Purpose and Objectives

Talk to most graduate students in education around the country and you will find that a course on research design (and even more so quantitative research design) is one of the least popular courses in their graduate curriculum. This is unfortunate because central to any work in education is the learning that comes from quality research. You, however, are fortunate because this course will be one that you will come to adore, and our weekly meetings will become the highlights of your semester. You will participate in engaging discussions with me and your classmates, and we will work together to overcome any anxieties you may have about quantitative research.

The research strategies employed by educational researchers are extremely diverse, which is fitting given the extraordinary diversity of the research questions educational researchers pursue. We will examine the main concepts of quantitative research design. Among the specific methodologies we will explore are true experiments, quasi-experiments, ex post facto designs, correlational studies, and secondary data analysis. We also will cover other fundamental concerns related to quantitative methods such as measurement, reliability, validity, sampling, hypothesis testing, internal and external validity, and statistical analyses.

This course is not intended as a substitute for the more specialized or advanced methodological training that successful doctoral dissertations or master’s theses typically demand. However, the course should provide you with the introductory skills to both evaluate and carry out research in education and other social sciences. You will acquire the skills required to recognize research problems, review literature that informs the problem, interpret results and draw conclusions about research problems, and apply research methods in the broader context of one’s professional work. We will discuss design, analysis, and interpretation in detail. The primary objectives of this course are as follows:

- To understand quantitative research concepts and methods and to be able to apply them in analyzing and doing research.
- To evaluate research presented in the popular press and in scholarly journals - i.e., be a good consumer of research.
- To plan your own research, specifically to know how to develop research questions and design a study to answer them.
- To develop and refine academic/professional writing skills by preparing a research proposal.
- To learn the skills necessary to function as a practitioner/scholar in education.
By the end of this course, I expect that you will have an introductory understanding of the following concepts or research tools:

- Scientific Inquiry
- Theory
- Hypothesis
- Scientific Paradigms
- Nominal, Ordinal, Interval and Ratio Scales
- Independent Variable
- Dependent Variable
- Control or Confounding Variable
- Variance
- Statistical Description
- Statistical Inference
- Statistical Significance
- Hypothesis Testing
- Mean, Mode, Standard Deviation, Percentile, T-Test, Correlation, Analysis of Variance
- Experimental Design
- Quasi-Experimental Design
- Ex Post Facto and Correlational Designs
- Control and Sources of Error
- Partial Correlation and Regression
- Internal Validity
- External Validity
- Reliability
- Elements of Sampling Theory and Design
- Sample Representativeness
- Psychometric Reliability and Validity
- Sampling Error

The course is intended to be an interactive graduate seminar. A variety of pedagogical techniques will be applied during the semester to insure that the objectives outlined above are met. I believe that students are responsible for their own learning as well as the learning of their peers. In order for this to happen, we must all be active participants in and take responsibility for what goes on in the classroom. You are expected to come to class having completed all assignments. This will allow you to be an active participant in our classroom dialogue. You can expect that the instructor will come to class prepared to lead you through an intellectually challenging and stimulating learning experience. In fulfilling your role as a responsible learner and teacher, I expect that you will be as willing to talk about what you do not know as you are to talk about what you do know.

**Valuing Diversity**

It is my belief that the diversity you bring to this class is a valuable resource because varied backgrounds and opinions enhance discussion. Research, including some of my own, suggests that learning is improved by exposure to diversity in the classroom. It is my intent to present materials and activities that utilize and are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know of ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you or for other students or student groups.

