LTCY 528—Literacy Research Methods and Evaluation

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 10:00 am-1:00 pm; available online and by appointment

Required texts:


Other useful resources:

- [Online Research Tutorial](http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/): basic information on locating books, articles, and other sources; evaluating sources; and citing sources.
- [http://writingcenter.unc.edu/resources/handouts-demos/specific-writing-assignments/literature-reviews](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/resources/handouts-demos/specific-writing-assignments/literature-reviews)
- Plagiarism tutorial: [http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/](http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/)

Course Description:

Investigation and critical analysis of literacy research and theory, and completion of literacy related research project.
Rationale:

In EDFN 500, students learn educational research methods and design. LTCY 528 builds on this foundation by focusing on literacy research methods. During this course of study, students will learn more about literacy research methods, critique literacy research articles, and refine their understandings of the conceptual framework for scholarly research design. This course provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability in identifying appropriate research questions, writing a review of the literature, and differentiating between observation and interpretation. In addition, students will learn to apply insights and skills as researchers and practitioners by identifying appropriate implications for literacy instruction when meeting the needs of diverse learners.

Course Objectives, Instructional Methods, and Assessment

- Develop an understanding of current views regarding the complex process for reading and the implications of these ideas for instruction in K-12 classrooms.
- Develop an understanding of how to critically evaluate and critique literacy research.
- Develop an understanding of different methodologies for literacy research.
- Develop an understanding of how to conduct an in-depth analysis and evaluation of literacy research, in particular as it is related to a specific research question or set of questions in the area of literacy. A related goal is to develop student ability to articulate research findings and data analysis in a thorough, effective, and scholarly manner.
- Develop research questions and complete a literature review in a literacy-related area, and identify specific implications for literacy instruction.

KERA Elements/Context Addresses

Goals and Valued Outcomes
Performance Tasks

Course Disposition Statement(s)

*The teacher recognizes her/his professional responsibility for engaging in and supporting appropriate professional practices for self and colleagues.
*The teacher is committed to the continuous development of individual students' abilities and considers how different motivational strategies are likely to encourage this development for each student.
*The teacher has a well-grounded framework for understanding the cultural and community diversity and knows how to learn about and incorporate students' experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction.
*The teacher is committed to continuous learning and engages in professional discourse about subject matter knowledge and children's learning of the discipline.
Standards Addressed

The following standards will be addressed through this course work:

Kentucky Teacher Standards

Standard 1: The teacher demonstrates a current and sufficient academic knowledge of certified content areas to develop student knowledge and performance in those areas.

Standard 6: The teacher uses technology to support instruction; access and manipulate data; enhance professional growth and productivity; communicate and collaborate with colleague, parents, and the community; and conduct research.

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards

Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration

The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

International Literacy Association Standards for Reading Professionals (Revised 2010)

Standard 3: Assessment and Evaluation

Candidates use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading and writing instruction.

- Effective reading professionals are able to analyze data and communicate findings and implications to appropriate audiences.

Standard 6: Professional Learning and Leadership

Candidates recognize the importance of, demonstrate, and facilitate professional learning and leadership as a career-long effort and responsibility.
• Effective professional learning is evidence based in ways that reflect both competent and critical use of relevant research and is thoughtfully planned, ongoing, differentiated, and embedded in the work of all faculty members.
• Effective professional learning is grounded in research related to adult learning and organizational change as well as research on reading application, development, assessment, and instruction.

**Course Topics**

**Framing the Research Question**

• To understand the process of building a conceptual framework for researchers for designing a research project and embedding it in appropriate traditions of research. Links should be demonstrated between the proposed study’s significance to larger instructional, social and policy issues relative to literacy. The study’s general focus and research questions, related literature, and significance are interrelated aspects of the conceptual framework. This is the substance of the study - the “what.”

**Designing Literacy Research Study**

• To focus the researcher on how systematic inquiry will yield data that will respond to the proposed research questions.

**Data Collection Methods**

• To identify primary and secondary data collection methods for the proposed research study; to examine various methods in detail and focus on the strengths and weaknesses of various research alternatives.

**Recording, Managing, Organizing and Analyzing Data**

• To provide a description and study of procedures for managing, recording and analyzing data as students complete a research project.

**Complementary Strategies of Computer-Aided Analysis**

• To become familiar with the use of computers to create and store data for the general management of the research process; to familiarize students with appropriate software, procedures and options for various tasks associated with coding, analyzing, representing and retrieving data segments.
Writing the Research

- To focus on the construction of a proposed formal report of the research project; to examine criteria and guidelines for building a logical rationale of the study, composing the proposed methodology of the study as well as the ability to answer challenges from critics.

