



**HIED 595.01W (82712)  
Research Methods Web Based Class  
Fall 2013**

**Instructor:** Denise Pheils, Ph.D. – Assistant Professor  
**Office Location:** Online (Remote faculty)  
**Office Hours:** via ClassLive: Tue & Thur 2:00pm – 4:00pm\*  
\*Others by appointment  
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Here as this becomes a public document.  
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<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
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**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

**Required Text:** Babbie, E. R. (2013). *The practice of social research* (13<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Cengage.  
ISBN 9781133049791

**Optional text:** American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed). Washington, DC: Author.

Texts by leading experts in educational research including Creswell and Gall, Gall, and Borg may be referenced. Quizzes will specifically reference the readings from the Babbie text, so be sure to treat the text as the primary course resource.

Relevant and related articles will be listed in the online course room for each specific module if necessary for completing the module. Most articles will be available in the DocSharing area for ease of access. Proper APA reference for each resource will be included as it is sometimes difficult to ascertain where an article was published.

Internet: A dependable Internet connection is mandatory as this is an entirely online course. Having an alternative method for connecting to class will be helpful if the need arises. Not having an Internet connection will not be an excuse for missed work.

**Course Description:**

This course provides a study of research methodologies with appropriate practical application in relevant problem solving. Specific research types, including action research, will be emphasized. The student is required to demonstrate his or her competence in the investigation and formal reporting of a problem.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

*Learning outcomes are what you are able to do as a result of the activities, readings, instruction, etc. that have occurred in this course - these are my expectations of you. Assignments/activities related to these outcomes are described in the assignments and assessments portion of the syllabus.*

1. The learner will be an active and engaged team member within his/her learning community by analyzing, constructing/creating, and evaluating information presented within the textbook, external readings/resources, student research, and class activities in order to contribute to and develop a research proposal.
2. The learner will compare and contrast different research designs and distinguish quantitative and qualitative methods.
3. The learner will prepare and execute steps in the process of research in the form of a written formal research proposal.
  - The learner will identify and select a problem for research.
  - The learner will collect and analyze relevant empirically based research and write a literature review.
  - The learner will develop the purpose and research questions to address the problem.
  - The learner will examine, select and design appropriate research designs to collect data.
  - The learner will evaluate research data from pilot study and report results.
  - The learner will properly format and cite research via the APA publication style
4. The learner will participate in a proposal review and revision process with group members providing constructive and thoughtful feedback to the construction and development of the research proposal.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

**Class concept and approach** – The best way to learn about research is to fully engage in the process. While the learner may not begin the dissertation, actively identifying resources and outlining a plan for research is perfectly acceptable. Well planned research shows in the final product just as poorly planned research is reflected. Students will actively participate in their own research and contribute with quality, thoughtful feedback to select peers in a group. Don't stress! The final submission will not be a large research project, but rather a small research project and a concept map, schedule, and other items that will aid in actively researching your dissertation.

A wide variety of instructional methods will be utilized to provide meaningful learning experiences, including group problem-solving activities, self-assessments, independent research, and case studies. It is vital that support material is read prior to class and that students actively participate in class discussion, activities, and case studies.

**Discussion participation** – Discussion questions and student interaction are the means for staying engaged in the course and for building the online community. Proper grammar, punctuation, and full words and sentences are expected. To earn points for the discussion the posts must be thoughtful, fully answer the question(s), respectful of the class, and posted within the current module. Late posts are not accepted as posts to discussion

threads are part of the course ‘conversation’ and once that conversation is over they are usually not read by students, and as such, hold no class value. For full points students are expected to respond with substance and to respond to at least one learner. That response should be with substance (‘I agree’ does not count) and adhere to the other rules for discussions noted above.