I also understand that you may celebrate religious holidays that conflict with the class schedule or may have a disability that requires special accommodations. You will not be penalized because of observances of your religious beliefs. Whenever possible, you will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. It is your responsibility to inform me as soon as possible of any intended absences for religious observances. If you have a documented disability that is relevant to the work that you will do in this course, please contact me as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made. Student Disability Services (3101 Burge Hall, 335-1426, [http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/](http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/)) also is available for consultation with students with disabilities.
**Academic Honesty**

You are expected to abide by the code of academic integrity throughout this course. I encourage you to collaborate with others as you think about, outline, and proofread your work. However, oral and written work must be your own, unless explicitly noted in the syllabus. You must acknowledge any scholars or classmates whose work you quote or refer to in any way. According to the College of Education’s Policy on Student Academic Misconduct, examples of plagiarizing or cheating include: presenting someone else’s written or spoken words or ideas as one’s own; using direct quotes with no quotation marks, paraphrasing without crediting the source or in some other way suggesting someone else’s work is one’s own; copying all or part of someone else’s paper; and knowingly allowing another student to copy one’s work or submit one’s work as his or her own. In addition, students must not turn in any written work for which they have already received credit in another course. Any sort of academic misconduct is a very serious offense, and may result in a grade reduction and/or other serious penalties. For more information see the University’s Policy on Student Academic Misconduct available online at: [http://www.uiowa.edu/~coedean/policies/student_ac_misconduct/index.htm](http://www.uiowa.edu/~coedean/policies/student_ac_misconduct/index.htm).

**Concerns**

If you have any suggestions or concerns, either positive or negative, about this class, please do not hesitate to see me during my office hours or make an appointment. It is my hope that we will be able to resolve the issue. In the event that we are unsuccessful, College policy suggests that you contact the EPLS department executive officer, Larry Bartlett (N491 Lindquist Center, 335-5307 or 335-5303). He will be able to help you and give further guidance. You also may wish to refer to the college policy on student complaints and dispute resolution. A copy of Student Complaint Procedures is available online at [http://www.uiowa.edu/~coedean/policies/student_complaint/index.htm](http://www.uiowa.edu/~coedean/policies/student_complaint/index.htm).

**Dropping the Course**

This course is given by the College of Education. This means that class policies on matters such as requirements, grading, and sanctions for academic dishonesty are governed by the College of Education. If you wish to add or drop this course after the official deadline, you must receive the approval of the Dean of the College of Education. Prior to dropping the course, I encourage you to come speak with me. I will do whatever I can to find a solution that will allow you to remain in the course and continue your progress toward degree completion. Additional information on dropping the course and details of the University policy of cross enrollments may be found at [http://www.uiowa.edu/~provost/deos/crossenroll.doc](http://www.uiowa.edu/~provost/deos/crossenroll.doc).

**Readings**

*Required* (available at the bookstore and from most electronic booksellers; also on reserve at Main Library)


Other Readings – Required and Supplemental
In addition to the required texts listed above, you will read additional book chapters and articles. All have been placed on electronic reserve (noted with an * in course schedule) on ICON at http://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml. I have provided both required and supplemental readings.

Lecture Presentations
I will post all lecture slides on the ICON course website (http://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml) by noon on the day of class. You may find it useful to bring a printed copy of them to class.

Additional resources (on reserve at Main Library or amazon.com; required sections on electronic reserve unless otherwise noted)

Methods of Instruction and Course Expectations
The course will employ a variety of approaches of instruction and will rely heavily on student participation and discussion. All students will be evaluated individually on the first three items.

1. **Class participation (10%)**—This course is conducted as a lecture/seminar class; therefore, you are expected to attend and to be actively involved in the class. You are expected to participate in class discussions in a manner that demonstrates thoughtful reflection and understanding of the subject matter, as well as respect for your colleagues in the class. To do so, you must complete the readings that are assigned for each session of the class prior to attending that class session. Active participation also means that each participant is willing to listen to other points of view and to change his or her mind. This means you must listen to others, respond thoughtfully, demonstrate an understanding of the issues, and show a willingness to learn and grow.

2. **Article Critique (20%)**—You will select and critique a quantitative research article that has appeared in a refereed journal. I recommend that you select an article that informs your research proposal. I also recommend that you allow me to review your article prior to writing your critique. You may use your notes and readings to assist with the assignment, but you may not consult with other people. I will provide additional information about the critique during the first class. The article critique is due in class on March 11.

