**EDUC 5302.060**
**Developing an Educational Research Proposal**
<u>**Fall 2025, Online**</u>

**Instructor:** Christopher L. Thomas, Ph.D.
**Office:** BEP 204
**Office Hours:** Thursday 4:00 – 7:00 pm (& by appointment)
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**
Continuation of EDUC 5301. Students will develop competency in the skills needed to conduct educational research through the systematic review of responsible research practices. Students will be expected to produce, present, and defend a well-developed research proposal at the conclusion of the semester. Online sections of this course will have a per credit hour fee. Please see the official University Catalog for current fee amount and details.

<u>*Last day to Withdraw from the course: November 3rd, 2025*</u>

Prerequisite: Formal admission to graduate program, EDUC 5301, consent of advisor

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**
As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the primary components of a research proposal.
2. Conduct effective literature reviews and critically evaluate educational research.
3. Develop an educational research project with defensible goals, methods, and analytic plan.
4. Communicate the significance of the proposed results of their research in written fashion.
5. Describe the steps needed to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects when conducting educational research.

**Readings (to be distributed by instructor):**

Boudah, D. J. (2020). Conducting educational research: Guide to Completing a thesis, dissertation, or action research project. (2nd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.ISBN: 9781544351698

Available from the UTT bookstore or online.
[FREE]https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uttyler/detail.action?docID=7106558

Dahlberg, L., & McCaig, C. (Eds.). (2010). *Practical research and evaluation: A start-to-finish guide for practitioners*. Sage.

Goodson, P. (2017). *Becoming an academic writer: 50 exercises for paced productive, and powerful writing (2nd edition)*. Sage.

Mertens, D. M., & Wilson, A. T. (2012). *Program evaluation theory and practice: A comprehensive guide. The Guilford Press.*

Mertler, C. A. (2017). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators*. Sage Publications.

Mertler, C. A. (2022). *Introduction to educational research.* Sage Publications.

Mills, G. E. (2018). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher.* Pearson.

***Supplemental Readings:***

Bem, D. J. (1987). Writing the empirical journal. *The compleat academic: A practical guide for the beginning social scientist*, 171-201.

Gibbons, B., & Herman, J. (1996). True and Quasi Experimental Designs. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 4
Available at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/pare/vol5/iss1/14

Peel, K. L. (2020). A beginner's guide to applied educational research using thematic analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation*, 25(1), 2.

Thompson, B (1994). The concept of statistical significance testing. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 4(5). Available online:
http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=4&n=5.

**Course Policies and Expectations:**

**Use of Artificial Intelligence:** Most assignments in this course will permit using artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT or Copilot. When AI use is permissible, it will be documented in the assignment description, and all use of AI must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. When using AI tools for assignments, add an appendix showing (a) the entire exchange (e.g., prompts used), highlighting the most relevant sections; (b) a description of precisely which AI tools were used, (c) an explanation of how the AI tools were used (e.g. to generate ideas, elements of text, etc.); and (d) an account of why AI tools were used (e.g. to save time, to surmount writer's block, to stimulate thinking, to experiment for fun, etc.). Using AI tools without appropriate acknowledgment and citation violates UT Tyler's Honor Code, constitutes plagiarism, and will be treated as such.

**Course Environment:** This is an online course that is delivered through the Canvas Learning Management System. As such, it is imperative that you check Canvas for necessary information and course materials. If you experience technical problems or have a technical question about this course, you can obtain assistance by emailing itsupport@patriots.uttyler.edu. When you email IT Support, be sure to include a complete description of your question or problem including: (1) the title and number of the course, (2) the page in question, (3) If you get an error

message, a description and message number, and (4) what you were doing at the time you got the error message

**Written Assignments:** All written assignments should be typed (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font) and submitted by midnight Central Standard Time on the due date. All written assignments should be submitted through the assignment link that I will provide. Please name written assignments using the following convention: last name, first initial, assignment title (ex. Last_F_Assignmenttitle). Assignments completed for other courses may **NOT** be turned in for this course and will be considered **academic dishonesty**.

