Course Location: Old Main 307

Instructor: Dr. Jim Shasteen
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ISBN-10: 0137013442

Meetings: Westminster College
319 South Market Street
New Wilmington, PA 16172

August 21, 2017-October 13, 2017 (Tuesdays)
5 PM-8 PM on dates scheduled
Blended learning on dates scheduled

Catalog Description: Current research and trends in education. The course is
designed to involve the student, through independent research
and seminar-type discussion, in an analysis of significant
contemporary issues in education.

Course Description: The course is designed to help students become good
consumers of research, to become familiar with the steps in
proposing research topics, and clearly apply research
knowledge in education. After completing the course, students
will be able to prepare a research plan, collect data, address
research questions and hypotheses, and organize a project
report. An overview of qualitative, quantitative, action, and
single-subject research principles and methodology will be provided.

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism, cheating and class disruptiveness is not permitted. Students should be intimately familiar with Westminster College’s Academic Integrity Policy. The Westminster Policy provides a detailed description of what is considered academic integrity, behaviors which are viewed as breaches of the policy, the procedures that will be followed in every case of violation of the policy and the consequences of violating the policy. Students are also required to follow the Pennsylvania Code for Professional Practice and Conduct. Failure to access and to become familiar with either code is not justifiable excuses. All written work will be electronically submitted to Turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection service. Details about this service will be described in class.

Cheating on exams or assignments, plagiarism, or class disruptiveness may result in penalties ranging from an “F” on an assignment or the course to expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the offense. Unless specifically described, all assignments are to be done individually and not in groups.

**Electronic Devices and Class Disruption**
The operation of cell phones, pagers, text messaging, etc., are not permitted unless advanced permission is given by the instructor for emergency situations. The Academic Integrity Policy will serve as a guide for instructor response.

**Disability Policy:** Students who desire some form of accommodation for a diagnosed learning disability or physical problem must inform their instructors at the beginning of each semester (within two weeks) as to the nature of the disability and type of accommodation requested. If the disability or physical problem is diagnosed during the semester, students should inform their instructors immediately of the problem and accommodations needed. Student with disabilities should also inform the Disabilities Coordinator in the Office of Student Affairs, who is available to assist in evaluating the disability and to facilitate communication between the College and the student in considering special accommodations. The type of accommodation provided will
depend on the needs of the student, the circumstances of the student’s classes, and the resources of the College.

**Grading:**

94-100% = A  
90-93 % = A-  
88-89% = B+  
84-87% = B  
80-83% = B-  
78-79% = C+  
74-77% = C  
70-73% =C-  
68-69% = D+  
64-67% = D  
60-63% = D-  
Below 60% = F

**Course Requirements:**

**Attendance and Participation (20%)**  
All students are expected to attend all classes and be on time. This is imperative so that each of us (instructor included) can benefit from the course, learn and gain insights from others, and actively participate in the dialogue we share throughout the course. Please remember that just showing up is not enough. Be prepared to present your work for each Face 2 Face class session, listen to the insights of others, and be willing to be an active learner.

Participation in the class (which includes attendance, being prepared, sharing your thoughts, and actively participating in class activities) will be considered in your course grade particularly in those cases where the grade is borderline.

An important part of any preparation program is preparation for the profession in both knowledge base and professional skill. One such skill is completing work on time unless justifiable circumstances intervene. Thus, my policy regarding due dates for work is as follows: Assignments are due at class time on the dates listed in the syllabus. Late submissions must be
accompanied by an explanation of the delay and if such delay is foreseeable, should be discussed in advance with me. Should I judge the explanation to be reasonable you will receive the same credit you would have received had it been on time. If the explanation is not reasonable, I may alter or eliminate credit for the assignment. Again, if you can tell by your collective syllabi that you will not meet a due date, negotiate with me well in advance for another due date.

**Quizzes (30%)**

There is an online component in your syllabus for each week. You are to read the selected chapter and take the online quiz that is on D2L. The quizzes need to be taken prior to the next class session so that you do not get behind.

