

Northern Kentucky University
College of Education and Human Services
Graduate Program in Counselor Education

COU 680 Research Methods and Program Evaluation

Development of skills for critically evaluating the professional literature; hypothesis generation & testing; examination of quantitative and qualitative research designs; outcome & program evaluation; basic statistical procedures for analyzing data; professional communication of research results.

CACREP Core Area: *Research and Program Evaluation*

Semester: Fall 2007

Location: AHC 208

Meeting Times: Saturdays from 9:00 to 11:45am.

Instructor: Greg Hatchett, Ph.D.

Office Location: BEP 203E

Office Hours: Tuesdays from 1:00-3:00pm; Wednesdays from 12:00-3:00pm;
Thursdays from 1:00-3:00pm; and by appointment.

Phone #: 859-572-6195

Email: hatchettg@nku.edu (easiest way to reach me).

Website: www.nku.edu/~hatchettg

Required Textbooks:

Heppner, P. P., Wampold, B. E., Kivlighan, D. M. (2008). *Research design in counseling* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Salkind, N. J. (2003). *Statistics for people who (think they) hate statistics* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Additional materials may be placed on reserve in Stealy Library.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will develop an appreciation for the value of research in advancing knowledge and developing better interventions for their clients (CACREP 8.a. & e.)
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the basic research designs utilized in the field of counseling. (CACREP 8.b.)
3. Students will demonstrate competence in selecting research designs and statistical analyses for evaluating specific hypotheses.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the pros and cons of null hypothesis significance testing and alternative procedures for understanding a study's results. (CACREP 8.c.)
5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of commonly used effect size statistics and the importance of power analyses. (CACREP 8.c.)
6. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the use of empirical research for evaluating counseling processes, outcomes, and programs. (CACREP 8.a.)
7. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the ethical principles involved in conducting counseling research. (CACREP 8.f.)
8. Students will become familiar with the process of program evaluation for assessing and evaluating the efficacy of counseling programs. (CACREP 8.d.)
9. Students will demonstrate proficiency in the use of technology for conducting research and communicating information to professional audiences. (CACREP 8.c.)

Expectations for Students

1. Read the assigned chapters before the scheduled class meeting.
2. Attend every class meeting; arrive on time for class.
3. Dedicate a minimum of 10 hours each week to this course. Students who cannot budget this much time for the course should drop immediately
4. Complete assignments on time. Late work will not be accepted.
5. Be willing to share your ideas and ask difficult questions. The academic classroom should serve as an environment where diverse, and sometimes controversial, ideas can be discussed and evaluated. *The classroom will serve as a free-speech zone in which students will not be penalized for their viewpoints or opinions.* [NKU's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities states the following: "The professor has an obligation to encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression. He/she may not evaluate student performance based on opinions (such as religious belief or political views) or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.

- Should students feel their performance has not been judged on solely academic grounds or that their grade does not reflect the quality of their work, they may appeal the professor's decision using the Academic Appeals Procedure outlined subsequently."]
6. Students are expected to adhere to the NKU Student Honor Code. Specifically, the honor code states that students "will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic regulations." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating or helping other students cheat on examinations/assignments and plagiarism (i.e., presenting another's work or ideas as one's own). When preparing a written document for grading, one should be careful to give credit, through appropriate citations, where credit is due. The use of citations should follow the style guidelines of the APA Publication Manual. Because issues surrounding proper citation can be ambiguous, please consult the instructor if in doubt. Violations of the Honor Code may lead to severe consequences, including up to expulsion from this course or NKU. More detailed information about the Honor Code can be found on one of the university's web pages at the following location: www.nku.edu/~deanstudents/Rights-Contents.htm.
 7. Please turn off or place on silent mode all potentially disruptive electronic devices, such as cell phones and pagers.
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Course Outline & Assignment Schedule:

- **August 25:** Course Orientation, Epistemology, Assumptions of the Scientific Method & Social Constructivism, Overview of the Major Research Methods.
- **September 1:** Critically Reviewing & Evaluating the Counseling Literature, Developing Research Ideas & Testable Hypotheses (Quiz on Chapters 1-4 in *Research Design in Counseling*).
- **September 8:** Research Validity, Ethical Issues in Counseling Research, & Introduction to Statistics (Quiz on Chapters 5-6 in *Research Design in Counseling* & Chapters 1-4 in *Statistics*).
- **September 15:** Sampling, Measurement & Data Collection, Evaluating the Psychometric Properties of Measurement Devices (Quiz on Chapters 13-14 in *Research Design Explained* & Chapter 16 in *Statistics*).
- **September 22:** Examination #1.

