What this Course is About: Generally, we disseminate new information we have learned through research articles in our professional literature. As professionals in our fields holding advanced degrees, we are usually obligated in our professions to remain current and to keep up with the latest research findings. We need to be able to read the research articles and listen to professional presentations as critical and informed consumers of such information. This course shows you what good research is, how it is done, and what to look for that helps you understand the results being presented. The skills you acquire in critically analyzing and using the results of research are invaluable. This is particularly so because not all published research is very useful or even well done. Ultimately it is you who must evaluate and use or discard the results of researchers. You need to become capable of critically evaluating the work of others. That is what this course is designed to help you do.

MATERIALS:
REQUIRED TEXT:

A digital version of the book is available to rent for 180 days from the publisher for $40.49.

SOFTWARE: Microsoft Excel with Data Analysis installed. (It is not necessary that you purchase this, but you will want to have access to it for about three weeks for this course. We’ll walk through the Data Analysis add-on).

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
The primary objective of the course is to equip the student with the necessary skills, concepts, and understanding of research methodology to evaluate and use the research in his/her discipline. Inherent in this broad objective is an ability to do the following:
1. Critique the problem and hypothesis of a research study.
2. Critique the review of literature to determine if it fulfilled the purpose of this phase of the research study.
3. Critique the definition of the population and the sampling procedure including its
size to determine if valid conclusions can be drawn.

4. Critique the data-gathering tools and procedures for collecting data

5. Critique the general design of the study to insure that correct conclusions are possible from the statistical analysis.

6. Critique the statistical analysis procedures to establish their valid use in the study.

7. Critique the conclusions and interpretations to insure appropriateness of each.

**Demonstrating Application of the Objectives:** Your opportunity to demonstrate your mastery of the 7 objectives above is built in to research critique assignment that you will turn in at the end of the course.

**STUDENT EVALUATION**
Student performance is evaluated by various written and/or oral assessments. One goal of this course is to develop clarity in written and oral communication.

**ASSESSMENT:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Papers and Peer Feedback (3)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Readings</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal and Research Proposal Presentation</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Article Critique (3)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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**GRADING POLICY**
Assignments are graded according to a rubric with ratings from 4 (high) to 1 (low). Final grades are awarded in accordance with the Graduate Bulletin that specifies: "Superior is indicated by 'A,' above average is 'B,' average is 'C,' below average but passing is 'D,' and failure is 'F.'"

The following grading scale will be used for this course (reported in overall averages):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional 100% Scale</th>
<th>4-point Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% or higher</td>
<td>A = 3.5-4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 – 89%</td>
<td>B = 2.5-3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 79%</td>
<td>C = 1.5-2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69%</td>
<td>D = 0.7-1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 60%</td>
<td>F = 0.0-0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ELPS faculty feels that aspiring educational leaders must be able to communicate clearly and accurately in order to have the necessary credibility to successfully lead schools in the 21st century. For that reason, students are advised that excessive violations (five or more) of any combination of the rules listed in the Writing Tips document posted on the ELPS Forms website may result in at least a .25 reduction in the final score assigned to each assignment. For that reason, students are encouraged to review these writing tips and apply them in all of their assignments.
Academic Dishonesty
Plagiarism or other academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. The penalty for such action will result in an “F” letter grade for the course and/or additional sanctions as permitted under University policy. If you are unsure of how to properly paraphrase or cite a source in APA style, we encourage you to seek assistance. Problems should be discussed with one of the instructors at your earliest convenience. Situations warranting consequences will be reported to the CEBS Dean. For a complete explanation of University academic student conduct policy, see http://catalog.unco.edu/200809/wwhelp/wwimpl/js/html/wwhelp.htm?accessible=true

Disability Access
Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services at Campus Box 139 Greeley, CO 80639 Phone: (970) 351-2289 (Voice, TTY), FAX: (970) 351-4166 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement:
The University of Northern Colorado prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. UNC is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence). If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an obligation to report it to UNC’s Title IX Coordinator. “Disclosure” may include communication in-person, via email/phone/text message, or through in/out of class assignments. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact the UNC Counseling Center (970-351-2496) or the Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (970-3514040). If you would like to learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, please visit www.unco.edu/sexualmisconduct.
RESEARCH ARTICLE CRITIQUE ASSIGNMENT

The intent of this project is to get you into an academic library to acquaint yourself with some of the materials used in research and to read and critique research journal articles related to your field of interest. The value of this project is not only what you may learn about the topics addressed in the articles, but what you acquire in the way of experience in critically evaluating the adequacy and technical merits of the research.

Find empirical research studies in peer reviewed academic journals on any topic or topics that interest you, read them, and write brief descriptions of them. I expect that the articles you select will be research articles and that several of them will be from the very recent (within the past 5 years) issues of the journals. For each article, utilize the analysis chart template to guide your response to the article.

