

Minnesota State University, Mankato Department of Educational Studies: Elementary and Early Childhood EEC 240: Research, 3 credits [W = Writing Intensive Course]
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Course Description

To research an area within elementary education to provide in-depth understanding and experience with scholarly inquiry.

Course Objectives

Students will discover content and practice skills related to scholarly inquiry and their academic subjects.

Students will gain content knowledge about:

1. A variety of research approaches and terminology used in an academic discipline.
2. Ethical principles about academic honesty and research with human subjects.
3. Standards for evaluating evidence according to appropriate scholarly conventions.
4. How inquiry is situated within broader academic and professional contexts.

Students will gain a variety of skills related to scholarly inquiry and to their future academic and career goals:

1. Articulate and refine the question for inquiry.
2. Identify and use resources to foster understanding and inquiry.
3. Organize project activities.
4. Manage time.
5. Coordinate team members.
6. Respond to others who have different ideas and values (critical thinking, active listening, evaluating, synthesizing, negotiating).
7. Use software related to word processing, data analysis, and reporting.
8. Communicate with academic audiences (speaking, listening, reading, researching, writing, public speaking).
9. Work harmoniously with other students, faculty and other research assistants.
10. Communicate the results of the project for a specified audience using appropriate scholarly conventions.

Required Texts

- Johnson, A. P. 2011. A Short Guide to Action Research. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Publishing Co.
- VanderStoep, S. W. and Johnson, D.D. 2008. Research Methods for Everyday Life: Blending Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Publishers.

Required FREE Resources

- Xxxxx Nvivo website and training
- Xxxxx transcription website and training
- Xxxxx audio bundle website and training
- Neyhart, D. and E. Karper. The OWL at Purdue: APA Formatting and Style Guide. Available FREE from <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- Northwest Regional Education Laboratory. Six Plus One Writing Traits. Available FREE from <http://doe.sd.gov/curriculum/6plus1/definition.asp>

D2L Course Site: Please visit the D2L web site for this course and take some time to browse around the course site to see the available features.

Course Home. General course announcements will be posted here.

Content. This link on the top left corner will give you access to course materials such as the course power-point lectures, links to video or audio programs, assigned readings and any other supplemental materials.

Discussions. This link will refer you to the online threaded discussion forums where we will discuss a number of topics from the texts and/or online readings. The specific topic for discussion is dependent on the unit we are currently on. You will refer to the **Content** section on specific threaded discussion topics.

Drop-box. This is the area where you will submit draft and final versions of written assignments.

Grades. Some grades for course projects and activities may be posted here as you progress through the course.

Class-list. You may view a list of your classmates and their email information. Please note that this course will use MavMail for class communication, so make sure to check your MSU email (MavMail) account frequently. Students who forward their MavMail to another email account are responsible for doing so and responsible for all messages sent to their MavMail email address. No excuses.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Fall Semester

August	Getting Started with Undergraduate Research
September	Study Design
October	Responsible Conduct of Research
November	Conference Proposals
December	Data Collection

Spring Semester

January	Data Collection
February	Literature Review
March	Data Analysis
April	Conference Presentations
May	Academic Journal Articles

Instructional Strategies: Students in the class will have the roles of Student Research Assistants and will work with a Faculty Member on research projects. The Faculty Member will act as a mentor, regularly providing counsel and direction on how to conduct the research. The Faculty Member will serve as facilitator, observing and periodically addressing individual and class-wide needs. The course materials will supply students with data or information and model how to apply concepts in solving problems. Homework will help develop essential skills in information processing, critical and analytical thinking, and problem solving. Students participating in the course are encouraged to learn through authentic inquiry within the context of the course themes and requirements. For each credit of the course, students will spend approximately 15 hours of class-based instruction. For each hour in class meeting, students are expected to spend approximately 2 hours of time working on material outside of class. Therefore, a student might expect to spend approximately 135 hours in work for this course. The instructional strategies for this course will include various methods and strategies for enhancing learning: Case studies, review activities, cooperative large and small group activities, role-playing, simulations, assigned and elective readings, lectures, multi-media presentations, guest speakers, field trips, and inquiry-oriented discussion circles.

Participation Requirements: Participation is expected. Student Research Assistants are expected to be active learners and participants. Students are expected to raise questions or comments that will add to the richness of this course. Criteria for participation include: preparation for class by reading assignments in advance, sharing ideas, participating in online discussion, asking questions, participation in the peer editing process, and enthusiasm. Responsibilities of a Student Research Assistant may include:

1. Transcribing audiotapes or videotapes
2. Read, analyze, write, perform research in library, interview, edit, present and evaluate data
3. Developing and using coding manual for observations
4. Scheduling appointments with research subjects
5. Gathering information from research subjects

Class Expectations: ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED TO MEET STANDARDS! All assignments are due as specified; late assignments result in the loss of points. Your grade is based on the number of points accumulated by the final day of class. The final day of class is the final deadline for all assignments. The only possibility for an In Progress grade is extenuating circumstances that result in your inability to complete the service-learning component by the last day of class. You need to communicate with the instructor at least two weeks prior to this deadline to seek an extension. LATE SUBMISSIONS without prior approval WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Failure to complete all assignments on time may result in a failing grade.

