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

Course Pack Topics

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EMR 6590 Contemporary Trends in Research
Course Syllabus

Hours of Credit: 3
Course Prerequisite: EMR 6400 or permission of instructor
Monday 6 - 9 PM
3217 Sangren Hall

Instructor
Brooks Applegate, Ph.D.
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Technical Support
Western Michigan University Office of Information Technology
Helpdesk: http://www.wmich.edu/oit/helpdesk/
Phone (269) 387-HELP (387-4357)
Email: HELPDESK@WMICH.EDU

Required Text / Readings
Required Texts
There are no required textbooks for this class.

Office Hours
My posted office hours will be Tuesday afternoon 2:30 – 4:00 pm. Please make an appointment for private conversation if you absolutely need to talk to me as there is no guarantee you will be able to speak with me during normal office hours.

Web Cam
Skype ID: brooks.applegate

Course 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.

**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.

**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 and Technology, EMR program maintains a strong and sustained commitment to the diverse and unique nature of all learners and high expectations for each student.

**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.

**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/).

Course Components
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.
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.
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 can not 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 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**

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, evidence of 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.

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%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance and participation</th>
<th>10 pts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>115 pts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Based on total points earned

| 100 - 95 % | A |
| 94 - 90 %  | BA |
| 89 - 85 %  | B |
| 80 - 84 %  | CB |
| 79 - 75 %  | C |
| Below 75 % | E |
Weekly Topics
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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: 1/11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2: 1/18</td>
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<td>MLK day (no class)</td>
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<td>3: 1/25</td>
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<td>Project 1 presentations (PowerPoint)</td>
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<td>4: 2/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>5: 2/8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project 2 presentations (PowerPoint)</td>
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<td>6: 2/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>7: 2/22</td>
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<td>Project 3 presentations (PowerPoint)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8: 3/1</td>
<td></td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>9: 3/8</td>
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<td>10: 3/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>11: 3/22</td>
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<td>Project 4 presentations (PowerPoint) Written Projects Due at 6:00 pm</td>
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<td>12: 3/29</td>
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<td>13: 4/5</td>
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<td>14: 4/12</td>
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<td>15: 4/19</td>
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<td>Project #5 Presentations (PowerPoint) Written Projects Due at 6:00 pm</td>
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<td>16: 4/26</td>
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Homework Policy
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 EMR6500hmk1.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**

Individual 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, list each and their associated purpose/function together with any affiliated scholarly journal sponsored by the association or division.

- AEA
- AERA
- APA
- ASA
- NCME

**Project #2  Annual meeting content analysis**

Large Group (4+ members)

15 pts

Given the findings from Project #1 and working in a small group, conduct a content analysis of topics sponsored by a PA or PA Division presented at their 2009 annual meeting.

**Project #3  Charting a domain topic**

Small Group (dyad)

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. Chart all presentations related to this topic within the PA used in Project #2 but now also consider the other PAs.

The goals of Projects 2 & 3 are to develop a mosaic of current problems and avenues of inquiry relevant to EMR. One of 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 2009 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.