**Reflection** - Reflection can be a valuable tool in teaching and study. An article by Brookfield is available in Doc Sharing for the course. The article details the value of becoming a critically reflective learner and teacher. The reflection part is private and individual to the student and will not be read by the teacher unless the student chooses to share the reflection. Reflection is graded as the ‘last piece’ of the module content. If shared, the reflection grade is placed early. If not shared, the reflection grade is assumed to have been completed when all the other work for the open module is completed. If all of the work for the module is not completed there will not be an award of reflection points. Given the private nature of the activity the value is 5 points per module. This is a different process than in most other HIED courses as the instructor believes for true, valuable, and in-depth reflection to occur and benefit the learner it must be private so that the introspection is honest.

**Lesson quizzes** – There are 2 quizzes that will aid in identifying understanding and assess student progress. These are automated quizzes with specific feedback to aid in immediate understanding of deficiencies.

**Group Assignments** - Each student will be assigned to a study/review group. I will share my method for selection (not alphabetical!) in the content for Module 1. Each group will have a study topic each module and will actively participate in the evaluation of each team member’s plan prior to submission to the teacher. The group should establish rules of operation and hold every member accountable. Please indicate the names of those who participated, as well as, the module for which the research project is intended. Group assignments will be awarded a grade ranging from **25** downward. You will evaluate each group member (including you) and submit that evaluation. There will not be free-riders in this class. If a group member did not participate do not include that name in the submission. All submitted names will be assumed as participating in the submission.

**Project Management Skills** – The concepts of good project management compliment the skills necessary for a solid, well planned and executed research project. As your instructor is a certified project manager (PMP certification through PMI) with over 15,000 hours experience managing projects, the common concepts and ideas (such as scope) will be stressed and utilized. The additional skills and concepts will aid in planning, developing, and completing a research project. None of the project management-specific skills and concepts are tested – they are simply a bonus as other sections of the course do not cover those ideas. If that seems confusing equate the concepts to Dr. Waller’s Cultural Corner ☺

#### **Grading Events-**

Discussion (5 topics @ 25 points each)	125
Quizzes (2 @ 25 points each)	50
Mini Research topics (Find the resources) (5 @ 25 points each)	125
Group Peer Review (5 @ 25 points each)	125
Final Project/Paper/Concept Submission	<u>125</u>
<b>Total Points available in class:</b>	<b>550 points</b>

**\*Do not be fooled by the low number! Every point matters.**

**Grading Scale-**The following final grading scale will be utilized to determine the final grade based on the average of your course work:

A = Exceeds Standards and demonstrates learning beyond course. “A” work is earned by learners who extend learning beyond the minimum presented in class and demonstrate developed written and verbal communication skills. Using only tools provided in the course will not result in A quality work. Identify quality resources and use them. Do not use Wikipedia.

B = Meets Standards and demonstrates mastery of objectives assessed. “B” work is earned by learners who demonstrate responsibility by meeting all deadlines, attending class, completing homework assignments, and earn passing grades on assessments.

C = Less than adequate demonstration of the mastery of objectives assessed.

D or F= Failure to meet Standards

Module assignments must be submitted within established open and closing dates. Due to the nature of group work it is suggested that each team member have a complete copy of all group work in case a problem arises. Late work will not be accepted without prior permission and only in extremely rare and serious situations. All work is to be submitted through the online course interface using the submission link for each assignment. Circumstances that might allow an extension would be significant and beyond the student’s control. The instructor is the sole determiner of extensions and may require written documentation for any extension granted. The instructor will also be the only person to determine the length of an extension if granted. Modules will not be reopened to permit completion of late work. Assignments not submitted within due dates will receive a grade of zero. As each module is open more than a week, there is ample time to complete each module and students should plan ahead and not wait until the last minute to complete and submit assignments.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

This is an online course and some obvious technological resources will be required.

Access to a computer with:

- Internet access (high-speed preferred)
- Microphone for classlive sessions throughout the semester (these run about \$10)
- Speakers so you can hear me and others during our classlive sessions and other audio enhanced assignments throughout the semester.
- Word processing software (Microsoft Word 2007 or newer preferred)
- The ability to view YouTube videos and download suggested reading.