Course Policies:

A. All assignments are due by the assigned date, but please communicate with the instructor if you need more time. Late work will not be accepted, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

B. All assignments will be graded for content and mechanics.

C. It is expected that you will read and reflect on required course readings prior to Discussion Board Entry.

D. Students are encouraged to conference with the instructor by phone or by email if the need arises.

E. All assignments must be typed. Use APA format for assignments as directed. (12pt font, 1-inch margins, double-spaced)

WKU Library APA resources: [http://libguides.wku.edu/how_to](http://libguides.wku.edu/how_to)

F. University policy on academic honesty will be strictly observed. Please see notes on plagiarism below.

G. Keep a copy of all assignments. If an assignment is lost, the burden of proof that you completed the assignment rests with you.

Evaluation and Grade Assignment

The final course grade will be based on the following grading scale:

- A = 93% to 100%  279 to 300 points
- B = 85% to 92%  255 to 278 points
- C = 77% to 84%  231 to 254 points
- D = 70% to 76%  210 to 230 points
- F = 69% or below 209 points and below
There is ONE CRITICAL PERFORMANCE for this course: Research Project (80 points)
This assignment MUST be posted to the Electronic Portfolio before a final grade can be
given for this course. This assignment need to be produced electronically in MS WORD
(doc) so it can be uploaded to the Electronic Portfolio and opened by your instructor.

Required assignments:

1. **Participation and Professionalism (1 per week=15 points)** Active participation
   through email, virtual chat, and discussion board forums is mandatory. This also
   includes participation in submitting surveys, collegiality, effort, etc. Professionalism
   is expected with regard to your electronic communications to one another and to the
   professor. Your communications should be polite and professional. All tasks will be
   explained via email, video, and discussion boards as they are introduced in the course.
   
   Additionally, you are required to send three check-in emails to the instructor
   throughout the course. These will be during Weeks 3, 7, and 11 of the semester.
   Reminders will be posted in the Announcements. Emails should include updates
   about your progress, concerns that you have about the course, and other pertinent
   information.

2. **APA (6th ed.) Quizzes and correction exercise (3 x 10 points = 30 points):** You
   are expected to know and be able to write using the rules of the American
   Psychological Association’s 2010 manual. After reviewing the different sections of
   the manual, you will complete quizzes that will require use of the APA’s format.
   APA format is required in all assignments in this course.

3. **Responses to readings (10 points each = 120 points)**
   These include MediaSite presentations, Voicethreads, reading guides, discussion
   board posts, and tasks you will complete in Word and upload to Blackboard based on
   readings and represented skills.

4. **Field Notes (20 points):** After reading about the use of and the creation of field
   notes, you will choose a setting/ situation that has to do with your research question to
   take field notes. Field notes should include rich description about a situation, so that
   at a later date a researcher can remember the particulars of an event. You will read
   two articles on the formation of field notes before creating them. Base your work on
   the articles using Patton or Mills’ template and the rubric at the end of the syllabus.
5. **Interview (20 points):** You will conduct an interview on someone who has to do with your research question. This should be recorded for your reference following the interview. You should choose someone who is willing to share information that is detailed and useful to your research question. You must develop a list of intended questions before the interview. You will turn in the list of questions and a report describing the interview, including some direct quotes.

   **Steps:**
   a. Identify topic of interest, select potential respondent
   b. Contact respondent, gain cooperation, and set date for session
   c. Do more extensive reading and fact finding about topic
   d. Develop interview schedule (areas of discussion and specific questions pertaining to those areas)
   e. Conduct interview
   f. Write up findings looking for underlying characteristics of topics. Also consider the method.
   g. Type and submit the report.

6. **Research Project (80 points)**

   The research project is the **Critical Performance** for the course. This assignment must be posted to the Electronic Portfolio before a final grade can be given for this course. The assignment must be produced electronically in MS Word (doc or docx) so it can be uploaded to the Electronic Portfolio and opened by your instructor. APA style is required. It will have the following components:

   a) Introduction and statement of the problem
   b) Research questions
   c) Definitions of terms
   d) Review of the literature (with theoretical/conceptual framework)
   e) Research methodology/design
   f) Implications for instruction
   g) References
   h) Presentation on VoiceThread

**Kentucky Teacher Standard(s) Assessed:** Standard 1 - Applied Content Knowledge

**Purpose and Use Statement:** This critical performance is an evaluation of Kentucky Teacher Standard 1. Completion and uploading of this performance into the electronic portfolio is a requirement for a passing grade for **LTCY 528**.