3. **Take-home midterm exam (30%)**—The purpose of the essay take-home exam will be to apply and integrate all of the information covered prior to spring break. It is easy to labor over take-home
exams for days and even weeks. To avoid this, I want to set realistic expectations for the exam. If you were to take the exam in class, you would have approximately two and a half hours. While I hope you spend a little more time on your exam than that, I believe you should take no more than four or five hours to complete it. I will evaluate your exam with this in mind. For those who need a page number guideline, I expect that you will write approximately ten double-spaced pages. You may use your notes and assigned readings to do the assignments, but you may not consult with other people. I will distribute the exam on March 11, and it will be due at the beginning of class on April 1.

4. **Group Research Proposal (40%)** – During the second class meeting, we will divide the class into groups of two (or three, if necessary) according to research interests. You will work together to develop a research proposal that addresses a particular problem and seeks to answer a research question or research questions. Your proposal will include the following components: an explanation of the research problem, a series of research questions and/or hypotheses, a review of the literature, and a thorough description of the method. You **will not collect data** for this project. I expect the proposal will be 20-25 pages, and it will be due on May 6. You will present your proposal to the class on April 29 or May 6. Additional information on the group project will be provided in class.

Note that you will work in groups to complete several written assignments that will lead to your final research proposal. A portion of your research proposal grade will be based on these assignments. But more important, I believe the feedback you receive from your peers and me will contribute greatly to your learning, as well as the grade on your final proposal. Therefore, I encourage you not to neglect these exercises. We will discuss the specifics of these assignments in class.

I know some are reluctant to work on group projects. To be honest, I dreaded group work while in graduate school. Yet, in my experience, educational research almost always involves teamwork. A scan of the educational research literature reveals that the majority of the articles have more than one author. Additionally, research suggests that collaborative work enhances student learning. However strong the argument for collaborative work, some of you still may wish to pursue your research proposal on your own. Please contact me prior to class on January 26 if you wish to write your own proposal, and I will make alternate arrangements for you.

➔ You must submit all written assignments in the “dropbox” on the ICON course website prior to the class meeting when they are due. Please do not email them to me or submit paper copies, as I tend to lose things in the electronic and paper shuffle. I do ask, however, that you bring paper copies of some of your group assignments (noted in the course schedule) to class to share and get feedback from your colleagues.

➔ **Note: All assignments should be turned in on time unless other arrangements are made well in advance of deadlines. I WILL NOT accept any late assignments.**

➔ All formal written work should adhere to APA style as described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th Ed.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your final grade for this class will be based upon the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation………………10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Critique…………20 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Process and Design (Umbach)  
Department of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies
Take-home Midterm……30 points  
Research proposal…………40 points

Your final grade will be calculated using the following scale:
92—100 points.........................A  
90—91 points..........................A-
88—89 points..........................B+  
82—87 points..........................B  
80—81 points..........................B-
78—79 points..........................C+  
72—77 points..........................C  
70—71 points..........................C-

I *strongly discourage* incomplete grades. I have seen numerous cases where students become overwhelmed trying to wrap-up incomplete grades. Because a large portion of your grade is dependent on your group project, assigning an incomplete grade comes with added complications. If it is absolutely necessary for you to take an incomplete, you must arrange it with me prior to April 22nd.

### Instructor Responsibilities

I have high expectations not only for you but also for myself. You should expect that I will:
- Be prepared for class, read and return your work in a timely manner, and be interested and engaged in your work;
- remember that each of you brings a different background, experience, and perspective to this course;
- learn from you;
- meet with you individually or in groups upon request and be available in person, by telephone, and by e-mail;
- and work hard, have fun, and empower students to develop greater understandings of the topics that are covered in this course.

### Course Schedule

I organized the course schedule around the main concepts of quantitative research methods. We proceed generally, considering how to write a research proposal, concepts of quantitative research design, measurement, and sampling. In late February, we begin to explore different data collection techniques and research designs, such as experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental designs. In the last half of the semester, we discuss more advanced research topics such as secondary data analysis, hypothesis testing, and inferential statistics.

