

Western Carolina University
College of Education and Allied Professions
Spring 2021 Discovery Bay, Jamaica
SPED 682: Research in Special Education

Course Description: Theoretical and experimental research into techniques of teaching, investigation of problems, and educational systems. PREQ: EDCI 602 or equivalent.

Instructor: Kristy Doss, PhD
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Course Objectives

Students will:

1. Explain the purpose of research in special education.
2. Describe the basic principles and procedures of literature review, applied behavior analysis research, and qualitative research.
3. Acquire information from journals and the internet; search for information through electronic libraries or databases; communicate information to others.
4. Critically read, analyze, interpret, and apply research to practical situations.
5. Conduct and write a focused literature review on a relevant topic.

Course Requirements:

1. Read assigned material.
2. Complete abstract exercise before class meetings in Kingston.
3. Prepare five (5) abstracts of research articles in the required format.
4. Submit a literature review proposal.
5. Write a literature review on a relevant topic according to directions. Submit first draft and final draft.

Topic	Activities	Class Dates	Due Date
Personal Profiles	Email Instructor (kkdoss@wcu.edu) * Name * Home or cell phone number * Preferred e-mail address * Name and phone number of your school * Name of supervising teacher or administrator * Your teaching schedule and description of student population * Other information you would like to share	N/A	February 15 th Send Email

Abstract Exercise and Understanding One Drive through WCU Catamount Mail	<p>Complete the Abstract Exercise.</p> <p>Submit through One Drive.</p> <p>You will receive directions as a response the personal email you send with your teaching information.</p>	N/A	<p>March 1st</p> <p>Submit Abstract Exercise through One Drive. This is an important tool that you will use to submit your observation videos in SPED 687.</p>
Overview of Course Goals and Major Assignments	<p>Assignment Expectations</p> <p>Rubrics</p>	<p>March 8th</p> <p>Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion</p>	
Basic tenets of Single Subject Research Design	Analyzing Articles – Abstract One	<p>March 9th</p> <p>Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Small Group Work</p> <p>Independent Practice</p>	<p>March 14th</p> <p>Submit Abstract One</p>
Basic tenets of Single Subject Research Design	Analyzing Articles – Abstract Two	<p>March 10th</p> <p>Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Small Group Work</p> <p>Independent Practice</p>	<p>March 14th</p> <p>Submit Abstract Two</p>
Basic tenets of Single Subject Research Design	Analyzing Articles – Abstract Three	<p>March 11th</p> <p>Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Small Group Work</p> <p>Independent Practice</p>	<p>March 14th</p> <p>Submit Abstract Three</p>
Writing a Research Proposal	Analyzing Articles – Abstract Four	<p>March 12th</p> <p>Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion</p>	<p>March 14th</p> <p>Submit Abstract Four</p>

Form Writing Groups	<p>Selecting a Topic – Based on current classroom issues, students, and goals.</p> <p>Select Partners for Peer-Editing and Revising – Groups of 2-4.</p> <p>All papers must be proofread by partners before submitting to Blackboard.</p>	Brainstorming Session	<p>March 14th Submit Abstract Five</p> <p>March 15th Submit Topic for Research Proposal</p>
Writing the Literature Review	<p>Analyzing Articles – Abstract Five</p> <p>Selecting Articles</p> <p>Synthesizing the Information</p> <p>Literature Review Matrix</p>	<p>March 15th Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion Independent Practice Peer-editing Groupwork</p>	<p>March 19th Submit Literature Review Matrix</p> <p>April 1st Submit Literature Review</p>
Writing a Research Proposal: Participants	<p>Selecting Students</p> <p>Describing the Participants</p>	<p>March 16th Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion Independent Practice Peer-editing Groupwork</p>	<p>March 17th Submit Description of Participants</p>
Writing a Research Proposal: Methods	<p>Describing the Intervention</p>	<p>March 17th Online Meeting</p> <p>Discussion Independent Practice Peer-editing Groupwork</p>	<p>March 18th Submit Description of Methods</p>
Writing a Research Proposal: Single Subject Research	<p>Organizing the Implementation Plan</p>	<p>March 18th Online Meeting</p>	<p>March 19th Submit Data-Gathering Plan</p>

Data Gathering Methods	Data Gathering Techniques	Independent Practice Peer-editing Groupwork	
Complete Research Proposal Plan Observations	Schedule Observations – Record Teaching Videos, Submit Video and Personal Reflection (3)	March 19 th Online Meeting Discussion Peer-editing Group Meetings	March 19 th Submit Schedule for Observations March 22 nd Compile all components of Research Proposal. Revise Based on Instructor’s Feedback. Submit Final Proposal.

