

Course Syllabus: Introduction to Research

College of Education
EDUC 5053 X12/DX3
Fall 2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Matthew Capps
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Instructor Response Policy

The instructor will respond to the email within 24 hours. I do not look at D2L every day. If you need a quick response, email the address above.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Required: Locke, L.F., Silverman, S.J., Spirduso, W.W.(2010). *Reading and Understanding Research*. (3rd). Los Angeles: Sage

Recommended American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Course Description

Fosters an understanding of the scope of social science research including methodologies appropriate to issues impacting human social interaction while preparing them to understand, analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate contemporary research.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

To provide students the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary 1) to read, understand, and appreciate research, 2) identify a research question with an independent and dependent variable and 3) to write a mini-literature review based upon synthesis of existing literature. The mini-literature should be 8-10 pages in length.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

More specifically, plagiarism can occur in many ways. If a student uses another student's work and presents it as the student's own, that is considered plagiarism and will result in a 0 on the assignment. If a student has a significant amount of narrative from other sources presented as his/her own (determined by % match in Turnitin), that is considered plagiarism and will result in a 0 on the assignment. Each draft submitted will have an associated plagiarism match provided by Turnitin. You may have one direct quote (cited in APA format). All other material must be cited AND original to the student.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) advances have now provided generative and creative applications such as Chat GPT, Google Bard, Guru, Microsoft Copilot, and others. Indeed, these tools can be helpful in the learning process; however, the content they generate does not represent the student's effort and learning. Submitting AI-generated work in place of the student's original and genuine work will be considered a form of academic misconduct and will fall under the plagiarism rule.

Grading/Assessment

Course Grade-

Synthesizing Literature

30 points

Research topic

15 points

Reading quizzes (6 quizzes)

60 points

HW assignments (3 units)

25 points each (75 total)

Final mini-literature review (due date)

72 points

Grade	Points
A	226.8-252
B	200-226.7
C	176.4-199.5
D	151.2-176.3
F	You have got to be kidding.

Synthesizing Literature

In the past, you have likely written papers that are summaries from research articles. That is not our purpose here. You will learn to analyze articles, summarize the meaning, and then combine those to create an original

paragraph. This activity will provide an opportunity to practice this skill prior to implementing the skill in an actual literature review. It is scored in three parts: 10 points for the research analysis table, 10 points for the article summary, and 10 points for the single-page synthesis. Please submit as a word document for editing and feedback. Note the deadline.

Reading quizzes

After you review read and review the material in a module, there will be a short quiz over the presentations, notes, etc. There are 10 questions in T/F, multiple choice, or multi-answer format. You have 1 hour to complete a quiz. You may do those anytime you feel ready BUT please note the deadlines for each in D2L.

HW Assignments

One of the main purposes of this class is for you to understand what it is you are reading as you peruse the literature on your topic. After you have read, we will discuss various aspects of research in class. In addition, each unit of study will have several papers with questions for you to answer to check for understanding. You may work on these when you think you are ready, but you will only have 24 hours to complete them. Note the deadlines for each in D2L. You may work together if you think that will help. They are worth 25 points each and represent an assessment of your understanding. These are multiple-choice questions from several articles.

Mini Literature Review

You will identify a research question with a clearly defined independent and dependent variable. You will then research articles related to this variable to help the reader better understand what is known about the topic. The literature review should be 8-10 pages in length, not including the cover page or reference page(s). 7.5 pages of writing is not 8 pages. Writing is a development skill, especially in the context of research. Part of this process includes writing multiple drafts. This is the same process every writer goes through. To that end, this assignment is graded on a competency-based format. This means I will provide feedback up to three times, leading to your final grade (i.e., you submit, I give edits/feedback, you correct that submission again, and I give edits/feedback, then you correct for a final version).

Please submit as a Word document for editing and feedback. A PDF will not receive feedback.

The final draft submitted for a grade will be a Word document. You will also include a zip file that has the first page of each primary source used toward the development of your literature review.

Due dates for drafts (drafts are not required and there is no grade).

October 20th (1st)

November 3rd (2nd)

November 17th (3rd)

December 9th (Final)

Extra Credit

Not available

Late Work

Late work is not accepted for any reason. A due date may be extended depending on coverage of material, but once the due date is set, no assignments will be accepted beyond that point

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 26-28. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: September 22 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 24th [Academic Calendar](#).

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into D2L through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

All assignments are submitted as word documents in D2L. Word press, PDF, google docs, etc.. are not accepted and will be counted as 0.

Attendance

This is an online course so attendance is not part of the requirement. However, the course is challenging. If you do not stay on top of the reading, you will quickly get left behind.

General guidelines for time commitment are as follows.

2-3 hours per hour of course credit for class preparation (reading)

1 hour per hour of course credit for course engagement (course engagement, watching videos, discussion etc..)

This means for a 3 hour course you should expect to devote 10-12 hours per week. This does not include time spent working on the literature review.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit

assignments, tests, or discussion postings. Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!! There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations; however, they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans, and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick
Title IX Coordinator
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
940-397-4213

laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#)

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Class Day/Date	Topics	Reading/Preparation	Assignment
Module 1 Jan 21-27	Introduction Course Requirements and Expectations: Selecting A Topic for a Literature Review		Research Topic – Due Feb 3
Module 2 Jan 27-Feb 3	The Research Report and Staying Organized When Reading Research Reviews; Synthesizing Literature	Chapters 1 and 13	Quiz Synthesizing Literature – Due Feb 24
Module 3 Feb 3-Feb 10	When to Believe What You Read: The Sources of Credibility	Chapter 2	Quiz
Module 4 Feb 10- Mar 3	How to Select and Read Research Reports; The Use, Misuse, and Misunderstanding of Research; Types of Research: An Overview	Chapters 3-5	Quiz HW- Credibility and Misunderstanding Research
Module 5 Mar 3-Mar 24	Quantitative Research Designs	Chapter 6 and Appendix B	Quiz

Module 6 Mar 24-Apr 7	Staying Organized When Reading and Reading Report of Quantitative Research	Chapters 7 & 9	Quiz HW – Quantitative Studies
Module 7 Apr 17-Apr 21	The Paradigms of Qualitative Research Staying Organized When Reading Qualitative Reports	Chapters 10-12	Quiz HW – Qualitative Studies
Week 14 Apr 21-May5	Editing Literature Review		
Week 15 May 5-May 12			
Finals May12-16			Final Mini Lit Review Due May 13