This introductory course examines the principles of sound educational research and prepares students to craft a robust and compelling research project. Students will be introduced to concepts in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research approaches in preparation for designing, conceptualizing, and carrying out independent research.

To this end, students will accomplish the following by the course’s conclusion:

- Identify several potential research topics;
- Develop substantial familiarity with one topic through engagement with relevant literature and the submission of a preliminary literature review;
- Refine the selected topic area into a focused, “researchable” research question;
- Identify appropriate research methods for exploring the research question;
- Submit a final research paper that includes a literature review, a methods section, and a findings section.

**STUDENT EVALUATION & WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

This course will be graded based on the following criteria:

A. Classroom participation (30%). Contributions in class should reveal substantial familiarity with assigned readings, as well as an ability to synthesize and constructively critique the comments of classmates. This course will operate as a seminar and students will be expected to provide thoughtful feedback on the work and ideas of classmates.

B. Researcher Identity Assignment (10%). Submit a 3 page memo that discusses who you are in relation to your research project. What do you bring to your research in terms of past experiences, values, and beliefs and how does your identity influence the way you are approaching this research? What kinds of previous connections do you have to the topic that you will study and what kinds of assumptions do you bring with you? What are the potential benefits and disadvantages to approaching this research with your background and past experiences? This memo is meant to help make you aware of your biases and to critique your motivations and assumptions as you approach your research. Due October 1.
C. Literature Review (20%). Prepare a 6-8 page review of the literature. You must select someone from class to review your work and provide you with feedback before submitting it. Please list the reviewer’s name on your title page. Due October 22.

D. Final research paper and presentation (40%). 25 pages in length, on the selected research question. This paper must include in an appendix each of the completed class assignments (listed in italics below) from the semester. Presentations (Dec. 3rd or 10th) should be 15 minutes in length. Papers due December 3.

Class I: Thursday, September 10:
An Introduction to Educational Research

Introductions to class and participants

Class II: Thursday, September 17:
Finding a “Researchable” Question and Articulating a Rationale for Your Research

Reading:

Please come to class with a list of eight to ten higher education-related topics that you think would be intriguing to research this semester. Write two to four sentences for each topic describing why you find the topic interesting and what angle you might want to investigate.

Class III: Thursday, September 24:
What You Bring to Your Research

Guest Speaker:
Loni Pazich, Research Associate and Project Coordinator for the Wisconsin Transfer Equity Study, University of Southern California Center for Urban Education

Reading:

Wisconsin Transfer Equity Study Overview.

Based on last week’s reading and discussion of formulating research questions, please come to class with a refined and narrowed research question that you plan to work with this semester. You should also draft two to three sub-questions.

Class IV: Thursday, October 1:
Gathering Sources from the Literature – A Visit to Bobst
Please note: Tonight’s class will meet in Bobst Library, PC Lab 2 on Lower Level 1

Guest Speaker:
Scott Collard, Social Sciences Collections Coordinator and Librarian for Education & Linguistics

Reading:

**Researcher Identity Assignment due**

Bring to class a list of at least 20 keywords that you will use as you begin your literature review.

Class V: Thursday, October 8:
Conducting a Literature Review

Reading:

Begin gathering a minimum of 30 sources that relate to your chosen topic. Provide citations in APA or Chicago format and include 1-2 sentences reviewing the major points of the source.

Class VI: Thursday, October 15:
Qualitative Research Methods, Part I – Ethnographies, Focus Groups, & Interviews

Reading:


Bring to class a draft outline of your literature review

Class VII: Thursday, October 22:
Qualitative Research Methods, Part II – Document Analysis, Historical Methods, & Policy Analysis

Reading:

**Literature Review due**
Class VIII: Thursday, October 29:
Quantitative Research Methods

In-class demonstration of SPSS, survey and questionnaire software, EndNote, and RefWorks

Reading:

Class IX: Thursday, November 5:
Constructing a Research Proposal

Guest Speaker:
Dr. Kimberly Torres, Sociologist; Academic Advisor, NYU

Reading:


Prepare a one to two page memo describing the research methods that you plan to use to conduct your research. Discuss why this proposed methodology is the most appropriate way to approach your project. If you will conduct interviews, bring a list of your proposed questions.

Class X: Thursday, November 12:
Ethical Issues in Research

Reading:


Prepare a one to two paragraph memo discussing what ethical issues/dilemmas you might face in carrying out your research project. How will you address them?

Class XI: Thursday, November 19:
Ph.D. Student Panel
Guest Speakers:
Emily Grey, Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education, NYU
Annie W. Bezbatchenko, Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education, NYU; Coordinator, M.A., Ed.D., & Ph.D. Program Admissions, Steinhardt, NYU
Rose-Anna Stanton, Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education, NYU; Graduate Accounts Director, Office of Advertising & Publications, University Relations and Public Affairs, NYU

Bring to class an outline of your final research project for feedback from classmates.

Class XII: December 3:
Presentations of Research Proposals

**Research Papers due**

Class XIII: December 10:
Presentations of Research Proposals