Loyola University Chicago
School of Education
RMTD 400: Introduction to Research Methodology
Fall 2015
Section 1
Online

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Email: lswanlu@luc.edu

Required Text

Additional readings will be provided by the instructor.

Course Description
This course will introduce the concept of inquiry and various research methods used in education, psychology, and other social sciences. Furthermore, the course will introduce the three main methods of inquiry: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods. Students will be able to analyze critically research and create a research proposal.

Course Objectives
As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explore the role of educational research in society and your own setting.
2. Understand the similarities and differences between quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research traditions, including paradigms, designs, methods, sampling techniques, and so on.
3. Analyze and evaluate the research questions, design, findings, and validity of existing educational research.
4. Understand the legal and ethical issues in educational research.
5. Conduct a review of relevant literature that synthesizes the knowledge from several research studies around the central idea or research question.
6. Effectively engage in an online learning community.

School of Education’s Conceptual Framework
The School of Education at Loyola University Chicago, a Jesuit and Catholic urban university, supports the Jesuit ideal of knowledge in the service of humanity. We endeavor to advance professional education in the service of social justice, engaged with Chicago, the nation, and the world. To achieve this vision the School of Education participates in the discovery, development, demonstration, and dissemination of professional knowledge and practice within a context of ethics, service to others, and social justice. We fulfill this mission by preparing professionals to serve as teachers, administrators, psychologists, and researchers; by
conducting research on issues of professional practice and social justice; and by partnering with schools and community agencies to enhance life-long learning in the Chicago area. This course will equip students with the knowledge, skills of inquiry, and ethics necessary to be professional and socially just researchers. The case studies used in this course illustrate how educational research can illuminate issues of social justice. In addition, the research methods used in this course also add to students’ ability to understand the diversity of perspectives that researchers use to address social problems. [www.luc.edu/education/mission/](http://www.luc.edu/education/mission/)

**Conceptual Framework Standards Assessed in this Course**

**CF4** – Candidates demonstrate skills that will enable them to work effectively with diverse clients.

**CF8** - Candidates apply ethical principles in professional decision-making

**IDEA Course Objectives**

The Following IDEA objectives will be a primary focus of the course:

1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
3. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
4. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
5. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course

**Diversity**

In concert with the conceptual framework for the School of Education, faculty and students will be expected to show respect and sensitivity to individual, cultural, social, and economic diversity. In this spirit, as we look at questions of organizational theory, instructional leadership and student achievement, it will be our challenge to create will and capacity within our schools so that all educational stakeholders can fulfill the promise of education.

**Dispositions**

Professionalism, Fairness, and the Belief that all students can learn, are indicators of growth for different levels in the program. Dispositions will be assessed through Live Text and are not factored into your grade. Refer to the Dispositions rubric in Live Text for information about those assessed in RMTD 400.

**Syllabus Addendums**

For information on academic honesty, accessibility, the ethics reporting hotline, and electronic communication policies and guidelines please refer to the syllabus addendum website: [www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/](http://www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/)
Format of the on-line course

The course calendar on page 8 details the topic and associated chapters for that week. I will post all information for the week before Monday. There is a structure for the 7 discussions:

- Discussion questions and relevant information for the week will be posted before Monday.
- You post an initial response to the discussion by Wednesday, and response to two peers by Friday.
- You will be provided feedback on the discussion and assignments by Sunday evening of that week.

*I cannot stress enough how important it is to stay with the course timeline.* Everything builds in this course leading up to your final paper. This is why each week we start the topics on Monday and you receive feedback on your understanding by Sunday. Please pay attention to the feedback. If you misunderstand a concept and do not read the feedback than you will have a snowball effect of not understanding the content, which will impact your assignments and final paper.

There is no times where we meet as a group on-line. It is fine to hand in assignments before the day it is due or complete the discussion requirements before the end of the week. Make the weekly format work for your schedule.

All assignment information is fully posted in Sakai. You will see examples of most assignments and detailed directions posted in the “Assignments” tab.

I will also have a section titled “unit questions” where you will be able to ask any questions about the reading or content. I will provide the final answer to all of your questions, but I also encourage other students to provide answers to develop their skills in explaining chapter material. Please feel free to ask any question you have in the Unit Questions thread. I assure you that the other students will appreciate your asking questions. Remember that the goal is for each of you to understand and learn the material, and we all need to help each other to make this happen!

### Course Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points each</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction Post</td>
<td>5 points (x1)</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>5 points each (X 9)</td>
<td>45 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Responses</td>
<td>15 points each (x7)</td>
<td>105 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>25 points each (X4)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical analysis</td>
<td>50 points (X 1)</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>125 points (X 1)</td>
<td>125 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total = 430 points</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent of Possible Points</td>
<td>Grade</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-66</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Livetext**

Two of your assignments will be used for School of Education Conceptual Framework assessments (CF4, CF8; discussed below) and are to be posted to your student Livetext account. In addition, Dispositions will be assessed in Livetext. All School of Education student’s should have an account; if you do not or need help finding out if you have one, please see me.