*Schedule key:  * - can be accessed on ICON course website [http://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml](http://icon.uiowa.edu/index.shtml)  
S & S – Singleton and Straits text  
*Creswell* – Creswell text (skim information on qualitative and mixed methods)

### Week 1, January 22 – Introductions, expectations, and introduction to research

### Week 2, January 29 – Reading day (no class meeting)

### Week 3, February 5 – Introduction to quantitative research design and elements of a research proposal

$S$ & $S$ – Chapter 1-3 & 17  
*Creswell* – 1-3

*Smart, J. C. (2005). Attributes of exemplary research manuscripts employing quantitative analysis. Research in Higher Education, 46(4), 461-477. (Authored by probably the best editors in the field, this paper serves as a great guide for those who wish to publish quantitative research.)

**Assignment due:** One paragraph describing the research problem you would like to address in your research proposal. Bring 3 copies to class.

**Week 4, February 12 – Measurement and writing the literature review and introduction sections**

S & S – Chapter 4
Creswell – Chapters 4-8

**Week 5, February 19 – Sampling**

S & S – Chapter 5


**Assignment due:** Two page research prospectus (group). Bring three copies to class.

**Week 6, February 26 – Experimental research design**

S & S – Chapters 6 & 7


**Week 7, March 4 – Experimental design (continued), writing the methods section, and introduction to survey research**

S & S – Chapter 8
Creswell – Chapter 9


**Assignment due:** Outline of your literature review (group). Bring 3 copies to class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8, March 11 – Survey research (Take home mid-term distributed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| S & S – Chapters 9  
Assignment due: Article critique |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9, March 18 - No class (Spring Break)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 10, March 25 – No class (AERA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 11, April 1 – Research using secondary data and evaluation research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| S & S – Chapters 11 & 13  
Assignment due: Take-home midterm |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 12, April 8 – Hypothesis testing and testing of differences (Chi-square, t-test, ANOVA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Assignment due: One page description of method (group). Bring 3 copies to class. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 13, April 15 – Analysis of relationships (correlation, partial correlation, and regression)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| S & S – Chapter 14  
Assignment Due: Draft of proposal (group). Bring 3 copies to class. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 14, April 22 – Multivariate analysis (multiple regression)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| S & S – Chapter 15  
Carefully re-read and be prepared to discuss ONE of the following examples of regression analysis:


**Week 15, April 29 – Group presentations (if necessary) and research ethics**

S & S – Chapter 16


Peruse the University’s Human Subjects Office Website: [http://research.uiowa.edu/hs/o](http://research.uiowa.edu/hs/o)

**Week 16, May 6 – Group presentations**

**Assignment due:** Group research proposal
## Course Schedule at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required readings</th>
<th>Assignment due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introductions, expectations, &amp; introduction to research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reading day (No class)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Introduction to quantitative research design &amp; elements of a research proposal</td>
<td>S &amp; S – Ch. 1-3 &amp; 17, Creswell – Ch. 1-3, *Broh (2002), *Smart (2005)</td>
<td>Three copies of one paragraph describing research problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Measurement and writing the literature review &amp; introduction sections</td>
<td>S &amp; S – 4, Creswell – Ch. 4-8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Experimental research design</td>
<td>S &amp; S – Ch. 6 &amp; 7, *antonio et al. (2004)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Experimental design (continued), writing the methods section, &amp; introduction to survey research</td>
<td>S &amp; S – Ch. 8, Creswell – Ch. 9, Collins &amp; Pascarella (2003), Springer et al. (1996)</td>
<td>Three copies of outline of literature review (group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Survey research (take-home midterm distributed)</td>
<td>S &amp; S – Ch. 9, *Umbach (2005)</td>
<td>Article critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No class (spring break)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No class (AERA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Research using secondary data &amp; evaluation research</td>
<td>S &amp; S – Ch. 11 &amp; 13, Perna (2003)</td>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Analysis of relationships</td>
<td>S &amp; S – Ch. 14, *Williams &amp; Monge – Ch. 11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>Three copies of proposal draft (group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Group presentations (if necessary) &amp; research ethics</td>
<td>S &amp; S – Ch. 16, Carpenter (2007), Iowa’s Human Subjects Office Website:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group research proposal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Article Critique

Select a quantitative research article from a peer-reviewed journal. Read the study several times. Then, in a coherent essay of no more than six (6), double-spaced pages, critique the study with particular reference to the items listed below. Feel free to make additional comments, criticisms, or judgments not specifically dealt with below. You might consult with McMillan and Schumacher (I will provide this section) for other things to consider when analyzing the article. In all cases, however, support your remarks with clear references to the methods or substance of the study.

