



EDAD 595.01W Using Research for Best Practice

COURSE SYLLABUS: SUMMER 1 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Peter Williams, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Office Location: Education North #203A (Commerce); Virtual
Office Hours: by Appointment, by Zoom
Office Phone: available in D2L course announcements
University Email Address: peter.williams@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: Email, appointment, SMS (for quick or urgent)
Communication Response Time: usually 24 hours (M-F)
Appointment Calendar: <https://peterwilliams.youcanbook.me/>

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required

- Mertler, C.A. (2022). Introduction to educational research, 3rd ed. Sage.
- American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th ed. American Psychological Association. ISBN: 978-1-4338-3216-1

Course Description

This course provides a review of significant research designs used in the field of education in order to seek out “best practices” in the classroom, on the campus and district wide. Emphasis is placed on the process and consumption of research. The student is required to demonstrate competence in developing and refining research techniques for “best practices.”

Standards Addressed:

TAC 241.15 Principal Curriculum Standards

(7) Learner Centered Instructional Leadership Management.

A principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a campus culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth. At the campus level, a principal understands, values, and is able to:

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- Facilitate the development of a campus culture learning organization that supports instructional improvement and change through an on-going study of relevant research and best practice.

TEXES Principal Competency 005

The principal knows how to promote the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a campus culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

149.2001.001 Instructional Leadership

The principal is responsible for ensuring every student receives high-quality instruction.

- 001c. Data-Driven Instruction and Interventions – The principal monitors multiple forms of student data to inform instructional and intervention decisions and to close the achievement gaps.

Student Learning Outcomes

The aspiring principal will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Learn research methodologies relevant to education and apply to professional practice through the creation of a coherent research plan that supports instructional planning through data driven decision-making. [149.2001.001c]
2. Evaluate and apply research literature to educational problems. [TAC 241.15]
3. Impact the instructional environment through familiarity with general methods of data collection and analysis and how to draw conclusions based on data. [Competency 005; TAC 241.15; 149.2001.001c]
4. Synthesize the relationship between theory, research, and practice and to use this understanding to become practitioner-scholars and consumers of research. [Competency 005; 149.2001.001c]
5. Facilitate the development of a campus learning culture that supports instructional improvement and change through an on-going study of relevant research and best practice. [TAC 241.15]
6. Monitor multiple forms of student data to inform instructional and intervention decisions that impact a narrowing of the achievement gaps. [149.2001.001c]

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Be able to use

- the learning management system
- Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Windows system or Mac system.

The learner is required to access and navigate the learning management system, use Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, and use presentation and graphics programs. All written assignments require Microsoft Word.

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Instructional Methods

This course is completely online through the D2L learning management platform. The course is structured so that content may be engaged in weekly modules, with experiential learning building to the culminating assignment. Each module begins on Monday of the week and concludes at 11:59 p.m. the following Sunday. Each assessment, whether formal or informal, is designed for the aspiring principal to demonstrate synthesis of material and application of concepts and theories to practice. This application is referred to as Practitioner Pedagogy. To the latter point, the course is a scaffolded action research project, designed to inform the aspiring principal how to use data to solve issues or challenges in the local setting.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

For success in this course, please read all materials, lectures, and supplementary resources. Additionally, bear in mind that this is Graduate level inquiry; therefore, it is necessary to devote 15-20 hours per week to the course readings and activities. Please feel free to contact me any time you have questions. It is your responsibility to keep me informed, to do the work required, turn in assignments on time, to carve out the time necessary to do the work, and to take care of yourself in the process.

