HHD 1007: Methods of Evidence-Based Practice

Fall 2024

Department of Health and Human Development

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Class Day/Time:	Tuesday / Thursday 1:00 – 2:15pm
Class Location:	5200 Wesley W. Posvar Hall (230 S. Bouquet Street)
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Grading:	Letter

The syllabus is a required text. Please read it carefully!

Mission/Vision of the School of Education

We ignite learning. We strive for well-being for all. We teach. We commit to student, family, and community success. We commit to educational equity. We advocate. We work for justice. We cultivate relationships. We forge engaged partnerships. We collaborate. We learn with and from communities. We innovate and agitate. We pursue and produce knowledge. We research. We disrupt and transform inequitable educational structures. We approach learning as intertwined with health, wellness, and human development. We address how national, global, social, and technological change impacts learning. We shape practice and policy. We teach with and for dignity. We think. We dream. We lead with integrity. We are the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

Course Description

In the fields of educational and developmental psychology, claims about what works, best practices, and the 'right' versus 'wrong' way of doing things are in no short supply. But how do we know these claims are evidence-based? What exactly does 'evidence-based' practice mean, and what are the methods used for determining it? This course aims to answer these questions through an overview of research methods in the field of applied developmental psychology.

<h1 style="text-align:center">Course Objectives</h1>

<u>By the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:</u>
- Be a more informed consumer of research and information in the field by asking "why" questions and seeking to answer those questions through a process of scientific inquiry and explorations.
- Recognize how research is conducted, including the range of methods and procedures that may be applied to different types of research studies in various developmental settings.
- Select and implement proper research methods regarding a given problem, grounded in a deep understanding of and appreciation for the scientific method.
- Reflect on themselves and their practice as a future professional working who works with children and youth.

<h1 style="text-align:center">Course Readings</h1>

(1) **<u>Required</u>:** Donovan, T., & Hoover, K. (2014). The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking (11th ed.). Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

(2) Additional assigned readings and videos will be posted on Canvas.

<h1 style="text-align:center">Grading Policy</h1>

Course Assignments:

Attendance and Participation (15 points). Given the dynamic, discussion-based format of this class, regular and prompt attendance in the class sessions is essential. You are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to class and to participate in daily class and small group discussions with your peers, and class activities and small group work. In-class activities will count toward your attendance and participation grade. On the days when we have guest speakers, you are expected to read the assigned article(s) ahead of time and come prepared with thoughtful questions for the Q&A portion of the presentation. Participation also includes the respectful use of computers and smart phones.

Class participation will be assessed during each class session based on the criteria detailed below:
- ☐ Arrive at class on time.
- ☐ Bring power point slides and other materials relevant to the lesson.
- ☐ Arrive prepared to discuss the homework assignments and/or readings.
- ☐ Complete in-class activities
- ☐ Contribute effectively to class discussion or activities by commenting, asking questions, answering questions, participating in small group work or discussions and/or completing in-class activities. Contributions should advance the academic conversation in-class.

You will receive feedback on your participation grade midway through the semester to provide opportunities for improvement. However, feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns at any point throughout the semester.

You may have two unexcused absences with no impact on your attendance and participation grade. Each additional unexcused absences will result in 2 points deducted from your attendance and participation grade. Please see attendance policy for descriptions of excused and unexcused absences.

Information Round-Ups (5 points each, 15 points total). To apply critical thinking skills, you will identify and critique sources of media (i.e., social media news article, research articles, and government/funding brief) related to your area of interest. These will be completed during the first part of the semester and submitted through Canvas.

Reflections (5 points each, 20 points total). You will complete 4 reflection assignments during the second part of the semester. These assignments will relate to your area of interest in applied developmental psychology and will build towards your final project. You will receive feedback on each assignment and are expected to incorporate this feedback into your final project for the course. You have two options for the format of these reflections. You may either submit a paper or a recorded video, as long as you answer all of the questions included in the prompt.

Exams (15 points each, 30 points total). There will be two exams during the semester. The first exam will cover material from Weeks 1 to 5. The second exam will cover material from Weeks 6 to 9. You can use the textbook, readings, and online resources to complete the exam, but you are expected to complete it independently. The first exam will be administered in person during normal class time. The second exam will be administered virtually through Canvas and will be available online for 3 days, but once you begin the exam, there is a time limit for taking the exam. Failing to take the exam by the due date will result in a failing grade for the exam, unless otherwise discussed with the instructor. We will not meet in-person on the date of the second exam. Please note we will not meet during the university scheduled final time.

Final Project (20 points). The purpose of the final project is for you to apply your knowledge of research methods from this course to designing studies related to your area of interest in applied developmental psychology. You will select a topic, identify academic research related to this topic, create research questions, and design both a qualitative and quantitative study. The reflection paper assignments will support your development of this project. We will also have time in class to workshop your ideas and receive peer and instructor feedback. You are expected to incorporate this feedback into your final project. You will receive a template for the final project submission and are expected to follow APA 7th edition formatting.

You will receive more information about each of these assignments in class as deadlines approach. All assignments are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
All assignments should be submitted electronically through the Canvas site by the deadlines listed. All assignments should follow APA 7th edition formatting including with 1-inch margins, double-spaced, and Times New Roman font and submitted as Word documents. Grades for late assignments will be deducted 10% per day that the assignment is late, unless otherwise discussed **prior to** the assignment deadline.

Final Course Grade:

A total of 100 points is possible for the course:

Assignment	Point Value (% of Final Grade)
Attendance & Participation	15 points (15%)
Information Round-Ups	15 points (15%)
Reflections	20 points (20%)

Exams	30 points (30%)
Final Project	20 points (20%)
TOTAL	100 points

Grading Scale:

%	Letter Grade
97-100	A+
94-96	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-

%	Letter Grade
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
60-69	D
59 or below	F

Course Expectations

Attendance. Attendance is a required component of this course as much of the course will involve applying content through course discussion, class activities, and role-playing in dyads. This includes arriving on time and staying for the duration of the class. Absences due to illness, mental health, personal emergencies, religious holidays, travel for university athletics, jury duty, and other extenuating circumstances will be excused at the discretion of the instructor. Students requesting an excused absence should **contact the instructor by email for approval prior to the class meeting time, if possible**. All students are permitted two unexcused absences and do not need to receive approval for this; however, each additional unexcused absence will result in a deduction in their participation grade.

Respectful Participation. This looks like engaging thoughtfully with peers. In order to facilitate an environment where open discussion can occur, at times I may need to pause the discussion or ask follow-up questions to clarify meaning of statements. If you would like to check in following a course discussion or in response to the material, I would be glad to follow up directly after class or at another scheduled time.

Communication. It is expected that you check the Canvas site at least weekly and regularly check your email for course updates.

Expectations of the Instructor. I will also do my best to attend class on time and prepared for discussion. I will communicate with as much advanced notice as possible if there are any changes to the course format. During the weekdays, I will check my email daily and respond within 24 hours and within 48 hours on the weekends.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week, Topic, & Dates	Readings and Assignments
Week 1 Welcome and Intro to Critical Thinking	
8/27	Course Introduction & Overview
8/29	Paul & Elders (2006) Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking
Week 2 Evidence-Based Thinking and Types of Bias	
9/3	Read Chapter 1 Donovan and Hoover Watch Crash Course: Check Yourself with Lateral Reading Watch Crash Course: The Facts about Fact Checking
9/5	**Complete Information Round-Up 1**
Week 3 Developing Information Literacy	
9/10	Watch Crash Course: Evaluating Evidence Watch Crash Course: Using Wikipedia
9/12	**Complete Information Round-Up 2** Read Wang et al. (2021)
Week 4 Scientific Method Part 1	
9/17	Read Chapters 2 and 3 Donovan and Hoover Watch Crash Course: Psychological Research. Watch Who Can You Trust?
9/19	**Complete Information Round-Up 3**
Week 5 Scientific Method Part 2	
9/24	Read Chapters 4 and 5 Donovan and Hoover Watch Crash Course: Sociology Research Methods
9/26	**Exam 1 – In Person**
Week 6 Quantitative Research Methods Part 1	
10/1	Read Creswell & Creswell (2018) - Chapter 8 - Quantitative Methods Watch Crash Course: Sampling Methods and Bias with Surveys Watch Crash Course: What is Statistics?
10/3	
Week 7 Quantitative Research Methods Part 2	
10/8	Watch Crash Course: Regression Watch Crash Course: ANOVA
10/10	Read Castellan (2010) **Complete Reflection 1**
Week 8 Qualitative Research Methods Part 1	
10/15	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS
10/17	Read Creswell & Creswell (2018) - Chapter 9 - Qualitative Methods
Week 9 Qualitative Research Methods Part 2	
10/22	Read Creswell & Creswell (2018) - Chapter 1 - Selection of a Research Approach (pp. 3-16 ONLY)
10/24	Read Chapter 9 in Garbarino & Stott's "What Children Can Tell Us" Read Kara & Jackson (2018) - Conversation with a Purpose
Week 10 Developing Research Questions	
10/29	**Exam 2 - Online**

10/31	Read McCombes (2022) - Developing Strong Research Questions: Criteria and Examples Watch How to Develop a Strong Research Question **Complete Reflection 2**
Week 11 APA Formatting & Scientific Writing	
11/5	ELECTION DAY – REMOTE CLASS Read Creswell & Creswell (2018) - Chapter 4 - Writing Strategies and Ethical Considerations (pp. 75-88 ONLY) Watch Crash Course: How to Argue
11/7	
Week 12 Ethics & Theories in Applied Developmental Psychology	
11/12	Read Fisher & Gilliam (2012)
11/14	**Complete Reflection 3**
Week 13 Final Project Feedback and Workshops	
11/19	
11/21	
Week 14 THANKSGIVING RECESS – NO CLASSES	
11/26	
11/28	
Week 15 Research and Practice, How to get involved in research, Course-Wrap up	
12/3	
12/5	**Complete Reflection 4**
Finals Week Please note, we will not meet during our scheduled final's time.	
12/10	**Final Project due by 5 pm**

University & Course Policies and Related Resources

The School of Education Policies and Forms page on the SOE website explains several policies and procedures, including academic probation, course repeats, leaves of absence, monitored withdrawal, transfer credits, and statute of limitations.

Academic Integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Please refer to university resources on the definitions of plagiarism (e.g., https://pitt.libguides.com/academicintegrity, and Academic Integrity module in Canvas). A student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. Consequences may be applied at the instructor's discretion and may include, but is not limited to, redoing an assignment, or receiving a failing grade for an assignment, exam, or for the course of any individual suspected of violating University Policy.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the Academic Integrity Guide for an overview of the topic. For hands- on practice, complete the Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial.

Disability Services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, visit the Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance web page.

I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu. Reports can also be filed online. You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

The Pitt Concern Connection

The University of Pittsburgh strives to build and maintain a positive and healthy working, learning, and living environment. Reporting concerns and asking questions can minimize the potential negative impact of inappropriate conduct on the University and our employees, faculty, and students. Reporting can help improve our culture and operations by identifying issues that require attention.

The [Pitt Concern Connection](#) is a dedicated reporting system where University members can elevate irregular or troublesome workplace, campus, and other issues so that they can be reviewed, addressed, and resolved. Report an issue or ask a question online, by telephone, or via text message.

The Pitt Concern Connection is not an emergency service. Immediate, life-threatening safety concerns should be reported to 911 or by contacting your local University police or security department.

Gender Inclusive Language

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of all genders (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, everyone versus ladies and gentlemen, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes both gender identity and expression. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences, gendered language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identifies may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Students, faculty, and staff have the right to control their own identity and to be referred to by the name and pronouns with which they identify. People also have the right to maintain their privacy regarding information they do not wish to share about their identities, including gender identity and pronouns. Source: [School of Social Work](#)

Religious Observations

The observance of religious holidays (activities observed by a religious group of which a student is a member) and cultural practices are an important reflection of diversity. As your instructor, I am committed to providing equivalent educational opportunities to students of all belief systems. At the beginning of the semester, you should review the course requirements to identify foreseeable conflicts with assignments, exams, or other required attendance. If at all possible, please contact me within the first two weeks of the first class meeting to allow time for us to discuss and make fair and reasonable adjustments to the schedule and/or tasks.

Sexual Misconduct, Required Reporting, and Title IX

The University is committed to combating sexual misconduct. As a result, you should know that University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the University's Title IX office. What this means is that as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware. After a report is made, you will be contacted by the Title IX Office for opportunities for support and options for proceeding.

For additional information, please visit the [full syllabus statement](#) on the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webpage.

University Notifications

The University offers an Emergency Notification Service (ENS) which is used to communicate with subscribers through voice, text, and email messages, as deemed appropriate in the event of an emergency. For instructions on how to register, please refer to CSSD's website: http://technology.pitt.edu/services/emergency-notification-service.

Any changes to normal University operations will be announced as early as possible through the ENS, the University's official website (www.pitt.edu), Twitter (@PittTweet), and local news media outlets.

Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use. The instructor may record the course and post the recording to canvas for student use.

Food/Housing Insecurity

Many students, both undergraduate and graduate, experience housing and/or food insecurity that can impact their academic work and general health. Please know there are resources available to you that are confidential. Of course, you are welcome to speak with me if you need support in contacting the right people/offices:

Pitt Pantry: Food Pantry available to the wider University community
https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/care-and-resources/pitt-pantry

Off-Campus Housing Office: http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/

Your Well-being Matters
College/Graduate school can be an exciting and challenging time for students. Taking time to care for yourself and seeking appropriate support can help you achieve your academic and professional goals. You are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax.

It can be helpful to remember that we all benefit from assistance and guidance at times, and there are many resources available to support your well-being while you are at Pitt. If you or anyone you know experiences overwhelming academic stress, persistent difficult feelings and/or challenging life events, you are strongly encouraged to seek support. In addition to reaching out to friends and loved ones, consider connecting with a faculty member you trust for assistance connecting to helpful resources. The University Counseling Center is also here for you. You can call 412-648-7930 at any time to connect with a clinician. You can also visit the Counseling Center website.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, please call the University Counseling Center at any time at 412-648-7930.

You can also contact Resolve Crisis Network at 888-796-8226. If the situation is life threatening, call Pitt Police at 412-624-2121 or dial 911.

If the situation is life threatening, call the Police:
- On-campus: Pitt Police: 412-268-2121
- Off-campus: 911

Additional University of Pittsburgh Resources

Education Library Guide: See this Hillman Library customized libguide, a gateway to resources for education students and faculty

Religious Observances: See the Provost's annual memo about religious observances.

Emergencies: Do you have Pitt Police saved on your mobile phone? 911 works, or Pitt Police, 412-624-2121

Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (OEDI): Resources, consultation, and bias incident reporting: https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/

Title IX office, resources regarding sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, and sexual violence: https://www.titleix.pitt.edu/

Catalogs: The University Catalogs have comprehensive information about policies, programs, and courses. There are University-level policies and policies specific to the School of Education. Bookmark these links and review these documents periodically.
- Pittsburgh Campus Undergraduate Studies

Student Mental Health: Counseling Center, in the Wellness Center in Nordenberg Hall: https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/ Call 412-648-7930, any time.

Sexual Assault Response: 412-648-7856

Care and Resource Support Team (CARS): Email pittcares@pitt.edu or see: http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cars/