

**URBAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH DESIGN: ELS 833**

Old Dominion University, Summer 2003

**Instructor:** Dr. Linda Bol      Office: ED 167-1, 683 - 3315 (Voice mail)  
Office Hours: 12 –1 Monday - Thursday  
Mailbox: ED 148 or outside my office  
E-mail: lbol@odu.edu

**Course Description:** This course focuses on the application of advanced research design as it is applied in urban education, human services, and educational technology.

**Required Texts:**

1. Schloss, P.J., & Smith, M.A. (1999). *Conducting research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
2. McMillan, J.H., & Wergin, J.F. (2002). *Understanding and evaluating educational research*. (2nd Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Review research approaches and designs
2. Critique published research studies that use experimental and non-experimental methodologies
3. Develop research questions and problem statements
4. Review literature related to a research question or problem
5. Operationally define variables and measure constructs
6. Write a research proposal
7. Recognize ethical and legal issues associated with research
8. Understand process for obtaining Human Subjects approval
9. Understand how to structure, write complete research report
10. Apply research methods for addressing questions related to urban issues and problems

**Outline of Topics:**

<b>Approximate Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assigned Reading</b>
7/14	Defining educational research; overview of research approaches and designs; criteria for evaluating research	Text 1: Chapter 1 Text 2: Chapter 1
7/15-7/16	Research topics, questions, problems; hypotheses, operational definitions, types of variables; reviewing the literature	Text 1: Chapters 3, 4 and 10
7/17	Quantitative experimental designs: true experiments, quasi experiments, factorial designs; Summaries and critiques of published experimental studies	Text 1: Chapter 5 Text 2: Chapter 3
7/21	Quantitative non-experimental designs: correlational research, survey research, ex-post facto or causal comparative. Summaries and critiques of published non-experimental studies	Text 2: Chapter 2
7/22	Selection and measurement in quantitative designs, reliability and validity in measures	Text 1: Chapters 8-9
7/23	Internal and external validity in quantitative designs	
7/24	Research proposals and reports	Text 1: Chapter 15-16
7/28	Critiques of research proposals	
7/29	Ethical and legal issues; obtaining Human Subjects approval	Text 1: Chapter 2
7/30	Prepare, review for final exam	
7/31	Final Exam	

**Assignments/ Grading Criteria:**

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Research question (s)/ problem	7/16	10
2. Address discussion questions for 2nd article in Chapter 3, Text 2	7/21	40
3. Address discussion questions for 2nd article in Chapter 2, Text 2	7/23	40
Submit proposal to partner	7/25	
5. Critique of research proposal	7/28	20
6. Research proposal	7/30	100
7. Final exam	7/31	<u>100</u>
<b>Total</b>		<b>310</b>

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. As described in a subsequent section, the underlying philosophy guiding my instruction is that students learn best through active participation and social exchange. If you miss more than two classes, your grade will be reduced by one letter grade (arriving late or leaving early counts as 1/2 an absence). In other words, be in class.

**Grading Scale:**

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade</u>
95 – 100	A
90 – 94	A-
87 – 89	B+
83 - 86	B
80 – 82	B-
77 - 79	C+
73 – 76	C
70 – 72	C-
60 - 70	D
0 - 60	F

**Late work:** Late work is accepted for half-credit if completed by 7/30

### **Methods and Activities:**

The instructional method features a combination of discussion, student presentations, small group activities, and lecture. You are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions and activities. Be prepared to summarize your work on the completed assignments during class.

The underlying principle guiding the instruction is that presentation of information be followed by active practice, providing the opportunity to use or apply the knowledge. You actively practice the material by generating and responding to discussion questions, working in small groups during class, and completing course assignments.

The goal of this course is to develop a climate of collaboration and cooperation. Learning is also facilitated through social interaction and exchange. I encourage you to work together both inside and outside of class.

### **Description of Assignments:**

*Assignment 1: Research question(s)/problem.* Submit the question(s) in question format. Also provide an explanation for why the question is important and how it relates to urban issues or problems. You may submit different questions if you are having trouble deciding. The other students and I will help you evaluate them in terms of importance and feasibility. The paper should be no more than one page in length.

*Assignments 2-4: Discussion questions in text.* Respond to the discussion questions about the articles presented in the text. This assignment will be modeled in class during group work. Each assignment should be no more than four pages in length.

*Assignment 5: Critique of research proposal.* You are responsible for reading and critiquing a classmate's research proposal. You will be assigned a partner for exchange of proposals. You must provide a copy of the complete proposal to your partner a few days before the critique is due. A rubric will be provided for you to use as guide for structuring the critique. This is the same rubric that I will use to evaluate the proposal. The critique with suggestions for improving the proposal should be from 2-3 pages in length.

*Assignment 6: Research Proposal.* The culminating project in this course is the research proposal. A handout describing its content and organization will be provided, and it is also addressed during class and in the text. We will use APA style. You should primarily rely on empirical journal articles for citations in your proposal. The proposal should be between 10 to 15 pages in length, including references.

*Assignment 7: Final Exam.* The final is a comprehensive exam containing short answer/essay items. It includes content covered in the texts and during class (lectures and group work).

### **Honor pledge and plagiarism:**

Both quotations below were taken directly from the Student Handbook published by Old Dominion University. By attending Old Dominion University you have accepted the responsibility to abide by this code. This is an institutional policy approved by the Board of Visitors. Violations of these standards may result in administrative action or disciplinary sanctions. (See handbook for more detailed information.)

Honor pledge: “I pledge to support the honor system of Old Dominion University. I will refrain from any form of academic dishonesty or deception, such as cheating or plagiarism. I am aware that as a member of the academic community, it is my responsibility to turn in all suspected violators of the honor system” (p.1).

Plagiarism: A student will have committed plagiarism if he or she reproduces someone else’s work without acknowledging its source; or if a source is cited which the student has not cited or used. Examples of plagiarism include: submitting a research paper obtained from a commercial research service, the Internet, or from another student as if it were original work; making simple changes to borrowed materials while leaving the organization, content, or phraseology intact; or copying material from a source, supplying proper documentation but leaving out the quotation marks. Plagiarism occurs in a group project if one or more of the members of the group does none of the group’s work and participates in none of the group’s activities, but attempts to take credit for work of the group (p. 81).