**Weekly Written Reflection (15%)**

Weekly written reflections of any of the topics of the text are used to facilitate learning opportunities for all students and the instructor. You will complete your written reflection for the chapter that we will cover in class the following week. Please print out a hard copy of your reflection and plan to read it aloud to promote discussion with your peers and instructor. In addition, you will provide your instructor a copy of your written reflection paper. Be sure to write your written reflection/commentary content from the textbook which should also include your own reflective thoughts and application to your role as an educator. Lastly, you may use the first person (I) in your reflections.

Your reflection submission should be 200-250 words in length. When writing, keep in mind that the purpose of the reflection is to do the following:

1. Promote peer interaction.
2. Demonstrate your understanding of the course content.
3. Address the course content.
4. Use appropriate grammar, spelling and complete sentences.
5. Write out your reflections in Microsoft Word before you submit them into Dropbox. This will ensure that you have the exact word count (please post this in parentheses before you submit your response; post it at the very end of your response). Additionally, Microsoft Word will check your work with regard to spelling and grammar mistakes.
6. Cite the references and sources (APA style) from which you are quoting and/or providing information.
7. You are expected to use a professional writing style in which you must acknowledge and cite the experts who have contributed to research, theory, and applications in the field of study.
8. At the end of your reflection, provide a list of references in APA style, if needed. This will add credibility to your work, provides ongoing references for your own research, and provides readers with a list of references.

**Rubric for Weekly Written Reflections:**

**Distinguished: (9-10 points for assignment):**
Written assignment is completed on time, is thoughtful and thorough, explicitly meets the intent of the assignment, and is presented professionally.

**Satisfactory (7-8 points for assignment):**
Assignment is completed on time, is thoughtful, and is presented professionally.

**Progressing or Needs Improvement (5-6 points for assignment):**
Assignment is completed on time but lacks the depth or professionalism required and/or expectations of a graduate student

**Unsatisfactory (0-5 points for assignment):**
Assignment lacks the requirements and does not meet graduate level work and expectations

**ACTION RESEARCH PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT (35%)**

You are to write a proposal for your action research project, focusing on the research methods appropriate for your project. This may include quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods. Make sure that your evaluative strategy (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) is appropriate for those types of studies. In other words, if you propose using a qualitative research strategy, ensure that your research questions are consistent with qualitative methodology. Below is the outline for the assignment.

**I. Introduction (2-3 pages):**

*A. Introduction of your topic.* What is the issue that you are researching in your school/district? How did this issue become the focus of your action research project? What needs assessment was done to justify interventions in this area?
B. Review of Related Literature: Explain how the topic/issue is defined in the literature and summarize previous research findings on this topic. Remember that one of the primary purposes of a literature review is to provide a rationale for the study. The resources you cite should be closely related to the various aspects of the topic/issue.

C. Research Questions: Identify the general and (if any) specific research questions.

II. Methods (3-4 pages):

A. Design: Briefly explain the type of intervention you are proposing. How does this intervention address the issues that were raised by the needs assessment? You must justify your reasons for the intervention(s) you selected.

B. Sample: What is the population to be receiving your intervention? Identify the size of the sample, who is to be selected and why.

C. Evaluation and Data Collection: How will you evaluate your efforts regarding the intervention? If you are not using an existing instrument, attach the questions/data collect instrument that you will be using. The procedures, and rationale, for data collection are to be described.

If you use quantitative methods, identify the instruments and the procedures for administering the instruments. If you plan on using existing instruments, identify your rationale for using those instruments, including a description of their psychometric characteristics.

D. Data Analysis: Identify how the data will be analyzed (t-test, ANOVA, multiple regression, simple correlation, simply examining percentages or averages, grounded theory, Miles and Huberman’s approach, etc.).

