

Educational Inquiry

CEP 930

Spring 2006

Monday, 4:00-6:50pm

C-313 Wells Hall

Instructors:

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Course Philosophy and Purposes

The first goal is for students to develop a common sense understanding of a variety of educational inquiry methods, as well as some specific technical knowledge about selected approaches. Students in this class should begin to become critical consumers of published research, while developing introductory knowledge about the options available to them in designing and conducting their own research.

Related to this general purpose, students will develop an understanding of the fundamental issues involved in various kinds of research, from both quantitative and qualitative traditions, including appreciation of the complementary nature of both kinds of methods and of the importance of multi-method approaches.

The second goal of the course is to introduce a range of contemporary issues and problems in educational research. These issues form the larger context within which inquiry methods are considered. The issues are influential in shaping the way research questions are generated, framed, and studied.

Course Texts

King, G., Keohane, R. O., & Verba, S. (1994). *Designing social inquiry: scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Campbell, D. and Stanley, J. (1963). *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research*. Chicago: Houghton-Mifflin.

Hart, B. and Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*. Baltimore: Paul Brookes Publ.

Lareau, A. (2000). *Home Advantage*, 2nd Edition. Lanham, MC: Rowman and Littlefield.

Duneier, M. (1992). *Slim's Table: Race, Respectability, and Masculinity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Putnam, R. (1993). *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Course Readings available on Angel.

Assignments and Grades

Completing the required reading for each class is critical, together with preparation to discuss readings in detail. There are two kinds of readings that we will cover. One kind will be representative studies, which supply examples of various traditions and methods of inquiry. The second kind are readings on specialized topics in educational research, such as ethnography or validity.

Course grade will be based on the following three components:

1. Reading summary. Each student will complete two summaries (no more than 1,000 words each) on course readings, due on the day when the reading will be discussed. Each summary will be fifteen percent of the final grade.
2. Research article critique. A research article will be distributed toward the middle of the term, and students will be asked to prepare a written critique. This paper will be worth thirty percent of the final grade.
3. A final essay exam will be given, which will be worth forty percent of the final grade.

Attendance is expected; please notify the instructors in advance if you must miss a class.

Class Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings
Jan 9	Intro to course: Logic of Educational Inquiry	King, et al., Ch. 1
Jan 16	MLK Day; no class	
Jan 23	Descriptive and interpretive inference (Sykes)	King, et al., Ch. 2 Geertz, C. (1973). Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture. In <i>The Interpretation of</i>

		<p><i>Cultures</i>. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30. (angel)</p> <p>Duneier, M. (1992). <i>Slim's Table: Race, Respectability, and Masculinity</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p>
Jan 30	<p>Designs for answering questions about cause (Sykes)</p>	<p>King, et al., Ch. 3</p> <p>Borman, G. D., Slavin, R. E., & Cheung, A. (2005). Success for All: First-year results from the National Randomized Field Trial. <i>Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i>, 27(1), 1-22.</p>
Feb 6 & Feb 13	<p>Threats to validity of causal inferences (Floden & Sykes)</p>	<p>Campbell, D. and Stanley, J. (1963). <i>Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research</i>. Chicago: Houghton-Mifflin.</p>
Feb 20	<p>Designs for answering questions about cause</p> <p>Looking at a chain of reasoning (Floden)</p>	<p>Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). <i>Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children</i>. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.</p> <p>King, et al., Ch. 4</p>
Feb 27	<p>Measurement and Sample Size (Sykes)</p> <p>Midterm due March 4</p>	<p>King, et al., Ch. 5 & 6</p>
Mar 6	<p>Spring Break</p>	
Mar 13	<p>Research using ethnographic methods</p> <p>Connections to theory (Sykes)</p>	<p>Lareau, A. (2000). <i>Home advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education</i>, 2nd Ed.. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.</p>
Mar 20	<p>Objectivity Value neutrality (Floden)</p>	<p>Harding, S. (1992). After the neutrality ideal: Science, politics, and 'strong objectivity'. <i>Social Research</i>, 59(3), 567-589.</p>

		<p>Ward, S. (1997). Being Objective about Objectivity: The Ironies of Standpoint Epistemological Critiques of Science. <i>Sociology</i>, 31(4), 773-791.</p> <p>Peshkin, A. (2000). The nature of interpretation in qualitative research. <i>Educational Researcher</i>, 29(9), 5-9.</p>
Mar 27 & Apr 3	Grand theory and empirical research (Sykes)	Putnam, R. D. (1993). <i>Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy</i> . Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Apr 10	AERA	No class
Apr 17	Revisiting issues (Floden & Sykes)	TBA
Apr 24	Multiple perspectives on research (Cherryholmes)	<p>Palincsar, A. S., & Brown, A. L. (1984). Reciprocal teaching of comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring activities. <i>Cognition and Instruction</i>, 1(2), 117-175.</p> <p>Cherryholmes, C. H. (1993). Reading research. interpretation and criticism of study on reciprocal teaching by A. Palincsar and A. Brown. <i>Journal of Curriculum Studies</i>, 25, 1-32.</p>
Wed, May 3	Final Exam 5:45-8:45	