provided. Each summary will have four parts: (a) your main research question; (b) full bibliographic entry of the article using APA format; (c) brief summary of the important content of the article; and (d) how this information ties directly to your research topic.

This is a way to help you in your literature search and provide you feedback on how you are: (a) writing the bibliographic entry; (b) providing sufficient and significant information from the articles; (c) connecting the content of the article to your specific research topic; and (d) using quotation marks and citations correctly. The review you submit is included among the 10 or more that you cite in your literature review.

Assessment Method: Your article summary will be scored on a scale of 5 (highest) to 0 (lowest) using the Article Summary Rubric, which is an example of a well written summary provided by a student in a previous class.

4. **Submit a Research Proposal:**

Student Learning Outcome #5. Submit a proposal for an action research study that (a) includes the required components as outlined in the Stetson-Nix Model and (b) meets the expectations as identified in the Action Research Proposal Rubric.

A research proposal is a plan for an action research project you propose to carry out in your classroom or in some other approved environment. Your research proposal will be submitted for evaluation and grading. There are many different formats for research proposals but we will use one particular format created by Stetson and Nix. Your proposal will be filed in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction for a period of three years, as required by the Graduate School.

Assessment Method. Proposals are evaluated using the Rubric for Evaluating Proposals.

5. **Final Report:**

Student Learning Outcome #6. Write a scholarly report of the action research study.

Revise your proposal based on the feedback you received from peers and the instructor. Conduct the research study and share the results of your study in a written report. The written report should follow APA format and the body of the proposal must be at least 10 pages excluding title page, table of contents, references, and appendices. Your Final Report will be filed in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction for a period of three years, as required by the Graduate School.

Assessment Method. Specific guidelines will be provided for writing and submitting the final report.

6. **Abstract:**

Student Learning Outcome #7. Write a half page abstract about the contents of the final report.

An abstract is a brief summary of the contents of the final report. The abstract should be brief, specific, and concise. Students will make copies of the abstract to use as handouts during the presentation.

Assessment Method Specific guidelines and examples will be provided for writing an abstract.

7. **Presentation of your Proposal:**

Student Learning Outcome #6. Present a summary of your proposal to an audience of peers.

On the final night of the class you will present your research study in a conference of your peers using a poster session format. Specific instructions will be provided. In brief, you will set up a poster display (science boards) containing specific information about your research.

Assessment Method: The presentation will be evaluated on a scale of 5 (highest) to 0 (lowest). A rubric will be developed based on the requirements of the presentation and will be distributed once the students provide input on what those requirements should be.

Grading
All assignments are graded on a scale of from 5 (highest grade) to 0 (lowest grade) based on the following criteria:

5 - Exceptional – Exceeds Minimum Expectations in All Areas Addressed: Well above average in thought, language structure, and word choice; extremely well organized; shows thorough understanding and assimilation of concepts; excellent sense of unity; polished transition between concepts or thoughts; frequent sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; quality word choice that may be unusually striking, vivid, or creative; virtually free of errors.

4 - Above Average – Meets Minimum Expectations in the Majority of Areas Addressed and Exceed Expectations in Some Areas. In general command of thought, sentence structure, and word choice; organized; shows some understanding of concepts; good sense of unity; good transition between concepts or thoughts; some sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; good word choice that may be vivid or striking; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; few if any errors.

3 -Average. Adequate In some Areas and Inadequate in Others. Problems in some of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organized and formatted appropriately; good unity, sequence, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

2 – Below Average. Inadequate in Several Areas. Problems in several of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

1 -Unacceptable. Inadequate in Many Areas. Problems in many of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

0 - Not Turned In or Not Accepted By Instructor.

FINAL GRADE IN THE COURSE

Your final grade in this course is based on your performance on all of the requirements. Below is an example of how assignments are scored and weights assigned. The number of assignments in the table below is only an estimate and will be adjusted by the end of the semester. Although the number of assignments are tentative, it is the prerogative of the instructor to alter the number of assignments, quizzes, and other requirements during the course of the semester provided the class is given due notice.

Product	Number of Assignments	Point Value	Total Possible
1. Quizzes on textbook reading	3	5	15 Pts.
2. Individual assignments	4	5	20 Pts.
3. Summary of research article	1	5	5 Pts.
4. Research Proposal	1	25	25 Pts.
5. Final Report	1	50	50 Pts.
6. Abstract	1	5	5 Pts.
7. Presentation	1	10	10 Pts.

Total Points = 130

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Internet Connection. An internet connected is necessary. Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

Word Processor. MS Word is the recommended word processor for eCollege

Operating Systems. Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Browser Testing. It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the 'my Courses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu.]

How is the eCollege Course Organized?
This course is organized around units. If you look on the left side of screen when you go to the course, you will see a link for **each unit**. If you click on the **Unit 1**, several other links will appear. Each link under the units is an assignment. You can click on any of the links and you will be able to read all of the details for each assignment.

