

Pub Ad 552
Fall, 2013 Mon 4-6:30pm
Office Hours: Mon 2-4pm

Bruce J. Perlman, Ph.D.
277-3313
bperlman@unm.edu

Designing Applied Research Course Syllabus

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

This purpose of this course is to prepare students to design and propose applied research on topics relevant to public administration study and practice. A particular aim of the course is to assist students in focusing on a potential topic for preparing the final integrative assignment of the Masters of Public Administration degree, the Professional Paper. To fulfill these goals, students will develop an independent research project and propose and present it during the course of the semester. Successful completion of this work will require students to attend class, participate fully and enthusiastically, and complete assignments completely and submit them on time. To reach the course goals, students should have completed the following specific objectives by the end of the course:

- Understand the concepts of empirical and applied research
- Develop a meaningful, appropriate, research topic and an answerable research question pertinent to public administration study or practice.
- Complete a literature search and review that is relevant to framing and answering the research question
- Develop an applied research approach, plan, and design to provide an evidence based answer to the research question
- Identify appropriate sources, collection methods, and analysis techniques for data appropriate to support an evidence based answer to the research question
- Write a short paper that presents the research and techniques proposed
- Make a brief presentation that presents the research and techniques proposed

II. Readings and Other Course Materials

A. Texts

There is one required text for the course. The required text has been ordered for purchase at the UNM bookstore and is available for order from the publisher on-line. In addition, there are two recommended texts available. These texts are available for purchase from the UNM bookstore or on-line from the publisher as well.

▪ Required Texts

Zina O'Leary, (2010), **The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project**. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

▪ Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association (APA) (2010), **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association**, (6th Ed.), Washington, DC: American Psychological Association

Maureen Berner, (2010), **Statistics for Public Administration: Practical Uses for Better Decision Making**, Washington, DC: ICMA Press

B. Other Readings and Materials

▪ Journal Articles

Students will be expected to review and summarize articles from academic journals as part of their course work. This will be necessary to complete course assignments. It is recommended that students complete this through the UNM library <http://library.unm.edu/> by using in full-text, PDF files. In order to access the library and review articles, students must have a valid UNM NetID and password.

▪ Slides

Microsoft Power Point Slides will be posted for all topics on the instructor's UNM course site at <http://www.unm.edu/~bperlman/>. These slides will cover some of the assigned reading, provide considerable additional information relevant to the particular topic not found in the reading, and will present any assignments that are to be completed by students. Students are expected to review these slides and understand the content in them for application to and completion of course assignments.

III. Assignments

There will be no tests. Students will complete four individual graded assignments, one ungraded assignment, and participate in class. The individual assignments will be completed in the order indicated on the course schedule below. Each assignment will be further explained in class and will each have instructions that will be posted on-line. All assignments will be submitted digitally. No extra credit or make-up assignments will be given. Extensions to submit assignments will not be granted, but students may turn in assignments at any time after they are due, but should expect a deduction of points corresponding to the degree of lateness. However, Incompletes may be requested for qualified reasons (see below).

The first three assignments will build to the final project. Assignments may not be resubmitted once graded, but it is expected that students will improve each submitted assignment in response to the instructor's feedback as they progress to the next one. Brief explanations of the assignments follow:

A. Class Participation (20 points)

Class participation has two elements. The first is attendance to class sessions. The second is presenting work and answering questions in class. At some point, each student will be asked to present work in class and to discuss the work of other students. Students should arrive in class ready to discuss both the readings and their work in progress and completed.

B. Research Topic and Question (40 points)

At this point in the masters' degree program, each student is expected to have selected an area or a specific topic for final research for the professional paper. Students will be asked to narrow, refine, and develop this topic into a fully researchable issue. This includes not only a preliminary literature search of the pertinent academic literature, but the development of a research question that results from and is framed by the literature search. The research question should include relevant, variables, constructs, processes, elements and other specific empirical concepts that ground it and make it narrow and specific enough to answer. Its development, relation to academic research, and potential ways to answer it will be further developed by the literature review.

C. Literature Review (40 points)

As part of the research proposal final course project, students will complete an in-depth, annotated literature review. The review will summarize articles relevant to the research topic and question approved by the instructor. All articles in the review will be cited according to APA style.

D. Proposal Presentation (20 points)

Before completing the research proposal mentioned below, students will present their research proposal in class to the instructor and to other students in the class. This assignment has three aims. First, it is important for students to learn to present work in progress to others. Second, it is expected that feedback given during these presentations will improve and refine both the student's research and their final research proposal. Third, it is hoped that students will be able to learn from the feedback given to others.