**Email:** Questions and concerns about course content and assignments should be submitted to my email. I will make every effort to respond quickly to your emails. Generally speaking, I check email twice a day during the workweek and less frequently on the weekend. If my schedule makes me unavailable to answer emails for an extended period, I will try to post an announcement so that you can plan accordingly. My priority is communicating with you and providing you with the tools needed to be successful in the course, so if there are any problems, we will work to solve them.

**Late Work Policy:** Late work refers to any course assignment that is submitted after the stated deadline. **Late work will be accepted in this class. However, there will be a 10% penalty for each late day.** Practically, this means that you will not receive credit for an assignment if you submit after 10 or more days. Importantly, the late work policy does not apply to discussion board posts. Discussion board posts and replies will not be accepted after the stated deadline.
**Student Assignments & Projects:**

The course is designed to be delivered in a "module format." This means that there will be a few different modules that you will work through that include their own readings, assignments, quizzes, and tests. The modules will be presented in a standardized format. The following are standard activities that will be included in the modules:

**Readings**: This course requires independent reading to ensure that you develop content mastery. There will be two main reading requirements throughout the semester.  Specifically, you will be required to read selections from the various textbooks and research articles that I will assign. All readings will be available on the Canvas site.

**Lecture Videos:** Each week, I will post lecture videos to the Canvas site to support the development of content mastery. The topic of each lecture video(s) will be related to key concepts found within the readings for that week. The lecture video(s) for each topic will be available on the Canvas site each Monday morning beginning at 9:00 am Central Standard Time. The Texas higher education coordinating board requires all courses to include 50 minutes of direct instruction per credit hour. With that in mind, please expect that the lectures in this course will be similar in length to those seen in a traditional face-to-face course.

**Discussion Board:** You will participate in several discussion board across the semester. The discussion boards will provide you the opportunity to discuss pieces of your research proposal with others in the course. I will provide prompts to help guide each discussion.

**Self-Reflections:** Research shows that metacognition (the ability to reflect on study success and make changes) is critical for success in graduate school. As such, I will be asking you to complete several low-stakes reflections designed to increase metacognitive ability. I will provide information about these assignments later in the semester.

**Writing Check-Ins.** I will ask each of you to complete writing check-ins throughout the semester. This allows me to keep track of the progress you are making on the research proposal. But, more importantly, these assignments will give you the opportunity to report barriers or challenges you are running into so I can provide timely support!

**Literature Review Draft:** Students will be expected to create an in-depth literature review organized around a topic(s) relevant to teaching/learning and your own practice. The literature review will conclude with research question(s) that are designed to address a problem or concern that is relevant to educators. This assignment will be graded on APA format, overall writing quality, and alignment among the literature review and research questions, the testability of the research question(s).

**Methodology Draft:** Students will be expected to identify a research strategy and method(s) of data collection that will allow them to address their research question(s) effectively. This assignment will be graded on APA format, overall writing quality, and the appropriateness of the research strategy and data collection method(s).

**Final proposal:** The final assessment for this course will be the completed draft of a high-quality educational research proposal. The final proposal must include an in-depth review of the literature related to an educational topic, research questions, study design, methods of data collection to be used, and analysis procedures. This assignment will be graded on APA format, overall writing quality, alignment among the literature review and research questions, the testability of the research question(s), and the appropriateness of the research strategy, data collection methods, and analytic plan.

**Buddy System/Learning Team.** Each of you has been assigned to a "buddy group" for the duration of the course. This means that you now have a small group of peers to reach out to if you are uncertain about something, you need some help, you are struggling, or you need some words of encouragement. Your job is to help each other succeed in this course. You will receive points for creating a plan to support one another and will be graded on how "well" you support the success of your peers. You will also work with individuals in your buddy group to complete peer reviews of the major paper components.

**Due Date:** Unless stated otherwise, all assignments are due before Midnight on Sunday the week that they appear on the course schedule. Stated another way, each week's assignments are due before Midnight on Sunday.

| Grade Item | % of Final Grade | Total Points |
|---|---|---|
| Discussion Boards | 9% | 15 points each X 6 DB posts = 90 total points |
| Writing Check Ins | 2% | 2 Assignments x 10 points = 20 points total |
| Literature Review Draft | 5% | 50 Points |
| Method Section Draft | 5% | 50 Points |
| Final Research Proposal | 75% | 750 points |
| Self-reflection activities | 2% | 2 Reflections x 10 points each = 20 total points |
| Learning Team | 2% | 5 points for the support plan<br>15 points for the quality of support across the semester |
| Course Total | | Approximately 1000 points |