1. Identify the hypotheses tested (if any) and discuss how the author(s) derived the hypotheses from theory. (Is the deduction logical?)

2. Describe briefly the theory (if any) on which the author(s) have based the study.

3. Identify the independent and dependent variables.

4. Describe the treatment (if any) and indicate whether the author(s) provide sufficient information to replicate the study. If there is insufficient information to replicate the study, what additional information do you think the authors should supply?

5. Identify the study design (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental, ex post facto, correlational) and explain why it is the design you say it is.

6. Discuss the threats to internal and external validity not controlled for by the design. Be specific when naming these threats and clearly identify those that are, in your judgment, the most serious.

7. In what ways, if any, might the researcher(s) made this study stronger? (e.g., how could the internal and external validity been increased?)

8. Given the study as it is, how well do the data and results support the conclusions drawn? (i.e., to what extent are the researchers justified in making the conclusions they do?)

The article critique is due in class on March 11. Please submit a copy of the article with your critique. As with formal written work for this class, your critique should adhere to APA style as described in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.).
Group Research Proposal

On February 5, we will divide the class into groups of two or three according to research interests. Your group then will need to decide on a quantitative research project that addresses a particular problem and tests hypotheses or answers specific research questions. Your proposal will include the following components: an explanation of the research problem, a series of research questions and/or hypotheses, a review of the literature, and a thorough description of the method. You will not collect data for this project. I expect the proposal will be 20-25 double-spaced pages (12 pt. font, formatted using APA, 5th edition) not including references and any appendices. Your proposal is due on May 6, and you will present your proposal to the class on April 29 or May 6. Your proposal should be organized to include the following components:

1. **Introduction** (5-7 pages). The introductory section of the proposal should capture the reader’s interest and sell them on the idea that the study is worth doing. This section usually includes a brief description of 1) what you plan to study, 2) why it is important to study it, 3) how you plan to study it, and 4) who you plan to study. While there are many models, to cover these topics, the introduction typically includes the following (see Creswell, 2003):
   a. The research problem
   b. Studies that have addressed the problem
   c. Deficiencies in the studies
   d. Importance of the proposed research
   e. Brief introduction to theoretical framework
   f. Purpose statement
   g. Research questions and/or hypotheses (sometimes included in the literature review section)
   h. Brief description of method (who? and how?)
   i. Limitations and delimitations

Creswell (2003) describes the structure of the introduction as an inverted triangle. In other words, you begin broadly by stating the problem. You narrow the problem into a manageable study by reviewing the research and describing the importance of the problem. You then narrow it even further by stating the purpose, research questions, and hypotheses, followed by a description of how you plan to answer your research questions or test your hypotheses.

2. **Literature review** (7-9 pages). Although your introduction reviews studies to make an argument for the importance of the research and to provide the reader with background information, it is in this section that you will offer detailed reviews of the research. The literature review frames the problem you have identified in the introduction section and explores the relationship between your study and previous research. In a quantitative study, it will help you identify the major independent and dependent variables to be included in your study. The literature review can take many forms, but is generally organized around ideas rather than specific studies. Do not organize your review around specific studies. Creswell (2003) suggests the following format:
   a. Introduce the section by telling the reader what it is you plan to cover in the review.
   b. Review the scholarly literature about the independent variable(s). Create a section for each variable.
   c. Review the literature about the dependent variable(s). If more that one dependent variable, create a section for each.
   d. Review specific studies that relate both to your independent and dependent variables. These studies will be closely related to your study. Do not be concerned if little or no work has been done that closely relates to your study.
e. Summarize the major themes of your review and make an argument for why your study needed to fill the gaps in the research.

