



EDF 7410

Design of Systematic Studies in Education

84805 005

Fall 2026

Instructor Name

Jennifer Wolgemuth

University Course Description

Theory and application of major design models to systematic inquiry, from experimental to naturalistic models. Nature and role of sampling in systematic studies.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

Most classes will be in person with three scheduled as synchronous online. They will include a mixture of lecture, individual and group activities, discussion, and student-led presentations. Please see syllabus schedule for more information.

Student Learning Outcomes

All course objectives are designed to enhance your ability to become both a critical reader and producer of educational research. On completion of the course, you should be able to:

1. Describe the logic underlying quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research paradigms.
2. Define and use terms and concepts commonly utilized in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research.
3. Describe the strengths and limitations of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research designs.
4. Demonstrate ability to develop a research proposal.
5. Demonstrate ability to make an oral presentation of a research proposal.

Course Objectives

The general objectives of the course are to:

1. Introduce concepts, purposes and methods fundamental to designing and conducting educational research.
2. Demonstrate how to critique research studies in education.
3. Convey how to conceptualize and develop a research proposal for a problem in students' substantive fields.
4. Provide opportunities for students to practice making an oral presentation of the research study.

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

Cheek, J., & Orby, E. (2023). *Research Design: Why Thinking about Design Matters*. SAGE.

Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

Ravitch, S. M., & Riggan, M. (2016). *Reason & Rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Grading Scale

A+ = >98%; A = 93-97.9%; A- = 90-92.9%
B+ = 88-89.9%; B = 83-87.9%; B- = 80-82.9%
C+ = 78-79.9%; C = 73-77.9%; C- = 70-72.9%
D+ = 68-69.9%; D = 63-67.9%; D- = 60-62.9%
F < 60%

Grade Categories and Weights

Proposal Roundtable Presentation (15%)

Research Proposal Draft 1 (25%)

Research Proposal Draft 2 (25%)

Research Proposal (35%)

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Date	Topic
Aug. 27	Course Overview 1. Syllabus (on Canvas; review before class) and Introductions 2. Come to class ready to share preliminary ideas for your research proposal
Sept. 3	Research Design, Questions, Methodology 1. Read Cheek & Oby Chapters 1, 3 & 4
Sept. 10	Review and Critical Evaluation of the Literature, Systematic Reviews and Effect-size 1. Reread Cheek & Oby pp. 5-12, 53-55 2. Read (Canvas): Boote & Beile (2005) <i>Scholars Before Researchers: Centrality of Dissertation. Literature Review....</i> 3. Read (Canvas): Maxwell's (2006) response to Boote & Beile 4. Read (Canvas): Boote & Beile's (2006) response to Maxwell
Sept. 17	Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks 1. Read (Canvas): Maxwell Chapter 3
Sept. 24 ONLINE (5:30-7:45)	The Proposal and Proposal Process at USF and Ethics, Institutional Review Board (IRB) 1. Read Cheek & Orby Chapter 2 2. Read (Canvas): Locke et al. (2014) Ch. 8 3. <u>Complete Roundtable Presentation Sign-up</u>

Date	Topic
Oct. 1	Quantitative Studies: Experimental Designs, Internal and External Validity 1. Read Cheek & Oby Chapter 8 2. Read (Canvas) Shadish, Cook, & Campbell 2002 3. Read (Canvas): Internal and External Validity in Health Professions Educational Research 4. <u>Proposal Roundtable Presentations (5)</u>
Oct. 8 ONLINE (5:30-7:45)	Quantitative Studies: Non-Experimental Designs (Correlational, Causal Comparative), and Descriptive and Survey Research 1. Read Cheek & Oby Chapter 10
Oct. 15	Mixed-Methods Studies 1. Read Cheek & Oby Chapter 10 2. <u>Proposal draft 1, Oct. 16 (15%) (2-3 pages)</u>. As a start to your research proposal, describe the rationale (why is this research needed?), significance (why is this research important?), and purpose (clear one-sentence goal statement) of your study. Present research questions. Describe your study's conceptual and/or theoretical framework. The rationale and significance for your research <u>may</u> include its practical importance (how your research informs practice) and its personal importance (your connection to the topic). However, the rationale <u>must</u> describe your how your research contributes to the literature. You should be citing research studies that point to a need for the research you plan to conduct.
Oct. 22	Qualitative Designs 1. Read Cheek Chapter 5 2. Read (Canvas) Maxwell 2012 Chapter 5 3. <u>Proposal Roundtable Presentations</u>
Oct. 29	Sampling and Data Collection Considerations 1. Read Cheek & Oby Chapters 6 & 9 2. Read (Canvas): Teddlie & Yu (2007). <i>Mixed methods sampling: A typology with...</i> 3. Read (Canvas): Castillo-Montoya (2016) 4. <u>Proposal Roundtable Presentations</u>

Date	Topic
Nov. 5	Data Analysis: Descriptive and Inferential Statistical Techniques 1. Read (Canvas): Cohen et al Chapters 38, 40, & 44 2. <u>Proposal Roundtable Presentations</u>
Nov. 12	Data Analysis: Mixed-Methods and Qualitative 1. Read Cheek & Orby Chapter 7 2. Read (Canvas): Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie (2002). Ch. 13, <i>A framework for analyzing...</i> 3. Read (Canvas): Braun & Clarke (2019). <i>Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis...</i> 4. <u>Proposal draft 2, Nov. 14 (15%) (3-5 pages)</u>. Continuing from Proposal draft 2, draft the methodology section of your proposal. Discuss <u>as appropriate</u> your design and paradigm, data collection, instruments, participants, setting, analysis, validity, ethics, role of the researcher. Include both what you will do and why, sourcing the rationale for your decisions from methods literature.
Nov. 19	NO CLASS
Nov. 26	NO CLASS
Dec. 3 ONLINE (5:30-7:45)	Validity and Qualitative Research, Closing Considerations 1. Read Cheek & Orby Chapter 11 2. Morse (2016) 3. Read (Canvas): Tracy (2010). <i>Qualitative quality... Big Tent</i> 4. <u>Final Proposal, Monday Dec. 7 (35%) (~20 pages)</u>.

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

Late Work Policy:

All dates in the syllabus are suggestions. I accept late work at any point in the semester, no explanation needed. However, I must keep to university deadlines and the proposal assignments build upon one another. If I do not receive your work in time to provide feedback before the next assignment is due then the points you would receive for the prior assignment will be transferred to the next one. If I do not receive your work in time to grade before final grades are due, I will need to enter whatever grade you've earned at that point.

Previous work in other classes:

I hope you make good use of work you've submitted for other classes as you write your proposals. For example, you may have written or are writing draft research proposals. I hope you will draw, build, improve on them through this class.

Grades of "Incomplete"

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other

circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. An "I" grade not cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Canvas:

This course is offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. You can find all class resources (readings, videos, assignments) in the Modules section, which correspond with each class session. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please consult the [Canvas Student Guides](#). You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Microsoft TEAMS

All synchronous classes will be held on Microsoft TEAMS and a link will be provided in Canvas. If you have problems accessing TEAMS, contact the IT Service Desk at 813-974-HELP, email help@usf.edu, or use the IT chat.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material

for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you

- allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website](#).

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)