



**Department of Foundational & Graduate Studies in Education
Programs in Education
EDF600 Research Methods in Education
Online course Spring 2012**

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Instructor Biography:

Dr. Jones earned an associate degree in business from Huntington Junior College (Huntington WV). She then went on to study pre-medicine at Shawnee State University, earning a BS in Natural Science in 2000. Afterward, she began teaching mathematics at Ashland Community & Technical College, where she continues to teach and consult part-time. Dr. Jones also serves as a part-time doctoral research professor at Northcentral University in Prescott Valley, Arizona. She earned an MA in Leadership Studies from Marshall University Graduate College in August 2004, and completed a doctorate in Educational Leadership – Higher Education Administration, with cognates in Adult Learning, College Teaching, and Educational Research, in December 2006. In addition, she studied Federal Tax Law at Washington School of Law. Prior to coming to MSU in January 2009, she worked in corporate operations management and educational research & evaluation. She is the former owner of Star Valley Tax in Ironton, OH.

MSU Office Hours: Tuesday noon-8pm; Wednesday 8am-8pm

Virtual Office Hours: Skype & Wimba, by arrangement, 7 days a week

Prerequisites: Admission to graduate school

Course Structure: This course is presented entirely online, using the Blackboard delivery portal. All students are expected to thoroughly read the course text, actively engage in the discussion forums when discussions are posted, check the Communications tab at least two times per week and respond to instructor e-mail, and submit all assignments in their entirety by the due dates and times noted. The class consists of intensive reading, exams, assignments, and the development and execution of an independent quantitative research project.

Communication: It is preferred that students post course-related questions and issues to the **General Questions** discussion forum on Blackboard. If the matter is grade-related or something else which requires discretion, then please send an e-mail through the **Communications** tab on Blackboard. Under normal circumstances, the instructor will check Blackboard a minimum of once per day Monday-Friday, and will respond to any questions or e-mail posted.

Timeliness of Grading/Feedback: Under normal circumstances, grades will be posted within 48-72 hours after the **closing time** of any assignment (although grades are often posted much sooner). Students are encouraged to work ahead on assignments, so that there is ample time to make any needed corrections to the different sections of the research proposal. The instructor will make every effort to review & grade early-submitted assignments or critiques before the promised timeframe.

General Course Commentary: This course is very technical in nature, and is an NCATE-based course. Central to educational research is to consistently and purposively investigate current issues that are of great significance to the field. The goal is for this course to be strongly academically engaging, so that at the end of the semester, we all have a stronger understanding of both the importance of conducting educational research, and greater knowledge of how to conduct, analyze, and critique research. *You will see this material again on exit exams in Foundation & Graduate Studies, MAT programs, and all elementary/secondary/special education graduate programs.*

Catalog Description: Selection, delineation, and statement of a research problem, techniques of bibliography building, methods of organization, recognized methods of investigation, application of statistical methods to research problems, and style standards for research writing. Attention given to the educational curriculum framework.

Field Experience Hours: N/A

Conceptual Framework Theme:

“Community Engagement: A Light to and From the Mountains”

The Professional Education Unit at Morehead State University delivers rigorous, high quality programs that prepare professionals informed by best national and international scholarship, plus research, literature, and experiences specific to Appalachia – preparing professionals to improve the schools, quality of life, and the communities in which they live and serve. This statement is not only the strategic mission for the College, but it also incorporates the conceptual framework that guides all our activities

Out of this vision flow the following critical outcomes: *Informed Decision making, Holistic Education, Collaboration/Coalition Building, and Empowerment.*

Conceptual Framework Outcomes (CFO's):

The Unit and the faculty with individual programs assess the degree to which its graduates:

1. Master the content knowledge, professional and the twenty-first century skills needed to make an optimal contribution to “whole” student learning in educational settings.
2. Are competent in the collection and use of data to inform decision-making and to demonstrate accountability for student learning.
3. Demonstrate professional dispositions.
4. Are culturally competent and understand the regions from which they have come utilizing knowledge and experiences to effectively “bridge the gaps” (economic, achievement, and geographic) ensuring optimal learning for all students.
5. Engage in authentic field experiences in collaboration with committed school based partners and are empowered to improve the quality of education throughout this region and beyond.