- **September 29:** Observational Research Methods, Correlation & Regression (Quiz on Chapter 10 in *Research Design in Counseling* & Chapters 5 & 13-14 in *Statistics*).
- **October 6:** Introduction to Experimental Designs (Quiz on Chapters 7 & 12 in *Research Design in Counseling*).
- **October 13:** Experimental Designs continued (Quiz on Chapters 8-9 in *Research Design in Counseling*).
- **October 20:** Analysis of Group Data (Quiz on Chapters 8-12 in *Statistics*).
- **October 27:** Examination #2.
- **November 3:** Analogue, Process, & Outcome Research (Quiz on Chapters 17-19 in *Research Design in Counseling*).
- **November 10:** Qualitative Research, Program Evaluation, Professional Writing (Quiz on Chapters 11, 21, & 22 in *Research Design in Counseling*).
- **November 17:** Psychometric Research & Multicultural Issues (Quiz on Chapters 15 & 20 in *Research Design in Counseling*).
- **November 24:** Thanksgiving Holiday.
- **December 1:** Catch-Up & Review for Final Examination. **Research Proposals Due.**
- **December 8th:** Final Comprehensive Examination.

Evaluation Procedures:

In-Class Exams. Students will complete three examinations, including a comprehensive final examination. Exams will be based on the assigned readings as well as information presented in class. (All of the information contained in the reading assignments is subject to being included on exams, irrespective of whether such information was specifically discussed in class.) Because a significant amount of the course material is not derived from the textbooks, it is essential that students attend class and take careful notes. Short-answer, application, and essay items will comprise the majority of the exam questions. Consequently, students will need to know the material well enough to explain it to the instructor. Responses to the exam items will be scored using criterion- and

norm-referenced grading procedures. The in-class examinations typically take 90 to 120 minutes to complete.

Policy on Missed Exams. A student will be allowed to complete a missed examination only under unusual circumstances (severe illness, death in the family, etc.). If a student misses an exam, he or she will be responsible for providing documentation of an excused absence. In any event, the student must contact the instructor in advance of the exam to explain his or her absence. If a student receives permission to complete a make-up examination, it must be completed within one week of the original exam date and content of the exam may be different from the original examination given to the rest of the class.

BlackBoard Quizzes. Students will complete a total of 10 quizzes through the BlackBoard software system. Each weekly quiz will be posted on BlackBoard by Wednesday at 12:00pm and it must be completed by Saturday morning at 9:00am before class. Each quiz will contain 10-30 multiple choice items. These quizzes will be timed; time limits will be established by multiplying the number of items by 2 minutes. Though the quizzes are “open book,” it is imperative that you have completed the assigned readings before logging on to BlackBoard. You will not likely be able to successfully complete the quizzes in this time frame without completing the readings first.

Research Proposal. Each student will develop a research proposal for investigating a research question in the counseling literature. A successful proposal will contain the following elements:

1. Critical evaluation of a narrow topic in the counseling literature.
2. Development of an important research question.
3. Development of testable hypotheses.
4. Explicit description of a research design (participants, materials, procedure) for evaluating one’s hypotheses.
5. Planned statistical analyses.
6. Communication of the proposal using correct APA style.

More detailed information about the specifics and evaluation of the proposal will be communicated throughout the semester.

Course assignments will be given the following weights:

Online Quizzes	10%
Research Proposal	20%
Examination #1	20%
Examination #2	20%
Final Exam	30%

Grading Scale:

A (<i>Extraordinary Academic Performance</i>)	= 100-94%.
B (<i>Expected Level of Performance</i>)	= 93-79%.
C (<i>Marginal, but Passing, Performance</i>)	= 78-72%.
F (<i>Inadequate Graduate-Level Performance</i>)	= <72%.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services) for this course must register with the Disability Services Office. Please contact the Disability Service Office immediately in the University Center, Suite 320 or call 859-572-6373 for more information. Verification of your disability is required in the Disability Services Office for you to receive reasonable academic accommodations. Visit the Disability Services website at www.nku.edu/~disability/.

Flexibility Clause:

This syllabus should be regarded as a tentative document and subject to change. Any changes to the syllabus or course structure will be announced in class. Because students will be held accountable for any changes in the syllabus, it is incumbent upon students to attend class meetings on a regular basis.
