HIED 710 Dissertation Prospectus
COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor:	Leslie Ekpe, Ph.D., Professor
Office Location:	N/A
Office Hours:	Available face-to-face and via Zoom, by appointment.
Office Phone:	903-886-5618
University Email Address:	Leslie.Ekpe@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication:	Email
Communication Response Time:	A response to any email or message will occur within (2) business days, (excluding weekends and holidays).

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Recommended
- There are no required books. However, any previous quantitative and qualitative methodology books that you already have will come in handy.

- This book is recommended if you do not already have a copy: American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author (ISBN 978-1-43380561- 5).
- This is recommended: Thesis and Dissertation Services (2017). Available without charge from the <u>Graduate School, TAMU-C</u>.

Software Required: None

Optional Texts and/or Materials: None

Course Description

The most challenging but very doable task you will ever face in your doctoral pursuit is the conduct and write-up of your dissertation. To assist you with the writing process, we have in mind two courses. The first course, HIED 650, is aimed at allowing opportunities to explore the literature about a potential research topic or purpose of your study. This process usually is reflected in Chapter 2 of your dissertation. The second course is HIED 710 (the one in which you enrolled).

The purpose of HIED 710 is to allow you to take the next logical step, which is to write up your Chapters 1 and 3. Chapters 1, 2, and 3, if written correctly, will constitute your dissertation prospectus or proposal, which will then be reviewed by your dissertation committee during a formal dissertation proposal meeting. Your doctoral advisor can assist and provide you with directions and guidance on how this can be done successfully.

If you have not completed your doctoral coursework, you are unable to enroll in the course. Additionally, if you are not currently a doctoral candidate (meaning you have passed your doctoral comprehensive exam), you will enroll once you have completed these items.

With that purpose in mind, the following are the student learning outcomes of HIED 710.

Outcome No. 1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research methodologies and the mechanics or processes of writing a dissertation proposal.
Specifically, the student will be able to
- Understand research methodologies (qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods), their strengths and weaknesses, and appropriate uses.
- Understand all the sub-components of research methodologies, which include sampling or case selection, data gathering mechanisms, validity, reliability, data trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, and data analytic procedures.

- Ability to evaluate completed student dissertations and other forms of research publications.

Outcome No. 2: Complete Chapter 1 of a dissertation proposal. Specifically, the student will
- Provide the proper introduction and context of a particular topic, complete with a brief literature.
- Discuss the importance and significance of the chosen research topic.
- Provide a detailed description of the major issues and complexities involved.
- Write a clear statement of purpose. Begin by writing "The purpose of this study is . . .". The purpose should not be a surprise since it is a logical progression from points or discussions already made.
- If necessary, break down the purpose into smaller research questions, themes, or hypotheses as appropriate.
- Formulate and explain the methodology that will be used to research the topic or to get answers to the posed research question(s) in the study.
- Explain the assumptions and limitations of the study.

Outcome No. 3: Complete Chapter 3 of a dissertation proposal. Specifically, the student will
- Expand upon the research methodology section from Chapter 1.
- Explain in detail the methodology that will be employed (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods), how the methodology will be implemented, including information about proposed dimensions, topics, or variables that will be studied; targeted population; sampling or case selection procedures; data collection techniques and procedures; and data analytical procedures (statistics or qualitative analytical traditions).
- Address all issues related to internal validity, data trustworthiness, data triangulation, confirmability, and credibility of potential findings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students must familiarize themselves with D2L, Microsoft Word, Zoom, or another appropriate teleconferencing software. Also needed is your knowledge and ability to access the TAMUC Library materials online.