Student Learner Outcomes/Course Goals: At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the varying research methodologies, epistemologies, and ideologies prevalent in educational research;
2. Recognize and define research problems related to work situations;
3. Locate and evaluate research literature from sources such as the Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse (ERIC), EBSCO Academic Search Premier, Google Scholar and the Internet.
4. Clearly state a research problem and hypothesis;
5. Determine adequate procedures for sampling, data collection, and data analysis;
6. Interpret research results and draw conclusions from them regarding the research problem;
7. Present research results in writing;
8. Use APA style citations and referencing in a written research report.

Student Learner Outcomes focused on Technological Competencies: At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Follow external Internet links to research material;
2. Communicate effectively via e-mail messaging, discussion boards, and written assignments submitted online;
3. Increase keyboarding and word processing skills;
4. Analyze and synthesize ideas through original writing.

Required Texts:

Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. W. (2012). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications* (10th ed.). New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall (Students may also use the 9th edition, but it is noted that all chapter exams are aligned with the new 2012 printing, and the updated/changed info is not reflected in older versions.)

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). (2009). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Supplemental Information:

The publisher provides a companion website for our text. You will find chapter summaries, quizzes, links to other pertinent information, and more at <http://www.prenhall.com/gay>

Technical Requirements:

The course management system used in this course is Blackboard Version 7.3. If you are not familiar with Blackboard, please log in through the MSU campus site, and complete the Student Tutorial. All of the technical requirements listed below refer to compatibility with Blackboard Version 9.1:

- **Internet Access:** You must have access to a computer with an Internet connection and an e-mail account. A broadband Internet connection is preferred over dial-up (but this may not be available in all geographic areas). If you do not have access to reliable internet access, then it is in your best interest to *not* take this course.
- **Supported Operating Systems and Browsers:** In order for Blackboard 7.3 to function properly, you must use a compatible operating system and browser. Blackboard is not compatible with Firefox and some other browsers. To determine whether or not your current browser is compatible, log into the Blackboard system and complete the Browser Check. If your system is not compatible, you will be given recommendations and instructions for compatible operating systems and browsers. For a complete list of compatible systems and browsers, visit <http://kb.blackboard.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=25368490>
- **Browser Configuration:** Regardless of the browser you are using, it must be configured to work properly with Blackboard. Many problems that students encounter can be traced back to an improperly configured browser. You must ensure that:
 - **Java** and **JavaScript** are enabled
 - **Cache** is set to reload the page each time
 - **Cookies** are enabled
 - **Pop-up blockers** are disabled
- **Java:** It is important that your system be loaded with only one Java system. Having more than one version of Java has found to be the cause of many problems with Blackboard. You can remove any versions of Java by clicking on the *Start* button, then click on *Settings* and *Control Panel*. Double-click *Add or Remove Programs* and then delete any previous versions of Java.
- **Pop-up Blockers:** Pop-up blockers must be disabled when working with the Blackboard system, as they keep the Mail, Tools, Discussion, and Quiz functions from operating properly.
- **Software:** Microsoft-based computer software programs are required, inclusive of Microsoft Word 97-2003 or Microsoft Word 2010. Assignment submissions can only be made through .doc or .docx formats – as other formats may not be compatible with Blackboard, and these formats are required for linkage to plagiarism detection software programs that are utilized.
- **Skill:** Students must be proficient in the use of the Blackboard online course delivery system, and all technical equipment and software mentioned above. Students must be able to develop and configure documents in APA 6th edition format and: (1) track changes, (2) perform spelling and grammar checks, (3) read comment blocks, (4) attach documents to electronic drop-boxes and discussion forums.

