

## **IDE/EDU 841: THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF INQUIRY**

Fall 2017

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Office Hours: By appointment

Thursday, 4:00 – 6:45 pm  
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### **OVERVIEW**

This course introduces students to the basic skills, processes, and designs of empirical inquiry. It familiarizes them with the fundamental mental activities of inquiry (observation, reasoning, intuition, and constructing knowledge), reviews the basic processes of problem development and argument construction, and provides practice in producing and comparing alternative quantitative, qualitative, and combined study designs. As a result, students will better understand the forms, purposes, and excitement of empirical research, and be better prepared to make subsequent choices about research topics and methods courses.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., Williams, J. M., Bizup, J., & Fitzgerald, W. T. (2017). *The craft of research* (4th ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (ISBN: 9780226239736(P))

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson. (ISBN: 9780131367395 (H))

Eco, U. and Sebeok, T. A. (Eds.). (1983). *The sign of the three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. (ISBN: 9780253204875 (P))

## SCHEDULE

### *Inquiry as Investigation*

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Assignments Due</u>
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### *Inquiry Fundamentals – GORKI*

1	8/31	Games	Smith 1992
2	9/07	Knowledge	Smith 1995 #1
3	9/14	Observation	Eco 2-4
4	9/21	Prob Identification	#2a
5	9/28	Reasoning	Eco 5-7 #2aR, #2b
6	10/05	Intuition	Eco 9-10 #3

### *Inquiry Process*

7	10/12	Prob Developmt	Booth 1-6
8	10/19	Research Prob Rvw	#4
9	10/26	Argmt Constrctn	Booth 7-11 #4R

### *Inquiry Designs*

10	11/02	“Quant” Designs	Creswell 10-12 #5
11	11/09	“Qual” Designs	Creswell 13-15 #6
12	11/16	“Mixed” Designs	Creswell 16-17 #4R, #5R, #6R, #7
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13	11/30	Peer Critiques	#8
14	12/07	Final Design Report – Oral Summaries	#9

## ASSIGNMENTS

Your primary course assignment will be to develop three alternative designs for studying some research problem of interest to you. Your final product (Assignment 9), should contain (1) a statement of the research problem (about 3 pages), (2) a description and evaluative assessment of a true experimental design for studying the research problem (about 3 pages), (3) a description and evaluative assessment of a cross-sectional survey design for studying the research problem (about 3 pages), (4) a description and evaluative assessment of an ethnographic case study design for studying the research problem (about 3 pages), and (5) a comparative analysis of the pros and cons of the 3 alternative designs (about 3 pages). The prior exercises are designed to assist you in preparing this final report, which should be no longer than 15 double-spaced pages, maximum.

Assignment 1: You will be given a case example (Smith, 1995) of two competing investigations of the same event. Using the provided summary analysis sheet, consider the “Inquiry Game” aspects of the two investigations in terms of context, purpose and social role, phenomena of interest, procedural rules, methods of justification, and sanctions. Bring a copy of your completed sheet for each student and the instructor on the date indicated in the SCHEDULE, and be prepared to discuss your work.

Assignment 2: Select a research problem of personal interest to you; this will be the topic about which you will prepare three alternative research designs. (2a) Bring to class a 1 page problem statement for each member of the class and the instructor; outline the nature of the topic, why it is of importance to you, and how you might study it. (2b) In class, you will work with a partner to sketch a preliminary 1 page design of your study.

Assignment 3: Conduct a non-intrusive investigative observation (examples will be provided in class). Be prepared to discuss your observation in class; bring a 1-2 page summary for each class member and the instructor.

Assignment 4: Submit a brief (2-page) statement of the research problem you wish to investigate.

Your statement should include a statement of the problem’s nature and scope, research significance, and interest to you. “To summarize: Your aim is to explain

1. what you are writing about – *I am working on the topic of...*
2. what you don’t know about it – *because I want to find out...*
3. why you want your reader to know and care about it – *in order to help my reader understand better...*” Booth et al., 2017, p.46.

Be prepared to discuss your statement in class; bring a copy for each class member and the instructor.

Assignment 5: Prepare a brief (2-page) outline of a true experimental design (Creswell chp 10) for studying your chosen research problem. Include major design steps, and a list of the possible benefits and problems of using such a design. Be prepared to discuss your design in class; bring a copy of your summary for each class member and the instructor.