**Task:** Design a literacy research project, gather data, and report findings.
Performance Criteria:

1. Investigate current issues/topics in literacy instruction at the elementary, middle, secondary, and/or adult levels. This investigation may take the form of a paper, report, or webpage.
2. Work in a group to select an issue/topic of interest and develop guiding questions to provide framework for a Review of the Literature regarding the selected issue/topic.
3. Develop research question(s) to be investigated
4. Develop research design to answer/explore research question(s)
5. Implement research design in an authentic literacy environment/scenario
6. Gather data, synthesize results, and report findings
7. Investigate publishing opportunities that align with targeted issues/topics.

7. **CITI Training (15 points):** Each student should participate in the CITI training in an effort to gain a better understanding of ethical responsibilities associated with research. Each module in the training is followed by a quiz. Your grade for the assignment will be based on your performance on the module quizzes. Two CITI training certificates are required to earn credit for this assignment.

You will find instructions for registering for your CITI training at:

http://www.wku.edu/compliance/training.php

You will need to save and submit electronically TWO Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program) Coursework Transcript Reports:

- Course Learner Group: Social/Behavioral Research Course
- Course Learner Group: Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research Course 1

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Keep an electronic copy of all assignments. If an assignment is lost, the burden of proof that you completed the assignment rests with you.

Proofread! Do not turn in a draft of your work. All work should be proofread for proper grammar, spelling, mechanics, and accuracy. Use of the proper conventions and mechanics of writing is part of each assignment's grade. The WKU English Department operates a Writing Center that offers free services to students wishing to improve their writing skills. For more information, visit their website:

http://www.wku.edu/pcal/writing-center

Grades will be posted on Blackboard and not given via e-mail. Many assignments will be reviewed on Blackboard and attachments will be provided with the instructor’s comments.
embedded. PLEASE review the instructor’s comments- these are done through Track and Change and through adding comments in Microsoft Word.

Plagiarism Policy

Academic integrity is of paramount importance to this university and the teaching profession. Plagiarism is defined in the Catalog of WKU as follows:

To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of students must be their own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism.

In other words, do not copy from others and claim credit. Do not simply "cut and paste" from on-line sources. Cite your sources. If you make a direct quote, use quotation marks.

Plagiarism is a serious issue and will not be taken lightly. The act of plagiarism is unprofessional and will result in the loss of your 30 professionalism points and all points for the assignment in which plagiarism occurred. Please read about avoiding plagiarism.

Incompletes

According to the online Catalog of WKU:

A grade of “X” (incomplete) is given only when a relatively small amount of work is not completed because of illness or other reason satisfactory to the instructor. A grade of “X” received by an undergraduate student will automatically become an “F” unless removed within twelve (12) weeks of the next full term (summer term excluded.) An incomplete must be removed within this twelve-week period regardless of whether the student is registered for additional work in the next term. A grade of “X” received by a graduate student, with the exception of thesis courses or similar projects, will automatically become an “F” unless removed within twelve (12) weeks of the next full term (summer term excluded). A student should work with the instructor who assigned the incomplete on an independent basis in order to complete the necessary assignments. The grade of “X” will continue to appear as the initial grade on the student’s transcript, along with the revised grade. A grade of incomplete is not used under any circumstances as a substitute for “F” or “W.”

Remember: You must upload your Critical Performance to your Electronic Portfolio before a final grade can be given.

