



HONORS: 345  
RESEARCH METHODS – 3 CREDITS

**Instructor Info:**

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**Course Description:**

This honors level course provides proficiency in qualitative and quantitative research methods, scientific theory, and historical inquiry from disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. The differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies are examined, as well as, the theoretical foundations of research methodology and analysis. This interdisciplinary examination of research methods examines the various stages of the research process; explores the range of skills used in research; begins to explore different approaches to research, methods of data collection techniques, and techniques of analysis; and develops the ability to critically analyze and assess research projects.

**Required Texts:**

*Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.* Neuman, W. Lawrence (Allyn & Bacon, 2006). ISBN: 978-0205457939

*From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods.* Howell, Martha and Walter Prevenier (Cornell UP, 2001). ISBN: 978-0801485602

A current style manual appropriate to the student's discipline (MLA, APA, Chicago Style)

**Student Learner Outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete Honors 345 will be able to

1. Understand and utilize the scientific method of research.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of research design and methods across a variety of disciplinary boundaries.
3. Evaluate and analyze research study results.
4. Develop appropriate research questions/problems.
5. Demonstrate scholarly writing style appropriate to their discipline.

6. Construct an appropriate annotated bibliography from scholarly source material for study and research.
7. Defend a proposition using appropriate sources of support.
8. Produce a publishable quality research paper

## **Course Outline**

### **Major Topics and Subtopics**

1. The scientific method and research
  - A. Steps in the research process
  - B. Qualitative and quantitative research
  - C. Dimensions of research
2. Identifying and evaluating sources
  - A. Source typology
  - B. Impact of communication and information technology on sources
  - C. Source criticism
3. Theory, research, and interpretation
  - A. What is theory?
  - B. Ethical Concerns
  - C. Interdisciplinary interpretive approaches
4. Methodologies
  - A. Meanings of Methodology
  - B. Change, continuity, and causal factors
5. Annotated Bibliographies
  - A. Primary and secondary sources
  - B. Utilizing resources
  - C. Literature review and ethical questions
6. Research designs
  - A. Planning and preparation
  - B. Measurement
  - C. Sampling
7. Issues in Education Research
8. Issues in Psychology and Sociology Research
9. Issues in Criminal Justice Research
10. Issues in Business and Finance Research
11. Issues in Scientific Research
12. Issues in Humanities Research
13. Gender analysis in research
14. Understanding power relationships in research
15. Ethnographic approaches

## Delivery and Assessment Methods

### Delivery

1. Class lectures and guest speakers
2. Online discussion threads, learning modules, and media libraries
3. Research methods website content (general and discipline specific)

### Assessment

1. Online essay exams
2. Discussion threads
3. Participation in three class sessions
4. Research problem
5. Annotated bibliography
6. Publishable paper

### **Course Requirements and Methods of Evaluation:**

1. Online essay exams (3)
  - A. There are three essay exams that must be completed during the semester. Each exam will consist of a single question and be based on the first six course outline major topics. Students will answer in as much detail as possible by supporting their answers with source material from the course textbooks **and** sources other than course textbooks. All sources must be documented. Students may work offline to answer the question and then paste in the answer. (SLO – 1,2,5,7)
  - B. A specific rubric for each question will be given at the time of the exam.
  - C. Each exam is worth 100 points for a total of 300 points.
2. Discussion threads (weekly)
  - A. Discussion topics and questions will be added to the discussions area throughout the semester. This is an attempt to create a seminar environment online and for students to enhance other student's knowledge. Students will need to visit the Blackboard site on a regular basis. Each student is expected to consider the main question for the week and post an appropriate response. Students are also required to respond to at least one other student's posted response and reply to those who respond to them. Students are also asked to read and consider all questions and topics in a given week. (SLO – 1,2,3,5,7)
  - B. Students will answer the main thread on 3 levels
    1. Answer to the posted question – 10 points
    2. Response to other's answer – 6 points
    3. Reply to student who responded to you – 4 points
  - C. Each discussion thread week is worth 10 points for a total of 160 points.

