

BUSI 6450
RESEARCH METHODS
Fall 2005

Instructor: Dr. Grant Miles
Office: 313A Business Administration Building
Office Hours: Monday - 11:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday - 11:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.
or by appointment
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Note: The college of business administration complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with a disability. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act and would like to request accommodation, please see me as soon as possible. My office hours and office number are shown on this syllabus. University policy requires that students notify their instructor within the first week of class that an accommodation will be needed.

PURPOSE OF BUSI 6450

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the process of research, which includes discussion of the scientific method, research design, measurement, and presentation of your results. The prerequisite for the course is MSCI 5180 or equivalent. BUSI 6450 is designed to provide you with a foundation for conducting research and publishing this research as a dissertation or journal article. At the conclusion of this course, you should have a functional understanding of what is necessary to conduct publishable research. Even though you may seek a career that does not involve publication, it is necessary to conduct a dissertation acceptable to the community of scholars in order to earn your doctorate. This course will help you achieve that end as you work toward becoming a *scientist*.

EXPECTATIONS

1. That you will put forth a great amount of effort to perform well on all of your assignments for this class.
2. That you will seek to become a part of the scholarly community at UNT, taking advantage of every opportunity presented to you as a *scholar in training*.
3. That you will work with your colleagues whenever possible to encourage each other's successful accomplishments.
4. That you will demonstrate the utmost integrity as a researcher, particularly avoiding any hint of plagiarism in your work, by giving credit where it is due and by working to use original words and ideas.

HELPFUL HINTS

(1) *Come to class.*

Try not to miss class unnecessarily. Make-up exams are not given. Thus, schedule your time wisely regarding family and work conflicts, school events, etc. I reserve the right to lower your final grade if attendance becomes a problem (i.e., 3 or more absences). Also, it may be that a class will need to be rescheduled for some reason. We will work out the details as needed.

(2) *Do not procrastinate.*

This course is very demanding of your time. Getting behind simply compounds your problems. The probability for success is much higher if you keep up with the work. So, if you stay flexible, prepare for class, and attend regularly, your chances for success are enhanced.

(3). *Know the rules.*

In order to succeed in this course, you must know how to play the game of research. So, pay attention and learn the rules; it will help you in your future careers.

(4). *Have a personal stake in the outcome.*

Take pride in your work and accept no compromise in quality.

(5). *Seek feedback.*

I am available to help you. You can either make an appointment (preferably during my student conference hours, but at other times if needed) or stop by at your convenience during those hours. Appointments are usually better to ensure a time is set-aside for you. If I am not in my office, be sure to check in 315 (the Management departmental office); I may be there or somewhere else on the floor talking with colleagues. During my office hours you have priority, so don't hesitate to find me. Occasionally, I may have a formal meeting conflict that cannot be avoided and during which I cannot be interrupted. I will let you know when that occurs, and will make arrangements for office hours at other times.

Note that due to a variety of service commitments I am not around my office as much as I would like these days. What this means for you is that you may need to be more active in tracking me down. I will, however, always make time to see you. If you have not been able to catch me, send me an email and we will set up a specific time to meet.

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, August 29 – Classes begin

Friday, October 7 – Last day to withdraw with automatic pass

Tuesday, October 18 – Midsemester

Tuesday, November 1 – Last day to drop course with consent of instructor

Saturday-Friday, December 3-9 – Prefinal week

Monday, December 12, 1:30-3:30 p.m. - Final for this class

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Article Reviews/Homework	10%
Article and Class discussions	15%
Mid-term exam	25%
Final-exam	25%
Research paper	25%
(Paper – 20%;	
Oral Presentation – 5%)	

Grade Distribution

All grades will be weighted on a straight scale (i.e., $\geq 90 = A$, $\geq 80 = B$, $\geq 70 = C$, etc.).

Furthermore, I do not have any requirements for a forced distribution of grades. Therefore, you make what you make regardless of what others' grades in the class are.

Article Reviews/Homework

Each week a writing assignment will be given. It will either be a written evaluation of the articles we read for the week, a request for your opinion on a particular topic, or an assignment relevant to your research proposal. It should not exceed one, single-spaced, typewritten page unless otherwise indicated. The major purpose for these assignments will be for you to begin to write and think like a researcher. Thus, my major efforts in grading these papers will be to evaluate the quality of your critical thinking and writing skills.

Article Discussions

Each week, readings will be assigned and lectures will be delivered with handouts. Doctoral students are expected to thoroughly prepare and participate in the discussions each week. All articles will be assigned to all students and students to present each article will not be selected until class begins for that assignment, thereby ensuring that all students prepare all articles each week. Your job is to review each article assigned using the guidelines below. Reviews are to be e-mailed to all class participants by 8:00 p.m. on the Sunday before class.

Review Evaluation Criteria

Journal editors use a number of criteria in Class A, basic journals to evaluate journal article submissions, which result in the decision to *publish*, *revise*, or *reject*. Three factors journal editors typically use to evaluate articles are *form*, *style*, and *substance*. Please use the following guide in your evaluations and reviews of articles for this class. Reviews for each article will be no longer than one page and in outline format using bullets or numbers to summarize your points. Also, keep these criteria in mind as you write your own research paper.

Form

Papers should be well *organized* and follow the *format* of the journal. This criterion is an important feature of any good journal article. Empirical papers should be organized into the abstract, literature review, method, results, discussion, references, tables, and figures. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (one of the required books for this class) is a good reference for you to have because most of the quality, basic research journals use the APA format, or some variation.

Style

Above all else, *write well*. Do not leave gaps in logic due to a choppy style and always strive for accuracy. Each section should have a transition to the next section. A good manuscript leaves nothing for the reader to guess or assume. There are four old tried and true tips to follow that are listed below. Use a copy of *The Elements of Style* by Strunk & White to help with writing the reviews. Other helpful books are available as well. It is important to be stylistically complete within a scientific context.

- Write in the active voice
- Present coherent thoughts
- Use precise terms
- Tell a good story

In addition, do not forget that writing well includes the use of correct grammar and punctuation. If these aspects of your writing are not correct, reviewers of articles may never even get past them to evaluate the content.

Substance

It is important that the author follow the scientific method in form, style, and especially substance in empirical articles. This point means that each empirical paper should include the following components:

- Start with a *research question* based on theory.
- Conduct *literature review* of theoretical and empirical works.
- Formulate research *constructs*.
- State *hypotheses* to be tested.
- Develop a set of *operational definitions* to illustrate hypotheses.

- Design a *method* for gathering data.
- Decide upon the best *technique* for data analysis.
- *Collect* data.
- *Analyze* data.
- *Interpret* results.
- *Evaluate* evidence.
- Recommend *future research* topics.

If the paper is not empirical, then the style guidelines will be one of the major bases for evaluation and review of the article; however, the substance, in terms of the value and “meat” of the content, should be strongly considered as well.

Exams

Your midterm exam will cover material from the first half of the class, and will be taken in class. You will have the full class period to complete the exam. The final exam will contain comprehensive questions from across the semester. It also will be taken in class. The time period available will depend on the exam schedule for our class room. The length of the exam will be adjusted accordingly.

Research Paper

You are required to turn in a complete research paper at the end of the course. This will be some type of empirical study, complete with theory and hypotheses, data and analysis, and conclusions. This is an intense undertaking and should not be put off until the last minute. There will be a number of small assignments throughout the term to try to keep you on track on this project. It is in your best interest to take these seriously and do the work up front in a step-by-step process.

As a general rule, your paper should follow the APA style guide. The following guidelines are provided as a supplement in order to help you structure and write your research proposals. Please follow these guidelines, as well as any additional guidelines presented in class, as closely as possible.

Title Page

- Title of project
- Your name
- Course title
- Date

Abstract

- You should summarize the study. It should not exceed 150 words.

Statement of the Problem

- Introduction to the study using a broad context
- Overview of the research problem
 - Goal of the study
 - Indication of why the problem is worth exploring
 - What contribution the study is apt to make to theory and practice
- Narrowly focused definition of the problem
- Research question

Review of the Literature

- Context for your study
- Review previous published papers on your topic
- Interpret those papers and research results
- Clarify the relationship between your study and previous work on the topic
- A coherent argument that leads to the description of your study
- Report, critique, and interpret only those works that are directly relevant to your study
- Should leave the reader thinking the same hypotheses that you ultimately propose
 - Warning:** a literature review is **NOT** simply a laundry list of papers or a compilation of facts and feelings. Each study cited must be giving meaning in relation to your study and contribute to your logical argument

Hypothesis

- State the hypothesis or hypotheses
- Justify each hypothesis by summarizing arguments made in the literature review
- Hypothesis is free from ambiguity
- Hypothesis must express the relationship between two or more variables
- Hypothesis should imply an empirical test
 - Warning:** do not include multiple hypotheses in one statement

Method

- Describe the basic method of the study (survey, archival, experiment, etc.)
- Describe your sample (number, type, population, demographic variables, etc.)
- Demonstrate the representativeness of your sample for examining the problem
- Describe your research instrument and tools
 - Describe how/why the measures are appropriate
 - Describe the measurement features of your instrument including reliability, validity, and structure
 - Provide a copy of your instrument
 - Describe how you scored the measures
- Describe in detail the procedures and steps used to gather the data

Results

- Prepare the data for analysis
 - Is the variable in the correct form?
 - Group the data
 - Create a correctly labeled table
- Describe the type of analyses used to test your hypotheses
- Present the findings as clearly as possible

- Just the facts
- Lead the reader carefully through the findings
- Clearly state whether hypotheses were supported
- Organize the results around answering the research question(s)
- Use tables and graphs to present results and fully explain them
- Use Huck as a guide

Discussion

- Overview the significant findings of the study
- Consider the findings in light of past research
- Implications of the findings for your theory
- Careful examination of the findings that fail to support hypothesis
- Limitations of the study that may affect the validity or generalizability of the results
- Recommendations for how you would do the study again
- Implications of the study for the real world
- Use pilot study findings to provide an indication of what might happen

