PSY 6381
Research Proposal
Development
fall, 2018
James Forbes, PhD
COURSE TITLE & NUMBER
PSY 6381
Research Proposal Development

CREDITS
Three Semester Credit Hours (3-0-0)
Online Class: Meets completely online using Blackboard

PREREQUISITE COURSES
Graduate Status

FACULTY Instructor
JAMES FORBES, PhD
Office: Academic 204B
Phone: (325) 486-6120
Email: James.Forbes@Angelo.Edu

OFFICE HOURS
MTWRF 11AM - noon & 1:30PM – 2PM; or by appointment

COURSE DELIVERY
This is an online course offering. The course will be delivered via the Blackboard Learning Management System. The course site can be accessed at http://blackboard.angelo.edu

COMMUNICATION
I will respond to your questions posted on Bb or sent via email and/or telephone messages within 24 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. Weekend and holiday questions messages may not be returned until the next school day!

ONLINE COURSE ISSUES
This course will be taught entirely on-line. We will not meet in person, unless you choose to visit me in my campus office. Consequently, much responsibility for developing a viable research proposal rests with you. I will give you a schedule of events (viz., readings, assignments, exercises, applications, discussion topics, and due dates); you will have to ensure that you keep pace with the schedule. If you manage your time effectively and focus your interests and energy on the course objectives, you will fare well in this on-line course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS
We will engage in the process of identifying suitable research topics, selecting variables, considering a research design and methods, reviewing the literature, and writing a proposal for empirical research. Your research proposal will address an applied or fundamental question of interest to you. A written report of your research proposal will be due at the end of the semester. You may collaborate with others on the same project, but each of you complete an individually written proposal.

To help you with your research proposal development, we will discuss the myriad details of conducting empirical research and communicating findings. We will also read and discuss individual research articles with the aim of learning directly from the published work of successful researchers.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

You will have opportunities to:

1. Develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in fields related to this course.
2. Apply course material to improve thinking about how to address practical problems.
3. Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
4. Develop skill in expressing ideas and arguments in writing.

Student Learning Outcomes

You will be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>CORRESPONDING ASSESSMENTS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Develop an empirical applied or fundamental research topic or question.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, empirical research proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Apply psychological research findings and methods to address personal, applied, fundamental, or professional issues.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, IRB proposal request, empirical research proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Write an empirical research proposal for a topic and question of importance to you.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, IRB proposal request, empirical research proposal</td>
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EVALUATION AND GRADES

Course grades will be dependent upon completing course requirements and meeting the student learning outcomes.

Final course grades will be calculated as follows: Course Grade = Assignments Score (30%) + Discussion Board Score (20%) + Empirical Research Proposal (50%).

The grading scale for the course will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSESSMENT/ACTIVITY</td>
<td>PERCENT OF TOTAL GRADE</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical Research Proposal</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COURSE GRADE</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
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TEACHING STRATEGIES

You are expected to be “active learners.” It is a basic assumption of the instructor that students will be involved (beyond the materials and lectures presented in the course) in discovering, processing, and applying the course information using peer-review journal articles, researching additional information and examples on the Internet, and discussing course material and experiences with their peers.

METHODS OF ASSESSING LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes will be assessed via a variety of assignments, weekly discussion posts, and one empirical research proposal.

1. **Assignments** (30% of your course grade). Assignments are embedded within four learning modules (Module 1, Module 2, Module 3, Module 4). All of the assignments will help you develop your proposal for empirical research, relate course material to your own experiences, and give you an opportunity to construct *(belief architecture)* or reveal *(belief archeology)* your own beliefs about psychology and its applications. Many of the assignments will help you learn skills needed to write an APA style research proposal.

   Scoring & Grading. Assignments will be graded using a 5-, 10-, or other point scale, where a 5, 10, or other point total are the highest scores obtainable. *Please note that assignment scoring and grading are separate processes*. Your assignment score will be the proportion of the total points you obtain. At the *very end* of the semester, I will sum your assignment scores, evaluate the class assignment score distribution, then assign assignment grades that reflect the difficulty of the exercise. The highest total assignment scores will receive an "A," the next group of scores will receive a "B," and so on. Hence, your assignment grade will be based on your performance relative to your peers rather than to some arbitrary standard of excellence.