Completion of Assignments: At the beginning of the semester, students will be informed of the due dates for all course assignments. It is the student's responsibility to complete all assignments in a timely manner and submit them for evaluation by the instructor no later than the due date specified. It is the student's responsibility to notify and consult with the instructor should there be extenuating circumstances which interfere with the completion of assignments on time. Late assignments may result in the minimum loss of a letter grade for that assignment.

Standards for Written and Electronic Assignments: To help students practice the formats and styles of academic work, written work is required for this course. All written assignments (whether turned in on paper or electronically) must be word-processed, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and in 8-1/2" x 11" format. All written assignments must be saved and submitted in *Microsoft Word* software. The student's name, course number, and due date should be visible on all work. When required, the written work should use professional, formal, and academic language, rather than informal opinion or conversational essay language. Work that includes mistakes in grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation may result in deduction of points at the instructor's discretion. The instructor reserves the right to return, ungraded, work that does not meet these standards. For help in preparation of assignments, contact MSU's Center for Academic Success, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, at (507) 389-1791. <http://www.mnsu.edu/success/>

Services for Identified Students with Disabilities: Minnesota State University, Mankato provides students with disabilities reasonable accommodations to participate in educational programs, activities, or services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should first register with the Office of Disability Services, located in 0132 Memorial Library (507-389-2825, TDD 711) and then contact the instructor as soon as possible thereafter.

Concerns about Academic Feedback: If you are concerned about a score that you receive, it is my policy that you wait a minimum of 24 hours to address the issue with me. This 24-hour period will allow you to cool off and to gain a perspective if I truly made a mistake in grading or if you have indeed earned the score that was recorded. Please make an appointment to talk with me and be prepared to prove me wrong with evidence. I do make mistakes and will gladly take the responsibility to rectify any errors on my part. Likewise, I would anticipate that you would be responsible for any errors that you have made.

Grading: All course products will be graded and points will be awarded according to rubrics distributed in class for each assignment. According to MSU College of Education policy, inattentiveness, absence, and late work are considered dispositional issues and will result in loss of points and/or grade and serve as grounds for formally reporting to the MSU College of Education. If students want to receive a grade of A, they must complete all course requirements, on time and with outstanding quality.

99-100 %	=A+	• Work of definitely superior quality
95-98 %	=A	
93-94 %	=A-	
91-92 %	=B+	• Work of better-than-average level or performance
86-90 %	=B	
84-85 %	=B-	
82-83 %	=C+	• Work of average performance
77-81 %	=C	
75-76 %	=C-	
72-74 %	=D+	• Work of below-average performance
67-71 %	=D	
66 %	=D-	
65%	= F	• Work of unacceptable performance

Classroom Conduct: The instructor will strive to conduct this class in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Students are encouraged to actively participate in class discussions. Each person may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The conflict of **ideas** is encouraged and welcome. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including the ideas of the instructor, is similarly welcome. However, the instructor will exercise responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion. Students should expect that if their conduct during class discussions seriously disrupts the atmosphere of mutual respect expected in this class, the instructor will file a Communication of Professional Concern with the College of Education.

The class is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. ... Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop and understanding of the community in which they live . . . Student conduct which disrupts the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

Use of Technology: All students enrolled in the course have access to University email and are expected to check it for information related to this course. Please be advised that the instructor will only use the University-assigned email address. If students use a commercial email provider, and forward email from the University address, it may be flagged as spam and may not be

delivered to the final mailbox. Students will want to periodically check their email system for undelivered mail.

The course instructor will use the Desire2Learn course site for course communications and access to course material. Desire2Learn may also be used to document and to reflect on field experiences. The internet address for Desire2Learn is: <https://d2l.mnsu.edu/>.

At MSU, there can be no excuse about "losing work" because of computer crashes. Requests for additional time to turn in assignments that were lost due to "computer crashes" will not be considered. Such an excuse amounts to "the dog ate my homework." Every student at MSU has space on the MSU MavDisk, a server that is secure and routinely backed up. Every student at MSU has access to this space on campus and at home. Every student at MSU has access to D2L on campus and at home. Every student will upload their work-in-progress to D2L drop boxes. At the beginning of the semester, every student will be informed about the instructions and the due dates for the assignments in this course.