**Assignment details:**

**Introduction on Discussion Board:** A portion of your participation grade will be based on the completion of a post to the Discussion Board introducing yourself to the class. This will consist of a brief description of yourself, your research interests, and your area of study at Loyola. The information will help you connect with your fellow classmates.

**Quizzes:** Nine short open-book quizzes will be posted throughout the course. These are meant to assess your understanding of the concepts in the chapters and discussion during the week that they are assigned. Quizzes are due by 11:59 on the Sunday of the week noted in the calendar. You are able to re-take quizzes until midnight of the date they are due.

**Discussion:** During this course there will be seven class discussions on Sakai. You need to participate on the discussions, and I will be monitoring your written responses. I will post “Threaded Discussion” questions for the week based on the chapter(s) and topic assigned. Each student in the class will provide a minimum of one thoughtful initial response to each threaded discussion and two responses to peers.

Your responses to each of these questions should be brief (3-4 paragraphs) but thoughtful, providing evidence that you have read the required reading and thought about the material. You need to reference the readings and answer all aspects of the discussion question. Posting a message with just your thoughts with no support from the readings, a response that doesn’t fully address the question, or a post that does not
include a logical argument is not an acceptable message. You are graded based on addressing the question and having evidence to support your claims. If you misunderstand a concept you will be provided with group and individual feedback to assist with your understanding. Note that the threaded discussion section is not where you ask me questions; it is where you discuss the material with the class. The initial responses are due by 11:59pm on Wednesday.

In addition, each student must provide a brief response to two posts by peers. These responses should be 1 paragraph in length, and provide a thoughtful analysis of the discussion thread. Assist your peers with creating strong research designs. The responses to peers are due by 11:59pm on Friday.

Please spread out your initial response and response to peers so that all conversations include a thoughtful analysis. I will be monitoring the discussion threads and clarify content throughout the discussion, as well as provide feedback at the end of the discussion.

Assignments: The following assignments will prepare you for the research proposal. Refer to the posted assignment and rubric in Sakai for further details.

Assignment 1: Research questions – Following the instructions for Assignment #1 in Sakai, you will create two research questions as a starting point for your research proposal.

Assignment 2: Essay on Ethics in Research (CF8) – Assignment details are at the end of this Syllabus and in Sakai.

Assignment 3: Bibliography – You will find and complete an annotative bibliography of ten research articles. These ten articles should be articles that you will use in your research proposal. See Sakai for details.

Assignment 4: Methodology – You will writing the procedures section of the methodology that will be a part of the research proposal. Further details are posted in Sakai.

Critical Analysis: You will complete a critical evaluation of a research study. A detailed description of the assignment can be found at the end of this syllabus and on Sakai.

Research Proposal: The largest portion of your points for this course will derive from the research proposal. This assignment will be discussed at length during the course. It will consist of the first three chapters of a basic research proposal or thesis. Each assignment will assist in the preparation of this proposal. A detailed description of the types of information necessary will be provided in Sakai and announcements.
Assignment due dates
Due dates for assignments are listed on the course calendar on page 8. Please note that the Critical Analysis will serve as an assessment of Conceptual Framework standard #4, Diversity, and the Essay on Ethics in Research will serve as an assessment of Conceptual Framework standard #8, Application of Ethical Principles. The rubrics for these assessments are given at the end of this syllabus.

Late Work
Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Note that for individual assignments, you will not be able to submit your work after 11:59 pm on the due date. Unlike traditional live taught classes, the option of turning in work late is not feasible because of rigid time constraints. As such, if a situation occurs and the need to turn in work late presents itself, it is imperative that the student contacts the instructor immediately.

Late assignments will automatically be worth only half of their original point value.

Online Course Requirements
From reading this syllabus it should be clear that the online classroom differs from the live-taught. As such, there are certain expectations and guidelines we must follow in order to ensure academic achievement. The following describes an explicit however non-exclusive list of expectations to ensure a successful semester:
- Reliable internet access
- Be able to download and attach files
- Microsoft Office Package
  - Microsoft Word
  - Microsoft Excel
  - Microsoft PowerPoint
- Access to Software – All are available for free download if needed this semester.
  - Adobe Flash Player
  - Java Software
  - QuickTime
  - RealPlayer

In addition to hardware access and software utilization, the following represent factors that facilitate a productive and effective online learning experience. (Material adapted from the University of Wisconsin Online website on Online Etiquette. http://online.uwc.edu/technology/ Etiquette.asp)

- Tone down your language. Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.
- Keep a straight face. In general, avoid humor and sarcasm. These frequently depend either on facial or tone of voice cues absent in text communication or on familiarity with the reader.
• Be forgiving. If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the instructor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the instructor.

• The recorder is on. Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. Also, although the grammar and spelling of a message typically are not graded and they do reflect on you; your audience might not be able to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor before posting them.

• Test for clarity. Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, then even better.

