AG 595: Research Literature Techniques

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2015

Instructor: Susan B. Skripac, PHD

Office Location: Ag/IT 2nd floor

Office Hours: Wed 1-3 p.m. or by appointment

Office Phone: 903.886.xxxx

Office Fax: 903.886.5990

University Email Address: susan.skripac@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:


Supplemental readings are embedded throughout the course.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

Learning Outcome #1: The learner will be an active and engaged team member within their 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.

Learning Outcome #2: The learner will compare and contrast different research designs and distinguish between quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches.

Learning Outcome #3: The learner will prepare a written research proposal that includes:

• A learner-developed literature review

• A learner-identified problem for research.
• A learner-developed purpose and research questions to address the problem.

• A learner-developed research design to collect data.

• A properly formatted (APA) research proposal

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Instructional Methods / Activities/ Assessments**

This course is made up of a series of assignments and assessments to assist you in achieving the course learning outcomes. Each week you will work on various combinations of assignments, activities, discussions, readings, research, etc. which will be made available to you on each Friday and close on the following Sunday - allowing for 10 days total to complete the activities. Modules will not close but assignments will be due on a specific date.

**Discussion Forums will be assessed holistically and be worth a total of 200 points (to earn full points you must respond, query, discuss/post a minimum of 9 times per week)**

**Learning Outcome #1:** The learner will be an active and engaged participate in discussion forums within his/her learning community by analyzing, constructing/creating, and evaluating information presented within the textbook, external readings/resources, student research, and class activities.

**Learning Outcome #2:** The learner will compare and contrast different research designs and distinguish between quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches.

**Description:** The discussion forums are related to the chapter readings, external resources and activities. Upon completion or near completion of the assigned readings and activities, you are expected to engage in an ongoing discussion/debate with your learning community peers. Your contributions to the discussion forums will be graded for **quality** not quantity, **timeliness** of your contributions, and a **detailed analysis** of linking together theory (readings) to application (activities).

One major piece of advice for this assignment....To avoid point deduction, you should have an original post (response to the question) and interact with your peers with a minimum of 9 posts per week.

**Assessment Method**

5=Excellent; 4=Good; 3=Meets Expectations; 2=Needs Work; 1=Below Expectations
Proposal Development Activities: One proposal, 300 pts

Learning Outcome #3: The learner will prepare a written formal research proposal that includes the following criteria:

- Problem for research
- Literature review
- Purpose and research questions to address the problem
- Appropriate research design to collect data
- Properly cited research via the APA publication style (6th edition)

Description: We will conduct a series of activities to assist you in designing a formal written research proposal. Through the analysis of appropriate research literature, you will identify a problem you wish to further investigate. This problem needs to be one that is "researchable." On occasion, we will conduct an activity to further assist you in developing your research proposal. This research proposal in its entirety is due at the end of the semester; however, you will be graded on the development of the components via the proposal development activities as you progress through the semester.

Assessment Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of activity produced</th>
<th>5=Excellent; 4=Good; 3=Meets Expectations; 2=Needs Work; 1=Below Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addressed all of the components to the activity</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Critiquing Research Reports: 100 points each

Learning Outcome #2: The learner will compare and contrast different research designs and distinguish between quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches.

As a student, you will submit 5 critiques based on a topic in your selected field of study.
**Step 1.** Locate a “research report” (e.g., an article from the *Journal of Agricultural Education* or from the *North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture*—NACTA or another appropriate source). REMEMBER, the report should relate to your knowledge base or your contextual setting.

**Step 2.** Provide APA style citation so that others (and you later) may locate the report AND you could use the citation subsequently in your future profession. This will go on the TOP of your submitted critique.

**Step 3.** Critique the article/report using the following criteria:

1. Is there an appropriate and systematic literature base to introduce the study?
2. Is a research problem and/or purpose stated explicitly and succinctly?
3. Are research objectives and/or hypotheses specified and stated clearly to lead in solving the problem/accomplishing the purpose of the research?