Assignment 6: Prepare a brief (2-page) outline of a cross-sectional survey design (Creswell chp 12) for studying your chosen research problem. Include major design steps, and a list of the possible benefits and problems of using such a design. Be prepared to discuss your design in class; bring a copy of your summary for each class member and the instructor.

Assignment 7: Prepare a brief (2-page) outline of an ethnographic case study design (Creswell chp 14) for studying your chosen research problem. Include major design steps, and a list of the possible benefits and problems of using such a design. Be prepared to discuss your design in class; bring a copy of your summary for each class member and the instructor.

Assignment 8: Prepare a thoughtful, detailed review (about 5 pages) of your classmate's draft Final Design Report for his/her use in making final revisions. Submit a copy of the review to your classmate and to the instructor; be prepared to discuss it in class.

Assignment 9: Submit a completed paper and electronic copy (WORD document, 15-page, double-spaced, maximum; APA 6<sup>th</sup> ed. format) of your Final Design Report. Your report will be judged in terms of its clarity, detailed thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and insight. You will not be able to fully address the problem you have selected and prepare three complete designs in the time available; you are expected, however, to demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of the three alternative design strategies and how they might be applied to your research problem. Be prepared to present your work during the final class session.

## GRADES

Assignments #1, #2aR-#2b, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, and #8 are due before or at the beginning of the class indicated on the Schedule. They will be graded according to the following scale:

3 pts: On time; Acceptable Work

2 pts: On time; Needs Work or Late; Acceptable Work

1 pt: Late; Needs Work

0 pt: Missing

Collectively, assignments #1 - #8 constitute 1/3 of the course grade: 3 pts X 8 = 24 pts

Assignment #9 is due before or at the beginning of Session #14 and will be scored using the following scale; 1 point will be deducted for late work:

4 pts: Excellent Work

3 pts: Strong Work

2 pts: Adequate Work

1 pt: Weak Work

0 pt: Missing

Assignment #9 will constitute 2/3 of the course grade: 4 pts X 12 = 48 pts.

Course grades will be assigned in accordance with the IDD&E grading policy described below. The final course product must go beyond a superficial repetition of the material presented in the texts and class to reflect depth of understanding, thoughtful application, and insight. Borderline cases in final grades will be resolved on the basis of classroom preparation and participation.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Attendance is expected for all classes at Syracuse University; given the nature of this course, class attendance is mandatory. Should you need to miss a class for personal or professional reasons, please contact the Instructor in advance. Except in emergency situations, the student will be expected to complete any work due prior to the class absence. More than two unexcused absences will result in the loss of a full letter grade.

### **STUDENT WORKS POLICY**

Work produced by students will be used in class for educational purposes. Under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, it is understood that registration and continued enrollment in this course constitutes permission by the student for such use. After this course is completed, any further use of student works will meet one of the following conditions: (1) the work will be rendered anonymous through the removal of all personal identification of the creator/originator(s); or (2) the creator/originator(s)' written permission will be secured.

### **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

SU's religious observances policy, found at [http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp\\_ben/religious\\_observance.htm](http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm), recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class. Please speak with the Instructor if you expect to miss class due to any religious observances.

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete policy, see the [Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures \(PDF\)](#).

You are expected to cite sources, including personal communication or other professional sources, for any material used in the assignments for this course that you did not create on your own. Please see the Instructor if you have questions about how to do this properly.

## IDD&E GRADING POLICY

In order that all IDD&E faculty members express a common meaning of letter grades, and that students come to interpret all grades in the sense intended, the IDD&E faculty has agreed upon the following definitions. All letter grades given at the end of each semester will be given with these meanings. Copies of these definitions may be furnished to anyone, upon request, to explain grades recorded on transcripts or to accompany letters of recommendation.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>
A	<u>Consistently exceptional performance</u> ; the highest level of honors work; beyond what is specified in both amount and quality.
B	<u>Fully satisfactory performance</u> ; the amount and quality of work done was completely acceptable; professional competence has been demonstrated.
C	<u>Minimum Performance</u> ; the amount and quality of work was less than expected; performance does not warrant a professional recommendation.
I	<u>Incomplete</u> ; the work performed was acceptable, but incomplete due to exceptional circumstances; this grade is to be given rarely, and the faculty member must have evidence to expect the incomplete work will be completed satisfactorily within a specified length of time not to exceed two semesters.
F	<u>Failure</u> ; unacceptable performance.