**It is important that you include your assessment of the educational leadership implications of the article to receive credit for the critique.**

You will critique three articles with the following criteria:

1. One article utilizing quantitative methodology (5 pts)
2. One article utilizing qualitative methodology (5 pts)
3. One article utilizing a critical theory (5 pts)
READING REFLECTIONS

Three Reflection Papers and Three Peer Feedback Responses (30 points) –

a. Three Reflection Papers (21 points)
   • Reflection Paper 1: Part II and Part III (Chapters 3-7),
   • Reflection Paper 2: Part IV and Part V (Chapters 8-15), and
   • Reflection Paper 3: Part V (Chapters 16-19).

   Each student is required to write the reflection paper individually.

Write a reaction to any of the new ideas generated by the textbook. A reflection paper is NOT a summary of everything you have read. It is an elaboration of part of what you read that is interesting to you. You should have about 1 page single spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman font. More information on how to submit reflection papers will be provided during the first week of the class.

You earn 10 points for each of the reflection papers.
Rubric: 10 points for “reaction responses” (3 = react to the assigned chapters with minimal depth, 6 = react to the assigned chapters with some depth, 10 = react to the assigned chapters by sharing likes, dislikes, agreements, disagreements, learning, surprises, questions, or other signs of thinking.)

b. Three Peer Feedback (9 points)
   You will earn 5 points each for responding to your class members’ three reflection papers for a total of 15 points. To provide peer feedback, you will:
   a. View your class members’ reflection papers and select two members’ papers you would like to respond.
   b. Click on “Reply”, type your message (no less than 150 works), and click on “Submit”.

Small groups (2 or 3 students) identify possible topics related to efforts to reform, restructure, and/or improve education; describe a problem facing practitioners; develop a literature review that explores several of the concepts and prior research related to this problem; and identify research questions that might be explored in via data collection and analysis. This Topic will be developing into a research proposal that will be turned in as a group assignment.

The Research Proposal assignment consists of two parts: the proposal and an oral presentation as described in detail below. The purpose of this assignment is to provide you experience with designing a research study and writing a research proposal.

In general, a research proposal explains why and how a study will be conducted. It is useful for planning a study (and for getting critical feedback before undertaking the study) as well as a resource to mine while conducting a study. The process is recursive. As you design your study, you will be guided in part by your review of the literature, and will no doubt continue to review relevant scholarship in your research area and your proposed methods.

**Problem or objective.** Research proposals generally begin with an introductory section that describes the research problem and establishes its significance. This section answers the following kinds of questions: What exactly do you want to study? Why is it worth studying? Does the proposed study have theoretical and/or practical significance? Does it contribute to a new understanding of a phenomenon (e.g., does it address new or little-known material, or does it treat familiar material in a new way or does it challenge an existing understanding or extend existing knowledge)?

**Review of Literature.** The research problem or objective needs to be situated within a context of other scholarship in the area(s). The literature review presents a discussion of the most important research and theoretical work relating to the research problem/objective. (Note: for a thesis committee, the review serves an additional function, namely, as a demonstration of your knowledge and understanding of relevant research and thus a demonstration of your ability to undertake a given research project.) It addresses the following kinds of questions: What have others said about this area(s)? What theories address it and what do these say? What research has been done (or not done) previously? Are there consistent findings or do past studies disagree? Are there flaws or gaps in the previous research that your study will seek to remedy?

**Research Question.** Your specific research question(s) or hypotheses should be stated clearly either at the end of the description of the problem/objective or at the end of the review of the literature.
(You have already written a draft of the review of literature that included the research problem and question(s). But you will probably find that you are continuing to craft your research questions, and may need to revise your review, cutting out tangential or irrelevant research and adding other research that you have come across since you wrote the review. You may also find that you need to add methodological sources to support your research design.)

**Procedures:** Methods Section This section describes how you will conduct your study. Regardless of the type of research you plan to do, you need to indicate how you will carry out your study so others may judge its viability, its worth, etc. For example, for empirical research, this section includes a description of the subjects (or participants), the measurements, the data-collection methods, and analysis/analyses.

**Subjects for study.** Describe the subjects (people or objects, e.g. texts) for your study, considering carefully the type and number you need. Explain your method of selecting your subject(s) (and if a sample, describe the population and how the sample will be drawn). Discuss the subject(s) in relation to your research question or hypothesis, to availability, and to your research design. That is, you need to identify the subjects and make clear whether they will be available and how you will reach them. This section typically answers the following questions: Who or what will you study in order to collect data? Is it appropriate to select a sample from a larger pool? If so, how will you do that? How do these subjects relate to your research question(s)?

**Measurement.** Describe the kinds of measures you intend to use and explain why you have selected these (have they been used previously? if not, have you piloted them?). A discussion of measurements generally considers the following questions: What are the key variables in your study? How will you define and measure them? Do your definitions and measurements draw on or differ from those of previous research in this area? (If you are using a writing prompt, or a survey questions, or other such written material, it is usually appropriate to include a copy of this in an appendix at the end.) You want to consider whether you will use concurrent, retrospective, direct or indirect product measurements or some combination of these. Your research question should guide you in your selection.