Assignment Descriptions:

Program: all graduate education programs Course: Research Methods in Education (EDF600)	
Assessment (point value)	Description
Plagiarism Tutorials (no points awarded)	All students are required to complete two unique plagiarism tutorials. Information on these two tutorials are available under the 'Assignments' tab on the Blackboard site. Students must achieve 80% mastery on the plagiarism tutorials before continuing with any other course work. <i>(Related course objective: 3)</i>
Literature Searching Exercise (50 points)	This assignment will take place very early in the semester, and will help students learn to locate appropriate material for the development of their research proposal. Students must submit this assignment after the plagiarism tutorial, and before submitting any work on the individual research proposal. This assignment may be re-submitted if the student wishes to increase the score earned. <i>(Related course objective: 3)</i>
Blackboard Discussion (50 points)	The instructor may post research-related questions, selected sections of fellow students' research projects/proposals, or portions of research reports for answer and/or discussion. Many of these discussion forums are specifically designed to navigate students toward appropriate research topics, problem statements, etc. Individual discussions are expected to be academically engaging, thoughtful, and of the level of discourse that one would expect in graduate level studies. It is desired that all students will check the discussion forums a minimum of 2 times per week for the duration of the semester and participate as appropriate. As the discussion is not an 'assignment', it carries no points value. However, it is very important to use the board in order to communicate with the instructor in the development of the research proposal. <i>(Related course objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)</i>
Exams (380 points)	There are 14 exams, covering the entire text. Each exam ranges from 10 to 25 multiple-choice questions, and each question is valued at 2 points each, for a total of 380 points. The questions are designed in a way that makes it difficult to "look up" the answer. You MUST read the appropriate chapter(s) before attempting the exams. The majority of exam questions will require application of textbook concepts into real-world research scenarios. Time limits: Each exam is structured with a timer, and the amount of time for the exam depends on (1) the number of test items, and (2) whether or not statistical calculations are required. Time limits are in place to ensure (1)

	students don't simply try to look up answers in the book {it is expected that textbook material be read until it is understood}, and (2) to reduce instances where students may attempt to work on exams together {such instances will result in automatic failure for the course, and may result in additional disciplinary action from the university}. Question format: All items are multiple-choice. Questions come from the textbook manufacturer instructor database. All questions and answers are randomized. <i>(Related course objectives: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)</i>
Basic Research Plan (50 points)	Students will develop a brief (2-3 page) Basic Research Plan that will help guide the development of the Major Project. This Basic Research Plan is fully described in Chapter 4 of the text. <i>(Related course objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)</i>
Major Project (470 points)	Students in all terms will design a quantitative research project, formally known as a <i>research proposal</i> . This will be the major project of the semester, and will be guided by various deadlines throughout regular 16-week terms. Students will work with the instructor to select an agreeable and appropriate topic. Significant guidance will be provided. <i>(Related course objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)</i>
Final Comprehensive Exam (optional – replaces the 4 lowest chapter exam scores)	There will be a comprehensive final exam that focuses on all material covered in the textbook. The exam will be open-book, open-note, and is not timed. The exam will be a mix of short answer, multiple choice, and/or application exercises. STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO WORK TOGETHER WITH OTHER STUDENTS IN COMPLETING THE EXAM. To help ensure academic honesty, there are multiple versions of this exam, and students are not made aware of which version they have been issued. Students will be provided with a minimum of 5 calendar days to complete the test. Final exams must be submitted no later than the posted due date/time. No late submissions are accepted.

Grading:

- Blackboard discussion participation: **50 points**
- Literature Searching exercise: **50 points**
- Basic Research Plan: **50 points**
- Exams: 14 exams, total of 190 questions x 2 points each = **380 points**
- *Major project* – Development and completion of a research project: **470**
 - Abstract: 20 points
 - Introduction (aka Chapter 1): 150 points
 - Introduction – 10 points
 - Background – 30 points
 - Problem – 10 points
 - Purpose – 10 points

- Theoretical Foundation – 20 points
- Significance – 10 points
- Research Questions – 10 points
- Null Hypotheses – 10 points
- Hypothesis – 10 points
- Major Delimitations and Limitations – 10 points
- Operational Definitions – 10 points
- Summary – 10 points
- Review of Literature (aka Chapter 2): 90 points
 - Introduction – 10 points
 - body of review – 70 points
 - Summary – 10 points
- Methods (aka Chapter 3): 130 points
 - Introduction – 10 points
 - Restatement of Research Questions – 0 points
 - Research Design – 20 points
 - Subjects and Sampling – 20 points
 - Instrumentation – 20 points
 - Collection of Data – 20 points
 - Data Analysis – 30 points
 - Summary – 10 points
- References/Referencing: 30 points
- Overall academic quality of the final submission, including proper APA 6th edition format: 50 points (no revisions permitted on final submission)

