EMR 6590
Contemporary Trends in Research
http://www.gowmu.wmich.edu
http://homepages.wmich.edu/~applegab/courses/emr6590.html

Syllabus & Course Pack: Spring 2014

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Course Catalogue Description

This course is intended to develop awareness of current inquiries in the areas of evaluation, measurement, and research methodology. This is an advanced core course in the master’s degree program. Each year the instructor will examine the annual meeting programs of the American Educational Research Association, the American Evaluation Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education to identify areas of activity in evaluation, measurement, and research methodology. Students will read and critique selected papers from those meeting, identify issues in need of further research and development, and prepare proposals for addressing those issues.

Course Details

Course Prerequisite
EMR 6400 or permission of instructor

Credit and Clock Hours
3 Semester credit hours
Wednesday 6:00 – 8:30 PM
3310 Sangren Hall

Instructor Contact
Brooks Applegate, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Leadership, Research & Technology
3571 Sangren Hall
V 269-387-3886
F 269-387-3696
Email: brooks.applegate@wmich.edu
Skype ID: brooks.applegate

Office Hours
I have standing office hours Monday 2:30-4:00 PM. Please submit an email request to me for private conversations either in person, by phone or live chat. Alternatively, email should be used and if you think your question(s) have a wider appeal; such as course content clarification please use the discussion board so that all students can benefit from the discussions and clarifications.

Personal Course Web Site
http://homepages.wmich.edu/~applegab/courses/emr6590.html
WMU eLearning Web Site Portal (if used)
https://elearning.wmich.edu

Technical Support
Western Michigan University Office of Instructional Technology:
Helpdesk:  http://www.wmich.edu/oit/helpdesk/index.html
Hours: 8am-10pm (Monday-Friday, EST)
Phone (269) 387-HELP (387-4357)
Email: HELPDESK@WMICH.EDU

Required Texts
There are no required textbooks for this class.

Instructional Objectives
In general, the major objectives of this course, taught from a traditional lecture format augmented with computer examples, seminar discussion, and small group consultation, are designed to introduce students to current topics and research methods utilized in educational and social/health science disciplines. Skills developed in this course critical evaluation and synthesis of research, qualitative and quantitative synthesis of literature. Specifically, students will learn via class presentations, simulations, and practical experience:
1. Major domains of inquiry in educational and the social sciences
2. General methods of inquiry in the educational and the social sciences
3. Some of the critical research questions currently under study in the educational and the social sciences
4. Within a narrow domain of the students choosing, the depth of inquiry currently under study

This course is designed to capitalize on previously acquired skills and experiences. Class presentations and coursework expectations have been developed with an assumption that:
1. Students have previous skills and knowledge in the use of personal computers, the University Libraries’ online catalog and related reference databases.
2. Students can use several software applications for all course assignments (e.g., Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, SPSS or SAS).
3. Students have skills and knowledge in the use of e-mail and the WWW;
4. Students have skills and knowledge of statistical concepts and procedures learned in the prerequisite class EMR6400.
I do not expect students to be expert in any of these skills. Each of the above listed skills will be reviewed and practiced. If any student has a concern about his/her personal skill level, please talk with me early in the semester.

**Professional Concerns**

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs that pertain to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. [The policies can be found at http://catalog.wmich.edu under Academic Policies, Student Rights and Responsibilities.] If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with your instructor if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

In addition, you may review University policies related to Code of Honor and general academic policies on such issues as diversity, religious observance, student disabilities, etc., at http://osc.wmich.edu and http://www.wmich.edu/registrar.

**Need for Accommodations**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the professor and the appropriate Disability Services office at the beginning of the semester. The two disability service offices on campus are: Disabled Student Resources and Services 269-387-2116 and the Office of Services for Students with Learning Disabilities 269-387-4411.

**Diversity Statement**

The Department of Educational Leadership, Research & Technology, EMR program maintains a strong and sustained commitment to the diverse and unique nature of all learners and high expectations for each student.