• Netspeak. Although electronic communication is still young, many conventions have already been established. DO NOT TYPE IN ALL CAPS. This is regarded as shouting and is out of place in a classroom. Acronyms and emoticons (arrangements of symbols to express emotions) are popular, but excessive use of them can make your message difficult to read.
Course Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic Area</th>
<th>Readings Due this Week</th>
<th>Assignments due by 11:59pm Friday of that week. Discussion questions are posted on Monday. Initial response to one question due by Wednesday, two responses to peers by 11:59pm Friday.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to the course – Discussion of assignments and requirements</td>
<td>Chapter 1 Article 1</td>
<td>Post to Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Research Paradigms, Research Problems, Research Questions</td>
<td>Chapter 2 &amp; 4 p 95-102</td>
<td>Quiz 1 and Discussion 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Literature Reviews and Research Proposal</td>
<td>Chapter 4 (p 83-95 and 103-107) &amp; 5 Article 2</td>
<td>Assignment 1: Research Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Library Information Research Ethics</td>
<td>Chapter 6 Belmont Report</td>
<td>Quiz 2 and Discussion 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Qualitative and Quantitative Validity</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>Assignment 2: Essay on Research Ethics Quiz 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Experimental Research and Quasi Experimental Designs</td>
<td>Chapter 12 &amp; 13 (p355-370) Article 3</td>
<td>Quiz 4 and Discussion 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Non experimental Designs / Single Subject</td>
<td>Chapter 13 (p370-380) and 14</td>
<td>Assignment 3: Bibliography Quiz 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Chapter/Article</td>
<td>Quiz/Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/12</td>
<td>Qualitative Designs</td>
<td>Chapter 15, 16, 17 Article 4</td>
<td>Quiz 6 and Discussion 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/19</td>
<td>Mixed Method Research</td>
<td>Chapter 18 Article 5</td>
<td>Quiz 7 and Discussion 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/26</td>
<td>Measurement / Assessment</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Quiz 8 and Discussion 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Constructing a questionnaire and data collection</td>
<td>Chapter 8 &amp; 9 Article 6</td>
<td>Assignment 4: Methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/9</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Quiz 9 and Discussion 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Chapter 19 &amp; 20</td>
<td>Critical Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/23</td>
<td>No Class – Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>Qualitative Analysis Discussion about proposals</td>
<td>Chapter 21</td>
<td>Optional: Draft of Research Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td>PROPOSAL DUE 12/11 by 11:59pm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Research Methodology
Core Assessment

Course: RMTD 400 – Introduction of Research Methodologies
Core Assessment: Essay on research ethics
CF Standard: 8

For this core assessment, the student will read an article or case study provided by the instructor that addresses an aspect of research ethics. One example is the following:

Please read the New York Times Magazine article from November 28, 1999, entitled, “The biotech death of Jesse Gelsinger.” In a 2-3 page essay, please address the following questions.

a. How would you assess the ethics of this study given the Belmont Report principles of respect for persons, beneficence and justice? This report can be read online at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.htm

b. A major criticism of the trial that resulted in Jesse’s death centers on the informed consent procedures. What is your assessment of the informed consent procedures? If you were in Jesse’s place, what information and procedures would you demand before you volunteered for a trial?

c. The medical ethicist of this research project would not allow infants as subject in this experiment because parents could not freely give consent knowing that their infant had only a few hours to live. What is your opinion of this decision? How would you argue your case?

Core Assessment Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Framework Standard</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF8: Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the major principles of research ethics in research with human subjects.</td>
<td>The essay clearly represents an understanding of the principles of the Belmont report: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. The essay assesses the ethical issues present in the case study, and provides a clear and well-supported argument for its claims.</td>
<td>The research article critique demonstrates a good understanding of the principles of the Belmont report: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. The essay addresses some of the ethical issues present in the case study, and provides some support for its claims.</td>
<td>The research article critique presents a limited understanding of the principles of the Belmont report: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. The essay partially addresses the ethical issues present in the case study, and provides little or no support for its claims.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Methodology
Core Assessment

Course: RMTD 400 – Introduction of Research Methodologies
Core Assessment: Critical analysis of a research study
CF Standard: 4

For this core assessment, each student will identify a research article related to an area of the student’s interest. The purpose of this assessment is to demonstrate an understanding of the research methodology used in the study, and critical assess the methodology used and results. Students are expected to include both a summary and a critical review of the article that discusses elements, such as the following:

1. Purpose of the study
2. Methodology (e.g., case study, ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenological study)
3. Research methods (e.g., interviews, observations, document analysis)
4. Sampling (e.g., purposive)
5. Role of the researcher
6. Data interpretation and analysis

Core Assessment Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Framework Standard</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF4: Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of research methodologies used in educational research.</td>
<td>The research article critique clearly represents an understanding of the research methodology employed in the study. The research paper weaves together the summary and analysis of the article supporting claims with sufficient evidence from the article.</td>
<td>The research article critique demonstrates a good understanding of the research methodology used in the study. The research paper attempts an integration of the summary and analysis with some evidence provided for claims.</td>
<td>The research article critique presents a limited understanding of the research methodology used in the study. The research paper does not successfully integrate the summary and analysis of the article, and/or provides little supporting evidence for claims.</td>
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</table>