

**The University of British Columbia**  
Faculty of Education  
Department of Educational Studies

**Research Methodology in Education**  
EDUC 500 (001)  
Winter 2016, Term 1  
Mondays 4:30 – 7:30  
Scarfe 205  
3 Credits

P. Taylor Webb  
Phone: 604.822.6381  
Office: Ponderosa Commons: Oak House 3048

Email: [taylor.webb@ubc.ca](mailto:taylor.webb@ubc.ca)  
Office Hours: By appointment

### **Course Overview**

This course is designed for graduate students in the first year of their programs, and predicated on the assumption that problem definition should determine research design. Consistent with the diversity of researchable problems that can be identified in educational structures and processes, the course surveys research issues and techniques in a manner intended to assist students to select methods and research strategies for more intensive study. It is *not* the purpose of the course to develop extensive technical (operational) competence in any method of research; rather, the course aims to provide an initial understanding of the nature and purpose of various approaches to research— all of which are useful in understanding educational phenomena, though they may appear to differ substantially from one another. Thus, the course is considered to be an *introductory course* in educational research methodology, and should *not be viewed as the only course* to be taken in the development of competence in research. However, it should provide students with the background necessary for making intelligent decisions regarding which kind(s) of methods, and which additional research training, are relevant to their research interests. Also, the course promotes more qualified “critical consumption” of published and unpublished research on the part of its students.

### **Course Objectives**

Students will develop awareness and be knowledgeable of:

- a cross-section of research methods available for the conduct of research in education (e.g., experiments, surveys, field studies, historical analysis).
- resources available to them for the conduct of research (e.g., research library, computer facilities, faculty expertise), and
- information and skills obtained above to develop assignments that reflect their personal research interests.

## **Course Structure and Expectations**

The course takes its impetus in a seminar structure – text to text; readers to readers; writers to writers. Students are expected to maintain constant and punctual attendance, be prepared for high levels of class discussion and participation, and complete several pieces of written work that is both analytic and reflective in nature. Thus, the course is designed for substantial student participation. In addition to using a variety of resources to provide a basis for common knowledge, students will work in groups to explore the issues that are raised.

Course grades will be based on the assignments listed below. Criteria for each assignment will be distributed during class. Strong work is indicated by careful analysis of texts, scholarly rather than informal treatment of the issues, and substantial participation in class discussions. Prompt and regular attendance is required. Please proofread – by having someone else read your papers - prior to handing written work in. If you anticipate any difficulty in meeting assigned due dates it is important that you contact me immediately. Late assignments without prior consent of the instructor, or for other than unplanned/emergency circumstances, will receive a *maximum* of 80% credit.

## **Academic Integrity**

Scholastic honesty is expected and required. All work submitted to me must be your own. Copying or representing the work of others as your own (including internet sources) will result in a failed grade. *If you are in doubt about how to properly credit the work of others, please consult with me.* Any act of cheating or plagiarism is considered a serious violation of the principle of academic integrity. Students who practice such acts will be penalized accordingly. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the definitions of each and of the possible penalties. Please see the University regulations regarding Student Discipline and Academic Misconduct at <http://www.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,286,0,0>

## **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a letter from Disability Resource Centre (DRC) indicating that you have a disability that requires specific accommodations, please present the letter to me so that we can discuss the accommodations that you might need for class. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, first meet with a DRC advisor to determine what accommodations/services you are eligible for. You can find more information at: <http://students.ubc.ca/access/drc.cfm?page=current>

## **Religious Observances**

Students will not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs. Whenever possible, students will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance.

## **Texts and Readings**

Texts can be purchased at the UBC Bookstore. Additional readings will be accessed digitally.

*Required*

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc..

### *Recommended*

- Bracey, G. W. (2006). *Reading educational research: How to avoid getting statistically snookered*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- de Laine, M. (2000). *Fieldwork, participation and practice: Ethics and dilemmas in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Lock, S. F., Silverman, W. & Spirduso, W. (2010). *Reading and understanding research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Palys, T. (2003). *Research decisions: Quantitative and qualitative perspectives* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Scarborough, ON: Nelson.

### **Description of Assignments**

Students are expected to complete the following assignments:

1. Assigned readings
2. Class participation
3. Research Backgrounder
4. Question Set
5. Annotated Bibliography & Adjustments to Problem
6. (a) Problem Development Exercise (PBE) OR (b) Methodological Sketch (ME)
7. Mini-Presentation of PBE or ME

Expectations for written assignments will be discussed in class.

1. Reading Assignments. Each student is responsible for completing the required readings on the date assigned.
2. Class Participation. Students are expected to make contributions to class discussions. Instances of active participation include:
  - a. Listening carefully to other students when they speak;
  - b. Allowing others to participate;
  - c. Demonstrating that one understands a point of view before critiquing it;
  - d. Being supportive of others when they are trying out tentative understandings;
  - e. Trying to understand points of view different from one's own and ask questions when you do not understand what is being said;
  - f. And, extending a thought or line of conversation (e.g. "Could you please elaborate?" "How do you see what you have said as related to what we are discussing?")

Quality of talk will be assessed, not quantity – for instance, civil, courteous, respectful, tolerant, informed, challenging, sincere, honest, thoughtful, probing talk aimed to generate discussion and advancement of ideas.

3. Research Backgrounder. Return a small survey.

4. Question Set. Provide a set of questions, in narrative format, that frame a potential area of inquiry. 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins.
5. Annotated Bibliography & Adjustments to Problem. Complete an annotated bibliography of at least seven (7) studies that relate to your area of interest. Demonstrate how the selected studies informed your thinking about the “problem.” 5-10 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. Font, 1-inch margins.
6. Problem Development Exercise. Describe your “problem” from two distinct methodologies. 5 page maximum, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins.

**OR**

Methodological Sketch. Explore a research method - one that was *not* covered in class - by elaborating on some of the key features of educational research discussed in class. For example, features include purpose, problem, setting, discipline, ‘generalizability’, etc. Include ways that the methodology discusses the reliability and validity of data collected with the method. Explore the benefits and problems associated with the method, but move beyond a balance sheet approach. Use concrete examples and draw on a minimum of six sources. Depth, rather than breadth, is the purpose of methodology in this assignment. 5 page maximum, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins.

7. Mini-Presentation. Read/share with class a portion of your PDE or ME

**Grades and Weights**

Participation	10%
Research Backgrounder	10%
Question Set	20%
Annotated Bibliography	30%
Problem Development Exercise/Methodological Sketch (PDE/MS)	20%
Mini-Presentation of PDE/MS	10%
<hr style="border: 0.5px solid black;"/>	
Total	100%

## SCHEDULE

*Please note that required readings may be added or deleted to those listed as the term transpires. I will aim to avoid unnecessary or untimely substitutions; however, the course is expected to evolve according to students' interests, background, and emerging learning.*

### September 5 - NO CLASS - Labor Day holiday

### September 12: Introduction and overview

- Course overview, expectations and outcomes
- Introduction to design
- Ontology, epistemology, and axiology
- Issues of power in educational research

#### Required readings

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Analytic contents of research techniques AND Preface* (pp. xv-xxvi).
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Preliminary considerations: The selection of a research approach* (pp. 1-24).
- Popkewitz, T. S. (1997). A changing terrain of knowledge and power: A social epistemology of educational research. *Educational Researcher*, 26(9), 18-29.

### September 19: Disciplinary and multi-disciplinary methods

- Academic disciplines and disciplinary research
- Multiple and conflicting paradigms
- Postcolonial lenses

#### Required readings

- Rizvi, F., Lingard, B., & Lavia, J. (2006). Postcolonialism and education: Negotiating a contested terrain. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 14(3), 249-262.
- Shulman, L. S. (1997). Disciplines of inquiry in education: A new overview. In R. M. Jaeger (Ed.), *Complementary methods for research in education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 4-29). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Tyack, D. B. (1997). Ways of seeing: An essay on the history of compulsory schooling. In R. M. Jaeger (Ed.), *Complementary methods for research in education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 35-69). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

### **DUE SEPTEMBER 19: RESEARCH BACKGROUNDER**

## September 26: Literature reviews and resources

- Library research workshop
- ***IMPORTANT NOTE: CLASS WILL BE HELD IN SCARFE 1007***
- *Students MUST have a Campus Wide Login (CWL)*

### Required readings

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Review of the literature* (pp. 25-50).

*Literature reviews: Getting started* <<http://guides.library.ubc.ca/litreviews>>

Webb, P. T. (2009). Territorializing wars over teachers' knowledge: The pleasures of micropolitical resistance. In *Teacher Assemblage* (pp. 1-21). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers. Available at: <<https://www.sensepublishers.com/media/1001-teacher-assemblage.pdf>>

## October 3: The use of theory in educational research and theories of writing

- Different uses of theory in educational research
- The roles of writing in educational research
- Issues of representation in research writing

### Required readings

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *The use of theory* (pp. 51-76).

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Writing strategies and ethical considerations* (77-104).

Miner, H. (1956). Body ritual among the Nacirema. *American Anthropologist*, 58(3), 503-507. Accessed at <<https://www.msu.edu/~jdowell/miner.html>>

### Recommended readings

Clifford, J. (1986). Introduction: Partial truths. In J. Clifford and G. F. Marcus (Eds.), *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography* (pp. 1-26). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Nelson, J. S., Megill, A., & McCloskey, D. N. (1987). Rhetoric of inquiry. In John S. Nelson, Allan Megill, and Donald N. McCloskey, *The rhetoric of the human sciences: Language and argument in scholarship and public affairs* (pp. 3-18). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Richardson, L., & Adams St. Pierre, E. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition) (pp. 959-979). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

## October 10 - NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Holiday

## October 17: Research design

- Research design
- Research questions and proposal
- Problem formulation and problematizations

### Required readings

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Designing research: The introduction* (pp. 105-122).
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *The purpose statement* (pp. 123-138).
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research questions and hypotheses* (pp. 139-154).
- Bacchi, C. (2012). Why study problematizations? Making politics visible. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 2(1), 1-8. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2012.21001>

Recommended readings

- Webb, P. T. (2014). Policy problematization. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 27(3), 364-376.

**DUE OCTOBER 17: QUESTION SET**

**October 24: Thinking in, with, and through paradigms: ‘Quantitative’ and ‘Qualitative’**

- (disciplinary) Epistemology and ontology of quantitative and qualitative paradigms
- Descriptive and inferential statistics; distributions; central tendency; variability
- Postpositivism; social constructivism; advocacy; postmodern; feminist; critical race theory

Required readings

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Quantitative methods* (pp. 155-182).
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Qualitative methods* (pp. 183-214).
- Lather, P. (2006). Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 19(1), 35-57. doi: 10.1080/09518390500450144

Recommended readings

- Wright, H. (2006). Are we (t)here yet? Qualitative research in education’s profess and contested present. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 19(6), 793-802.

**October 31: NO CLASS - Library time**

**November 7: NO CLASS - Library time**

**November 14: (more) Paradigmatic thinking: Mixed methods**

- (disciplinary) Epistemology and ontology of quantitative and qualitative paradigms (con’t)

Required readings

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Mixed methods procedures* (pp. 215-240).
- Johnson, R. B. & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26. doi: 10.3102/0013189X033007014

**DUE NOVEMBER 14: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## November 21: Research ethics, politics and institutional boards

- Research ethics
- The role of institutional boards
- Begin BREB ethics tutorial

### Required readings

Sample BREB application. Retrieved from: [https://ethics.research.ubc.ca/sites/ore.ubc.ca/files/documents/Draft\\_Behavioural\\_Application\\_for\\_website.pdf](https://ethics.research.ubc.ca/sites/ore.ubc.ca/files/documents/Draft_Behavioural_Application_for_website.pdf)

*Guidance notes on behavioural application* <<https://ethics.research.ubc.ca/behavioural-research-ethics/breb-guidance-notes/guidance-notes-behavioural-application>> (Review all ten (10) sections)

Halse, C. & Honey, A. (2007). Rethinking ethics review as institutional discourse. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(3), 336-352.

## November 28: Conclusion & Sharing

### Required readings

Berliner, D. C. (2002). Educational research: The hardest science of all. *Educational Researcher*, 22(4), 16-23. doi: 10.3102/0013189X031008018

### **DUE NOVEMBER 28: PROBLEM DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE**

&

### **DUE NOVEMBER 28: MINI-PRESENTATION OF PROBLEM DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE**