

*All the knowledge that you want is in the world, and all you have to do is go and seek it.*

**Marcus Garvey**

## EDRS 602: Research Methods

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### Instructor:

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### Course Overview:

Marcus Garvey once said, "All the knowledge that you want is in the world, and all you have to do is go and seek it." This course is about seeking knowledge in systematic ways that can inform how we go about the business of teaching and leading schools. EDRS 602, Methods of Research, is designed to prepare current and future educators and educational leaders to review and conduct relevant research to inform conscientious decision-making. This course is about seeking

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Evaluate (read, review, and apply) research in your professional setting;
- Describe the contribution of research to your field and continuous improvement;
- Conduct research using sound methodology that is appropriate for different lines of inquiry and is ethical;
- Assess the internal and external validity in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research;
- Assess the relevance of a study or its findings to your context.
- Develop a preliminary understanding of analytical methods in quantitative and qualitative research;
- Communicate effectively with academic writing conforming to the conventions set forth by the American Psychological Association (7<sup>th</sup> Edition).

Research is relevant to all educators, regardless of context. It is relevant to educators seeking to improve the quality of education in Jamaica.

Whether you are trying to improve task performances scores on the Primary Exit Profile (PEP), increase the engagement of secondary boys, or increase parental involvement in rural areas; research skills can help you

better understand the problem and identify solutions appropriate to your context.

## Required Texts

*Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*  
By John W. Creswell

## Student Expectations:

1. **Watch the podcasts.**  
Because we are not able to meet face to face, the content I would normally cover in the classroom as been converted to videos on Canvas. Panopto videos ranges from 20-60 minutes and cover content that is essential to course outcomes (and the midterm).
2. Read the assigned readings.  
This is a reading intensive course, *especially in the first half of the class*. After the midterm, reading will wane, as your focus will shift to your final project. The textbook is dense and has lots of information. Pay attention to the words and concepts in bold. I understand the course of this class is fast—if you cannot read every word on every page in every chapter—make sure you read the **KEY IDEAS IN THE CHAPTER** section.
3. Participate in the discussion boards.
4. Submit assignments on time.  
All assignments are to be completed on time.
5. Ask for help.

## Professor Expectations

1. Be clear about what I want.  
In an effort to make this course a great learning experience and one that is beneficial to your GPA, I try to be very explicit about what I want in each assignment. Every major assignment has a rubric that I follow to grade. While I am clear about content; I avoid giving page numbers on assignments. Please write to you feel you have covered what it required in the rubric. Please do not submit assignments that are full of “fluff.” I read for content not length.
2. Respond to students’ inquiries a timely fashion.
3. Give feedback on assignments in a timely manner.  
Every major assignment, I will try to turnaround in 1 week with feedback. I provide feedback electronically in Canvas. Sometimes my feedback will say,

- “We need to conference about this.” If that is my feedback, plan to meet with me face to face or via Go to Meeting in the following week.
4. Be available.

## Assignments:

### Interview and CANVAS Post 10%

Research is not just for professors or think tanks. Research is an increasingly used tool by organizational leaders, administrators, and clinicians to evaluate and understand complex organizational structures as well as program and treatment effectiveness. You are to interview an administrator about his/her knowledge and use of research in their current position. The individual you interview should be in a position that you hope to obtain in the future. This individual should not hold a position that is lateral to your current job. For example, I am a junior professor, so I would interview a professor with tenure or a distinguished professor. If I had the desire to be an administrator, I may interview a dean or the provost.

Design an interview protocol that includes the following ideas (feel free to deviate add and omit to the list below):

- What types of research are useful and relevant to your current position?
  - How often is that information readily available?
- How frequently does the professional read research?
- Has the professional conducted any research in their current job position?
  - How often?
  - If not, why not?
  - How do they find time to do practitioner research in the school?
- Do they think conducting research is valuable?
- What kind of data do they utilize to make decisions?

In your presentation, I expect you to include direct quotes from the interview. I also expect you to juxtapose the positions of your interviewee with the various viewpoints on the purpose of research in the pre-reading. Lastly, I want to know how you anticipate that you will use research when you obtain a similar position.

### Participation 25%

We are in a pandemic so we cannot be in close proximity to engage with each other. However, research is a difficult topic, that requires conversing and processing with thought partners. I will be using Canvas to have you post questions and thoughts and to respond to specified inquiries on certain topics. The discussion board posts are not optional, but necessary. To get full credit for a discussion board post, you must make your comment—responding to the prompt, and reply to 2 colleagues. Canvas will not alert me that you have items that need grading until you post and comment twice.

### Fundamentals of Research Assessment 35%

Paulo Freire said education suffers from narration sickness. The teacher talks and the students are supposed to be passive recipients as he/she fills their head with knowledge. He said, "Liberating education consists of acts of cognition, not transferals of knowledge" (2008, p.79). This assessment is a test but it is designed to ensure you master the material as you complete the assessment. It is open book/open note so if you come across something you do not know; you have time to make sure you understand it before crafting your responses. This assessment takes a constructivist framework—it is grounded in the idea that learning has to be active and *you construct your own knowledge*. You will have 3 hours to complete the assessment. The assessment will require you to read short (6-7 pages) qualitative and quantitative articles and evaluate their methods. You will also be asked about literature reviews, validity, sampling procedures, and ethical research practices. The exam questions will require short, open-ended responses.

### Practitioner Research Proposal Presentation 30%

Research should be practical and relevant. As educators it is necessary for you to assess current problems in your setting and set a plan of action to remedy that problem. For the final in this course you have to develop a proposal to conduct research on a problem facing your current or future (hypothetical) school (or classroom). In your plan you will:

1. Articulate the problem of practice
2. Review the relevant literature (having 6 peer-reviewed citations)
3. Identify an intervention or innovation that will remedy the problem (or that you will test it's effectiveness)
4. Describe the data you will collect to test the effectiveness
  - a. Including how you will analyze the data after collected AND
  - b. How you will ensure validity.
5. Describe the actors who will aid in this initiative
6. Develop a timeline

Think about using action research, improvement science, or lesson study to guide your proposal. In your presentation, make sure you a lot equal time for all presenters. You can schedule a zoom to present to me in real time or submit a video of the group presenting via zoom link or youtube link.

	Readings/ Podcast	Assignments/ Discussion Ideas Topics
<b>June 14</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is Research and Types of Research</li> </ul>	Chapters 1  Watch Course introduction video.	Interview an educator or administrator.  Post your introduction to the class on CANVAS. – Feel free to use video and photos in your introduction!
<b>June 15</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why Research? Basic</li> <li></li> </ul>	Why Research  Read chapters 5-7	
<b>June 16</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding Research</li> </ul>	Look closely at chapter 2-3 How to use resources at Hunter Library	
<b>June 17</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading and Evaluating Research</li> <li>Validity</li> </ul>	Consuming Research Evaluating Research in <i>Using Educational Research: A School Administrator's Guide</i> (on Canvas)** Maxwell- Understanding Validity in Qualitative Research (On Canvas)**	
<b>June 18</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Collection</li> </ul>	Quantitative & Qualitative Research Designs Chapters 8-10	Final Project Groups formed  Post your reflection on your interview on CANVAS.
<b>June 21</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzing Data</li> </ul>	Quantitative & Qualitative Research Designs Chapters 8-10	
<b>June 22</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practitioner Research Designs</li> </ul>	Chapter 8-10 Learning to Improve Chapter 1 (on Canvas)	On CANVAS- Answer the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action Research, Improvement Science, Lesson Study</li> </ul>	<p>How should research contribute to instructional improvement? The case of lesson study (on CANVAS)</p>	<p>Action research? Improvement science? Lesson Study? How do these practitioner research designs differ from traditional research? Which of these do you think you are most likely to employ on your practice? Why?</p>
<p><b>June 23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Word on Ethics</li> </ul>	<p>Stanford Prison Experiment Stream through Kanopy (link on CANVAS, you must log in with your WCU credentials to access the film)</p>	<p>On CANVAS, discuss the risks and benefits of the Stanford Prison Experiment. Do the risks outweigh the benefits? Would you have approved the study? Why or why not?</p>
<p><b>June 24</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Midterms</li> </ul>	<p>Midterm Review 5:00pm- 7:00pm Synchronous VIA ZOOM Midterm available beginning at 7:05pm Midterm Exam (you have 48 hours to complete)</p>	
<p><b>June 25</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing a research proposal</li> <li>APA Review</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 4 Writing a Literature Review Writing about Methods Presenting about research</p>	
<p><b>June 28-July 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recap</li> </ul>	<p>Exam Review on CANVAS Presentation Preparation</p>	<p>Final Presentation I Due July 1, 2021 (upload to Canvas or present via Zoom )</p>

