

# ARGOSY UNIVERSITY SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**Course Title** Descriptive Research Methods

**Course Number** R7031

**Required Texts** Marks, D. & Yardley, L. (2003). *Research Methods for Clinical and Health Psychology*. Thousand Oaks; CA: Sage Publications. ISBN 0-7619-7191-2

Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN 1-4129-0197-9

**Course Description** Descriptive Research Methods introduces a number of key concepts in quantitative and qualitative research and provides practical exercises to develop skills in using a range of research methods. The main topics include understanding principles of research design from the perspectives of the scientific method, interpretive methods, and feminist approaches; key differences between quantitative and qualitative research approaches; combining research methods; and the role of the researcher in conducting original research. Practical exercises in the organization and summary of raw data (using descriptive statistics and content analysis), the evaluation of validity and reliability, and data interpretation support skill development in the practical application of research methods to the design and preparation of research proposals.

**Pre-requisite Knowledge or Courses** None

**Course Objectives** To provide an opportunity for students to develop;

- FAMILIARITY with a breadth of issues and concepts related to quantitative and qualitative descriptive research methods.
- UNDERSTANDING of the key differences between quantitative and qualitative research designs.
- ABILITY to organize raw data and present summaries of quantitative and qualitative data.
- SKILLS in the independent analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.
- COMPETENCY in the preparation of a psychology research proposal using descriptive research methods.

**Methods of Instruction** Online teaching and class participation.

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Assignment 1: Critical essay  
 Assignment 2: Research proposal

**Content Areas**

Research design; quantitative & qualitative research methods; descriptive statistics; content analysis; validity & reliability; data interpretation & reporting.

**Schedule**

Week (Mondays)	Date	Module	Assignments
1	05/08/06	Module 1. Research Design	
2	05/15/06	(Mod 1. continued)	
3	05/22/06	Module 2. Theories, Hypotheses, & Populations	
4	05/29/06	Module 3. Describing Quantitative Data	
5	06/05/06	(Mod 3. continued)	
6	06/12/06	Module 4. Describing Qualitative Data	
7	06/19/06	(Mod 4. continued)	
8	06/26/06	Module 5. Analyzing Qualitative Data	Assignment 1 due
9	07/03/06	(Mod 5. continued)	
10	07/10/06	Module 6. Combining Quantitative & Qualitative Data	
11	07/17/06	(Mod 6. continued)	
12	07/24/06	Module 7. Reporting Results	
13	07/31/06	(Mod 7. continued)	
14	08/07/06	Module 8. Refining Your Research Proposal	Assignment 2 due
15	08/14/06	Summary	

**Student Performance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures**

**Criteria for Online Class Participation**

Grade	
A = 90+	Student actively participated in online discussions in <b>&gt;80%</b> of sessions; <b>nearly all</b> comments were <b>thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings.</b>
B = 80 – 89	Student actively participated in online discussions in <b>&gt;80%</b> of sessions; <b>most</b> of the comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings.
C = 70 – 79	Student participated in online discussions in <b>&gt;70%</b> of sessions; comments/questions demonstrate a surface level understanding of course topics.

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F = <70	Student participated in <70% of sessions; comments/questions did not demonstrate an understanding of course topics, or <b>student did not participate</b> in online discussions.
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### Criteria for Paper

Grade	
A = 90+	Paper is in appropriate APA format, well thought out and provides <b>excellent</b> coverage of material. There is <b>substantial evidence</b> of understanding complex psychological concepts applied to research methods, and critical reflection on literature and empirical research.
B = 80 – 89	Paper is well thought out, but is missing one component of APA format OR coverage of material is <b>adequate</b> . There is <b>some evidence</b> of understanding complex psychological concepts applied to research methods and critical reflection on literature and empirical research.
C = 70 – 79	Insufficient number of references provided AND <b>limited</b> coverage. There is <b>limited evidence</b> of understanding complex psychological concepts applied to research methods and critical reflection on literature and empirical research.
F = <70	Paper is disorganized AND coverage is not adequate AND does not conform to APA format, or there is evidence of <b>plagiarism</b> , or paper not submitted. There is <b>no evidence</b> of understanding complex psychological concepts applied to research methods, and/or critical reflection on literature and empirical research.

### Criteria for Research Proposal

Grade	
A = 90+	Paper is in appropriate APA format, well thought out and provides <b>excellent</b> coverage of material. <b>All</b> the main sections of a psychology research proposal are included, and there is a clearly demonstrated understanding of research decisions and ethical issues.
B = 80 – 89	Paper is well thought out, but is missing one component of APA format OR coverage of material is <b>adequate</b> . <b>Most</b> of the main sections of a psychology research proposal are included, and there is a demonstrated understanding of research decisions and ethical issues.
C = 70 – 79	Insufficient number of references provided AND <b>limited</b> coverage. <b>Few</b> of the main sections of a psychology research proposal are included, and only a demonstrated understanding of some research decisions and/or ethical issues.
F = <70	Paper is disorganized AND coverage is not adequate AND does not conform to APA format, or there is evidence of <b>plagiarism</b> , or paper not submitted. The main sections of a psychology research proposal are

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<b>not</b> addressed, and there is <b>no</b> demonstrated understanding of research decisions and/or ethical issues.
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### **Grading**

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
69 below	F

### **Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism**

In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Additionally, Argosy University considers resubmission of a work produced for one course in a subsequent course or the submission of work done partially or entirely by another to be academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the instructor regarding how much help may be received in completing an assignment, exam or project and what sources may be used.

**Scholarly writing:** The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You are responsible for maintaining an electronic copy of any work submitted, because you may be asked to submit your course assignments through "Turnitin," ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

### **ADA Policy**

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It is AU/San Francisco Bay Area Campus policy not to discriminate against qualified students with a documented disability in its educational programs, activities or services. If you have a disability-related need for accommodations in this class, contact the Campus Director of Student Services at 510-215-0277.

**Your instructor is responsible for delivering this curriculum in a format that will ensure the objectives are met and measured. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways depending upon the experience, orientation, technological acumen, emphasis and preferences of the instructor as well as the resources available. Your instructor is also required to ensure that the course Outline include details regarding assignments and method of instruction.**

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