

1-1-2008

CO 725 Research Seminar: Theory and Design

Randy Lewis

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Recommended Citation

Lewis, Randy, "CO 725 Research Seminar: Theory and Design" (2008). *Syllabi*. Book 2303.
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**CO 725: Research Seminar: Theory and Design
Spring 2008**

Thursdays, 6:15-9:00

Room # TBA

3 credits

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Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to basic research methods, research ethics, simple statistics and their interpretation, and the communication of research results.

Course Goals:

Goals: Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Define research vocabulary.
2. Describe various types of research.
3. Write using APA format.
4. Compute simple descriptive statistics.
5. Interpret descriptive and inferential statistics based on research data.
6. Understand the difference between qualitative and quantitative research.
7. Find, read, comprehend, and apply published articles.
8. Understand ways in which research can be used within a Christian framework.

Required Texts:

- Stangor, C. (2006). *Research methods for the behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. ISBN: 0618705910
- Course articles distributed in class.

Recommended Texts:

- Locke, L. F., Silverman, S. J., & Spirduso, W. W. (2004). *Reading and understanding research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.).

Prerequisite / Enrollment Limits: CO 601 and **recommend** completion of CO 720 (or previous experience with research and statistics from undergraduate psychology program) / No more than 25 students

Course Requirements:

- 1. Regular attendance** and active participation are very important to mastery of course material. Therefore, if you miss two (2) or more class sessions, you will not receive a passing grade. You are responsible for making sure I check your name as “present” during each class session

- 2. Participation – 5%**
You are expected to participate in class discussion and activities.

- 3. Objective examinations – 30% each (60% total)**
You will take one mid-term and one final exam on specified testing date to document your understanding of course content.

- 4. Research paper – 30%**
Develop a research paper. Your paper must include the following elements:

Step 1 – Clear statement of your research question and the importance of that question.

Step 2 – Brief annotated bibliography of possible resources you will use for you paper.

Step 3 – Develop an outline of your paper which evidences the logical development of your hypothesis and conclusions.

Step 4 – Review of the literature as it relates to your question. Your review must include a minimum of 10 references, 7 of which are journal articles (1996-2008). Of the 10 references, 5 must be a descriptive summary of empirical research. Format for these summaries will be discussed in class. The remaining 5 can be theoretical pieces.

The paper should have an introductory paragraph, good logical development, and a strong conclusion paragraph. Also, you must include title page and references per APA style.

The introductory paragraph and/or section should address the following question: why is your review of the literature needed (i.e., there is a lack of information in this area as demonstrated by XYZ); What do you hope to add to the “knowledge of the field” from your study?

The main body should include thorough summaries and critiques of the articles reviewed along with clear evidence of your own thinking about the issues.

The conclusion should address the following questions: What difference will your results make? How do you hope to apply the results?

Step 5 – Methodology section. This will be submitted as part of your final exam. It will be an overview of a study that you might run to find support for your hypothesis and literature review. It should include a description of your participants and your procedures [protocol and materials]. This finally includes a clear statement of your variables (dependent and independent), your hypotheses, your research design (including statistics), & your alpha level. **(This section is graded as part of the final exam, not as part of the paper.)**

You will develop your paper throughout the semester and you will submit it for review section by section on specified due dates. I will critique your work, focusing my attention on the section under review. I will not grade your paper at these points, but will give you ample feedback to help you develop a strong paper. I will not give you feedback on sections I have already reviewed unless you ask very specific questions. However, should you not turn in your “in process” paper for review on the specified dates, your final paper grade will be lowered (see below).

5. Homework - 5%

Throughout the semester we will be discussing different kinds of research articles. Worksheets will be provided to help you prepare for class. You should come to class prepared to discuss the article. Your work will be collected just to verify that you completed it on time. It will not be graded on accuracy.

Course Evaluation:

The grading guidelines found in the 2006-2008 catalog will be used for grade assignment.

A	93	B	83	C	73	D	63
A-	90	B-	80	C-	70	D-	60
B+	87	C+	77	D+	67	F	below 60

Course Policies

- **Attendance.** Attendance is essential for understanding and processing the material. You should only be absent in emergencies—illness, family death, or similar unavoidable situations. Emergencies DO NOT include attending to church work or other employment. Therefore, if you miss two (2) or more class sessions, you will not receive a passing grade. Poor participation will hurt your grade. And, *you are responsible for verifying that your attendance has been registered (when you arrive late to class)*. If you fail to sign, it will count as an absence. Also note that arriving significantly late to class or leaving significantly early (more than 20 minutes) will count as an absence ... even if you sign the attendance sheet.
- **Submitted Written Papers:**
 - **APA Format.** All written material should conform to style and form set forth in the Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association, 5th ed. Also, all written material should be produced with **Times New Roman 12-point font**, typed, double-spaced with a one-inch margin.
 - **Writing Quality.** Grades for written material will be partially based on quality of writing, clarity of thought, and logical development.