**Please note: The number, content focus, and point value of all assessments and assignments is an approximation and may change.**

**Letter Grades: Letter grades will be assigned using the following guidelines:**
A: 90% of points or above, B: 80% - 89 % of points, C: 70% - 79% of points, D: 60.00% - 69% of points, F: 59% of points or below

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| **Proposed Semester Schedule** | | | | | |
| **Date** | **Topic(s)** | **Required Reading(s)** | **Supplemental Readings (Optional)** | **Discussion Board Post** | **Other Assignments** |
| **Week 1** | | | | | |
| Aug. 25th – Aug. 31st | Course Orientation & Introduction to Action Research | Mills: Ch 1 | Mertler (2017) Ch:1 | Introductions & Syllabus Reconnaissance | Availability & Topic Statement |
| **Week 2** | | | | | |
| Sept 1st – Sept. 7th | Analyzing Empirical Sources & Research Topics & Questions | Mertler (2017) Ch:3 | Mills: Ch 4 | Topic Overview | Learning Support Plan |
| **Week 3** | | | | | |
| Sept. 8th – Sept. 14th | Hypotheses & writing the literature review | Mertler (2017) Ch:8 Boudah Chapter 3 | Bem (1987) | Problem statement, research question, and hypotheses | |

| Date | Topic(s) | Required Reading(s) | Supplemental Readings (Optional) | Discussion Board Post | Assignments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Week 4: Writing Week** | | | | | |
| Sept. 15th – Sept. 21st | | | | | Lit Review Progress Check #1 |
| **Week 5: Writing Week** | | | | | |
| Sept. 22nd – Sept. 28th | | | | | Literature Review Draft |
| **Week 6:** | | | | | |
| Sept. 29th – Oct. 5th | Overview of Qualitative Research | Mertler (2022) Ch:6<br><br>Boudah Chapter 6 | Dahlberg & McCaig Ch: 8<br><br>Mills: Ch5 | | Self-Reflection #1 |
| **Week 7** | | | | | |
| Oct. 6th – Oct 12th | Overview of Quantitative Research | Mertler (2022) Ch:7<br><br>Mertler (2017) Ch:5 (Quantitative Content) | Gibbons & Herman, 1996<br><br>Mills: Ch5 | Research Design Discussion | Learning Team Peer Review |
| **Week 8** | | | | | |
| Oct. 13th – Oct 19th | Validity and Reliability | Boudah Chapter 4 | | Data Collection Discussion | |

| Date | Topic(s) | Required Reading(s) | Supplemental Readings (Optional) | Discussion Board Post | Assignments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Week 9: Writing Week** | | | | | |
| Oct. 20th – Oct 26th | Writing the Method Section | Goodson – Chapter 8 | | | |
| **Week 10: Writing Week** | | | | | |
| Oct. 27th – Nov 2nd | | | | | Method Progress Check |
| **Week 11** | | | | | |
| Nov 3rd – Nov 9th | | | | | Method Section Draft |
| **Week 12:** | | | | | |
| Nov 10th – Nov 16th | Analyzing Quantitative Data (PT 1) | Mertler (2017): Ch 6 (Quantitative Data Analysis Content) | Thompson, 1994 | | |

| Date | Topic(s) | Required Reading(s) | Supplemental Readings (Optional) | Discussion Board Post | Assignments |
|------|----------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| **Week 13** | | | | | |
| Nov 17th– Nov 23rd | Analyzing Quantitative Data (PT 2) | | | | |
| **Week 14: Thanksgiving Break** | | | | | |
| Nov 24th – Nov 30th | | | | | |
| **Week 15** | | | | | |
| Dec 1st – Dec 7th | Analyzing Qualitative Data & Writing the Planned Analysis and Implication Section | Boudah Chapter 4 | Peel, 2020 | Analytic Plan and Proposed Findings Discussion | |
| Finals Week! | | | | | |
| Dec 8th  – Dec 13th | | | | | Self-Reflection #2<br><br>Final Research Proposal<br><br>All Due Thursday December 11th |

**Note: All dates and content are subject to change**