## References

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- \*Kovinthan, T. and McPherson, K. (2017). The ethics of inclusion: Digital approaches to literacy among struggling readers in two Jamaican high schools. In *Ethics, Equity, and Inclusive Education (International Perspectives on Inclusive Education, Vol. 9)*, Emerald Publishing Limited, pp. 145-164. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-363620170000009006>
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- Sani-Bozkurt, S., Vuran, S., & Akbulut, Y. (2017). Design and use of interactive social stories for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 8(1), 1-25.
- \*Wilkinson, K. (2019). A fight for inclusion: An analysis of juvenile delinquency in low-level secondary education in Jamaica. In *The First International Development Forum In Thailand "Well-being, Social Inclusion, and Sustainable Development."* (p. 76-90).
- \*Denotes a study completed in Jamaica used to illustrate research design, data collection methods, internal validity, external validity or a combination of the four.



## Campus Resources

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. Students who require reasonable accommodations must identify themselves as having a disability and/or medical condition and provide current diagnostic documentation to the Office of Disability Services. All information is confidential. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at (828) 227-3886 or come by Suite 135 Killian Annex for an appointment.

### **Accommodations for Military Students**

To my veterans and active duty or reserves military students, I honor your commitment to our country and understand such commitments can interfere with work. WCU strives to be a military friendly campus, with an office designed to support you. If you are a military student and believe it will affect your performance in this course, please let me know. Know that I am required to keep your military and/or veteran status confidential. If you should happen to be deployed or required to do extended reserve training, I will work with you to ensure your absence does not cause you to lose credit or work in this class.

### **Student Support Services**

Student Support Services provides support to students who are either first-generation, low-income or those who have disclosed a disability with: academic advising, mentoring, one-on-one tutorial support, and workshops focused on career, financial aid and graduate school preparation. You may contact SSS at (828) 227-7127 or email [sssprogram@wcu.edu](mailto:sssprogram@wcu.edu) for more information. SSS is located in the Killian Annex, room 138.

### **Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC)**

**This is a writing intensive course. Please utilize this resource if you need writing support.**

#### **Electronic format (with hyperlinks):**

The [Writing and Learning Commons](#) (WaLC), located in BELK 207, provides free [small-group course tutoring](#), one-on-one [writing tutoring](#) and [academic skills consultations](#), and online [writing and learning](#) resources for all students. All tutoring sessions take place in the WaLC or in designated classrooms on campus. To schedule tutoring appointments, log in to TutorTrac from the WaLC homepage ([walc.wcu.edu](http://walc.wcu.edu)) or call 828-227-2274. Distance students and students taking classes at Biltmore Park are encouraged to use [Smarthinking](#) and the WaLC's online resources. Students may also

**take advantage of writing tutoring offered at the Biltmore Park campus on certain days of the week; call 828-227-2274 or log in to TutorTrac and select “Biltmore Park Writing Tutoring” for availabilities.**

**Academic Calendar** includes dates for all breaks, university closures, final exams, etc. The academic calendar can be found at:  
<http://www.wcu.edu/academics/campus-academic-resources/registrar-office/academic-calendar.asp>.