Tips

- This might be a helpful rule: if I spend an hour on something, and really give it my all, but I still cannot get it, it may be time to ask for help. Don't be afraid to ask for help! Don't just sit there getting frustrated, even though we know that learning process can be frustrating!
- Get to know your cohort as they will be an important source of support, as you will be for them. Find your tribe among the whole group. Some groups create a group on social media to support each other.
- Understand that graduate school is an emotional journey as well as a cognitive academic pursuit. It is full of excitement, some fear, joy, sadness, etc.. Some describe it as a roller coaster. Use the journey to learn about yourself--to recognize your emotions and use them as data. What are your feelings telling you? The better you get at this, the better a school leader you will be. Emotional intelligence, as some call it, is a leader competency.
- Get used to learning new words, phrases, and concepts. Treat it like a language learning experience. Keep notes of the new words you hear and read, and learn them.
- You will think at some point that you do not belong in this class or program. This is normal. It does not mean that you do not belong; it only means that you are being stretched a bit (or a lot). Some call it the imposter syndrome.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

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A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Assessments

For this course, you will be required to complete the following assignments:

- 1) Critical Assessment (30 pts)
- 2) Research Plan (80 pts)
 - a. Research plan
 - b. Research report
- 2) Participation in class discussions Total of 20 pts.
- 3) 2 Reviews of Journal Articles (20 points each) Total of 40 pts.
- 4) ~~Reflection on Practice: Total of 10 pts.~~

Total possible points for course assignments = 140 pts.

Class Participation (Total of 20 points) [TAC 241.15; Competency 005; 149.2001.001c]

In class meetings within this course we will engage in an activity and reflection, related to designing of an applied research project for the final project. Participation in the activities is critical for maximizing your learning experiences in this course. You are required to be part of the learning community who interact, through discussion and participation in activities, to enhance and support the professional development of the group. Part of your grade for the course includes my assessment of the quality and quantity of your participation in the group activities and associated discussion. I will take attendance and make notes of your level of engagement in class activities.

Critical Assessment (CA) Assignment (30 points)
[TAC 241.15; Competency 005; 149.2001.001c]

Instructions: Meet with your mentor or campus principal to identify a problem or issue related to either campus culture, instructional leadership (aligned curriculum, effective instructional strategies, disproportionality of disciplinary or academic processes and outcomes, data-driven instruction, or interventions to impact student achievement), or

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professional development for teachers. Together, critically examine 2-3 sources of data (campus or district improvement plan, School Report Card, PEIMS data, benchmark exams, etc.) that support this issue or a problem that is in need of investigation or intervention. Based on your meeting with your mentor or campus principal, use the *Writing a Problem Statement* worksheet in doc sharing (in D2L) to develop a comprehensive and formal statement of the problem to be used as the foundation for your research plan. **This assignment is worth a total of 30 points.** Please use the Critical Assessment Rubric below to guide your thinking and discovery.

EDAD 595 CRITICAL ASSESSMENT RUBRIC	
Points	Statement of the Problem
20	The statement of the problem and need for the study is clearly addressed and supported by identifying 2-3 document sources and citations from scholarly research
16	The statement of the problem is clear, although a rare extraneous element is introduced. The problem is supported by identifying 2-3 document sources and citations from scholarly research
12	The assignment has a statement of the problem, but additional unrelated ideas distract the reader. The problem is not supported by 2-3 document sources but does include citations from scholarly research.
10	The assignment has a statement of the problem, but additional unrelated ideas distract the reader. The problem is supported by 2-3 document sources but does not include citations from scholarly research.
8	The statement of the problem is unclear and not supported by document sources or citations from scholarly research.
4	The assignment lacks a statement of the problem or appears to reflect the writer's "free association."
0	Assignment not submitted.

Points	References
10	All references are appropriate with no APA errors.
8	Most references are appropriate and/or limited APA errors.
6	Some references are appropriate and/or limited APA errors.
4	Many references are inappropriate and/or a variety of APA errors.
2	Most references are inappropriate and/or excessive APA errors.

Research Plan (80 total points): [149.2001.001c; Competency 005]

The core of this course is the development of a research plan. Through the analysis of multiple data sources and investigation of relevant literature, you will identify a problem to further investigate. This problem needs to be one that is *researchable* and related to an area of disproportionate representation or misrepresentation of marginalized groups (discipline, special education, gifted and talented), equitable instructional improvement, such as narrowing of the achievement gaps, or specific measures of academic intervention focused on fair and equitable distribution of educational resources.