This course focuses on developing knowledge about research procedures used in special education. Its purpose is to teach students how to interpret various types of research used in the field of special education to improve teaching students with disabilities.

Evaluation and Grades

Students will be evaluated based on performance on each of the following areas.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>
• Abstract Exercise submitted through One Drive	5
• Abstracts (10 pts @ x 5)	50
• Literature Review Matrix	25
• Literature Review	25
• Research Proposal Brainstorming Assignments (15 pts @ x 3)	45
○ TOTAL Possible Points	150

A = 135 pts (90%)

B = 119 pts (80%)

C = 104 pts (70%)

F = 103 and below

About the Course: This course will utilize Blackboard. Blackboard is the course management system used to place content for the course such as the syllabus, PowerPoint presentations, and other course materials. Assignments must be submitted electronically through Blackboard using Word documents.

When submitting assignments on Blackboard, label or name the file using your last name and first initial, name of assignment, course. For example, the abstract assignment should be named: lastname firstnameinitial assignment SPED682 Example – **DossK Abstract Exercise SPED 682.**

Statement on Assigning Grades

Students should be aware that a grade of “A” on an assignment will be reserved for performance of superior quality that exceeds minimal expectations. If a student merely completes an assignment and it is accurate, the assignment would not automatically warrant an “A” grade. In many cases, outstanding performance is distinguished from satisfactory or highly satisfactory performance by the inclusion of additional factors due to the initiative and scholarship of the student which mark the work as clearly superior.

Example: Assignments will be awarded points based on the policy above. Therefore, an assignment that has a maximum value of 20 points will be awarded 15-17 points if it meets the stated criteria. No points are deducted. Assignments that earn 18 or more points out of a possible 20 are those that meet and exceed requirements due to the initiative of the student. In most cases, assignments will not be resubmitted for a higher grade.

Course Evaluation: Students should log on to CourseEval and evaluate the course when prompted.

Abstract Exercise:

Given a journal article and part of the abstract completed, students will complete unfinished sections and submit a completed Word document on One Drive by midnight March 1st. Directions for using One Drive will be emailed after initial emails are received by the instructor. One Drive is part of the Microsoft programs provided by WCU. This feature works as a storage area that can be shared between students and instructors. Observational videos for SPED 687 will be upload to One Drive. It is essential that students learn how to use this tool before the start of class.

Abstract Assignment:

Students must read five peer-reviewed research articles and submit an abstract. Articles must be published no earlier than 2001 and must concern some aspect of special education. If in doubt, ask instructor.

All abstracts must include single-subject design research. Please see this website in order to become familiar with single-subject design: <https://researchbasics.education.uconn.edu/single-subject-research/>

You will have time in class to work on these abstracts, but you will need to complete the final drafts during the first week of class. Students can choose from the articles provided by the instructor or find articles in the WCU Hunter Library. Use “single subject research” in the search feature. Make sure the article has graphs showing the results in the data section of the paper. Articles should be individual studies – not a meta-analysis that summarizes multiple studies.

Abstracts should be prepared in the following format and should be single-spaced using 12-point font, with double spacing between sections. Abstracts should generally be one to two pages in length. Use the following format.

Article Citation: Use APA format

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_electronic_sources.html

Purpose: What question(s) did the research seek to answer?

Subjects: Who were the subjects? Number? Ages? Gender? Disabilities? Etc.

Setting: Where did the research take place? School, hospital, group home? Urban? Region?

Method: What was done? What were the interventions, if any? How long did it take? What was measured? How?

Results: What were the results in plain terms? What were the changes, if any, in dependent variables? Use numbers, if available.

Conclusions: What did the authors conclude from the study? What are the limitations of the study?