Note: Classlive sessions are optional – but they will add significantly to student understanding, so it is in your best interest to attend. Students will have the opportunity to speak as well as type for questions, comments, etc.

As a student enrolled at Texas A&M University-Commerce, you have access to an email account via myLeo - all my emails sent from eCollege (and all other university emails) will go to this account, so please be sure to check it regularly. Conversely, you are to email me via the eCollege email system or your myLeo email as our spam filters will catch yahoo, hotmail, etc. and I will not check for your email in spam.

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

**eCollege Technical Concerns:** Please contact the eCollege HelpDesk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. by sending an email directly to [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org). You may also reach the HelpDesk by calling (toll-free) 1-866-656-5511, or through the Online Chat by clicking on the "Live Support" tab within your eCollege course.

**Course Concerns:** If you have questions pertaining to the content of this course (e.g., questions about a quiz, about course due dates, etc.), please check the syllabus, then the course information online. If you have a question about a grade you received read the comments that accompany the graded assignment. Usually all questions are resolved that way. If you still have a question please contact your instructor via email, through the "Virtual Office," or during office hours.

**Other Questions/Concerns:** Contact the appropriate TAMU-C department relating to your questions/concern. If you are unable to reach the appropriate department with questions regarding your course enrollment, billing, advising, or financial aid, please call 903-886-5511 between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

**Participation & Communication:** I expect each of you to be active and thoughtful participants within the learning environment (eCollege) and your learning community. You are to expect the same of me. This includes completing the extensive readings related to course topics, team and/or individual research proposal topics and participation in proposal revision activities (submission of individual draft sections and evaluation of draft sections from other class members).

1. Email is the best way to reach me as I check it daily. A reply will be usually sent within 12 hours depending upon the time your message was received. Please do not send me panicked last minute emails with the word HELP!!!!!!!! in the subject line. **HOWEVER... in order to avoid duplication of questions and answers I prefer that you post all class related questions in the Virtual Office forum provided in the class. It is likely that your peers will have the same question. Emails of a personal nature should be sent to my email address via eCollege.**

When sending email please include your course number (Ie. HIED595) in the subject line.  
The use of proper grammar, spelling, capitalization, and sentence structure is expected.

2. Or, if you want to talk via phone, you may contact me via my cell phone (the number will be provided inside the course shell and not in the syllabus as this becomes a publically accessible document). Please do not contact me before 9 am or after 9 pm. Please remember that I am in a different time zone which is the reason for the limited hours.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

**The following items are standard expectations to be posted for all courses.**

**Citizenship:** All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student 92s Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).

**Scholarly Expectations:** All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical, particularly at the graduate level, to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested by the instructor. Work submitted at the graduate level is expected to demonstrate higher- order thinking skills and be of significantly higher quality than work produced at the undergraduate level.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism **WILL NOT** be tolerated and will result in an automatic **F** in the course. Various versions of your work and final papers will be run through Turnitin software - this is not meant to "catch"

you in the act, but rather assist you in seeing possible areas that may be unintentionally plagiarized and allow for editing your work.

**Academic Honesty:** Academic work submitted by you (such as papers, assignments, reports, tests) shall be your work or that of the team and referenced in part or in whole to the correct source. Submission of commercially prepared materials is unacceptable. Moreover, participants shall encourage honesty in others by refraining from providing materials or information with knowledge that these materials or information will be used improperly. Violation of these academic standards may result in removal or failure. Please see the TAMU-C Graduate Catalog and the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Students are expected to use conventions noted in the APA Publication Manual, 6th edition, for citing sources.

Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty, which includes, but is not limited to plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments) and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. (Texas A&M University Commerce, Graduate Catalog).