III. Conclusion (1 page):

A. Explain the limitations of the study: If you are using a quantitative or mixed methods design, you should explain the potential threats to validity, which would include explaining some of the problems with generalizing the results to a larger population. If you are proposing a qualitative or mixed methods study, you should explain the delimitations of the study, which includes drawing clear boundaries around the context of the study (e.g., participants, environment, perspective).
The proposal paper must follow APA format guidelines for professional writing and should be approximately 5-7 pages in length.

**Areas of Assessment on the Action Plan Proposal:**

Introduction of your topic (10 points)
Review of Related Literature (10 points)
Research Questions (10 points)
Design (10 points)
Sample (10 points)
Evaluation and Data Collection (10 points)
Data Analysis (10 points)
Explanation of the limitations of the study (10 points)
Usage of the APA style format (10 points)
Correct grammar, mechanics, and usage (10 points)

Total: 100 points

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**Rubric for the Action Research Proposal Assignment**

**Distinguished: (9-10 points for assignment):**
Written assignment is completed on time, is thoughtful and thorough, explicitly meets the intent of the assignment, and is presented professionally.

**Satisfactory (7-8 points for assignment):**
Assignment is completed on time, is thoughtful, and is presented professionally.

**Progressing or Needs Improvement (5-6 points for assignment):**
Assignment is completed on time but lacks the depth or professionalism required and/or expectations of a graduate student.

**Unsatisfactory (0-5 points for assignment):**
Assignment lacks the requirements and does not meet graduate level work and expectations.
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Quiz/Assignment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: 8/22</td>
<td>Introduction to the course, scientific method, overview of types of educational research, ethics and the IRB.</td>
<td>Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>Quiz on 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Online component: Mini-quiz 1-Due before 8/29</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Complete written reflection for Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2: 8/29</td>
<td>Proposing a Topic for Research and Locating Published Research</td>
<td>Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>Complete written reflection for Chapter 4</td>
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<td>Quiz on 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Online component: Mini-quiz 2-Due before 9/5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Read Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
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<td>Complete written reflection for Chapter 5</td>
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<td>3: 9/5</td>
<td>Interpreting Published Research, Basic statistics, significance</td>
<td>Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>5 &amp; 6</td>
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<td>Complete written reflection for Chapter 6</td>
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<td>Quiz on 9</td>
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<td>Online component: Reading on preparing a research report (style/format).</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 7</td>
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<td>Mini quiz Due before 9/12</td>
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<td>Quiz on 6</td>
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<td>Read Chapter 11</td>
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<td>Complete written reflection of Chapter 11</td>
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<td>4: 9/12</td>
<td>Validity and Reliability; Survey Research</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 7</td>
<td>6 (cont) &amp; 11</td>
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<td>Online component: Identifying sampling methods.</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Quiz on 6</td>
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<td>Mini-quiz 4 - Due before 9/19</td>
<td>Chapters 15 &amp; 16</td>
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<td>Read Chapters 15 &amp; 16</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 7</td>
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<td>Complete written reflection of Chapter 15 or 16</td>
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<td>5: 9/19</td>
<td>Action Research &amp; Evaluation Research</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 7</td>
<td>15 &amp; 16</td>
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<td>Online component: Read Assigned Article</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Quiz on 15</td>
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<td>Mini-quiz 5 - Due before 9/26</td>
<td>Chapters 10 &amp; 7</td>
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<td>Read Chapters 10 &amp; 7; Complete written reflection of Chapter 10.</td>
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| Week 6: 9/26 | Qualitative Research  
Project Proposal Due-Submit to Dropbox by 11:59 pm on 9/25 and bring in a printed copy for review. | 10 & 7 (p. 128-130) |
|---|---|---|
| | Online component: Mini-quiz 6- Due before 10/3  
Read Chapters 12&13  
Complete written reflection of Chapter 12 or 13 | Quiz on 10 |
| Week 7: 10/3 | Quantitative Research | 12 & 13 |
| | Online component: Mini-quiz 7 -Due before 10/10  
Read Chapter 14 | Quiz on 12 |
| Week 8: 10/10 | Mixed-Methods Research & Student Presentations | 14 |