Disability Accommodations Statement

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course
must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in DUC A-200 of the Student Success Center in Downing University Center. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Resources:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
<th>Connection to research question</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contains a rich description of what was observed; the reader can form a picture in his/her head; Includes date, time, location, who was there, what the setting was like, what social interactions occurred, what activity took place</td>
<td>Well worded write-up; No errors in grammar, spelling, or mechanics</td>
<td>Clearly and thoroughly states the research question in the write-up; explains clearly how the field notes contribute to understanding of the research question</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description is somewhat descriptive; lacks some of the required components</td>
<td>Well-worded write-up; Some errors in grammar, spelling, or mechanics</td>
<td>Somewhat meets above goals</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not descriptive; lacks many required components</td>
<td>Hard to understand due to wording; Many errors in grammar, spelling, or mechanics</td>
<td>Does not address research question or connection to field notes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Interview (20 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Information Gathered</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>The interview was highly successful. All information obtained was useable in the study.</td>
<td>The researcher included two or more open-ended questions, asked for specific examples, and asked two or more follow-up question during the interview.</td>
<td>Researcher prepared the question schedule in advance; selected an interviewee that was suitable to the research question; links interview to scholarly research</td>
<td>Well-written; No errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, mechanics</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>The interview was semi-successful. Some useable information was obtained.</td>
<td>The researcher included two or more open-ended questions and included at two or more follow-up questions during the interview.</td>
<td>Most of the above preparation was completed; links interview to scholarly research</td>
<td>Well-written; few errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 pts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>The interview was semi-successful. Some useable information was obtained.</td>
<td>The researcher included at least one open-ended question and included at least one follow-up question during the interview.</td>
<td>Researcher did little preparation for the interview; does not link interview to scholarly research</td>
<td>Many errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 pts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>The interview was unsuccessful. No useable information was obtained.</td>
<td>The researcher asked only yes/no questions with no follow-up.</td>
<td>Researcher did not prepare for the interview; No links between interview and scholarly research</td>
<td>Unable to read this work due to errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, mechanics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 pts.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Critical Performance Rubric:

### Scoring Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Level 1 (4 pts)</th>
<th>Level 2 (6 pts)</th>
<th>Level 3 (8 pts)</th>
<th>Level 4 (10 pts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigate current issues/topics in literacy instruction at the elementary, middle, secondary, and/or adult levels. This investigation may take the form of a paper, report, or webpage.</td>
<td>Little or no effort to investigate in current issues/topics in literacy instruction at the elementary, middle, secondary, and/or adult levels. This investigation may take the form of a paper, report, or webpage.</td>
<td>Some evidence of investigation in current issues/topics in literacy instruction at the elementary, middle, secondary, and/or adult levels. This investigation may take the form of a paper, report, or webpage.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of investigation in current issues/topics in literacy instruction at the elementary, middle, secondary, and/or adult levels. This investigation may take the form of a paper, report, or webpage.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of investigation in current issues/topics in literacy instruction at the elementary, middle, secondary, and/or adult levels. This investigation may take the form of a paper, report, or webpage. Excellent work on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select an issue/topic of interest and develop guiding questions to provide framework for a Review of the Literature regarding the selected issue/topic.</td>
<td>Little or no selection an issue/topic of interest and develop guiding questions to provide framework for a Review of the Literature regarding the selected issue/topic. Low quality Review of Literature.</td>
<td>Some evidence of selection an issue/topic of interest and develop guiding questions to provide framework for a Review of the Literature regarding the selected issue/topic. Medium quality Review of Literature.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of selection an issue/topic of interest and develop guiding questions to provide framework for a Review of the Literature regarding the selected issue/topic. Acceptable quality Review of Literature.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of selection an issue/topic of interest and develop guiding questions to provide framework for a Review of the Literature regarding the selected issue/topic. HIGH quality Review of Literature on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop research question(s) to be investigated</td>
<td>Little or no development of research questions to be investigated.</td>
<td>Some evidence of development of research questions to be investigated.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of development of research questions to be investigated.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of development of research questions to be investigated on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop research design to</td>
<td>Little or no development of a research design.</td>
<td>Some evidence of development of a research design.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of development of a research design.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of development of a research design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Little or no evidence</td>
<td>Some evidence</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answer/explore research question(s)</td>
<td>research plan to answer/explore research questions.</td>
<td>research plan to answer/explore research questions.</td>
<td>research plan to answer/explore research questions.</td>
<td>plan to answer/explore research questions on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implement research plan to answer/explore research questions.</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of implementation of a research design in an authentic literacy environment/scenario</td>
<td>Some evidence of implementation of a research design in an authentic literacy environment/scenario</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of implementation of a research design in an authentic literacy environment/scenario</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of implementation of a research design in an authentic literacy environment/scenario on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather data, synthesize results, and report findings.</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of gathered data, synthesis of results, and/or report findings.</td>
<td>Some evidence of gathered data, synthesis of results, and/or report findings.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of gathered data, synthesis of results, and/or report findings.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of gathered data, synthesis of results, and/or report findings on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate publishing opportunities that align with targeted issues/topics.</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of investigation of publishing opportunities that align with targeted issues/topics.</td>
<td>Some evidence of investigation of publishing opportunities that align with targeted issues/topics.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of investigation of publishing opportunities that align with targeted issues/topics.</td>
<td>Acceptable evidence of investigation of publishing opportunities that align with targeted issues/topics on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed format, grammar, and neatness</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>Somewhat acceptable</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>Acceptable on the first attempt and without extra assistance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>