E. Research Proposal (80 points)

The final project for the course will be a completed research proposal. The research proposal will include the work done on refining topics and questions and will include a final literature review. In addition, the final research proposal will consider other important questions such as how to answer research questions, what methods are appropriate to collect and analyze data, what specific steps will be taken to apply those methods, as well as what a feasible schedule might be to conduct and complete the research. The purpose of the proposal is to have a document to present to a Professor to request supervision to compete a Professional Paper and, if appropriate for funding.

F. HRP Research Certificate (0 Points; -5 points for failure to submit)

Students will successfully complete on their own, the Human Research Protections on-line course at the Health Sciences Center's "Moodle" found at <https://hsc-moodle.health.unm.edu/moodle/> To enroll in this course, students will need a valid UNM Netid. Upon completion of the referenced course, students will receive a certificate in PDF. A copy of this certificate is to be mailed to the instructor as indicated.

IV. Grading

Points earned for completing course requirements will provide the basis for course grades. The value of each requirement is detailed above. Grades will be assigned on the basis of cumulative points earned. A grading scale is presented below. It presents the grades earned for levels of accumulated points.

Grading Scale

Grade	Points
A+	200
A	199-190
A-	189-180
B+	179-170
B	169-160
B-	159-150
C+	149-140
C	139-130
etc.	

V. Incomplete Grades

The grade of Incomplete MUST be requested in writing (electronic mail is acceptable) from the instructor. The grade of incomplete will not be assigned unless so requested. The request must state a

reason appropriate to the UNM Office of Graduate Studies guidelines for incomplete grades. According to these guidelines... "the grade of "I" is given only when circumstances beyond the student's control have prevented completion of the course work within the official dates of a session".

VI. Plagiarism

The policy on plagiarism in this class follows the definitions used in the UNM Faculty Handbook. Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit. It is done intentionally. Ideas and quotations from others must be cited appropriately. This includes all sources even the author's own work used elsewhere. Such work in the course will not be accepted to complete any assignment.

VII. Course Schedule (Subject to Amendment and Change)

Date	Session	Topic	Reading	Activities & Notes
8/19	1	Introduction to the Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus and Requirements • Course Organization • Getting Acquainted • Expectations 		
8/26	2	Understanding Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empirical Research • Applied Research 	O'Leary Ch. 1 APA pgs. 9-11	
9/2	3	Managing the Research Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Working 	O'Leary Ch. 2	
9/9	4	Research Topics & Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refining a Topic & Question • Hypotheses 	O'Leary Ch. 4 APA Ch. 3 Berner Ch. 1	Research Topic & Question Assignment
9/16	5	The Literature Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Sources • Writing the Review 	O'Leary Ch. 6 APA Ch. 6	Literature Review Assignment
9/23	6	Planning and Designing Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedules and Level of Effort • Methods and Methodology 	O'Leary Ch. 7	Using the Library
9/30	7	Understanding Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative vs. Qualitative • Triangulating and Mixing 	O'Leary Chs. 8 & 14 Berner Chs. 2, 3 & 4	
10/7	8	Thinking about Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct and Indirect Collection • Reactive vs. Non-Reactive Collection 	O'Leary Chs. 11 & 12 APA pgs. 30-31 Berner Chs. 5, 6 & 7	Research Topic & Question Assignment Due
10/14	9	TBA	N/A	TBD
10/21	10	Thinking about Quantitative Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing Quantitative Data • Data, Description & Inference 	O'Leary Ch. 13 APA Ch. 5 & pgs. 116-124 Berner Chs. 8 & 9	
10/28	11	Thinking about Qualitative Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coding and Categorizing • Data Reduction 	O'Leary Ch. 14	

Date	Session	Topic	Reading	Activities & Notes
11/4	12	Preparing a Research Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements and Importance • Writing Well 	O'Leary Ch. 5 APA pgs. 87-114	Proposal Assignment
11/11	13	Ethics and Integrity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Politics • Human Subjects 	O'Leary Ch. 3 APA pgs. 11-18	Presentation Assignment Literature Review Assignment Due
11/18	14	Presenting the Proposed the Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Up • The Audience 	O'Leary Ch. 15 APA Ch. 2	Proposal Presentations
11/25	15	Presenting the Proposed the Research	N/A	Proposal Presentations
12/2		Closed Week	N/A	TBA – HRP Certificate Due
12/9		Final Exam Week	N/A	No Meeting – Proposal Due