**Student Conduct:** All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

**Courtesy and Respect: Student Conduct:** All students shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See Student's Guide, Policies and Procedures, Conduct). The course will require your best effort. Course demeanor is that which is expected at the university level. Students must complete their team assignments in a timely manner. Historically those who have not done due diligence to course assignments tend to redirect course expectations. Any such variation from class protocol is unacceptable at this level and will result in immediate removal from the course. Please keep in mind that the course email is not a forum for complaint or personal attacks.

**Class Participation:** Systematic and timely on-line participation is expected. University policy notes that excused absences include (i) participation in an authorized university activity, (ii) illness verified by a physician, (iii) death in the immediate family, and (iv) verifiable, official court appearance. Keep in mind that this course has been developed to allow maximum flexibility in regard to your online access. You are not required to log on at specific times on specific dates. You will work with other members of the class on specific tasks; however, this activity is determined by the group. The college will close officially for all national holidays and students are not expected to post or engage in the online course on those days. A holiday closure will not extend due dates, please plan ahead.

**Attendance:** This is an online class therefore attendance is up to you! You will be required to work as a team via various activities. The quality of your contributions and regular participation activities, including attendance via ClassLive sessions, will be considered attendance. It is strongly encouraged that you attempt to log into the course everyday and/or check your email for messages in order to not get behind. The synchronous sessions via ClassLive are not required, but it is in your best interest to attend when available during the semester.

**Late work:** Late work is not accepted. You will have plenty of notification and time to complete course assignments. Each module is two-weeks in duration or longer. If you know you are going to be out of town and unable to access a computer, plan ahead. See course semester outline at the bottom of this syllabus.

**Assignments Submitted by Deadlines:** Assignments are due as stated in each course module and according to the schedule noted at the end of this syllabus.

Class participants are strongly recommended to participate in their assigned groups. Numbers generate strength. Teaming is an essential soft-skill in every academic environment. Individual team members will be evaluated; however, teams often rise or fall together. Every team should select a lead member. Problems regarding team participation should be discussed with the course instructor. Under no circumstances should team members be allowed a free-ride at the expense of other members.

**Dropping the Class:** If you need to adjust your schedule by dropping this course, please follow university procedures to officially drop the class. If you fail to officially drop the class, a failing grade shall be assigned at the end of the course. Incompletes: Per university policy is granted only for circumstances beyond student's control which prevented the student from attending classes during Finals Week or the preceding three weeks (Policy A 12.07, 1998). The extension cannot exceed one semester. Failure to fulfill plan requirements within the specified time will result in an F.

**Course Communication:** Course communication will occur through your MyLeo Account. You will need to regularly and systematically review your e-mail on a timely basis. I will not reply to personal email accounts due to FERPA concerns.

### **University Specific Procedures:**

#### *ADA Statement*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)  
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

If you are approved for assistance by the Office of Student Disability and Resources and Services, I will do all in my power to provide the necessary accommodations and modifications.

**\*Note:** If you have been granted accommodations through the Office of Student Disability Resources & Services you need to notify me immediately at the beginning of the course so that those accommodations can be made part of the course. If you do not share your accommodation via the department letter you receive I will never know of the accommodation. It is your responsibility to notify me.

## COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

**HIED 595 will consist of 5 online modules.** These modules will be available on the indicated dates. **The modules will NOT be accessible BEFORE or AFTER the indicated dates.** The idea is for students to progress through at a comfortable pace and to dedicate the necessary time to mentally ‘chew’ on each topic. I understand the desire of many students to rush through a course so they can ‘be done’, but as the dissertation is an item that cannot be rushed it is advised that students view the progress through this course as a timesaver for their dissertations. I have also experienced the benefit of allowing my subconscious to work on a problem or approach resulting in a better plan than the one initially conceived. My goal is for each of you to experience that phenomenon.

Each module will offer a variety of tools and material. The contents of each module may not be similar, so do not assume that each module will require the same work and effort on your part. You will need internet access capable of accessing and viewing the indicated discussions.