I find that theory often guides the structure of the literature review. If you have identified a theory, you might include a section on each component of the theory followed by studies that most relate to yours. Other times, you might review the literature as described above and integrate what you have reviewed by applying a theory.

Many also use the inverted triangle concept to structure their literature reviews. At the top of the triangle, the review begins with the broad body of literature or concepts related to your research topic. This section is followed by concepts or research more closely related to your study. At the bottom of the triangle are studies that are most similar to your own.

3. Method (8-10 pages). Discuss, in detail, your methods. This section should clearly describe how you plan to take answer your research questions or test your hypotheses. It should include the following:
   a. Identify research design
   b. Describe sample, population, and participants
   c. Describe instruments, variables, and materials
   d. Review procedures in detail
   e. Explain plans for preliminary studies or pilot studies (if necessary)
   f. Provide details about data analysis procedures
   g. Identify ethical issues and your approach to dealing with them

   Keep in mind that you will need to provide enough information so that others can replicate your study.

Stylistic issues and the writing process

1. Adhere to APA style as described in the 5th edition of the style manual.

2. Try to avoid the use of passive voice. The subject of your sentence should act, not be acted upon.

3. When reviewing research, create your own voice. It helps if you organize your review around concepts or ideas rather than specific studies (as described above). The way you cite your sources will help in this regard. There are two forms of bibliographic citation used in APA style within the body of the text:
   a. "Jones (1983) found that teachers spend 74% of the time they are in the classroom on their feet."
   b. "Teachers spend 74% of the time they are in the classroom on their feet (Jones, 1983)."

   The second is preferable, because its grammatical subject (teachers) is central to the meaning of the sentence. In the first form, the grammatical subject (Jones) is tangential to the meaning of the sentence. Remember that your proposal should normally talk about what people do, not what researchers write about what people do.

4. Do not be afraid to use the first person. Until recently, formal writing did not use the first person ("I" or "we"). Instead writers wrote things like: "It is this author's opinion that...". Today's scientific writing often does allow authors to use the first person. In fact, the APA Style Manual, which governs the style of many journals in education, psychology, and other disciplines, insists on the use of the first person. Use the first person where it is appropriate.
5. Be consistent with verb tense. As Creswell (2003, p. 61) notes, “A common practice is to use the past tense to review the literature and report the results of a study. The future tense would be appropriate at all other times in research proposals and plans. For competed studies, use the present tense to add vigor to the study, especially the introduction.”

6. Be careful in your use of gendered pronouns. Although English writers have traditionally used the masculine form of pronouns (he, him, his, etc.) as a neuter form as well, many (myself included) do not approve of such usage. The time has passed when an author can use "If a child is not praised appropriately, he will…” and not confuse the reader. One solution, which I do not like, is the "he/she" construction. Because the meaning of "/" is undefined, I prefer "he or she”. However, even "he or she" is awkward and should be used sparingly. More often than not, you can rephrase the sentence to avoid the problem and make the meaning more clear at the same time. Two simple options, which often work well, are to use plural forms (since "they" is intrinsically neuter) or repeat the noun instead of using a pronoun.

7. Write multiple drafts, and get feedback on your work. Years of schooling have taught us to work right up until a due date and write only one draft. It has been my personal experience that multiple drafts and revisions of my written work are always necessary. In fact, even the most widely published scholars write multiple drafts of their work. As part of this process, I have found that thoughtful critiques from my peers provide me with insight and information that is extremely helpful to me as I seek to improve as a writer. I will do whatever I can to facilitate this process. Just ask me.
Name:

Informal name you like to be called:

E-mail address:

Telephone:
  Work:
  Home:
  Cell:

B.A./B.S.  in:
B.A./B.S. from:

M.A./M.S.  in:
M.A./M.S. from:

Current academic program:

Expected date of program completion:

Current job(s):

Describe any courses you have taken related to statistics or research design:

Career goals:

What do you hope to gain from this course?

Is there anything else you would like me to know about you?