Implications: What does the research mean for educators, parents or others?

Rubric for Abstracts

Indicators	Unsatisfactory	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Candidate is able to assess research articles relevant to	Candidate is not able to locate articles that use a Single Subject Research method or does not	Candidate is able to locate appropriate articles that use a Single Subject Research	Candidate is able to select peer-reviewed articles with a Single Subject Research method that is relevant to their field	In <i>addition</i> to Proficient: Candidate demonstrates how the research

their field of study (CAEP 1.1, NCPTS 5)	understand the components of a peer reviewed article.	method in their field of study, but the assessment of each component in the study is insufficient and lacking details.	of study, address each component of the research process, and follow guidelines of the assignment in terms of page length (1-2), grammar expectations, and APA guidelines.	has specific implications for educators, parents, and others by making connections to current or former students.
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Literature Review Assignment

A review of literature is required on a topic relevant to special education and to the student's area of interest. A review of literature of a relevant topic is intended to provide the student with current information on a chosen topic that meets general standards for publication. The review of literature assignment describes current research, analyzes research reviewed, synthesizes the selected research, and concludes how it is relevant to current practices.

The literature review is a focused investigation on a specific question or closely related questions such as the effectiveness of a certain method with an identified group of learners or the empirical relationship of two or more factors. The literature review is NOT intended as a "term paper" on topics such as the math difficulties of students with learning disabilities or the pros and cons of medication treatments or the trend of Response to Intervention approaches. Each of those broad topics may be focused to one or more targeted questions that would make them appropriate but they are not appropriate as broadly stated.

Guidelines:

1. A **minimum** of 10 sources must be used.
2. Five required sources must have a publication date of 2001 or later. Older references can be used but do not contribute to minimum number of sources (5) from 2001 or later.
3. The 10 minimum sources can include:
 - a. Reviews of research
 - b. Experimental and quasi-experimental research
 - c. Meta-analyses
 - d. Qualitative studies
 - e. Case studies
4. At least three sources must be original, empirical research published in reputable journals.
5. No more than one of the required minimum sources can be a description of a procedure, method, or testimonial.
6. No more than one of the required minimum sources can be a case study.
7. No more than three of the required minimum sources can be a review of research.

*add/delete additional rows as necessary

Column 1 – Authors and Title – List the authors and title of their research study. For this exercise, this information need not be in APA style format. Include the Permalink.

Column 2 – Simply list the topic or sub-topic under investigation – e.g., parental involvement. This can be a phrase or a full sentence.

Column 3 – Rather than report the ‘purpose’ of the research study – respond here with the ‘problem’ (i.e., *why* was this study needed?). One to two sentences.

Column 4 – Good empirical research will normally report a guiding theory, or often called a conceptual framework. Report the theoretical framework here. This can be a phrase – e.g., attribution theory – or a complete sentence. *Pay close attention to any mention of theory by the researchers – since in practice-based improvement, theoretical guidance is imperative.*

Column 5 – Report the research question(s) here. These are normally highlighted/accenuated in the research - and should be easy to pinpoint. The research questions *can be reported verbatim* and do not need to be cited for these purposes. Remember – the research questions should end with a question mark!

Column 6 – Report the sample – who were the participants in the investigation? (e.g., 476 8th grade students in Wisconsin). If not from human subjects, often data will be collected from archives, such as student records. If the latter is the case, report the archival data source.

Column 7 – Most of the statistical methods appearing in your research studies have not yet been discussed in class. However, it should be relatively easy to identify the method or statistical test (for quantitative studies) in which the data were analyzed. For example, qualitative data are often analyzed using the Constant Comparative Methods – where individual (qualitative) responses are compared for overall patterns, and then coded as such. Conversely, most quantitative studies use ANOVA, t-tests, correlational analysis,

or Chi-Square tests. For this column, simply state the statistical technique/test used (and further elaboration is not needed).