Instructional Methods

This course is delivered completely online. Of course, you are free to call, visit, or Zoom me during the term for any conservations that are better suited for synchronous communication. As far as feedback on your written papers and exam are concerned, you will receive timely feedback from me via the tracked feature of Microsoft Word or directly in D2L. You must submit your written papers using MS Word. There is no exception.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

It is your responsibility to log in the course website regularly (several times each week), to stay on top of all course requirements, and to engage actively in all required class activities, such as discussion forums.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

1. Unit 1, Research Methodology Assessment, 7% of your grade
2. Unit 2, Dissertation Review, 7% of your grade
3. Unit 3, Purpose of Study Participation, 7% of your grade
4. Unit 3, Purpose of Study Paper, 7% of your grade
5. Unit 4, Chapter 1 Paper, 36% of your grade
6. Unit 5, Chapter 3 Paper, 36% of your grade
   Total Points: **100%**

The final grade will be based on the following ranges:
- A=90 to 100%
- B=80 to 89%
- C=70 to 79%
- D=60 to 69%
- F=59% or lower

   (Please take note that a grade of "C" or lower for doctoral students is considered a failure. The Graduate School will automatically expel students who have more than 3 "C" or lesser grades.)

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of

supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft ® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft ® Internet Explorer ®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A

	Latest	N/A
Google® Chrome ™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point** release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point** release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2L supports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version. Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
  - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
  - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
  - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

- You must have a:
  - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
  - Speakers or headphones.
  - *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.

- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: JAVA web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp

- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.
  Pop-ups are allowed.
  JavaScript is enabled.
  Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  - Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - Adobe Flash Player *(version 17 or later)* https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/
  - Adobe Shockwave Player   https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/ ○ Apple Quicktime   http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

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

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT
Brightspace Support
Need Help?
Student 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 or call the IT Helpdesk on the TAMUC campus.

System Maintenance

Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Email me at david.tan@tamuc.edu. I will reply to email messages within 48 hours, except on the weekends and holidays. Use your TAMUC email only with an appropriate message title when communicating with me. Otherwise, your email will be diverted to my junk folder, and I will never see it. I can also be reached on my office phone at (903) 886-5619 or you can visit me in my office on the TAMUC campus.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Respect Differing Views

As with all graduate-level classes, this course deals with common and differing ideas and opinions. Please always be scholarly, courteous, fair-minded, and respectful of each other's opinions, particularly in disagreement situations. Always be a good

listener, attempting to understand other people's rationale, perspectives, and beliefs. Any discourtesy and lack of respect will not be tolerated.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is of utmost importance in academia. Acts of academic misconduct and plagiarism are considered egregious matters that will severely jeopardize your career as a student. Plagiarism, depending on severity, will result in a failing grade for either that particular assignment or the entire course. Work produced, whether in part or in whole, from assignments for other courses will not be accepted for credit and will be considered a form of plagiarism. I expect all assignments for this course to be creative and honest representation of your scholarly work. If the evidence is clear that you have committed academic misconduct, including plagiarism, a formal charge will be filed against you following university policy. At my discretion as the course instructor, if the misconduct is not intentional, I can decide on whether a particular assignment may be rewritten and resubmitted for a maximum grade of 70% of the original total, along with other stipulations, including participation in an academic misconduct workshop.

Here are some useful resources about academic integrity:
- Plagiarism Tutorial, Indiana State University, 2016, 26 mins.
- Avoiding Plagiarism: Writing with Integrity, TAMU College Station, 2015, 35 mins.
- Nine Things You Should Already Know About Plagiarism, University of Oklahoma, no date.
- 10 Types of Plagiarism, 2012, 4 mins.

Writing Center

Students are encouraged to visit the A&M-Commerce Writing Center and other locations for writing assistance. Graduate students, especially at the doctoral level, are expected to have a high level of writing ability and skills. Also, as the instructor for this class, I will be providing helpful writing guidance and advice. You should also consult with your faculty advisor for any needed assistance.

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

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: Netiquette
http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.
http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce 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

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

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99. R0.10

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

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- Room 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-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.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce 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 A&M-Commerce 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 A&MCommerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.

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

Texas A&M University-Commerce 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.

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 on D2L.