

**Salisbury University**  
**Fall 2008**  
**EDUC 502: Introduction to Research**

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| <p>Course Web:<br/> <a href="http://faculty.salisbury.edu/~dmwagner/">http://faculty.salisbury.edu/~dmwagner/</a></p> <p>Office Hours<br/>         Tuesday, 11-2<br/>         Wednesday, Thursday 4-5 p.m.<br/>         Other hours by appointment</p> | <p>INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Diana Wagner<br/>         Office: TETC 379F<br/>         Office Phone: 410-677-5490 (o)<br/>         Cell Phone: 302-228-6295 (c)<br/>         Email: <a href="mailto:dmwagner@salisbury.edu">dmwagner@salisbury.edu</a></p> |
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### REQUIRED TEXTS

*The Condition of Education 2006.* (2008). Washington, D.C.: US Department of Education.

Levitt, S.D. & Dubner, S.J. (2006). *Freakonomics*. New York: William Morrow.

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.* (2001). 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: APA.

Thomas, R.M., (2005). *Teachers Doing Research*. Boston: Pearson.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

GullCard for Library Access  
 Network and Groupwise email access  
 Thumb Drive/Jump Drive as needed

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to quantitative and qualitative methods of scientific inquiry. Students gain experience in the use of research in defining a problem and in collecting, organizing and presenting information on it. Three hours per week.

### COURSE PRE-REQUISITES

Admission to graduate study at Salisbury University.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the stages of the research process and be able to make connections among them
2. Establish a knowledge base of terminology and methodology for quantitative and qualitative research.
3. Be able to describe and interpret the organization and content of research articles
4. Locate and use published research to improve professional practice.
5. Evaluate the validity, reliability, and usefulness of research designs, to judge their usefulness in informing professional practice.
6. Discuss and interpret statistical analyses
7. Identify how different interpretations of data can lead to widely varying conclusions about the same phenomenon, and describe implications for using research to support professional actions.
8. Identify various types of quantitative research procedures
9. Design a research project that is personally meaningful in *your* professional context.

## PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION UNIT CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This course is designed with the Professional Education Unit's Conceptual Framework as the guiding principle. The core values of the Conceptual Framework are below. All teacher candidates in this course are expected to reflect these values.

- I. Informed and reflective pedagogy:** We believe in teachers as decision-makers. Through careful preparation and thorough grounding in research and best practices, we support candidates and collaborative partners who are disposed to question and reflect continuously in pursuit of sound educational judgments.
- II. Enhanced student learning:** We celebrate human diversity and we are passionately committed to the belief that skilled and caring educators enhance learning and achievement when they recognize, appreciate and build on the individual strengths and differences of every learner.
- III. Scholarship:** We are committed to academic excellence, ongoing scholarly inquiry, and integrity – in our own work, in the efforts of our candidates, and by extension in the primary mission of student learning in local schools.
- IV. Collaboration:** We believe that the integrated mission of preparing teachers, advancing the knowledge base, supporting teachers' professional development and improving student achievement in P-12 schools can best be accomplished through synergistic partnerships. These partnerships must include all stakeholders in the greater educational community.

## TECHNOLOGY PREREQUISITES

Basic technological literacy is assumed. If you are unable to demonstrate any of the following skills, please seek assistance through the IT Helpdesk or HelpDesk web site within the first week of class:

- Send and receive Groupwise email
- Send attachments by email
- Basic word processing (MS Word), including page and text formatting, cut/paste, spell check, grammar check
- Basic internet skills (searching, browsing, bookmarking)
- Copy files between different data storage devices

## SKILL PREREQUISITES

Basic writing competency is assumed. Grammar, mechanics, sentence structure, and sound paragraph structure are expected in *all* written work, including emails with the course instructor. The university Writing Center is available on the second floor of the University Center to assist you with your writing. Dr. Wagner may require your attendance at the Writing Center if your writing is not proficient.

## TECHNOLOGY

This course will involve extensive use of email, the internet, and a variety of other software packages. It is assumed that you are reasonably adept at using computer technology and basic software programs. You are responsible for checking your email daily and always before class. Visit the Groupwise page of the Information Technology web for information on how to forward your email to your preferred address.

Campus computer labs and the information technology Help Desk are open until at least midnight every day. Your GullCard is required to print in computer labs. You have a 300 page/week printing limit when on campus.

## **DISPOSITIONS**

Dispositions are the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice.

## **PROGRESS TOWARD MASTER'S DEGREE**

All graduate students intending to earn the M.Ed. degree must formally declare their program of study before the completion of 9 credit hours. Students may not transfer more than 9 hours earned as a non-degree student into a program of study.

## **WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

SU maintains a commitment to developing effective writing skills for all students. Strong communication skills are critical for teachers. All writing assignments will be evaluated for overall communicative competence.