2. **Discussion Boards** (20% of your course grade). Discussion forums are posted on the Discussions tab. I will add forums as we progress through the semester. Participating in the discussion forums will help you consider a variety of issues regarding proposal development. Reflecting on others’ posts, and posting your thoughts about proposal development will help you clarify and enrich your thinking.

   Scoring & Grading. Discussion forum posts will be evaluated using a 10-point scale. The highest scores will be awarded to those who make insightful comments or responses. Echoing others’ opinions and comments made only at the very end of the discussion forum due date will be awarded the lowest scores. Scoring and grading are separate processes. A single discussion score is not a grade. Your cumulative discussion boards score will be the proportion of the total points you obtain (e.g, 96 of 115). At the *very end* of the semester, I will sum your discussion forum scores, evaluate the class discussion forum score distribution, then assign discussion boards grades that reflect the difficulty of the exercise.
The highest total discussion boards scores will receive an "A," the next group of scores will receive a "B," and so on. Hence, your discussion boards grade will be based on your performance relative to your peers—not to some arbitrary standard of excellence. Your discussion boards grade will count as 15% of your final course grade.

Blackboard Location: Discussion board forums are posted under the Discussion Boards tab on Blackboard. Each forum will have availability dates posted during with time the forum will be open and accessible.

3. **Empirical Research Proposal** (50% of your course grade). You will write an empirical research proposal using APA style on a topic and question of interest to you. Your proposal will link your topic and question(s) to the existing published literature. Your proposal will evaluate, explain, compare, findings and methods from published research that have been or could be used or revised or adapted to better address your question and topic. Your proposal will also identify a sample, describe materials needed for the conduct of the research, and describe research design and procedures.

**Proposal Format (APA style).** Your written proposal will include a title page, an abstract, an introduction/literature review, a method section, and references. Your proposal will also include appendices of any materials needed to conduct the proposed research (e.g., photos, prose passages, questionnaires,…). The body of your proposal (introduction through method section) should be about 8 to 10 pages.

**GENERAL POLICIES RELATED TO THIS COURSE**
All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in the following documents:

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & ATTENDANCE**
**ON-LINE:** This class is an asynchronous, meaning you do not have to be on-line at a certain time. There are readings which you will have to complete to be able to adequately participate in individual and group assignments. In order to complete this course successfully, you do have to participate in all course activities i.e. discussion boards, course projects, assignments, etc. Students are expected to engage in course activities and submit work by due dates and times. The hope is that students will make substantive contributions which reflect integration of assigned materials as well as any outside readings as appropriate. Scholarly contribution is an expectation. For planning purposes, this class will probably require a minimum of 6-9 study hours per week on average.

**LATE WORK OR MISSED ASSIGNMENTS POLICY**
Due dates and times for assignments are posted in the course schedule. Late assignments are not accepted without my prior approval. I may deduct points for late assignments that are accepted past the original due date.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**
Academic honesty is expected on all work. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their online experiences. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

The Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work adheres to the academic honesty statement as set forth in the Angelo State University Student Handbook (2011-2012) [http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code](http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code). The University “faculty expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain
complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom setting and may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials."

PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism at ASU is a serious topic. The Angelo State University’s Honor Code gives specific details on plagiarism and what it encompasses. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word for word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. We use the APA Style Manual of the American Psychological Association as a guide for all writing assignments. Quotes should be used sparingly. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Bb Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center http://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
1. “Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.”

2. The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Office of Student Affairs, University Center, Room 112 at (325) 942-2047 or (325) 942-2211 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Office of Student Affairs will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students determined to be disabled or who have documented disabilities.

STUDENT ABSENCE FOR OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS
“A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence.”

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY (OP 10.11 Grading Procedures)
ASU policy is that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact me if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work.
Documented may be required.

COPYRIGHT POLICY
Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

SYLLABUS & COURSE SCHEDULE CHANGES
I may make changes as necessary to this syllabus, the course content, or the course schedule. If changes become necessary during this course, I will notify you by email or course announcements.
It is your responsibility to look for such communications about the course on a regular basis.