Column 8 – Perhaps the most useful for consumers of research, this column asks you to report the key findings. You will begin to see “signal phrases” such as “Our analysis reveals that ...,” or “Findings suggest that ...” Report these (keeping your response(s) for each key finding to 1-2 sentences). For this column, do not report any statistical figures (such as correlational coefficients), rather, state the research findings in layman’s terms (i.e., plain English)

Review of Literature Proposal Grading Rubric

Indicators	Unsatisfactory	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Candidate uses literature effectively in designing a literature review (CAEP 1.1, NCPTS 5)	No evidence that literature was reviewed.	Research topic is explored through an examination of literature, but may not be comprehensive and/or includes references that are not relevant. References may not be from peer-reviewed journal articles.	Research topic is explored through a comprehensive examination of the literature, including highly-relevant, peer-reviewed journal articles.	In <i>addition</i> to Proficient: The information throughout the literature review is synthesized, not summarized. APA is correctly used for in-text citations and reference list.

Research Proposal Brainstorming Assignments:

For this course, you will brainstorm the major components of your research proposal:

Participants
Methods
Data Gathering Plan

Each component will be submitted for instructor feedback.

Guiding Questions for the Research Proposal Brainstorming Sessions

- What topic will you investigate?
- Why is this topic relevant to your field of study?

- What methods will help you in understanding the phenomenon?
- Who will be included in your study?
- How will you recruit these individuals?
- Will you use assessments already validated to collect data?
- Will you design your own tool to collect data?
- How will you analyze your data?
- How will you report your results?
- Can you envision possible limitations to the study?

The **Research Proposal** will be completed for **SPED 687 - Practicum in Special Education**.

The research proposal will be in the following format and will be approximately three to four pages. All students will be completing a project using a Single Subject Research Design.

Review and summarize the literature in the area. Select a minimum of seven current and pertinent sources (2007-present) including professional education journals/textbooks (do not use internet websites). Develop an action plan for your classroom based on what you learned in the professional literature.

Include the following: an objective, strategy for reaching your objective, a timeline, and an evaluation plan (method of data collection). Have your plan approved before beginning implementation. Implement the action plan. Collect data, evaluate, and modify the plan if needed.

Use the following format for Proposal (**March 22nd**):

- **Brief Description of Project:** State in three to five sentences what you propose as project.
- **Relevance to Exceptional Education and Practica:** State in three to five sentences the relevance of your proposal to exceptional education and practica.
- **Brief Literature Review:** Using at least seven professional references from scholarly sources (cite using APA format), state why the issue is important and what the literature says about it. This section is about three to five paragraphs or about a page.
- **Describe the Expected Outcome and Product:** In two or three paragraphs, describe what you expect to accomplish.
- **Provide an Evaluation Plan for your Project:** How will it be evaluated for success? You can use a rubric, a set of tasks with deadlines, an independent observer or observers such as a supervisor or colleague, a graphic representation of progress of a student or students, a survey of stakeholders, a combination of two or more methods or something else. Provide criteria for the instructor to evaluate your project.
- **Timeline and Action Plan:** Provide a plan for completing the product and timeline. Include your participants, methods, and data-gathering plan here.

- **Statement of Originality:** Provide a statement that the proposal is an original project and has not been completed in another course or another assignment.
- **Completed Collaboration with School Administration with Action Research Project or Grant Proposal:** Complete the form and secure signatures.

Research Proposal Rubric

Indicators	Unsatisfactory	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Understanding of Single Subject Research in Education (CAEP 1.1)	Inappropriate research design for the topic or intended population.	<p>The research design ideas are vague, lacking enough specific details for fellow researchers to follow the process.</p> <p>Tools will not provide relevant data aligned with the research design. For example, the method does not measure the behaviors accurately.</p>	<p>Appropriate selection of research method for topic, setting, and population.</p> <p>Appropriate selection or design of tools for gathering data.</p> <p>Appropriate approach for data analysis. Limitations describe possible complications that might be encountered during the study.</p> <p>Research design is crafted after a careful examination of prior studies</p>	<p>In <i>addition</i> to Proficient:</p> <p>Description of tools offers possible limitations with the instrument based on scholarly research or from peer assessment.</p> <p>Description of data analysis includes references to scholarly articles.</p> <p>Limitations offer a comprehensive understanding of numerous factors that may influence the study.</p>

			through a focused, accurate examination of the literature.	
Employment of data analysis and evidence to develop supportive school environments (CAEP 1.1, NCPTS 4, InTASC 9.c)	Research topic is not based on current educational trends or on students' needs.	Research topic is based on current educational trends, but the research proposal lacks details about the information gleaned can improve students' academic, behavioral, or social and emotional development.	Selection of topic pertains to current educational trends or specific classroom needs based on students' academic needs, behavioral support, or social and emotional development.	In addition to Proficient: Selection of participant(s) stems from current classroom makeup. Description is thorough, including academic strengths and challenges, behaviors, and other important factors that may influence the study.