3. Participation in 3 class sessions
  - A. As a hybrid class, most work will be done online; however, students will be required to attend at least 3 classes. In the second week of class, students must submit which other two classes they will attend. Students must attend the first class of the semester, one class from 7-12 of the course outline, and one additional class of the student's choosing based on interest and need. Class during 7-12 of the course outline, dependent upon availability, will feature a guest speaker from the area discussing research issues. Some sessions may be on campuses other than the Texas A&M – Texarkana campus (SLO – 1,2,3)
  - B. Submitting the list of classes the student will attend and attending the second and third class session are each worth 50 points.
  - C. Each item is worth 50 points for a total of 150 points
4. Research Problem
  - A. Students will prepare a research question appropriate to their discipline that capitalizes on work done in a course they are currently taking. This text will feature a research statement and research objectives. A specific rubric will be given at the time of the assignment; however, generally the text should provide background information on the research question, provide guidance into the nature and relevance of the topic, utilize the course content on research methods, and provide focus for the annotated bibliography. (SLO – 1,2,3,4,5)
  - B. The research problem text is worth 300 points.
5. Annotated Bibliography
  - A. Students will provide an annotated bibliography of at least 20 scholarly articles based off of their research problem text. Again, a specific rubric will be given at the time of the assignment, but a few of the key pieces of the text are provided here. The bibliography must include at least 15 texts from scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. The articles must also include multiple sides of the questions (pro and con). They must adhere to the publication manual of the student's discipline. Again, consultation with professors in the student's discipline is expected. (SLO 1,2,3,5,6)
  - B. The annotated bibliography is worth 500 points
6. Publishable paper
  - A. Students will prepare a paper that is suitable for publication relating to both the research problem and annotated bibliography. The work from the prior two assignments will serve to provide a background and clarify your research question. A specific rubric will be provided at the time of the assignment. (SLO 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8).
  - B. The publishable paper is worth 700 points

**Grading Scale:**

A =	90% – 100%	(1899 – 2110 pts.)
B =	80% – 89%	(1680 – 1898 pts.)
C =	70% -- 79%	(1477 – 1679 pts.)

D = 60% -- 69% (1266 – 1476 pts.)  
F = 0% -- 59% ( 0 -- 1265 pts.)

**Complete Course Schedule:**

Every week also includes Blackboard and web content to be decided once I get my hands on the course texts.

9/1 – Introduction to the course and the scientific method and research

Reading from Neuman

**Research Problem Assigned**

9/8 – Identifying and evaluating sources

Reading from Howell

**Exam 1**

9/15 – Theory, research, and interpretation

Reading from Neuman and Howell

9/22 – Methodologies

Reading from Neuman and Howell

**Exam 2**

9/29 – Annotated bibliographies

Reading from Neuman

**Annotated Bibliography Assigned**

10/6 – Research Designs

Reading from Neuman

**Exam 3**

10/13 – Issues in Education Research

**Research Problem Due**

10/20 – Issues in Psychology and Sociology Research

10/27 -- Issues in Criminal Justice Research

11/3 – Issues in Business and Finance Research

**Annotated Bibliography Due**

11/10 – Issues in Scientific Research

11/17 – Issues in Humanities Research

11/24 – Gender analysis in research

12/1 – Understanding power relationships in research

12/8 – Ethnographic approaches

12/15 – **Publishable Paper due**

**Student Participation:**

This is an interactive course on-line and in the classroom. Students are required to participate in weekly discussion threads and in at least three classroom sessions. Professional and courteous communication is always expected.

**Disability Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

**Academic Integrity:**

Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of 'F' in the course and/or disciplinary actions. For additional information, see the university catalog.

**Statement on email usage:**

Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana email account. This email account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university email account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana email account on a frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework.

**Student Technical Assistance:**

- Solutions to common problems and FAQ's for your web-enhanced and online courses are found at this link:  
<http://www.tamut.edu/webcourses/index.php?pageid=37>
- If you cannot find your resolution there, you can send in a support request detailing your specific problem here: <http://www.tamut.edu/webcourses/gethelp2.php>
- Blackboard Helpdesk contacts:

Office hours are: Monday - Friday, 8:00a to 5:00p

Kevin Williams (main contact) 903-223-1356 [kevin.williams@tamut.edu](mailto:kevin.williams@tamut.edu)

Frank Miller (alternate) 903-223-3156 [frank.miller@tamut.edu](mailto:frank.miller@tamut.edu)

Nikki Thomson (alternate) 903-223-3083 [nikki.thomson@tamut.edu](mailto:nikki.thomson@tamut.edu)