**FOR YOUR 1st CRITIQUE, you may stop here — or you may add the items below**

4. If applicable, are the target population, accessible population, sampling frame, responding sample, & treatment of non-respondents stated carefully & accurately?
5. Were important variables defined conceptually (theory) & operationally (practical)?
6. Are measurement instruments/data collection tools selected, designed, & used properly? Are instruments valid & reliable? Is evidence provided to ensure they are?
7. Are data collection procedures employed correctly?
8. Is the research design described & appropriate to achieve the research objectives? Does the design of the study ensure internal & (if appropriate) external validity?
9. Are appropriate statistical analyses employed and reported?
10. Are findings consistent with purposes/objectives, research design, & data analysis?
11. Are conclusion based on findings from the research and implications drawn and recommendations made as appropriate?
12. Is the paper well written, using proper grammar, punctuation, and APA style?
13. Does the research contribute to theory or practice? Is a significant problem solved and/or additional important research questions raised?

**Grading**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>possible points</th>
<th>Earned points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Participation</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article critiques 5 @ 100</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
<td></td>
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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 any class live sessions throughout the semester
- Speakers (for live sessions or other audio enhanced assignments)
- Word processing software (Microsoft Word preferred)

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 through 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 Help Desk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by sending an email directly to helpdesk@online.tamuc.org. You may also reach the Help Desk 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 an exam, about course due dates, etc.), please contact me via email, through the Q&A Forums or during office hours. If you wish to talk call at 315.558.2938 any time between 5:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m.

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. This includes completing the extensive readings related to course topics.
1. Email is the best way to reach me. A reply will be sent immediately depending upon the time your message was received. Please do not send me last minute emails with the word HELP!! in the subject line. Also, in order to avoid duplication of questions and answers, I prefer that you post all class related questions in the Q&A forum provided each week. It is likely that your peers will have the same question. Emails of a personal nature should be sent to my email address.

2. If you want to talk via the "phone" You may call me on my cell phone.

**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

**Course Specific Procedures:**

**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).

**Late work:** Not accepted.

**Plagiarism:** Is stealing and WILL NOT be tolerated. Plagiarism will result in penalties from a Zero(0) on the assignment up to failing the course.

**Attendance:** This is an online class. The quality of your contributions and regular participation activities will be considered attendance. It is encouraged that you attempt to log into the course everyday and/or check your email for messages!

**Scholarly Expectations:** All works submitted for credit must be original works created by YOU. It is considered inappropriate and unethical to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes.

**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@tamu-commerce.edu
Student Disability Resources & Services
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WK</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>What’s due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Course introduction</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Read Ch.1&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Identify a researchable topic</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion1</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 1 discussion&lt;br&gt;Feb 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>- Read Ch. 2&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion#2&lt;br&gt;- Begin proposal development activity #1</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 2 discussion&lt;br&gt;Feb 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>- Read Ch. 3&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 3</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 3 discussion&lt;br&gt;AG 595: Critique #1&lt;br&gt;Feb 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>- Read Ch. 4&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 4</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 4 discussion&lt;br&gt;Feb 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>- Read Ch. 5&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 5</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 5 discussion&lt;br&gt;March 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>- Read Ch. 6&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 6&lt;br&gt;- Begin proposal activity #2</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 6 discussion&lt;br&gt;March 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>- Read Ch. 7&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 7</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 7 discussion&lt;br&gt;AG 595: Critique #2&lt;br&gt;March 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>- Read Ch. 8&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 8&lt;br&gt;- Begin proposal development activity #3</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 8 discussion&lt;br&gt;April 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>- Read chapter 9&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 9</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 9 discussion&lt;br&gt;April 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>- Read Ch.10&lt;br&gt;- Online discussion 10</td>
<td>Conclude Ch. 10 discussion&lt;br&gt;AG 595: Critique #3&lt;br&gt;April 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>- Continue study/discussion of mixed methods &amp; proposal development #3</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>- Begin preparation of proposals&lt;br&gt;- Work due at the end of week</td>
<td>AG 595: Critique (#4 &amp; #5) due&lt;br&gt;May 2</td>
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