

Argosy University, San Francisco Bay Area Campus
Department of Education

R7031: Descriptive Research Methods
Thursdays 4:00 pm – 10:00 pm

Spring 2006
01/12/06 – 02/23/06

Course Instructor: Brenda Czech, Ph.D.
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Course Overview:

R7031, Descriptive Research Methods, focuses on the structure and process of descriptive research across the disciplines of business, education, and behavioral science. The course presents the concepts of relationships, correlations, and descriptive paradigms, and examines computer applications, logistical issues, and the ethical considerations.

The student will be exposed to the various important aspects of descriptive research process, including utilizing correct descriptive sampling techniques; collecting and organizing data systematically; adhering to acceptable reliability and validity standards in measurement; applying appropriate descriptive methodology; performing descriptive statistical analysis including mean, mode, median, correlations, chi square and t-tests with matched groups; and present findings.

Course topics include the language of descriptive research; how to distinguish between various methodologies; conducting literature surveys that provide the foundation of investigation; critiquing descriptive research; reviewing the dissertation research process; and constructing effective descriptive research proposals.

Required Texts:

Salkind, N. (2004), *Statistics for People who (Think They) Hate Statistics* (2nd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers.

Gall, M.D., Gall, J.P. & Borg, W.R. (2004). *Educational Research: An Introduction* (7th Edition). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Course Grade:

Course grades indicate the following:

- A to A-: This grade indicates work of superior quality. It clearly exceeds expectations.
- B+ to B: This grade indicates work that is well above average, thoroughly competent.
- B-: This grade indicates work that meets expected minimum standards.
- C+ and below: This grade indicates work that shows little comprehension of the subject and falls significantly below expected minimum standards. This grade indicates the student must repeat the course to earn credit.

The course grade will be determined by the student's performance on class assignments, quizzes, homework, the midterm project, and the final project. Final course grades are weighted as follows:

A	96-100
A-	90-95
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	0-59

Course Requirements:

- Class Assignments 20%
- Quizzes & Homework 20%
- Midterm Project 25%
- Final Project 35%

All students are expected to attend every class session unless otherwise arranged. Scheduled reading assignments should be complete before the class meeting.

Class sessions will be comprised of lectures, discussions, review of selected homework problems, group work, quizzes and computer demonstrations. Students are expected to participate in class discussions, group activities and the review of homework.

Course Outline:

Prior to our first class meeting on Thursday, January 12th read Chapters 1,2, 3,& 4 in the Salkind text.

Session	Topics
01/12/06	Descriptive Statistics & SPSS Standard Deviation Frequency Distributions Introduction to Statistical Inference <i>Homework: Read Chapters 6-10 in Salkind text</i>
01/19/06	Research Hypothesis & Testing Techniques Correlation Coefficients Linear Regression Statistical Significance T-Tests <i>Homework Read Chapters 11, 14-15</i>
01/26/06	T-Tests & Statistical Significance Nonparametric statistics Other statistical procedures <i>Homework Read Chapters 1-4 in Gall, Gall & Borg Midterm project is due next session</i>
02/02/06	Midterm project due The Research Process Research Proposals & Review of the Literature Ethics and Legal Issues <i>Homework Read Chapters 5-8</i>
02/09/06	Statistical Techniques Sample Selection Collecting Data <i>Homework Read Chapters 10-13 Draft of final project is due next session</i>
02/23/06	Quantitative Research Designs Feedback on final project drafts
02/27/06	Final Project Due

Professional Resources:

http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml	The U.S. Department of Education: Its original directive remains its mission today — to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation.
http://nces.ed.gov/	National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data that are related to education in the United States and other nations.
http://www.eric.ed.gov/	Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to provide access to education literature and resources.
http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/resource_library.asp	Smithsonian Education – Resource Library: The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies provides leadership in education at the Smithsonian and produces a variety of programs, services, and resources for the education and museum communities. The Center studies education at the Institution and builds consensus on standards for strengthening its educational programs, publications, and websites.

Professional Associations and Journals:

APA: The American Planning Association brings together thousands of people — practicing planners, citizens, elected officials — committed to making great communities happen. APA is a nonprofit public interest and research organization committed to urban, suburban, regional, and rural planning. APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, advance the art and science of planning to meet the needs of people and society.

<http://www.cefpi.org/> The American Educational Research Association is concerned with improving the educational process by encouraging scholarly inquiry related to education and by promoting the dissemination and practical application of research results.

<http://www.aera.net/> Education Commission of the States (ECS) keeps policymakers on the leading edge of what's happening in the states by gathering, analyzing and disseminating information about current and emerging issues, trends and innovations in state education policy.

<http://www.ppionline.org/> American Educational Research Journal (AERJ) is a quarterly publication of the American Educational Research Association. It has as its purpose to publish original empirical and theoretical studies and analyses in education.

http://harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu/b02/en/hbr/hbr_home.jhtml ED Review is a bi-weekly update on U.S. Department of Education activities relevant to the Intergovernmental and Corporate community and other stakeholders.

<http://www.edweek.org/> The Chronicle of Higher Education is a weekly publication that is a leading news source for college and university faculty members and administrators.