

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
PCP 625 Research Methods for Helping Professionals.
Monday Evenings 6:30 – 9:10 PM

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Spring 2005

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a review of behavioral science research designs and methods appropriate for counselors and marriage/family therapists. Topics include: philosophy of science, ethical issues in research with human subjects, hypothesis formulation, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, measurement, descriptive designs, and the analysis and interpretation of data. The application of these research methods to professional settings will be emphasized.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the major components of a scientific-based research study.
2. Describe basic research design and methodology.
3. Integrate the philosophical and ethical issues in social science research.
4. Apply the special factors inherent in therapy research, especially marital and family therapy.
5. Evaluate social science research on the key issues of validity, reliability, sampling, and data collection and analysis.
6. Demonstrate mastery of issues related to causal, measurement, internal, external validity, and statistical validity;
7. Identify potential problems related to cultural diversity, minority populations, and gender in research;
8. Conceptualize and operationalize an appropriate research question.
9. Prepare a research proposal.
10. Conduct a mini research study.
11. Prepare a research report.
12. Explain the rationale and methods of conducting an evaluation project in professional practice settings;

TEXTBOOKS

Neuman, W. L. (2000). Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches 4th Edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

Gravetter, F. J. & Wallnau, L. B. (2002). Essentials of Statistics for the Behavior Sciences, 4th, ed. St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company. ISBN-0-534-35926-4

American Psychological Association. (2001). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition. Washington, DC: Author.

METHODOLOGY

The format of the course will consist of lectures, class discussions, multi-media presentations, homework assignments, group activities, demonstrations, and hands-on activities, quizzes and examinations. Students will be immersed in the theory and concepts regarding research and research methodology. Application of course material will be required as students complete course exercises and the research project.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Professionalism and courtesy in regard to attendance is expected.
2. Active participation in class discussions is expected.
3. Timely completion of all assigned readings.
4. Timely completion of homework/classwork assignments.
5. Completion of a midterm and final exam.
6. Conduct a mini research study of some aspect of behavioral science or family relationships and write a report of the study. The report will include all the relevant elements of scientific research as identified in the text and in class. Specifically, the report will include a clear contextualized statement of the research problem, an extensive review of relevant literature, a statement of the hypotheses to be tested, methodology of the research study (including sampling procedures, data collection and data analysis), research findings, and discussion (including implications and recommendations for future research).

***** A full report of the study will be typed in accordance with the guidelines in the APA Publication Manual.***

**** The report will be due April 15th, 2005**

ATTENDANCE

It is hoped that students will not miss any class sessions. When it is necessary to be absent, students should send an e-mail to the professor prior to the class session if possible to maintain communication regarding material covered in class. Excessive absences may result in the student being dropped from the course. The material being covered will require the student to develop analytical and critical thinking skills as they

relate to the use and practice of research. Students will be expected to not only be present but to also be engaged in class activities and discussion and share their thoughts and opinions with other students.

GRADING PROCEDURES

It is expected that all class work will be completed as scheduled. Late work will be penalized up to one letter grade, including incompletes. The final course grade will be determined based on combined scores of all quizzes, exams, homework assignments, in class projects, and research project. Grades will be calculated by dividing the total number of points accumulated by the total possible points. Attendance and class participation will be considered in cases of borderline grades.

DUE DATES

Chapter Quizzes (At the discretion of the professor)

February 28th Midterm

March 28th Five Web site reviews

April 11st Journal reviews & Dissertation Critique

April 15th Research Project

April 18th Final Exam

Professional and Ethical Conduct: Students will conduct themselves in this course as professionals, preparing projects as directed and in a timely manner. They will complete assignments and exam in an ethical manner. Plagiarism, the presentation of another's work as your own, will be considered a serious violation of the Code of Ethics and may result in failure for the course. Research will be developed in consideration of ethical standards for researchers.

Disability Accommodation: Any student who because of a disability may need special arrangements or accommodation to meet the requirements of this course is encouraged to see me before or after class to discuss accommodations.

SPECIFIC DATA

Syllabus prepared by Melody Palm, Psy.D., November 2004.

This document is intended to provide a general orientation to the course. The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to the schedule and specific assignments during the semester.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Babbie, E. (1995). *The practice of social research*, 7th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Berg, B. L. (1989). *Qualitative research methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Buros, O.K. (ed.) (1940 -) *Mental Measurements Yearbook*. New Jersey: Highland Park.
- Campbell, J.A. (1988). Client acceptance of single-system evaluation procedures. *Social Work Research and Abstracts*, 16(3), 15-20.
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- Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (1994). *Measures for Clinical Practice*, 2nd Edition. New York: Free Press.
- Davitz, J.R., & Davitz, L.L. (1996). *Evaluating Research Proposals*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Drew, Clifford J. (1996). *Introduction to designing and conducting research*, 2nd ed. St. Louis, MO: The C.V. Mosby Company.
- Fraenkel, J.R., & Wallen, N.E. (2003). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*, 5th edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
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- Gravetter, F. J. & Wallnau, L. B. (2000). Essentials of Statistics for the Behavior Sciences, 5th, ed. St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company. **(Highly recommended for help with understanding statistics.)
- See web site [www.gravetter](http://www.gravetter.com) for sample quizzes to take that accompany this text.
- Greif, G.L. & Bailey, C. (1990). Where are the fathers in social work literature? *Families in Society*, 71(2), 88-92.
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- Klein, W.C., & Bloom, M. (1995). Practice wisdom. *Social Work*, 40, 799-807.

- Mason, E.J., & Bramble, W.J. (1997). *Research in Education and the Behavioral Sciences: Concepts and Methods*. Madison, WI: Brown and Benchmark.
- Nachimias, D. & Nachimias, C. (1976). New York: St. Martin's Press. *Research methods in the social sciences*
- Nelson, J.C. (1996). Teaching students to evaluate practice outcomes by monitoring clients' responses to opportunities. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 32, 181-189.
- McTavish, D. G. & Loether, H. J. (2002). *Social Research: An Evolving Process*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon
- Phillips, B. S. (1976). *Social research: Strategy and tactics*, 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
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- Spatz, C. & Johnston, J. (1984). *Basic statistics: Tales of distributions*, 3rd ed. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
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- Tracey, T.J.G., & Glidden-Tracey, C.E. (1999). Integration of theory, research design, measurement, and analysis: Toward a reasoned argument. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 27, 299-324.