Conceptual Framework of the College of Education: "Grounded in a vision of learning communities, MSU's College of Education has at its heart collaboration and connectedness to students, schools, neighborhoods, and society. To achieve this vision, the College of Education seeks to graduate individuals with passion for and proficiency in content, with thoughtful and principled pedagogy, and a strong sense of educational purpose. College of Education graduates possess the attributes, knowledge, and skills to effectively promote the success of students, families, and schools. They see their own learning and the learning of others as occurring in a cycle of experience, reflection, and re-conceptualization—a process of seeking new knowledge that both fits into and changes existing understanding. Furthermore, College of Education graduates understand that individuals are embedded in family, school, and community systems, and they seek to foster positive systems change as well as individual growth."

Diversity: Students work in cooperative groups to develop and deliver class presentations. "College of Education graduates value diverse cultures and communities, seeking to help all students achieve the knowledge and skills needed to flourish as successful members of a pluralistic society. They work to form broad-based, inclusive learning communities which engage in respectful and relevant conversations that promote shared understandings. College of Education graduates value multiple perspectives and use culturally relevant strategies in their work. They guide and nurture individuals with whom they work to live and thrive in a diverse and open society."

The Minnesota Board of Teaching sets standards for licensed teacher that include competencies for working with diverse populations: *Teacher candidates need to develop proficiencies for working with students from diverse backgrounds and with exceptionalities to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn.* (Standard 4)

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system recognizes and respects the importance of all similarities and differences among human beings. The system and its institutions are committed, through their programs and policies, to fostering inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance and respect in a multicultural society. Diversity includes but is not limited to, age,

ethnic origin, national origin, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, religious beliefs, creeds and income. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system's commitment to diversity compels it to confront prejudicial, discriminatory or racist behaviors and policies.

Minnesota State University expands on the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities definition of diversity to promote a learning environment that celebrates differences. MSU Mankato defines diversity as: *Diversity at Minnesota State University Mankato is a commitment to create an understanding and appreciation of diverse peoples and diverse perspectives; a commitment to create an academic, cultural, and workplace environment and community that develops mutual respect for all and celebrates our differences.* (See <http://www.mnsu.edu/cultdiv/reports/annualreport2008.pdf>)

Academic Integrity and Honesty: *Academic integrity* refers to the “integral” quality of the search for knowledge that a student undertakes. The work a student produces, therefore, ought to result completely from the student's own efforts. Sources for intellectual and/or teaching ideas, including quotes and general paraphrases, must be cited and referenced according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

A student is guilty of violating Academic Integrity and Honesty if the student (a) knowingly represents the work of others as the student's own work, (b) uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in the execution of any academic work, or (c) gives fraudulent assistance to another student. Examples of violations include, but are not limited to: “plagiarism (using another's phrasing, concepts or line of reasoning as your own); submitting work for course assignments that is not your own work; submitting the same paper in different classes without prior approval from both instructors; cheating on assignments; failure to follow class policies; obtaining academic benefits through inappropriate application of technology; computer fraud or unauthorized access; engaging in academic fraud alone or with others; downloading material from the Internet without proper citation; illicit attempts to influence grading; failing to abide by test-taking procedures; signing the class attendance roster for another student.”

Please see the MSU Basic Staff Handbook for the university policy on academic honesty and plagiarism. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points or to fail the student who is guilty of academic dishonesty and/or plagiarism. (<http://www.mnsu.edu/welcome3/Publications/basic-stuff/policies>)

“In order for an academic community to teach and support appropriate educational values, an environment of trust, cooperation and personal responsibility must be maintained. As members of the University community, students assume the responsibility to fulfill their academic obligations in a fair and honest manner. This responsibility includes avoiding such inappropriate activities as plagiarism, cheating or collusion. Students found responsible for one or more of these activities may face both academic sanctions (such as lowering a grade, failing of a course, etc.) and disciplinary sanctions (such as probation, suspension, expulsion).”
Please visit the above-cited webpage for the complete policy.

When preparing written or oral presentations, students will cite appropriate research resources, including books, articles in academic journals, professional organization publications, individual interviews, film documentaries, etc. Using internet web pages will NOT count toward the use of appropriate research resources. Students will cite their references according to the Publication Style Manual of the American Psychological Association.

See <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> and <http://apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx>

Communication of Concern: A “Communication of Concern” form will be filed when a student does not exhibit appropriate behaviors as one prepares to become a professional educator. Inappropriate behaviors include, but are not limited to: late assignments, failure to complete required assignments, a pattern of non-participation or over-participation, improper attire, disregard of chain of command when approaching problem solving, etc. Additionally, continual disregard of behaviors that reflect Domain D: Professionalism may result in a minimal grade reduction of one letter grade.

