Southeast Missouri State University
Course Syllabus

Department of: Human Environmental Studies Course No: HE 635

Title of Course: Research Design in
Revision: ______

Human Environmental Studies New: Spring 2008

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours of Course:
Application of basic principles of research design to the development of first three chapters of research proposal (3).

II. Prerequisite(s): PY571, HE525 or permission of the instructor

III. Purpose or Objectives of the Course:
A. Identify the unique characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research methodology.
B. Demonstrate the ability to create a viable research study using a quantitative approach.
C. Demonstrate an understanding of the applications and limitations of quantitative research design.
D. Demonstrate the ability to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses that reflect the purpose and conceptual framework of the study.
E. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of human subjects approval, informed consent, confidentiality issues and ethics.
F. Demonstrate the ability to select and document (APA) creditable research and theory related to an identified topic.

IV. Expectations of Students:
A. Active participation in class discussions and activities
B. Successful and timely completion of all course assignments and readings
C. Active participation in the peer review and editing process
D. Uphold the University’s academic honesty policy.

E. Completed a preliminary literature review on a topic that has been approved by the thesis advisor prior to enrolling in HE635.

V. Course Content:

A. Introduction to research design
   1. The Scientific Approach
   2. Basic and applied quantitative research
   3. Basic and applied qualitative research
   4. Multi-method research

B. Developing Chapter 1 Research Proposal
   1. Developing the introduction to a research study
      a. selection of demographic data
      b. selection of key words/concepts
      c. causal inference-variables
         1) dependent
         2) independent
         3) intervening variables (mediator/mediating)
         4) moderating (control/moderator)
         5) demographic variables
         6) experimental variables
   2. Purpose/problem statements/significance
      a. descriptive
      b. experimental
      c. relational
      d. discipline specificity
   3. Research Questions
      a. research objectives
      b. depth and breadth
      c. pitfalls in question development
   4. Hypotheses
      a. expected results-research/evidence based
      b. rationale for predictions
      c. directional/non directional
   5. Assumptions
      a. limitations
      b. delimitations
   6. Operational definitions
      a. ambiguities
      b. key words
      c. documentation

Hours

5

12
7. Conceptual/theoretical frameworks
   a. temporal presence
   b. constant conjunctions
   c. non spurious
   d. grounded-foundational

C. Refining Chapter Two - Literature Review
   (Lit review developed earlier in HE 525)
   1. Levels of analysis
   2. Primary and secondary sources
   3. Determining depth and breadth of the literature review

D. Developing Chapter Three Research Proposal
   1. Participants
      a. selection criteria
      b. population description
      c. ethics
      d. confidentiality and privacy
      e. institutional review process
         1) informed consent
         2) risks and benefits
      f. sampling
         1) probability sample
         2) non probability sample
         3) sample size
   2. Methodology
      a. instrument selection
         1) reliability & validity establishment
         2) permission for use
         3) replication potential
         4) development-pilot studies
      b. measurement concepts
         1) reliability
            a) consistency
            b) stability
         2) validity
            a) face
            b) criterion
            c) construct
            d) content
            e) internal/external
      c. levels of measurement
         1) nominal
         2) ordinal
         3) internal
         4) ratio
d. data collection
   1) survey
      a) mailed questionnaires
      b) telephone questionnaires
      c) personal interviews
      d) internet questionnaires
   2) observation
   3) experimental designs
   4) non reactive techniques

3. Analysis
   a. measure of central tendency
   b. measure of variability
   c. data organization/representation
   d. statistical significance
   e. inferential statistics-parametric & non parametric
   f. SPSS

E. Abstracts/References/Appendices and Table of Contents

F. Presentation of a research proposal
   1. Presentation formats
   2. Publication/Copyright and Patent Information
   3. APA standards

Total hours 45

VI. Textbook(s) and/or Other Required Materials or Equipment:


References:


VII. Basis for Student Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated based on satisfactory performance on the following assignments:

- Human subjects proposal: 10%
- Thesis Chapter One: 35%
- Thesis Chapter Two: 10%
- Thesis Chapter Three: 35%
- Presentation (defense) of project: 10%

100%

VIII. Grading Scale

- 100% - 93% = A
- 92% - 85% = B
- 84% - 76% = C
- 75% - 0% = F

The weight of the evaluation criteria may vary according to each instructor and will be communicated at the beginning of the course.

IX. Academic Policy Statement:

Students will be expected to abide by the University Policy for Academic Honesty regarding plagiarism and academic honesty. Refer to:

http://www6.semo.edu/judaffairs/code.html

X. Student with Disabilities Statement:

If a student has a special need addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires materials in an alternative format, please notify the instructor at the beginning of the course. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate special needs.