Grading Scale :

90-100% (900-1000 points)	= A	(Superior graduate-level work)
80-89.9% (800-899 points)	= B	(Average graduate-level work)
70-79.9% (700-799 points)	= C	(Below average graduate-level work)
60-69.9% (600-699 points)	= D	(No credit – computed at 0.0 GPA points)
<60% (0-599 points)	= E	(No credit – computed at 0.0 GPA points)

Note: Please be aware of your individual program guidelines pertaining to grades of C or below. No graduate program at MSU permits D's or E's for satisfactory completion of any degree requirement. Many programs limit the number of C's that students can use toward a graduate degree (typically a limit of 2). Graduate grading scales are different than undergraduate scales. In grad school, B's are considered 'average', and as an undergrad a C is would have been considered 'average'.

Instructor Policy on Incomplete Work:

Incompletes are granted only on the rarest of occasions. It is NOT my policy to issue a grade of 'Incomplete' unless the following criteria are met:

- *More than 3/4 of the work has been satisfactorily completed for the course;*
- *The student was on track with all work up to the course withdrawal date set by the university;*

- *The non-completion of work has been due to extreme and unforeseen Individual/Personal/Family hardship or circumstance for which the instructor was made fully aware in a timely fashion. The issue must have initiated during the last 2-weeks of a regular term course, or the last 3 days of a summer-term course. {If events happen prior to the withdraw deadline, and it is anticipated that those events will prohibit the timely completion of the course, then the student is expected to withdraw from the course.}*

Attendance Policy: This online course has no mandated physical attendance, but students are required to maintain appropriate online attendance and participation.

Course Calendar: A detailed course calendar is provided at the end of this syllabus.

Diversity: This course promotes understanding issues of diversity and multicultural influences within the broad framework of research in education. Students may elect to focus their research proposals on a diversity-related topic area, but this is not a requirement. Given the more technical nature of this course, content focusing on diversity as a socio-cultural construct is not an appropriate focal point. Students will find that this course entails learning the process of how to develop, conduct, report, and evaluate educational research. While diversity of teaching and learning methods will be apparent, the concept of diversity is limited to that scope.

Campus Safety (for classes meeting on MSU campus): Emergency response information will be discussed in class. Students should familiarize themselves with the nearest exit routes in the event that evacuation becomes necessary. You should notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester if you have special needs or will require assistance during an emergency evacuation. Students should familiarize themselves with emergency response protocols at www.moreheadstate.edu/emergency.

Assignment Revisions:

Students have the option of re-submitting sections of the major research project. *Because the research study is the major component of this course, and because this work is paramount in the educational field, we are working toward mastery of the process. Students can expect to receive extensive feedback on the work they submit for the major research project. Because of the vast amount of time that the instructor will spend working with each individual student, it is expected that students will work on revisions (as necessary) with the goal of attaining producing a high-quality, complete and correct research proposal.* During regular academic terms, the re-submissions of major project sections are due **NO LATER than 7 days after the graded assignment is initially returned to the student.** There will be no re-submission permitted of the final research proposal, due to end-of-semester time constraints.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism or helping others to commit these acts will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty will result in severe disciplinary action including but not limited to, failure of the student assessment item or course, and/or dismissal from MSU. If you are not sure what constitutes academic dishonesty, read the Eagle: Student Handbook or ask your

instructor. The policy is located at <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/advising/index.aspx?id=8311>

Please see the additional information provided by the instructor regarding plagiarism prevention. No amount of plagiarism is ever acceptable, and will never be tolerated in this class. The instructor utilizes two different plagiarism detection systems, and compares all submitted work against work submitted in previous courses. Any verified instance of plagiarism will be dealt with according to the published MSU standards (link above). Because of the significant coursework specifically dealing with the prevention of plagiarism, any verified instance of plagiarism/academic dishonesty will result in failure of this course.