### **Academic Integrity Policy and Reporting Process:**

This policy addresses academic integrity violations of undergraduate and graduate students. Graduate students should read inside the parenthesis below to identify the appropriate entities in charge of that step of the process.

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators of Western Carolina University (WCU) strive to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community. While academic in scope, any violation of this policy is by nature, a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and will follow the same conduct process (see Article VII.B.1.a.). If the charge occurs close to the end of an academic semester or term or in the event of the reasonable need of either party for additional time to gather information timelines may be extended at the discretion of the Department of Student Community Ethics (DSCE).

#### **I. General:**

This policy addresses academic integrity violations of undergraduate and graduate students.

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators of Western Carolina University (WCU) strive to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of this policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community.

Instructors have the right to determine the appropriate academic sanctions for violations of the Academic Integrity Policy within their courses, up to an including a final grade of “F” in the course in which the violation occurs.

#### **II. Definitions:**

1. Cheating – Using, or attempting to use, unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

2. Fabrication – Creating and/or falsifying information or citation in any academic exercise.
3. Plagiarism – Representing the words or ideas of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise.
4. Facilitation – Helping or attempting to help someone to commit a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in any academic exercise (e.g. allowing another person to copy information during an examination).

### **III. Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Integrity Process:**

1. Within five (5) business days of the instructor’s knowledge of the alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, s/he will inform his/her department head (or associate Dean of the graduate school when applicable) in writing of the allegation and proposed sanction(s).
2. Within ten (10) business days of the instructor’s knowledge of the alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the instructor will inform the student of the allegation, including the proposed sanction(s), in writing. In the written notification, the instructor will inform the student of his/her right to request a meeting with the instructor. During the meeting, the instructor shall complete the Academic Integrity Violation Faculty Resolution Form. If the student does not request a meeting with the instructor within five (5) business days of receipt of the written allegation(s), the student shall be deemed to have mutually resolved the matter and shall be bound to the sanction(s) outlined by the instructor in the written allegation. If the student does not request a meeting, the alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy shall not be subject to further review and/or appeal.
3. Within five (5) business days of meeting with the instructor, the student shall either appeal the decision to the department head or mutually resolve the matter by accepting the allegation and proposed sanction(s). No action by the student within five (5) business days of the meeting with the instructor shall constitute a mutual resolution and waiver of the student’s rights to appeal pursuant to the Academic Integrity Policy. If the student does not respond within five (5) business days of meeting with the instructor, the alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy shall not be subject to further review and/or appeal.
4. Within five (5) business days of receiving a student’s appeal, the department head must schedule a meeting with the student. The instructor may be present during the meeting. During the meeting, the department head shall complete the Academic Integrity Violation Department Head Resolution Form. Only information submitted during the meeting with the student, or in the meeting between the instructor and the student, may be considered by the department head. The evidentiary standard for making a decision shall be preponderance of the evidence. The department head may agree or disagree with the allegation(s) of the instructor. The department head may also approve, overturn, or modify the sanction(s) proposed by the instructor. If the student does not attend the scheduled meeting with the department head, the matter will be heard in absentia and shall not be subject to further review and/or appeal.