**Data-Collection Methods.** Describe what you plan to actually do and the kind of research you will conduct. Your data-collection methods obviously need to be consistent with your research problem, your subjects and your measurements. This section typically considers the following questions: How will you actually collect the data for your study? What kind of study will you conduct (e.g., ethnographic, case study, experiment, survey, historical, textual analysis, etc.)?

**Analysis.** Describe the kind of analysis you plan to conduct and explain the logic and purpose of your analysis. The kind(s) of analysis you plan will, of course, be contingent on the subjects, the measures and the data collection as well as on your research
question. These all work in tandem with one another. Whether you’re conducting a quantitative or qualitative, a study of some combination or a study of some other kind, you need to explain how you will analyze the data you collect. This section typically answers the following kinds of questions: How precise a description or explanation of the phenomenon do you plan to provide? Do you intend to simply describe the what and how of a given phenomenon? Do you intend to examine relationships among variables? or Do you intend to explain why things are the way they are? What possible explanatory variables will your analysis consider and how will you know if you’ve explained the variables adequately? If you plan to use specific statistical procedures (whether descriptive, inferential, or some combination), state these.

**Schedule.** Most proposals require a schedule that outlines the various stages of the project along a timeline. Typically, this is written as a chronological list of procedures you will follow in carrying out your study (data collection, analysis, writing and revising). Work backwards from the date you want to complete the project and be realistic about the amount of time that different tasks will take. Even when this is not required, it is a good idea to generate a timeline because this task forces you to think through the entire research process realistically and may alert you to problems that you might otherwise overlook. A timeline also helps you later on to stay on task during the research project.

**Bibliography:** Include a bibliography or works cited of all sources cited in the research proposal. Double check your bibliography against the proposal to make sure that all sources appear in both places.

As you draft your proposal, keep in mind that, as the name suggests, you are describing your tentative plans for research. You want the proposal to be specific enough for someone to understand what it is you plan to do so they can assess your plan, and you want it concrete enough to help you as you engage in your research. Further, your proposal should help you (and your readers) identify any problem areas before you invest time, energy and money in a study so that you can correct these. But your proposal is also subject to change once you actually begin the study. The point is: be realistic and be flexible.

**Page Length:** Your proposal should run between at least 10-15 pages not counting your works cited and any appendixes you might include.

**Oral Presentation:** Student groups will schedule a time with the instructor to give a live oral presentation via the Zoom conference platform. These will occur during Synchronous sessions 4 & 5. Student groups that are presenting on the night of the sessions are required to attend and participate in the entire session.
Synchronous Sessions

We will have synchronous sessions via the Zoom platform four times throughout the semester. The purpose of these sessions is to have a guided discussion about the course content. These sessions allow online students to interact with instructor and peers in real time. Students will also have the opportunity to ask the instructor questions during the sessions. Although these sessions are optional, students are strongly encouraged to participate in these sessions as part of the learning process. Session are scheduled for the following dates:

1/14/19
2/11/19
3/28/19
4/08/19 - Presentations
4/22/19 - Presentations
# Course Schedule

(Subject to change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic &amp; Objective</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/7/19</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>UNIT 1</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/14/19</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td><strong>Synchronous Session 1 – 5-7 pm</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1/21/19</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>UNIT 2</td>
<td>Chapters 3, 4, &amp; 5 Research Article Critique # 1 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/28/19</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/4/19</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>UNIT 3</td>
<td>Chapters 6 &amp; 7 Research Article Critique # 2 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/11/19</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td><strong>Synchronous Session 2 – 5-7 pm</strong></td>
<td>Reflection 1 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/18/19</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>UNIT 4</td>
<td>Chapters 8 &amp; 9 Research Article Critique # 3 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/25/19</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection Peer Review 1 Due</td>
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<td>3/4/19</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>UNIT 5</td>
<td>Chapters 10, 11, &amp; 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/28/19</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td><strong>Synchronous Session 3 – 5-7 pm</strong></td>
<td>Reflection 2 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/25/19</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>UNIT 6</td>
<td>Chapters 13, 14, &amp; 15</td>
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<td>4/1/19</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>Reflection Peer Review 2 Due</td>
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<td>4/8/19</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>UNIT 7</td>
<td>Chapters 16, 17, 18, &amp; 19 Research Proposal Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/15/19</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection 3 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/22/19</td>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>UNIT 8</td>
<td>Chapters 20 &amp; 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/29/19</td>
<td>Week 16</td>
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<td>Reflection Peer Review 3 Due</td>
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<td><strong>Spring Break March 12-16</strong></td>
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Chapters 1 & 2

Chapters 3, 4, & 5

Chapters 6 & 7

Chapters 8 & 9

Chapters 10, 11, & 12

Chapters 13, 14, & 15

Chapters 16, 17, 18, & 19

Chapters 20 & 21

Research Article Critique # 1 Due

Research Article Critique # 2 Due

Research Article Critique # 3 Due

Research Proposal Due

Reflection Peer Review 1 Due

Reflection Peer Review 2 Due

Reflection Peer Review 3 Due