Academic Integrity Policy.

This policy addresses academic integrity violations of undergraduate and graduate students. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators of Western Carolina University (WCU) strive to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community. While academic in scope, any violation of this policy is by nature, a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and will follow the same conduct process (see Article VII.B.1.a.). If the charge occurs close to the end of an academic semester or term or in the event of the reasonable need of either party for additional time to gather information timelines may be extended at the discretion of the Department of Student Community Ethics (DSCE).

General:

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Instructors have the right to determine the appropriate academic sanctions for violations of the Academic Integrity Policy within their courses, up to an including a final grade of “F” in the course in which the violation occurs.

Definitions:

Cheating – Using, or attempting to use, unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. This includes “recycling” assignments (yours or others’).

Fabrication – Creating and/or falsifying information or citation in any academic exercise.

Plagiarism – Representing the words or ideas of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise.

Facilitation – Helping or attempting to help someone to commit a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in any academic exercise (e.g. allowing another person to copy information during an examination).

Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Integrity Process.

Additional information is available on the Student Success website under Student Community Ethics: <http://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/academic-integrity.aspx>

Course Evaluation.

Course Eval is the WCU course evaluation and you are encouraged to participate and complete this on-line evaluation for this course. We strive to constantly improve course design and delivery – your cooperation to complete the Course Eval provides a mechanism that will help us in our goals to improve teaching and learning outcomes for all students. You will receive an electronic notification near the end of the semester when it becomes available.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.

Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. Students who require reasonable accommodations must identify themselves as having a disability and/or medical condition and provide current diagnostic documentation to the Office of Accessibility Resources. All information is confidential. Please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources at (828) 227-3886 or stop by Suite 135 Killian Annex for an appointment. <http://accessibility.wcu.edu>

Civil Discourse at Western Carolina.

Consistent with WCU's core values and our campus creed, the WCU community accepts the freedoms and responsibilities of our shared community. WCU encourages all to clearly express their own views while at the same time seeking to understand the varieties of style, identity, and opinion that are held in any diverse community. In order for us to sustain a learning environment that promotes and values freedom of expression, we have a shared charge to accept personal responsibility for our actions, reactions, and speech, while seeking to learn from the actions, reactions, and speech of others.

Blackboard Support.

The learning management system for this class is blackboard and can be found at: <http://wcu.blackboard.com>. Additional help with blackboard can be found at: tc.wcu.edu, (828) 227-7487.

Library Resources.

Hunter Library provides students with access to group and individual study spaces and to thousands of information resources: print and electronic books, newspapers, and scholarly journal articles. These resources can be searched online and often accessed there (<http://library.wcu.edu>) or can be searched and located in the library building. Students in need of research or library support can get help online (<http://researchguides.wcu.edu/help>), from your subject specialist, Beth McDonough bmcdono@wcu.edu, or from the research guide: <http://researchguides.wcu.edu/Education> or <http://researchguides.wcu.edu/Counseling>

Academic Toolbox.

The Academic Toolbox is available in all WCU courses via the course Blackboard site. It can be found in the left-hand side column. The Academic Toolbox contains information and contact information for nearly all of the resources needed by WCU students, including but not limited to: technology assistance, academic services, student support, co-curricular programs and university policies.

Jamaican Relevancy Statement

SPED 682 focuses on finding, reading, and understanding research that can be used to improve education for all students including those with disabilities. The course encourages review of research that is based in Jamaica and relevant to Jamaica. Students are encouraged to share research based in Jamaica so that the Western Carolina University Program can build a collection of Jamaica based education research. The final evaluation for the class will include a question related specifically to whether the information presented during the course was 'relevant to Jamaican schools.'