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Throughout each module you will conduct a series of activities to assist you in completing the formal research plan. With the inclusion of the components from the Critical Assessment (CA) Assignment, the Research Plan will consist of the following sections:

- Statement of the Problem (20 pts.)
- Research Questions (10 pts.)
- Significance of Study (10 pts.)
- Methodology
 - Selection of Sample (10 pts.)
 - Design (10 pts.)
 - Data Analysis (10 pts.)
- References (10 pts.)

Total Possible Points= 80 points

*The previous two rubrics and the following five rubrics will be used to evaluate the seven parts of the Research Plan.

595 Research Plan Grading Rubric <i>CLAQWA (modified), Flateby & Metzger - University of South Florida</i>	
Assignment	
Research Questions	
10	All research questions are well written and relate to research topic.
8	Majority of research questions are well written and relate to research topic.
6	Research questions slightly deviate from research topic and have room for improvement.
4	Research questions are unrelated to research topic.
2	Research questions are poorly written, unrelated to problem.
0	Assignment not submitted
Assignment	
Significance of Study	
10	The significance of study clearly contributes to the research plan, which is obvious, specific and appropriate.
8	The writer's significance of study is present, appropriate for the research plan.
6	The writer's significance of study is present and appropriate, but elements may not clearly contribute to the statement of the problem.
4	The writer's significance of study is inappropriate for the research plan.
2	The writer's significance is not evident.
0	Assignment not submitted
Selection of Sample	
10	Target population was identified and appropriate method used for selection of sample of participants. Description of participants was

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	included and appropriate in ability to provide data in answering research questions.
8	Little discussion of target population; however sampling technique used for selection was discussed and appropriate in providing data for research questions. Description of participants provided.
6	No discussion of target population and room for improvement in sample technique used. No description of actual participants.
4	No discussion of target population and poor sampling technique used.
2	No discussion of target population and/or sampling technique used. Participants targeted for study were inappropriate for providing data to research questions.
0	Assignment not submitted

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary

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use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

This course is completely online. You will need access to an email account on a daily basis. I will be emailing during the course to communicate information, assignments, and other addenda. **You need to check your myLeo email AND the D2L course each day for these communications and to participate in all activities.**

Our primary mode of communication is through the online course and by email, but I am available through other modes of communication, too. If you need to discuss something, make an appointment 24 hours ahead of time via my Appointment Calendar (listed top of syllabus). If you have a quick question (not a discussion), or an urgent message, you may text me, but use phone text judiciously. Identify yourself up front. Do not just call me without an appointment. In order to complete your assignments, you will need to be proficient at MS Office programs, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Excel. **All assignments submitted electronically must be in MS Office formats.** All assessments will receive feedback within 5 days of the module end date.

Please feel free to email me at Peter.Williams@etamu.edu if you have questions. Please communicate with me in whichever form you are most comfortable; however, avoid using the public forum for confidential matters. If you would prefer to correspond via telephone, you are welcome to do so. Please schedule a phone (or Zoom) conference before you call me, using my Appointment Calendar (listed at top of syllabus). Prior to asking a question, please quickly review the syllabus and online course.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments will not be accepted nor graded beyond the final day of the course.

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Scholarly Expectations

All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical, particularly at the graduate level, to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested by the instructor. Graduate level work demonstrates higher-order thinking skills, clear logic, supporting evidence for claims, and strictly follows the APA 7th Ed style guide

Writing Style

All papers must be written in accordance with the rules and guidelines of the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2020). All citations and references in papers must adhere to the APA format provided in this manual. Please use the following format for all of your documents: Times New Roman font with 12 cpi (characters per inch), double-spacing, and one-inch margins.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx).
<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx) webpage and [Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx)
<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>
<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

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Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- 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

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University 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.

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Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas &M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.etamu.edu/counsel

AI use policy [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

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In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Available in D2L.

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