Once a module is opened, the module will remain open then close as indicated. This is done to help the entire class stay on track. While I realize that some may desire to work ahead, the purpose is to bring the entire class along. To work ahead simply utilize the recommended textbook.

Each module may include discussions of various topics. The discussions are likely to utilize voice over PowerPoint and may reference materials available on the Internet for study prior to crafting a response. My discussion questions are often a series of questions that identify content areas within a topic and request a response. The student may respond to any sub-part or the discussion as a whole. This approach allows for unique and interesting posts by each learner and probes a topic instead of seeking single terms in answer to the question. Additionally, to stimulate your cultural enrichment, some of the modules will include material to examine some aspect of cultural enrichment. The latter is included since your evaluation of the course includes a question as to your enrichment in cultural understanding. This will not be Dr. Waller’s material. I have created my own. I know some of you will miss the possums.

This course is very rigorous. In higher education, the responsibility to learn falls squarely on the student, as an adult. I want you to be successful. I want each of you to fully master this material. Keep this in mind as you consider the following.

Please put forth your best effort towards all assignments. By checking and rechecking your work, you will strengthen your abilities to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. You must assume responsibility for your own learning.

The goal in this course will be to abandon the pedagogical model in which the teacher is the fount of all knowledge. The pedagogical model should be replaced by andragogical model. You must take charge of your own learning. Work in groups. Share your ideas with others. Help each other. By building a viable cohort of friends, companions, and compatriots, you will do more than master this course. You will master all future courses and successfully navigate the waters of doctoral education to their desired end. You will also build a professional network of colleagues who may be a source of information, jobs, and other opportunities in the future. I will contribute to that network and learning but I will not dominate the process.

HIED 595 is a very important milestone in your development as an educator. The design and assessment of research speaks to the very heart of education. Avail yourself of the opportunity to engage in this important topic. You will not be given research topics only parameters for your mini and major research submissions. (Again, major is not huge, only bigger than the mini research project as it includes all mini pieces to-date).

Every member of the class is admonished to keep up with the materials. Do not miss the deadlines. This is a fast paced course. Time is built in for reflection and true, active research, but it is still fast paced. Every learner is individually responsible for staying on track.

Establish rules for the operation for your group. Hold every member accountable. Do not cover for anyone who does not participate! Each group is free to go through the stages of storming, forming, and norming. I suggest getting to the norming stage as quickly as possible. **DO NOT LET A NON-PARTICIPANT HOLD BACK THE PROGRESS OF YOUR GROUP.** Set due dates and require all members of the group to comply. Be sure the due dates are before the submission due dates so that you have time to complete your peer review for each submission.

I know that working in groups is frustrating; however, the modern workplace is about group work. Teaming is a critical skill for success in today's world. Every team member will be evaluated and grades are assigned to individuals not groups.

<b>Course Schedule</b> (Subject to change, all changes will be posted to the online classroom) *Note: Not all modules have the same beginning and ending dates* Additional material and steps to complete each module's work are noted in the specific modules online. Readings are supplied for students who wish to work ahead.		
<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Intro, Terms and Concepts, &amp; More</b>	Open 8/26/13- Closed 9/8/13 Reading: Chapters 1-3 Pick a topic to research (more info in the module)
<b>Module 2</b>	Building the Research Plan	Open 9/9/13–Closed 9/29/13 Reading Chapters 4-6 Quiz 1 (Online, timed, multiple choice)
<b>Module 3</b>	Determining Tools based on research found and needs identified	Open 9/30/13 - Closed 10/20/13 Reading Chapters 7-9
<b>Module 4</b>	Creating, testing, and using research tools. Collection and compilation of data. What does it mean?	Open 10/21 – Closed 11/10/13 Reading Chapters 10-12 Quiz 2 (Online, timed, multiple choice)
<b>Module 5</b>	So you think you know how to research? Prove it! Complete course project for peer review and final submission.	Open 11/11/13 – Closed 12/06/13 Reading Chapters 13-15

**\*Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus as necessary. Notification will be made via the course site.**