LECTURE OUTLINES

Each week an outline of the lecture will be provided. In order to receive one of these from the instructor, you must be in class the day it is provided. If there is some good reason why you will not be in class, **then you must call let me know before class** and I will provide an outline to you during the next class period.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND BOOKS

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Campbell, D.T., & Stanley, J.C. (1963). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Huck, S.W. (2004). *Reading statistics and research* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

Kerlinger, F.N. & Lee, H.B. (2000). *Foundations of behavioral research* (4th ed.). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS AND BOOKS (that you might find helpful)

- Alreck P.L., & Settle R.B. (1995). *The survey research handbook* (2nd ed.). Chicago: Irwin.
- Blalock, H.M., Jr. (Ed.) (1985). *Causal models in the social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Bruning, J.L. & Kintz, B.L. (1987). *Computational handbook of statistics* (3rd ed.). Glenview: Scott, Foresman & Co.
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Erlbaum.
- Cohen, J., & Cohen, P. (1983). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Cook, T.D., & Campbell, D.T. (1979). *Quasi-experimentation: Design and analysis issues for field settings*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Festinger, L., & Katz, D. (Eds.) (1966). *Research methods in the behavioral sciences*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Gibaldi, J. (1995). *MLA handbook for writers of research papers* (4th ed.). New York: The Modern Language Association of America.
- Hair, J.F., Jr., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, R.L., & Black W.C. (1998). *Multivariate data analysis* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.
- Huck, S.W. & Sandler, H.M. (1979). *Rival hypotheses: Alternative interpretations of data based conclusions*. New York: Harper & Row.
- James, L.R., Mulaik, S.A., & Brett, J.M. (Eds.) (1982). *Causal Analysis: Assumptions, models, and data*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Kaplan, A. (1964). *The conduct of inquiry*. San Francisco: Chandler.
- Kirk, R.E. (1982). *Experimental Design: Procedures for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Kuhn, T.S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Locke, E.A. (1986). *Generalizing from laboratory to field settings*. Lexington: Lexington Books.
- McGuigan, F.J. (1997). *Experimental psychology: Methods of research* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

- Neale, J.M., & Liebert, R.M. (1986). *Science and behavior: An introduction to methods of research* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Nunnally, J.C., & Bernstein, I.H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Pedhazur, E.J., & Campbell, D.T. (1991). *Measurement, design, and analysis: An integrated approach*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Popper, K.R. (1959). *The logic of scientific discovery*. New York: Basic Books.
- Rudestam, K.E., & Newton, R.R. (1992). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process*. Newbury Park: SAGE Publications.
- Scott, W.A., & Wertheimer, M. (1962). *Introduction to psychological research*. New York: Wiley.
- Sekaran, U. (2000). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach* (3rd ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Sidman, M. (1960). *Tactics in scientific research*. New York: Basic Books.
- Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E.B. (1979). *The elements of style* (3rd ed.). New York: Macmillan.
- Turabian, K.L. (1996). *A manual for writers of term papers, theses, and dissertations* (6th ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Winer, B.J., Brown, D.R., & Michels, K.M. (1991). *Statistical principles in experimental design* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

DAY-BY-DAY COURSE OUTLINE*

WEEK	DATE	ASSIGNMENT
1	Aug. 29	Introduction & Course Overview KNOWLEDGE INVENTORY EXAM
2	Sept. 5	Labor Day Holiday - No Class
3	Sept. 12	<i>The Scientific Method & Research Ethics</i> (H 1, K&L 1-3, 17)
4	Sept. 19	<i>Validity</i> (H 4, K&L 28)
5	Sept. 26	<i>Reliability, Sampling & Measurement</i> (H 4-6, K&L 8, 26-27)
6	Oct. 3	<i>Data Analysis Issues</i> H 2-3 & 7-21 (read 2-3 & 7-13, skim 14-21). K&L 6 (skim 4 & 5 for background), 12 (skim 9-11 for background), skim 13-16, 32-35 which discuss various statistical methods.
7	Oct. 10	<i>Experimental Research</i> (K&L scan 18-22, & 24 as background material on experiments and quasi-experiments)
8	Oct. 17	<i>Quasi-Experimental Research</i>
9	Oct. 24	MID-TERM EXAM (2-5pm)
10	Oct. 31	INDIVIDUAL REVIEWS OF PROGRESS
11	Nov. 7	<i>Survey Research</i> (K&L 25, Skim 23 & 29-31 We will return to these in subsequent weeks).
12	Nov. 14	<i>Archives & Natural Observation, (K&L 31)</i> <i>Meta-Analysis</i>
13	Nov. 21	<i>Causal Modeling</i>
14	Nov. 28	RESEARCH PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS Written research proposals due by noon, Dec. 1
15	Dec. 5	RESEARCH PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS Written research proposals due by noon, Dec. 8
16	Dec. 12	FINAL EXAM – 1:30-3:30pm (longer if room available)

* Every effort will be made to stick with this schedule, but it is not absolute. It is your responsibility to be aware of any changes announced in class and/or by email.

I have read the syllabus and understand the conditions necessary for successfully completing BUSI 6450.

Name (printed)

Signature

Date