**Plagiarism and Academic Honesty**

Students who take this class must be prepared to submit electronic copies of some or all assignments. The University expects that all students will be evaluated and graded on their own work. If you use language, data, or ideas from other sources, published or unpublished, you must take care to acknowledge and properly cite those sources.
Failure to do so may constitute plagiarism or other violation of University academic honesty policies (refer to the Undergraduate or Graduate catalogs for details). To detect and deter plagiarism, encourage responsible student behavior, improve student learning, and ensure greater accountability, assignments for this class may be submitted for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com and/or other resource. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Papers that are submitted to Turnitin.com become part of the Turnitin.com database (student identities are protected) solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site.

If you wish to request that your paper(s) not be included in the Turnitin.com reference database, I need to receive your request in writing prior to submission of any course assignments; the paper(s) can then be processed and reviewed accordingly.

The results of a Turnitin.com originality report or other resources may be used as evidence to charge you with plagiarism or other offense. If that is the case, you will be given the opportunity to respond per the regular institutional process and procedures that govern student academic conduct (http://osc.wmich.edu/academicintegrity/).

**Evaluation Policy**

**Course Expectations**
In order to benefit most from your study of this course material, you are expected to: read the course text, related documents, and journal articles, complete assignments related to course topics, and document mastery of course content via examination. Professionalism in all course-related endeavors and active class participation is expected. All work will be evaluated based on accuracy, adherence to guidelines, due dates, thoroughness, and evidence of effort. Be sure to check, proof, and edit all work before it is submitted.

**Attendance and Participation**
Be prepared to discuss problems and readings as a class or in cooperative groups. If you have questions, you may ask them in class, or via email, as it is your responsibility to gain clarification and there may be supplementary reading for this class. If you have to be absent, please make arrangements to get materials/notes from a classmate or instructor. Regardless of the reason, you cannot receive credit for participation if you are not present to participate.

Regular and punctual class attendance is expected of all students. A student will be assigned a failing grade for excessive absences. Excessive absences mean a failure to attend 80% of scheduled class meetings. One absence will be accepted without affecting your participation grade unless prior notification and approval from the instructor is obtained.

**Grading**

As previously stated: Professionalism in all course-related endeavors and active class participation is expected. All work will be evaluated based on accuracy, adherence to guidelines and due dates, thoroughness, effort, evidence of professionalism, evidence of data integration, coherence, and appearance. Be sure to check, proof, and edit all work submitted. Timely completion and the quality of your work will contribute to your overall course grade. In fairness to all, a penalty will be imposed for any work submitted late. Generally speaking, the penalty will be equivalent to one letter grade or more. Extenuating circumstances will be considered with proper documentation.

All assignments are to be written according to the 6th edition of the APA publications manual. It is your responsibility to become familiar with this writing style and the rules related to tables, figures and reporting statistical findings. Programs and output can be attached but will not contribute to your score. Homework is to be turned in the day of class it is due by email to Dr. Applegate WMU email (brooks.applegate@wmich.edu) by 6:00 PM or it will be considered late. Email attachments must be readable by Microsoft Word. If you are unable to meet this requirement, please inform the instructor immediately. The MS Word attachment requirement allows for easy handling for the course instructor and feedback (e.g., Track Changes) back to the students.

Course grades are based on total points earned plus any extra credit points. Your point total %, is determined by dividing your total point total including extra credit points into the highest total number of points earned, excluding extra credit points and multiplying by 100. So if you have earned 225 points and 20 EC points your total points = 255. If the highest point total excluding EC is 280 points your % is (255/280) *100 or 91%.
Attendance and participation 10%  (10 pts)
Projects 90%  (100 pts)

Based on total points earned
100 - 95 %  A  94 - 90 %  BA  89 - 85 %  B
80 - 84 %  CB  79 - 75 %  C  Below 75 %  E

Digital Drop Box (if used)

Students may be required to submit certain assignments to the digital drop-box via the on-line course web site or to the instructor directly as indicated in the assignment (WMU eLearning) in Word file format only. If you are unable to meet this requirement, please inform the instructor immediately. The Word attachment requirement allows for easy handling and instructor based feedback to the students (i.e., track changes).

