

ON THE THIS PAGE.

Foundations of Educational Research
EDF 6481

Instructor: W. Steve Lang

Phone: 727-553-4572

Office: 227 Coquina Hall

Email: lang@bayflash.stpt.usf.edu

Please contact the professor by e-mail as a first choice. You may obtain a USF e-mail account at no charge by through the computer lab.

Text: *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education (6th)* by Fraenkel and Wallen - You need to buy a book. You can get them on-line: [Bigwords](#); \$61 to \$122, [Amazon](#); \$70 to \$85, [Barnes & Nobles](#); \$101 to \$112, [CampusBooks](#); \$70 to \$88...you get the idea! Get the best deal you can. Be sure and get the 6th edition!

The bookstore located in the parking lot at USFSP is Bayboro Books. Their website is: <http://www.bayborobooks.com/>

Course Purpose:

Typically, modern teachers and their administrators are held accountable for the latest findings from research. Unfortunately, teachers and other educational personnel have not always been well-trained in the appropriate interpretation and evaluation of research results. In fact, many professionals actively avoid the difficulty of finding and digesting new information. They often think the information is impractical or inaccurate. Some fear the mathematics called statistics. Some are hesitant to use electronic information searching and actually peruse the stacks of library shelves waiting for some inspiration to fall on their head. This class is designed to introduce educators and psychologists to the field of social science research as practitioners and consumers of data-based conclusions. It is not designed to produce statisticians, researchers, librarians or computer guru's even though those disciplines underlie the creation and good use of information.

Course Objectives:

Each chapter in our textbook is associated with a set of chapter objectives written in behavioral terms. These are not repeated here. There is a topical outline with goals in this syllabus.

Topics (usually 1 per week during the fall and spring semesters; merged into a shorter term in the summer):

Part I Finding Information

- 1 Becoming a Critical Consumer of Research
- 2 Getting Started on a Search for Information
- 3 Developing a Search Strategy
- 4 Concepts in Research
- 5 Sampling
- **Don't Worry**

Part II Making Sense of Published Research

- 6 Separating Good from Bad Information
- 7 Organizing the World of Research
- 8 Descriptive Research
- 9 Correlation Research

- 10 Experimental Research Design
- **Be Happy**

Part III Digging Deeper, Exploring the World of Research

- 11 Qualitative Research
- 12 Reporting the results of Research
- 13 Meta Analysis and Reviews
- 14 Summing Up – Exams and Evaluations

How To Study

You must participate. Look for your own examples, explore topics in the library, have study and discussion groups, **immerse yourself in the topic**. If you are taking 15 hours, working 40, raising 3 kids, and planning to run for Student Government President...join the club. You'll either have to let something go or nothing will get done. Set aside study time and be disciplined. This is the age of electronic education, so you need to stay realistic about having time to **incubate on the topic**.

WARNING, WILL ROBINSON, WARNING!

Frankly, my brief experience with other internet courses tells me that something will likely go wrong. A link won't work, you will send in an assignment that will disappear, or you won't be able to access the course an hour before the due deadline. Please don't drink heavily or take out your frustrations on a spouse or pet. Please don't flame the instructor. The good people at USF's Education Outreach and your instructor will fix things as quickly and fairly as possible!

Evaluation Criteria:

This is an active learning course. Your participation is required. Many activities are "just do it". If hurricanes strike, the power is out, or something causes us to be short of completing all activities and assignments, then your grade will simply take the number of points allowed below and proportionally reduce the total by the number of assignments we don't do. If you have a personal issue, please notify the instructor before the end of the course that you request an Incomplete, and you will have a written contract or description of the reason for an I and the way to remove the incomplete. **Please note that we sometimes have to change this plan - typically by reducing the number of activities. Changes will be announced on Blackboard and by email. The grades will still be proportional to 90%, 80%, 70%, etc.**

Each Module will have Activities that are to be done. The results are usually submitted to the Blackboard Assignments or posted on your Group Bulletin Board. This is our PLAN, but there may be changes as we go along.

Module Solo Group Masterclass Quiz or Exam

1	10	15	25	10
2	10	15	25	10
3	10	15	25	10
4	10	15	25	10
5	10	15	25	10
6	10	15	25	10
7	10	15	25	10
8	10	15	25	10
9	10	15	25	10
10	10	15	25	10
11	10	15	25	10

12	25	25	--	10
13	--	--	--	75
14	--	--	--	100

Course Evaluation and Survey Participation: 30 and 50: 80

Grades:

A = 90%

B = 80%

C = 70%

Topical Outline:

Topic	Knowledge	Skills	Dispositions
1 Becoming a Critical Consumer of Research	Professional Context of Research	Asking research questions	Role of educational leaders dissemination of research
2 Getting Started on a Search for Information; Developing a Search Strategy	Research information organization; Search strategies	Finding information in a library; Efficient searching	Value of information; Professional improvement and change through information
3 Concepts in Research	Vocabulary and concepts in the world of research	Application of research to real world settings	Willingness to challenge published research findings appropriately
4 Sampling	Methods of sampling	Generalizability	Appreciation of "nonignorable nonresponse", "random sampling", and "causality"
5 Separating Good from Bad Information	Threats to validity	Analysis of the quality of data-based conclusions	Valuing both research design and research methodology
6 Organizing the World of Research	The branches of research methods	Identifying and understanding research methods	Developing positive interest in research methods
7 Descriptive Research; Correlation Research	Central tendency and distribution statistics; Correlation statistics	Computation and interpretation of descriptive statistics; Computation and interpretation of correlational statistics	Commitment to reporting to the public; Valuing exploratory research
8 Experimental Research Design	Hypothesis testing statistics	Computation and interpretation of experimental statistics	Valuing experimental research
9 Qualitative Research	Qualitative vocabulary and methods	Reading and understanding qualitative research	Valuing qualitative research
10 Summing Up – Exams and Evaluations	None		Valuing the impact of research

Copyright 2006, William Steve Lang, Ph.D.

Schedule

Modules will automatically turn off on the dates given on the course calendar in Blackboard. You must NOT PROCRASTINATE! The only exceptions are illness, family crisis, and course delivery problems. During the "catch up week" you should make up missing modules or resubmit transmission issues. Please note that the dates on this schedule are set for Sunday at midnight. Modules turn on at that time and date, not during a "class time". Also, during catch up week, you will have an opportunity to see some past modules that have closed.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lesson Opens</u>	<u>Lesson Closes</u>
August 29	Introduction	
September 2	Lesson 1	
September 9	Lesson 2	Lesson 1
September 16	Lesson 3	Lesson 2
September 23	Lesson 4	Lesson 3
September 30	Lesson 5	Lesson 4
October 7 (make up)	Lesson 6	Lesson 5
October 14	Lesson 7	Lesson 6
October 21	Lesson 8	Lesson 7
October 28	Lesson 9	Lesson 8
November 4	Lesson 10	Lesson 9
November 11(make up)	Lesson 11	Lesson 10
November 18	Lesson 12	Lesson 11
November 25	Lesson 13	Lesson 12
December 2	Lesson 14	Lesson 13
December 9	Lesson 15	Lesson 14
December 14 (make up)	(Friday)	Lesson 15