## **COLLECTION OF STUDENT WORK**

In order to meet state and national program approval and accreditation requirements, samples of student work may be collected and retained for internal evaluation purposes. It is vital that all of your course work is stored electronically in the event I wish to keep a copy.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ORIGINALITY OF WORK**

Academic dishonesty or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any breach of academic honesty will be handled through the University procedures. Any student found guilty of violating the rules of academic integrity will automatically receive a grade of F in this course.

## **CODE OF ACADEMIC CONDUCT**

Under the academic integrity policy, students may not submit the same work to more than one professor without consent from both professors.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of course cancellations due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions, that information will be communicated via the local media and university web site.

## **LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

### **Minor Assignments**

#### **Class Preparation Assignments & Homework**

You will have, at a minimum, readings to complete for every class meeting. You may also have brief written work to submit via email or at class time. Although ungraded, these assignments are a reflection of both your preparation and your professionalism. As such, your work in this regard will determine whether and to what extent I may choose to round up your final grade. Ungraded assignments will be graded with  $\surd+$ ,  $\surd$ , or  $\surd-$ . These marks represent A, B, and unsatisfactory, respectively, and are meant as an estimation—not a contract—of the final grade. Failing to complete any ungraded assignment will result in your final average being reduced by 5 points for *each missed or late assignment*.

## **Major Assignments**

### **I. Literature Review/Annotated Bibliography**

You will locate, evaluate, and summarize a minimum of 7 articles relevant to your research topic. These articles should be based on formal, scholarly research studies. (i.e., They should not be opinion, reflection, or mass media articles.) You will write a formal, annotated bibliography.

### **II. Presentation of Research Article**

You will sign up to orally present a summary of a published, scholarly research article. I will provide a list of articles to choose from. You will be responsible for locating the entire article via library resources. You may present an article off of my list if I approve it in advance.

### **III. Formal Research Proposal & Accompanying Presentation**

You will design and present the components of a formal research project. You will design the project and produce the research proposal as if you are carrying it out as a federal grant recipient seeking funding and permission to conduct human research. Your final research proposal will follow the format of a proposal to a Human Subjects Review Board. You will also prepare a 5-10 minute Power Point presentation of your research design and its importance to people working in your field of education or public service.

### **IV. Midterm Exam**

The midterm examination will test your understanding of research methods, basic terminology, and APA format covered in class until midterm.

### **V. Final Exam**

The final examination will test your understanding of research methods and terminology covered after midterm.

## **CLASS NOTES AND HANDOUTS**

The course web site contains copies of the syllabus, schedule of assignments, and useful online resources. Class notes will be published on the course web site for each class meeting.

## **GETTING HELP**

You are welcome to contact me individually to discuss your coursework, your progress, and your concerns. I encourage you to call or e-mail me at any time that you have a concern. Because we meet as a class only once per week, individual contact outside of class is both necessary and desirable. Keep in mind that although email is available 24/7, I am not. Please allow 24 hours for a response. If you need to reach me on short notice, please try my phone numbers.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

If you have any special needs related to a learning, medical, or physical disability that I need to know about, please talk to me privately after the first class.

## COURSE POLICIES

1. You are expected to attend every class. Neither I nor the university recognize “excused” absences. After your first absence, each subsequent absence will result in a 3 point deduction from your final average. Humane exceptions to this rule will be discussed on the first night of class. Additionally, you are expected to be on time to class. Class begins promptly at 5:30 pm and ends no later than 8:15. Please plan accordingly, especially given the challenging parking situation on campus.
2. If you miss 4 classes, you will receive a final grade of F, regardless of the other work you have completed.
3. Absence is not an excuse for missing a deadline. If you cannot be present, your work must be submitted to me electronically (as an email attachment) prior to class time.
4. All assignments must be handed in on time. Late work is *never* accepted for credit without prior arrangements nor without extraordinary circumstances. If you fail to turn in any major assignments, that assignment will receive a grade of F.
5. Cell phones, beepers, pagers or any other electronic annoyances must be turned off and stowed during class.

## EVALUATION:

Your coursework will combine for your final grade as follows:

| Assessment                        | % of Final Grade |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Literature Review                 | 20%              |
| Research Article Presentation     | 15%              |
| Research Proposal                 | 20%              |
| Presentation of Research Proposal | 15%              |
| Midterm Examination               | 20%              |
| Final Examination                 | 10%              |

## GRADING SCALE

### Grade Points Interpretation

|    |        |  |
|----|--------|--|
| A  | 90-100 | Outstanding  |
| B+ | 87-89  | Very Good  |
| B  | 80-86  | Satisfactory; Meets Basic Expectations (You did what was asked & required) |
| C+ | 77-79  | Below Standard for Graduate Study  |
| C  | 70-76  | Unsatisfactory for Graduate Study  |
| D  | 60-69  | Well Below Standard and Unacceptable for a Professional Educator           |
| F  | <60    | Entirely Unacceptable  |