Save the completed Word so that the instructor knows (by the filename) who is dropping the assignment and which assignment is attached: For example, John Doe - Project #1 - EMR6510: DocEMR6510PRJ1.docx. YOUR last name MUST be included within the file name. Please do not e-mail me to check on the status of an assignment placed. If you need verification that I received your email simply CC yourself, if you got it, then so did I. The following information MUST be included on a separate cover page for all projects. For example:

Your name & email address               Brooks Applegate: brooks.applegate@wmich.edu
Course                                    EMR6400
Project #                                 PRJ #1 Review a Standardized Test
Date                                      January 30, 2012

Projected Weekly Readings

Described below are lecture topics and associated web-based instructional aids available on Dr. Applegate’s web site. The dates provided offer a general timeline for your reading. It is expected you will complete the assigned readings prior to the class in which it is discussed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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All written assignments must follow the 6th edition of the APA publications manual. It is your responsibility to become familiar with this writing style and the rules related to tables, figures and reporting statistical findings. Programs and output can be attached but will not contribute to your score. Homework is to be turned in the day of class it is due or by email attachment by the start of class (6:00 PM). Email attachments must be readable by Microsoft Word. If you are unable to meet this requirement, please inform the instructor immediately. The MS Word attachment requirement allows for easy handling from the course instructor back to the students (with feedback included within the attached document).

Homework will be accepted up to 1 class meeting past the due date and can only receive a maximum of 50% of the available points for that assignment unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.

Save the completed MS Word file: (note the location of where you have saved the file!). All attachments need to be saved so that the instructor knows (by the filename) who is dropping the assignment, assessment or project. For example, for assignment 1 the document name may be something like: **YourName EMR6590Proj1.doc**. Please do not e-mail the instructor to check on the status of ungraded homework, assessments,
or projects. If you need verification that I received your email, simply ‘CC yourself in
the original email, if you get it then so did I.

**Project Descriptions**

**Project #1  Breadth of Professional Associations**
Paired Activity
15 pts
For this project you will review the websites for the five professional associates (PA)
listed below. For each PA, please describe in general purpose and function of each
association, if there are divisions/TIGs, list each and their associated
purpose/function together with any affiliated scholarly journal sponsored by the
association or division. Identify and list all funding opportunities supported by the
PA, e.g., graduate student dissertation grants.
  - American Evaluation Association (AEA)
  - American Educational Research Association (AERA)
  - American Psychological Association (APA)
  - American Statistical Association (ASA)
  - National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME)

**Project #2  Annual Meeting Content Analysis**
Large Group (approx. 4 members)
15 pts
Given the findings from Project #1 and working in a large group, identify the topical
cluster and dissemination form (e.g., platform presentation, discussion, round table,
poster) conduct a content analysis of topics sponsored by a PA or PA Division/TIG
presented at their 2013 annual meeting. Try to form logical clusters to reduce the
number of clusters based on subject content.

**Project #3  Charting A Domain Topic**
Paired Activity
20 pts
This project closely parallels Project #2, but simultaneously increases both the depth
and breadth of the content analysis. Begin this project by selecting a general topical
domain identified in Project #2, e.g., participatory evaluation or the use of HLM in
cluster evaluations. Chart all presentations/posters/training/discussions related to
this topic within the PA used in Project #2. Now also consider the one other PA.

The goals of Projects 2 & 3 are to develop a mosaic of current problems and avenues
of inquiry relevant to EMR. One of the primary sources of current research resides in
the annual meetings of the PAs. Project #2 examines a broad topic/problem from within one PA. Project #3 extends this investigation by considering if and how different disciplines investigate the same general problem.

Project #4  Topical Content Analysis
Individual
30 pts
Continuing narrowing your topic by focusing on one aspect or characteristic that is being given serious attention in the annual meetings. Secure paper or electronic copies of the relevant papers, presentations, and posters and conduct a critical analysis and review of this topic as covered in the 2013 annual meeting.

Project #5  Extended Topical Content Analysis
Individual
35 pts
Given the results of Project #4, Project #1 and Project #3, expand your consideration of literature on your topic by using cross-sourced and published journal literature to more comprehensively review your topic.

The goals of Projects 4 & 5 are for the student to complete a content analysis of a research topic, problem actively under investigation. Minimally these projects should critically review and integrate the general problem and how each study reviewed integrates into the local fabric of inquiry directed at the said problem. General and specific research methods should be critically examined and presented and must include a discussion of all sampling methods and techniques and the primary analytical methods. As your review closes please indicate where there are still unresolved problems and new inquiry is likely.