What is the Schedule of Assignments?
At the beginning of each assignment it will tell you to go to the "Schedule of Assignments" to see due dates. The Schedule of Assignments is a link by that name located above the Unit link in a separate section titled "Course Home." If you click on Schedule of Assignments, you will see every assignment and its due date.

What Should Students Do First?
1. Click on 'Course Home." Read the welcome message to give you an overview of the course.
2. Click on all of the links under "Course Home" to get acquainted with the syllabus, technical support, the library, how to communicate, the eCollege tutorial, and the Schedule of Assignments.
3. Click on "Unit 1" and read the introduction to the right.
4. Click on each link under Unit 1 and review each assignment so you can get an idea what you will be doing.
5. Click again on the "Schedule of Assignments." Print it out and keep it handy so you can see the due dates.

How Should Students Proceed Each Week for Class Activities?
As you proceed through each weekly lesson, please keep in mind the following important principles:

1. Assignments. All assignments for the unit are fully explained in the links on the left navigation bar. Everything you need to know about each assignment can be found within the assignment.

2. Needed Documents Are Provided. When documents are required, they are usually embedded within the assignment. Look for the blue links. When an assignment requires you to have a document, that document will be provided to you simply by clicking on the blue link there in the lesson. Backup document are also filed in Doc Sharing in the event the blue link does not work properly.

3. Lectures and Slideshows. Any lecture you are to read or hear and any slide show you are to view will be make available to you simply by clicking on the blue link provided to you within the lesson you are reading.

3. Exams and Quizzes. The student will complete the assigned 'online' exams by accessing the 'exam' tool in the eCollege course. You will access exams by clicking on the appropriate link for each week.

4. The DropBox. You will complete and submit most of your assignments electronically using the eCollege dropbox tool.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Questions about the course, assignments, syllabus, etc.
Contact me via **university email** any time 24/7.

Office Hours
I check my email M-F during the day. If you would like to make a face-to-face or phone call appointment, let me know and we can set a time. I will give you my phone number during the first class meeting.

Submitting assignments:
All assignments are submitted through the eCollege Dropbox. Pay close attention to due dates. All assignments have due dates and penalties are assessed for late work. I use a document called "Schedule of Assignments" to record every assignment along with the date and time each is due.

Announcements:
Announcements are posted often, sometimes once and twice per day. They are posted on the home page when you go to the course. In some cases I will also send the same announcement to you via the eCollege email system.

Email Correspondence
From me to you: all emails from me will be sent to your Leo email account, therefore, it is important to go check your email regularly.

From you to me: Always send emails through the TAMU-C email system.

Emergencies
Call me at Home. [This information will be given the first night of class].

eCollege Student Technical Support
Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Chat Support: Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
Help: Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc…)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies:

Late Work.
Specific dates and times are established for every assignment. Grades for work not submitted when due are automatically reduced beginning immediately upon exceeding the deadline. For example, assignments typically have a midnight deadline. If you exceed that midnight deadline, your work is automatically reduced by one numerical grade. For each 24 hours period thereafter, the grade is reduced again by one numerical grade. No work is accepted after three days and a grade of "0" will be recorded. Work cannot be made up and extra work is not allowed to compensate for missing or later work. The final authority on time is the time recorded on your assignment by the eCollege clock.

Appeal of the Final Grade (13.99.99.R0.05 Student's Appeal of Instructor's Evaluation, Effective September 1, 1996. Revised December 15, 1999, Revised February 8, 2007)

1. The final grades awarded by faculty members are their expert judgment concerning student performance. Students challenging a final grade must show that the instructor's judgment was unfair based on:
      a) some basis other than performance, or
      b) standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section, or
      c) a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced departure from previously articulated standards or the syllabus.
2. Students who believe their grade to be unfair must first discuss the matter with the instructor.
3. If no satisfactory resolution is reached with the instructor, or if the instructor is unavailable, the student shall appeal to the department head. A grade appeal must be

initiated in writing with the department head (or dean if the department head is the instructor) within six months of the last day of the semester in which the grade was awarded. The department head will examine the student's appeal to determine whether the student has established an apparent case of unfair academic evaluation as described in section 1. If the student has not established a case that appears to have merit, the department head will so inform the student and the instructor without delay. 4. If the case has merit, the department head will secure, from all parties, written statements and other such information as he or she deems helpful and will issue his or her findings and remedies, if any. In so doing, the department head will be guided by the principle the burden of proof lies with the student.

For additional information regarding the appeal of a final grade above that of the department head, please consult the latest version of the graduate catalog or contact the Head of the Department, Curriculum and Instruction, at 903-886-5537.

Academic Integrity/Honest Statement

This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission from this instructor in advance; (2) turning in another person's work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them; and (4) any form of cheating on exams. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course, or brought before a higher level of governance for possible dismissal from the university. Additional information about this topic and policies can be located at the following website:
http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/sociologyCriminalJustice/fAQs/academicHonesty.aspx

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook).

Non-discrimination Policy
A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.