- **Form.** Written materials should be submitted in electronic format by the due date. Electronic submissions should be Word documents or text documents attached to an email. Papers will NOT be accepted in hardcopy (paper format).
- **Timeliness.** Students should submit written material on time; late papers will receive no written comments and the grade will be reduced.
- **Self-Disclosure.** In class interactions, some self-disclosure and personal examination may occur; this should be kept appropriate to the classroom situation. These interactions fall under the umbrella of confidentiality and members will be expected to abide by this ethical standard.
- **Incompletes.** Seminary guidelines indicate that “A grade of ‘I’ denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment” (*Catalog*, 32). Incompletes will only be granted in extreme situations, so be sure to plan for ordinary emergencies and busyness.
- **Withdrawals.** If you decide to withdraw from the course, you should file forms in the Registrar’s Office according to seminary deadlines.
- **Academic Integrity.** Students are expected to follow seminary policy with regard to issues of academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) and proper conduct in the classroom is required. Any confirmed incident of cheating is grounds for failure in this course. Cheating includes passing off someone else’s written work as one’s own as well as looking at someone else’s test answers to formulate one’s own test answer(s).
- **Problems.** If you are having difficulty in this course for ANY reason, please speak to me as soon as possible.
- **Special Needs.** All materials can be made available in alternate formats. Please inform me of any special needs you may have.
- **Scheduling.** The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to the course schedule as necessary.

Date	Reading	Focus	Goals	Announcements & Assignment Due
February 14	Stangor Ch 1 Locke Ch 1 & 6 APA Manual	Intro. To Research & the Scientific Method Getting along with APA	Goals of research. Steps in empirical research APA introduction	DUE FEB 21: read two articles given in class
February 21	Stangor Ch 2 Locke Ch 2, 4 & 5	Information Gathering & Analysis Exploring the literature	How to conduct a lit. search. Types of journal articles.	DUE FEB 28: read Draucker; Finkelhor articles
February 28	Stangor Appendix A, Ch 2 Locke Ch 3, 4, & 5 Locke pp. 242-245	Research articles. Literature Review. Theory articles Formulating a research problem	Structure of articles. Writing a coherent review of literature Create research problem	DUE March 6: One page summary of one research article & one theory article
March 6	Stangor Ch 4, Appendix B Locke Ch 7	Identifying variables Statistics	Levels of measurement	Exercises 1 & 2 & Measurement Work pages DUE March 13: Step 1 of Paper
March 13	Stangor Ch 8 Locke Appendix C	Constructing Hypotheses Statistical Significance	Hypothesis , $p < .05$ Type I & II errors	Ex. 3 - statistical significance work pages DUE March 20: Step 2 of Paper
March 20	Stangor Ch 12 & 14	Basic Research Design	Basic research design	DUE March 27: Step 3 of Paper
March 27	Stangor Ch 5, 13	MID TERM Reliability and Validity	Reliability Internal & External Validity	DUE April 10: First 1/3 of Step 4 of Paper, May resubmit earlier steps if you have specific questions
March 31 - April 5	NO CLASS - Spring Reading Week			
April 10	Stangor Ch 5, 13 Stangor Ch 3	Reliability and Validity Ethical Standards	Reliability Internal & External Validity Ethics	Exercise 4
April 17	Stangor Ch 6	Sampling Procedures Data Collection	Select your sample and your method of sampling; Determine how you are going to collect data	DUE April 24: read McMinn article
April 24	Stangor Ch 6 McMinn	Descriptive Research Case study; Survey research	Descriptive Research Case study; Survey research	DUE May 1: Draft of Step 3 of paper; read Stabb & Roth articles
May 1	Stangor Ch 9 Roth	Relational Research Correlational studies (r)	Correlational research Ex-post facto	DUE May 8: Read Foster article
May 8	Stangor Ch 10 & 11 Foster	Basic Experimental Design pre-post designs – t-test & ANOVA	Basic types of experimental design. Types of variables; Types of “groups” Sources of error	DUE 15: FINAL VERSION OF PAPER; read Lewis article
May 15	Stangor Ch 7 Lewis	Qualitative Research Faculty Presentation	Philosophy; Methods	NEXT WEEK: FINAL EXAMINATION
May 22		FINAL EXAMINATION		

Student:**2008 Spring Evaluation Form for Research Proposal**

(Each component is worth 5 points, except where noted.)

Section 1 – Literature Review

1. Introductory paragraph
2. Use of transitions. Do you provide transitional links between sections and within sections?
3. Quality of your review of the literature. Do maintain a high quality of writing?
4. Organization of literature review. Did you use APA heading format?
5. Relevance of your literature review to the research question. Have you addressed the key variables?
6. Review of empirical research studies & theoretical articles. How well have you unpacked the studies? Are there at least five empirical studies? Seven from journals? (10 points each)
a. Article 1 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 2 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 3 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 4 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 5 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 6 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 7 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 8 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 9 - empirical or theoretical -
a. Article 10 - empirical or theoretical -
7. Subsequent paragraphs to build your argument for where the “hole” is in the knowledge base, and therefore, the need for your study (10 points).
8. State research question.
9. State hypotheses.
10. Identify Independent variable(s) and Dependent variable(s).
11. Briefly discuss how variables will be operationalized.
12. Concluding paragraph

Section 2

13. Paragraph describing your participants. Do you include salient factors about the participants?
14. Tell how participants were recruited and name the kind of sampling procedures you used.
15. Selection of appropriate measures.
16. Description of measures used.
17. Tell what you had the participants do. How thorough is your description of what you have your participants do?
18. Name your research design accurately.
19. Correct re-statement of research question and hypotheses.
20. Describe statistics to be used in analysis, including test and probability level.
21. Restate dependent and independent variables, including levels of each as needed.

General

24. Accuracy of manuscript preparation (APA)
25. APA format for citations
26. APA format for references
27. APA format for headings, subheadings, title page, etc.
28. Overall apparent effort
29. Overall quality of work

Comments:**Grade for Final Paper:** _____**Overall Grade:** .1(draft section1a) + .1 (draft section1b) + .1 (draft section 2) + .7 (final paper)