Timeliness of Assignments:

Because of the intense workload in this course, it is imperative that students adhere to the posted due dates. Students are provided with a full calendar of the entire semester at the start of the term. If you anticipate an issue that may prohibit you from completing an assignment on time, then you should be pro-active and start working on this assignment early. Any assignment/quiz/exam received more than 24 hours after the posted due date will result in a 25% reduction in possible points. Sections of the major project can be re-submitted in order for the student to enhance their level of mastery and increase the grade, but if the initial work was submitted late then the 25% reduction in possible points will still stand.

Policy for Accommodating Students with Disabilities

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), all students with a documented disability are entitled to reasonable accommodations and services to support their academic success and safety. Though a request for services may be made at any time, services are best applied when they are requested at or before the start of the semester. To receive accommodations and services, the students should immediately contact the Disability Services Coordinator in the Office of Academic and Career Services, 223 Allie Young Hall, 606-783-5188, www.moreheadstate.edu/acs/. Professional staff from the MSU Academic Services Center (ACS) coordinates efforts to address accessibility needs and class accommodations with instructors of students who have learning or physical disabilities. Faculty will cooperate with the ACS staff to accommodate the needs of students enrolled in departmental classes.

FERPA

Educational records are kept by University offices to facilitate the educational development of students. Faculty and staff members may also keep informal records relating to their functional responsibilities with individual students.

A federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (aka FERPA, aka the Buckley Amendment) as amended, affords students certain rights concerning their student educational records. Students have the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from the records. Educational institutions have the responsibility to prevent improper disclosure of personally identifiable information from the records.

Course Calendar – Spring 2012

Friday, January 20, 2012	Plagiarism Tutorials due
Saturday, January 21, 2012	Chapter 1 Exam due
Wednesday, January 25, 2012	Chapter 2 Exam due
Saturday, January 28, 2012	Deadline for approval of general research area
Wednesday, February 1, 2012	Chapter 3 Exam due
	Last date to receive approval for Research Topic
Saturday, February 4, 2012	Chapter 4 Exam due
Wednesday, February 8, 2012	Last date to submit Literature Searching Assignment
Saturday, February 11, 2012	Chapter 5 Exam due
Wednesday, February 15, 2012	Chapter 6 Exam due
Saturday, February 18, 2012	Last date to submit Basic Research Plan
Wednesday, February 22, 2012	Chapter 7 Exam due
Saturday, February 25, 2012	Chapter 8 Exam due
Saturday, March 3, 2012	Chapter 1 (Introduction) is due
Wednesday, March 7, 2012	Chapter 9 Exam due
Saturday, March 10, 2012	Chapter 10-11 Exam is due
Wednesday, March 14, 2012	---nothing due today---
Saturday, March 17, 2012	Chapter 1 (Revisions) due
Sunday, March 18 – Saturday March 24	SPRING BREAK
Wednesday, March 28, 2012	Chapter 12 Exam is due
Saturday, March 31, 2012	---nothing due today – students working on Review of Lit
Wednesday, April 4, 2012	Chapter 2 (Review of Literature) is due
Saturday, April 7, 2012	Chapter 13 Exam is due
Wednesday, April 11, 2012	---nothing due today -- reading Chapters 14-20 & revising Chapter 2 Review of Lit
Saturday, April 14, 2012	Chapter 2 (Revisions) due
Wednesday, April 18, 2012	Chapter 14 – 20 Exam due today
Saturday, April 21, 2012	Chapter 3 (Methods) is due
Wednesday, April 25, 2012	--nothing due today – making revisions to Chapter 3
Saturday, April 28, 2012	Chapter 21-22 Exam is due
Wednesday, May 2, 2012	Chapter 3 Revisions due
Friday, May 4th	Last Regular Day of Term before finals week
Saturday, May 5, 2012	Research Proposal Due
Wednesday, May 9, 2012	OPTIONAL Final Exam Due