Research-intensive Course Planner

Course and Student Outcomes	
What should students know when they have completed this course (content)?	A variety of research approaches and terminology. Ethical principles about academic honesty and research with human subjects. Standards for evaluating evidence according to appropriate scholarly conventions. How inquiry is situated within broader academic and professional contexts.
What should students be able to do when they have completed this course (skills)?	Articulate and refine the question for inquiry. Identify and use resources to foster understanding and inquiry. Organize project activities. Manage time. Coordinate team members. Respond to others who have different ideas and values (critical thinking, active listening, evaluating, synthesizing, negotiating). Use software related to word processing, data analysis, and reporting. Communicate with academic audiences (speaking, listening, reading, researching, writing, public speaking). Work harmoniously with other students, faculty and other research assistants. Communicate the results of the project for a specified audience using appropriate scholarly conventions.
What will be the balance between student learning outcomes in content and skills?	Approximately 30% content specific to Education and approximately 70% skills general to undergraduate academic majors.
Will the students work independently or in groups? How will the groups, if used, be determined?	Students will work in groups/teams for the research projects. Groups will be determined in general by student choice among the possibilities described by the instructor.
Student background	
What relevant knowledge and skills will students bring to the course?	Students will bring Admission to Minnesota State University, Mankato. Enrolled full-time in an academic major Demonstrated understanding of English grammar and language structure. Demonstrated skill in written communication. Ability to work harmoniously with other students, faculty and other research assistants. Skills in software related to word processing, data analysis, and reporting. Project management, time management, and organizational skills.
How can you determine this – survey, test, pre-requisite course syllabi, work samples, etc.?	application letter resume sample of writing (5-10 pages) names of two professional references
How much do students know about the process of research and inquiry in their discipline?	This is a 200-level course at MSU. Students do not know very much about the process of research and inquiry in their discipline.
How might this course challenge students, in relation to their beliefs, their expectations about learning and teaching, self-confidence in ability to create knowledge, etc.?	?????????

Defining the question	
What will be the stimulus for the research: an open question, faculty research area, known problem, an image, an artifact, a performance, a community action, an article, other?	Faculty research agenda and College of Education objectives related to cultural competency.
Who will determine the research question – the faculty, the students, someone else?	The faculty instructor determines the research area and archived data. The students can customize the research question each year.
Research scheduling	
How will the tasks be sequenced?	See the activities chart.
Is there an established framework or model for the research process that can be used?	??????
What is the appropriate time needed to complete each aspect of the research project?	??????
Who will determine how to allot time to each part of the process? Will this be tightly or loosely structured by the faculty?	??????
Access to space and materials	
How will students gather primary information?	Archived data available from the instructor’s course, Human Relations in a Multicultural Society.
What partners will be needed – librarians, community organizations?	MSU librarians, URC staff members, CESR staff members, IRB coordinator.
Is there a need for a specific type of learning space for the course?	Yes. Small group computer “pod” spaces, such as the ground floor of Wigley Admin Bldg.
How will students have access to specific materials beyond usual class meeting periods – space, instruments, technology, etc.?	Each student has access to the Undergrad Research Center and the Memorial Library space and technology.
Course activities	
What course activities will there be to engage students with the course content?	See activities chart.
What course activities will there be to develop scholarly inquiry skills?	See activities chart.

What course activities will there be devoted specifically to advancing the research project?	All of them.
Student Assessment	
Will the assessment and grading be linked directly to the student learning outcomes?	Yes. The instructor uses the D2L course design wizard to connect assignments and activities with student learning outcomes.
Will a rubric be used?	Yes.
Will the weight of grades be proportional to the balance between content and skills?	TBD.
What will be assessed and/or graded?	TBD.
How often will the faculty provide feedback to students?	Monthly.
How will faculty differentiate between individual and group contributions?	Assignments will be identified as individual (blog entries, articles, etc.) or as group (funding applications, oral conference presentations, etc.).
Dissemination	
How will students disseminate the results of their projects beyond the classroom?	Abstracts submitted to MSU's URS, to MnSCU's URC, and to NCUR. Journal articles submitted to Journal of Undergraduate Research.
What opportunities are there to join in larger campus, disciplinary, or national presentations or publications?	Abstracts submitted to MSU's URS, to MnSCU's URC, and to NCUR. Journal articles submitted to Journal of Undergraduate Research.
Will these presentations be evaluated?	Yes, through submission review process with each opportunity.
Course Assessment	
What tools will be used to gather information and use it to improve the experience the next time the course is taught?	Instructor will maintain a course notebook portfolio, with weekly log entries.