INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

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Purpose and Scope
This is the first course in the Department’s sequence of doctoral research courses. EAPS 714 focuses on furthering student’s knowledge and skills related to collection, analysis, and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative empirical data. Particular attention will be paid to development of conceptual models, measurement, research design and approaches, and the substantive interpretation of empirical findings. The goal of the doctoral research sequence of courses is to prepare students to design and carry out original research that deepens our understanding of some aspect of educational policy or leadership. EAPS 714 is the introductory course in the sequence.

This course is designed to allow students to explore basic themes in empirical inquiry. The course is an introductory overview of research issues such as specifying a conceptual model, conceptualizing and operationalizing measures, sampling cases, and developing data collection instruments. Students will gain experience in statistical methods for analyzing quantitative data, using SPSS. It is important to point out that this course is not a course in SPSS, rather that students will acquire experience with SPSS in solving a set of exercises prior to each class session. Students are expected to study the SPSS tutorial themselves, and to attend any of the free introductory courses in SPSS available on campus if they believe they need them. Students will also explore approaches to analyzing qualitative data, including issues related to organization and coding of information collected and reporting results, and the use of computer tools using the HyperRESEARCH package, that is included in the student CD-ROM of the Schutt textbook. Copies of SPSS (Student Edition) can be acquired with the Schutt textbook, through the University Bookstore or students may choose to use the copies available in the School of Education computer laboratory.

Course Requirements

Prerequisite
Students in this course are expected to have already acquired basic skills in statistics, including an understanding of fundamental inferential and multivariate analyses. This ability is indicated by earning a B or better in EAPS 614 (Quantitative Analysis for Educational Administrators) or an approved alternative course, or by passing the departmental statistics examination.
Lectures and Discussions:
This class will include lectures, discussion of readings, and discussion of analyses in student assignments. Regular attendance, preparedness, and contribution to class discussions and activities are necessary (but not sufficient) conditions for a passing grade in this course. Absences, lack of preparation, or failure to contribute will be taken into account in the final course grade.

Readings:
Two books containing the reading assignments for this course have been ordered for possible purchase and are available at the bookstore. They are:


Homework Assignments
There are 12 homework assignments for this course, each of equal value and representing 70% of a student’s final grade. All assignments must be turned in on time in order to receive any credit. In the case of SPSS and HyperRESEARCH exercises, students are required to not only master procedural aspects of analysis, but also to come to class prepared to discuss the conceptual and theoretical issues associated with the analytical techniques and the substantive interpretation of findings. Students submit their responses to the assignments in brief memoranda – and thus will not be submitting copies of output or examples of the results of practicing the SPSS or HyperRESEARCH procedures. However, the memoranda are of course based on these procedures, outputs, and intermediate products and students should bring these to class in order to serve as references for class discussions.

Final examination
There is a take-home final examination. The examination will consist of questions which students will have one week to answer. Students are permitted to use all notes, books or other resources to assist them in responding to the test, they are however required to respond to the test individually, without any consultation with others. Each of these examinations will be worth 30% of a student’s final grade.

Office Hours
Regular office hours are Mondays from 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm, and Tuesdays from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Students are requested to honor these as much as possible. Outside of these hours, appointments are available by prior arrangement.
Themes and Assignments

Week 1 (30 August)

No assignment – Introduction to the course

Week 2 (06 September)

Theme: Introduction to Disciplined Inquiry

Reading: Schutt – pgs 1-61, and Appendix F

Assignment 1: SPSS exercises on pages 26 and 60. Hand in a two-page memo in which you provide an answer to the final question under number 4 on page 26, and to the test of the Borg hypothesis under number 4, on page 60.

Week 3 (13 September)

Theme: Theory, Conceptualization and Measurement

Reading: Schutt – pgs. 62-126

Assignment 2: SPSS exercises on page 84 and page 126. Hand in a four-page memo, the first page with your response to 1d on page 84 (findings relevance to conflict theory) making sure that your response includes specific references to both theory AND the particular empirical results that you obtain. Page two of the memo should contain the same sort of brief write up for exercise 2 – in which you test only one of the alternatives (either functionalism, symbolic interactionism OR rational choice). Pages three and four of the memo should contain your responses to exercises on page 126

Week 4. (20 September)

Theme: From Conceptualization to Theoretical Modeling

Reading: Britt – pgs. 1-74

Assignment 3: There are exercises at the end of each chapter of the Britt
volume. In a memorandum of no more than two pages, provide an answer to 3 exercises (your choice) choosing one from each of Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

**Week 5**

(27 September)

**Theme:** Respecification and Elaboration of Models

**Reading:** Britt – pgs. 75-131

**Assignment 4:** In a memorandum of no more than two pages, provide an answer to 3 exercises (your choice) choosing one from each of Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

**Week 6**

(11 October)

**Theme:** Evaluating models and moving to working models.

**Reading:** Britt – pgs. 132-202

**Assignment 5:** In a memorandum of no more than two pages, provide an answer to 3 exercises (your choice) choosing from both Chapters 7 and 8.

**Week 7**

(18 October)

**Theme:** Sampling

**Reading:** Schutt – pgs. 127-164

**Assignment 6:** SPSS exercises on pages 163-164. Hand in a one page memo with your answer to 1g (page 164).

**Week 8**

(24 October)

**Theme:** Causation and Research Design

**Reading:** Schutt – pgs. 165-193

**Assignment 7:** Two page memo with your answers to the questions in exercises 1 through 3 on pages 192 and 193.
Week 9  
(01 November)

**Theme:** Experimentation and Quasi-experimentation

**Reading:** *Schutt* – pgs. 194-226

**Assignment 8:** Two page memo with your answers to the questions in SPSS exercises on pages 225 and 226. Make sure that you do 2c – the t-test procedure.

Week 10  
(08 November)

**Theme:** Survey Research

**Reading:** *Schutt* – pgs. 227-275.

**Assignment 9:** Two page memo with your answers to the questions in SPSS exercises on pages 274 and 275.

Week 11  
(15 November)

**Theme:** Qualitative, Historical and Comparative Research

**Reading:** *Schutt* – pgs. 276-309 and pgs. 337-366.

**Assignment 10:** Four page memo with your answers to the questions in SPSS exercises on pages 308-309 and 365-366.

Week 12  
(22 November)

**Theme:** Data Analysis

**Reading:** *Schutt* – pgs. 367-412.

**Assignment 11:** Two page memo with your answers to the questions in SPSS exercises on pages 412 and 413.

Week 13  
(29 November)

**Theme:** Qualitative Data Analysis and Content Analysis
Reading: Schutt – pgs. 414-449 and Appendix G.

Assignment 12: Two page memo with your answers to the questions in HyperRESEARCH exercises on page 449.

Week 14  (06 December)

Theme: Reporting Research and Introduction to issues in the preparation of Doctoral Research Proposals in EAPS.

Reading: Schutt – pgs. 450-474.

No assignment: – ESSAY FINAL EXAMINATION DISTRIBUTED TODAY.

ESSAY EXAMINATION DUE: 13 DECEMBER AT 7:15 PM

The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion in the event of extenuating circumstances.

University statement regarding accommodations for students with disabilities.
Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe that you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Student Disabled Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations.