

Course Syllabus

EPC 602 – Research Methods

Wednesday • 4:00 pm – 6:45 pm • Virtual (Zoom) • Spring 2021

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Course Description

This course allows students to evaluate counseling research from scientist-practitioner perspective with an emphasis on how to develop and use research with an applied focus. The goal of this course is to help candidates develop an understanding of the various types of research, research designs, and statistics useful for counseling and counseling-related research. The application of this knowledge base for the critical evaluation of published research, theoretical literature, and for the possible development and implementation of future research plans with diverse populations is emphasized. The course helps candidates to further develop problem-solving, decision-making, and professional research skills. Problem-solving activities, cooperative learning techniques, and discussion of field-based clinical research all contribute to the development of the informed counselor.

Knowledge and Skills Outcomes

Assessment and Testing	CACREP Standard	Curriculum/Evaluation Outcomes
1. statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations	2.F.7.g.	Lectures, Reading, exams
2. reliability and validity in the use of assessments	2.F.7.h.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, exam,
Research and Program Evaluation	CACREP Standard	Curriculum/Evaluation Outcomes
1. the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession, including how to critique research to inform counseling practice	2.F.8.a.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Literature Review Paper
2. identification of evidence-based counseling practices	2.F.8.b.	Lectures, Reading
3. evaluation of counseling interventions and programs	2.F.8.e.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Literature Review Paper

4. qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods	2.F.8.f.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Research Proposal, exams
5. designs used in research and program evaluation	2.F.8.g.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Research Proposal
6. statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation	2.F.8.h.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Research Proposal
7. analysis and use of data in counseling	2.F.8.i.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, exams, Literature Review Paper, Research proposal
8. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and/or program evaluation	2.F.8.j.	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Literature Review Paper, Research proposal

School Counseling Performance Expectations Covered in This Class

Professionalism, Ethics, and Legal Mandates	CTC SCPE	Curriculum/Evaluation Outcomes
1. Knowledge of empirically validated practices and programs, and apply those practices and programs in an ethical manner	2.8	Lectures, Reading, exams
Research, Program Evaluation, and Technology	CTC SCPE	Curriculum/Evaluation Outcomes
1. Knowledgeable about basic principles of research design, action research, and program evaluation, including traditional experimental design as well as qualitative and single-subject designs.	9.2	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Literature Review Paper
2. Ability to differentiate between and ability to interpret valid and reliable results.	9.3	Lectures, Reading
3. Understand measurement and statistics in sufficient depth to evaluate published research and conduct evaluations of school counseling and other educational programs in terms of student outcomes.	9.4	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Literature Review Paper
4. Conduct a program evaluation of a comprehensive school counseling program using technological applications such as computer software or web-based applications.	9.5	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Research Proposal, exams
5. Facilitate effective and appropriate outcomes in program management and individual student achievement, demonstrate skills in utilizing current technology for communication and collecting, organizing, distributing and analyzing data, and resources.	9.6	Article Critique, Lectures, Reading, Research Proposal

Method of Instruction

Methods of instruction and learning will include lectures, discussions, written work, readings, small group learning, and examinations. This course is not designed as a passive learning environment and students are expected to actively engage with the course material and in class discussions. As this class is a Remote Synchronous course this semester (with asynchronous activities, as well), students are required to attend class via Zoom at the scheduled class period. Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android.

Course Materials

Required Textbooks and Readings

Gravetter, F. J., & L. B. Forzano (2018). *Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences* (6th Edition).

Recommended Readings

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

*Additional readings will be provided.

Course Assignments

Research proposal paper and presentation (KPI - Signature Assignment) (SCPEs 2.8, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6)

The paper is to be a research proposal that proposes to either conduct a study or develop a product (students who are already doing comps may align the proposal with one of their comp questions).

- There is a 10-page limit (excluding references and title page).
- There must be at least 10 references (the majority of which must come from peer reviewed journals).

The paper must be in APA 7th format.

Substance:

You can propose on any topic you wish.

Details:

The paper should include an introduction (Significance) section. The introduction should identify the motivating factor for the study/project (i.e., significance or need), and by the end of the first paragraph clearly state the purpose – with additional sentences delineating and specifying details. For example: This study proposes to examine whether parent support impacts growth mindset differently for elementary school boys and girls. The study also examines how these variables are related to math performance. Elementary school students will be surveyed to identify their growth mindset and the amount of perceived parent support. This information along with the student's sex will be used to determine the relationship and impacts of these variables on math performance.

The introduction should also provide a roadmap for the rest of the paper. For example: The following section contains the literature review that covers three relevant areas related to this study: correlates of math knowledge; the impact of parent support on math performance, the impact of

math mindset on math performance, the impact of sex on math performance, the impact of sex on perceived parent support, and the impact of parent support on math mindset (if any).

The literature review must contain at least 15 references (and some of these may have been used in the introduction section, as well). The review should not simply present 15 separate summaries or “book reports” about each paper, rather, the reviewed papers provide credible objective substantiation for your arguments and provide context for your study. The review should also summarize the general finding of your review as well as critiques of the literature (either methodological short-comings, sampling short-comings, holes in the literature, and/or over-generalizations). The literature review should be organized by the summary provided in the roadmap in the introduction

The methodology section (albeit short), should indicate how you propose to conduct the study.

See rubric for detailed expectations.

Individual Article Critique (SCPEs 9.2, 9.3, 9.4):

Each student will review 4 research studies published in a professional journal and write a 1- to 2-page critique. Students should provide an electronic copy of the article (for the instructor only) along with the critique.

Literature Review Paper

Each student will write a 5 to 7-page literature review (page count not including references) on a topic of personal interest that should (ideally) align with your thesis.

Exams

Exams will be provided on the scheduled dates only. **No make-ups will be given without prior approval of the instructor.** If you are unable to be present during the scheduled exam dates, it is vital that you inform the instructor as soon as you can. The instructor reserves the right to refuse the administration of a make-up exam or to require students to fulfill this requirement in an alternative format. The exams will cover material covered in the course and may consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Students will be expected to critique research, identify class-related terminology and apply concepts in a practical manner as it relates to research in the field of counseling. The final exam will cover all material presented in the class during the semester. All exams will be closed-book and closed-notes and you are NOT permitted to work with other students to complete the exams. Failure to comply with these rules **will result in an automatic zero on the exam.** No make-up exams will be given without a legitimate, verified excuse and prior approval from the instructor.

Active Class Participation

Students’ full participation is vital to the success of this course. Expected professional behaviors include regular attendance, punctuality, preparedness, completion of quality assignments and timely submissions, clear and appropriate communication of problems or concerns, thoughtful sharing of experiences, ideas, and reflections in class discussions and exercises, and the proper acknowledgment of and support for the efforts of classmates. I recognize and appreciate that individuals vary in their comfort level regarding class participation and so there are numerous ways to obtain participation points. Students will have opportunities to engage in dyads work, small group

work, and class activities and discussions. The primary responsibility for leading the discussion and related activities belongs to the instructor. It is expected, however, that you have read the material beforehand and are prepared to discuss it. Both teaching and learning in this course rely heavily on students' participation and on the healthy exchange of ideas. Consequently, timely and regular attendance and thoughtful involvement in class discussions and activities accounts for 10% of your final grade.

Evaluation Procedures

Assignment	Score or Weight
Research proposal presentation	35%
Individual Article Critiques (4x5%)	20%
Literature Review	15%
Exams (midterm 10% and final 10%)	20%
Active Participation	10%

Grading Scale

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

Instructional Philosophy

The Counseling programs at CSUN are designed based on learning-centered, outcome-based educational principles as described below:

Learning-Centered Education

- A cross-disciplinary, constructivist pedagogical model, learning-centered education refers to designing educational curricula that focus on promoting active student learning of specific skills and knowledge rather than mastery of content.
- In this approach, learning is the focus of curriculum design. Student learning is measured to determine whether students are meaningfully engaging the material. Students are active in this process, applying and using knowledge rather than trying to memorize or analyze it.
- Clearly defined learning objectives and criteria are used to facilitate student learning and democratized the student-teacher relationship.

Outcome-Based Education

- Closely related to learning-centered, outcome-based learning refers to designing curriculum around the final learning outcomes or objectives.
 - Rather than simply following the textbook chapter by chapter, the learning objectives drive the curriculum.
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Policies and Resources

Attendance

Students manifest their responsibility in the regularity and punctuality of their attendance. Since this course includes significant seminar and experiential components, attendance at each class meeting is required. ***In cases of absence, any scheduled assignments are due to the professor at the beginning of class unless other arrangements have been made prior to that time.*** If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check online and with fellow classmates regarding announcements made while you were absent; this includes supplemental instructions related to assignments. You are responsible for and may be tested on any and all lecture materials presented in class that are not covered in your readings.

Due Dates and Times

Due dates and times are non-negotiable unless an extension is provided to the entire class and/or if one has been approved in writing for serious medical necessity or extreme circumstance. Assignments are due on the identified date at the beginning of class (4pm) and must be submitted via Canvas. There will be no rewrites of assignments; therefore, it is necessary that you submit your best work. **Note:** Emailed assignments will not be accepted as there are often issues with opening documents and/or the formatting is incorrect.

Requests for Incompletes

Incompletes will only be considered in accordance with university policy, which requires that 75% of the course be completed prior to the unforeseen grave circumstance(s) at the end of the semester, such as the loss of an immediate family member, hospitalization, or severe illness. Students must request a grade of Incomplete in writing using the university's Incomplete Request Form ([Incomplete Request](#)).

Religious Holidays

If you celebrate a religious holiday that falls on a scheduled class meeting, please notify the professor during the ***first two weeks of class*** so that proper and equitable accommodations can be made. Students are responsible for selecting presentation days that do not conflict with one of their religious holidays.

Professionalism

As a student in a professional training program, you are expected to consistently demonstrate professional behavior. This includes but is not limited to:

- Being on time to class with assignments complete.
- Respectful interactions with all students and faculty.
- Proactive engagement in the learning process.
- Being organized and prepared for in-class discussions.
- Managing paperwork effectively.
- Managing technology effectively (the university provides extensive computer, printing and internet support; please use it in times of technical emergency).
- Attending to class discussions/lectures and using technology (Laptops/iPads/etc.) for class purposes only.
 - *Note:* It can be very tempting to check email, instant message, play games, etc. during class when using technology at your desk. Should you **appear** to be

disengaged from class discussions, lectures, or small/large group activities, points will be deducted from your overall participation and professionalism grade.

- Please – No texting, use of Twitter, Skype, or emailing during class. It is very distracting to others.
- Managing personal information (own and others’) appropriately.
- Seeking assistance related to assignments in advance of due dates.
- Engaging in email communication with students and faculty appropriately and professionally (e.g. proper email etiquette, using appropriate language, etc.).
- Please ensure you have turned off your cell phone in class or placed it on silent.

Students who have difficulty in one or more of these areas may have their participation grade lowered and in severe cases may be referred to the department Student Affairs Committee for further review.

Students with Disabilities

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and need course materials in alternative formats, notify the professor **within the first two weeks of class**. Students interested in accommodations should contact the university’s office for students with disabilities (Disability Resources and Educational Services, 818/677-2684); only this office can recommend and arrange for accommodations. No accommodations may be made without their approval. Any and all reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.

Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses in a professional program and may result in expulsion from the program/university on a *first offense*. See the University Catalog for further information. Additionally, students should refer to the Ethics Codes of the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) for ethical guidelines regarding plagiarism. For a definition and examples of plagiarism and self-plagiarism, students can refer to the *APA Publication Manual, 6th edition*. Additionally, students **must submit original work**. Any papers or assigned writing must be original work and cannot be taken from previous papers submitted for other courses. If you are found submitting a paper in this manner, you will receive a 0 on the assignment and your participation and professionalism grade will be lowered by up to 7.5 points. Any student caught cheating will be referred to the department Student Affairs Committee.

Informed Consent

Counseling, by definition, implies an intention to make personal changes. Many assignments and exercises in Practicum are also designed to effect personal exploration and change as part of the process of preparing to become an effective counselor. While we have given a good deal of thoughtful consideration to making these experiences beneficial to you, and to give you as much control as possible over the process, it must be acknowledged that any personal change involves risk: you may experience emotional pain or discomfort or reduced stability in your psychological adjustment. It is possible to develop irrevocable awareness about yourself or your environment that you regret. People may not respond as you hope.

Therefore, it is important to understand that participation in course exercises is optional (except when performing in the role of “counselor”). You have not only the right, but also the responsibility to decide if, and to what extent, you will participate in any exercises or assignments. In addition, you also have the responsibility to stop if, in your judgment, participation will be personally detrimental, and to raise the question of alternate assignments with your instructor. At the same time, if you find yourself not wishing to participate in many of the experiential activities, arrangements should be made to discuss the issues with the instructor and program coordinator. Practicum & the CC/SS program are, by their very nature, experientially-oriented.

It is also important to understand that you have not only the right, but also the responsibility to share only what you want in Practicum. You are asked to make a commitment not to reveal anything specific

Week 2 2/3	Research ideas	Chapter 2
Week 3 2/10	Research variables	Chapter 3 Final Paper Step 1- Identify research topic
Week 4 2/17	Writing an APA style research report	Chapter 16 Article Critique #1
Week 5 2/24	Ethics in research	Chapter 4 Article Critique #2
Week 6 3/3	Sampling and research strategies External/internal validity (SCPE 9.3)	Chapter 5 & 6 Final Paper Step 2– Submit research questions
Week 7 3/10	Experimental research strategies t-test, one-way ANOVA (SCPE 9.2)	Chapter 7
Week 8 3/17 SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS	
Week 9 3/24	Mid-Term Exam	
Week 10 3/31	Between-subject design Repeated measures of ANOVA (SCPE 9.2)	Chapter 8 Article Critique #3
Week 11 4/7	Within-subject design Data use in SPSS I (SCPEs 9.2, 9.5, 9.6)	Chapter 9 Article Critique #4
Week 12 4/14	Non-experimental and quasi-experimental strategies Factorial designs Two-way (or factorial) ANOVA Data use in SPSS II (SCPEs 9.2, 9.5, 9.6)	Chapters 10 & 11
Week 13 4/21	Correlation and Regression Data use in SPSS III	Chapter 12 Final paper Step 3 - Literature Review Due
Week 14 4/28	Qualitative research; grounded theory, mixed methods designs. (SCPE 9.2)	Readings will be provided
Week 15 5/5	Presentations	Final paper - Research Proposal paper due Proposal presentations
Week 16 5/12	Presentations	Proposal Presentations
Finals week	Final exam	Date to be announced

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes to the syllabus shall be distributed in writing, which may include electronic communication.

EPC 602 INDEX for CTC Standards

Pages on which CTC Standards are Introduced in yellow

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9.2	4, 9
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9.6	3, 9