5. Within five (5) business days of meeting with the department head, the student shall either appeal the decision to an Academic Integrity Board or mutually resolve the matter by accepting the allegation and proposed sanction(s). The student must submit an appeal to the academic Dean listed on the Academic Integrity Violation Department Head Resolution Form. No action by the student within five (5) business days of the meeting with the department head shall constitute a mutual resolution and waiver of the student's rights to appeal pursuant to the Academic Integrity Policy. If the student does not respond within five (5) business days of meeting with the department head, the alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy shall not be subject to further review and/or appeal.
6. Within seven (7) business days of receiving a student's appeal, the appropriate academic Dean must schedule an Academic Integrity Board hearing with the student. The Academic Integrity Board shall consist of a minimum of two (2) currently enrolled students and/or faculty members (with a minimum of one faculty member). A faculty member will serve as chair of the board. The instructor may be present during the hearing. Only information submitted during the hearing, or in the meetings between the instructor/department head and the student, may be considered by the hearing board. The evidentiary standard for making a decision shall be preponderance of the evidence. The hearing board may agree or disagree with the allegation(s) of the instructor. The hearing board may also approve, overturn, or modify the sanction(s) proposed by the instructor and/or department head. If the student does not attend the scheduled hearing, the matter will be heard in absentia and shall not be subject to further review and/or appeal. Within ten (10) business days of the hearing, the appropriate academic Dean shall review pertinent records and send the student written notification of the decision of the Academic Integrity Board.
7. Within five (5) business days of receiving written notification of the decision of the Academic Integrity Board the student may accept the findings and sanctions of the board or submit an appeal to the designated academic Dean. No action by the student within five (5) business days of the meeting with the department head shall constitute a mutual resolution and waiver of the student's rights to appeal pursuant to the Academic Integrity Policy. If the student does not respond within five (5) business days of meeting with the Academic Integrity Board, the alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy shall not be subject to further review and/or appeal.
8. If the student elects to file an appeal of the decision of the Academic Integrity Board, she must submit a written appeal within five (5) business days of receiving written notification of the decision of the Academic Integrity Board to the designated academic Dean. An appeal to an academic Dean must be limited to the following grounds; 1) a violation or due process or 2) a material deviation from Substantive and Procedural Standards by the UNC Board of Governors (as set forth in the UNC Manual 700.4.1).
9. If an appeal is heard by an academic Dean, s/he shall review pertinent records within ten (10) business days of receiving a valid appeal. The academic Dean may agree or disagree with the allegation(s) of the instructor. The academic Dean may also approve, overturn, or modify the sanction(s) proposed by the

instructor, department head, and or Academic Integrity Board. Within five (5) days of making a decision, the academic Dean shall provide the student with a written decision. The decision of the academic Dean shall be final.

10. The student must remain enrolled in the course related to the case, and may not be permitted to withdraw from the course related to the case, until all hearing timelines, notifications, and/or appeals have been completed.
11. Upon resolution of each level of the case (no matter the outcome), the instructor, department head, and academic Dean must provide the Department of Student Community Ethics with all materials and documents related to the case (i.e. course syllabus, materials in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, Instructor Resolution Form, Department Head Resolution Form, Academic Integrity Board decision letter, academic Dean decision letter, etc...). The Department of Student Community Ethics shall serve as the repository for all records associated with allegations and violations associated with the Academic Integrity Policy.

#### **IV. Academic Integrity Board:**

The Academic Integrity Board shall consist of a minimum of two (2) currently enrolled students and/or faculty members (with a minimum of one faculty member). A faculty member will serve as chair of the board. Students and faculty members serving on boards for each college will be selected by each college Dean. The Department of Student Community Ethics will train all board members prior to their service on a hearing board. Each academic Dean will convene hearing boards as necessary, and will determine a faculty member to serve as chair prior to a hearing.

#### **V. Sanctions:**

The instructor, department head, Academic Integrity Board, and/or academic Dean may impose academic sanctions permitted by the institution (not to exceed receiving a grade of "F" for the course). The instructor, department head, Academic Integrity Board, and/or academic Dean may not permanently remove the student from the course or suspend/expel the student from a program or the University. Student behavior of the magnitude to warrant consideration for permanent removal from the course or suspension/expulsion from a program or the University must be referred to the Department of Student Community Ethics.

#### **VI. Habitual Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy:**

Upon receipt of materials associated with violations of the Academic Integrity Policy, the Department of Student Community Ethics will determine if a student has previous violations of University policies. Students with a prior record of violations, or who commits a gross and/or egregious violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, will be referred to the Department of Student Community Ethics for consideration of being subject to hearing proceedings as a habitual violator. Students with three or more violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will automatically be subject to hearing proceedings as a habitual violator. Students in this category are subject to course-

related sanctions imposed by the instructor, department head, Academic Integrity Board, and/or academic Dean and University-level sanctions imposed by the Department of Student Community Ethics for habitual violations of University policies.

Additional information is available on the Student Success website under Student Community Ethics.