

MOUNT SAINT VINCENT UNIVERSITY  
Department of Child and Youth Study

Course Title:

Research Methods in Child and Youth Study  
CHYS 2211 (02) Winter 2010

Location:

TBA

Instructor:

Mr. Robert S. Wright, MSW, RSW

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Office hours:

I will not hold regular office hours during this semester; however, I will make myself available to students at mutually convenient, pre-arranged times and locations. My preferred method of communicating with students during the semester is email. It is essential that you place CHYS as a prefix in the subject line of all emails to me. I look forward to discussing with you your concerns, questions, suggestions, problems, etc. related to the course and the profession in general.

Course Description:

This course is designed to familiarize students with current research methodologies in the social sciences. Emphasis will be placed on the student's ability to evaluate the quality, and potential for application of research in the field of child and youth studies.

Required Text:

Cozby, P. (2009). Methods in Behavioural Research. (10<sup>th</sup> edition). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Supplementary Texts and Resources:

Other items will be identified and added to the online version of the syllabus as readings for particular classes. All items will be available

either through the online reading list on the MSVU Library site or will be on reserve. Every effort is made to make the instructor's lecture notes available online. The instructor will also be recruiting volunteer notetakers. These notes, taken during class will be digitized and also placed online. This is an attempt to make materials available for students with disabilities, though all students are likely to benefit from this.

#### Course Objectives:

- 1) Help students to understand the basics of methodological reasoning – how to formulate research problems and how to understand issues of social causality.
- 2) Introduce students to the process of making ethical decisions in doing research.
- 3) Give students an understanding of the nuts and bolts issues of research – e.g., sampling, measurement and research design.
- 4) Allow students to develop their abilities as researcher by conducting a project using three specific methodologies.
- 5) Make students more critical consumers of the social science knowledge presented to them in their everyday lives..

#### Course Requirements:

There will be no quizzes or time limited, invigilated exams in this course. Students will be evaluated on their take-home written work and participation in general and specific in-class activities.

#### Two Research Article Reviews:

Students will critique 2 research articles using a standard template. Both will be provided by the instructor. These papers will be a maximum of 3 pages in length, which includes an APA standard cover page; the template; and a third, double spaced APA standard formatted page. A fourth page may be used only if it is a reference page. Students will be penalized for providing more pages than are requested.

#### Design a Research Paper, Parts A & B:

Students will prepare a 5 page design paper for an original piece of research. This paper will be prepared in two stages. More details will be provided for this assignment in class.

#### In-class Activities and Participation:

Most classes will be organized in a fashion that includes some lecture, review of class readings, small group discussions, in class writing assignments, structured activities and discussions of relevant,

contemporary issues. Students are expected to demonstrate a working knowledge of the assigned readings and engagement with materials presented in lectures.

Evaluation:

Unless otherwise negotiated (we will discuss the concept of flexible evaluation in class), students will be evaluated on the assigned material using the following weighting

Research Article Review #1	15%
Research Article Review #2	20%
Design a REsearch Study Part A	25%
Design a Research Study Part B	25%
In-Class Participation	15%

Your instructor will draw upon the normative criteria of academic success that circulate widely throughout academia and that are broadly (if oftentimes rather unquestioningly) used as a basis for credentialing students in the academic milieu. S/he will apply the standards typical for assessing work at an undergraduate level. Please understand that these standards include good writing, thorough research and accurate and complete referencing, with no plagiarizing (plagiarizing is an academic offence). Correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments.

Please note that all deadlines in this course are firm. Late papers may not be evaluated until the next assignment deadline and will lose a full letter grade of their value.

Plagiarism:

University regulations on Plagiarism and Cheating will be strictly enforced. These regulations are posted on boards and are found in the University Calendar and on the website at [www.msvu.ca](http://www.msvu.ca) on the Current Student page under Academic Offences. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's words or ideas obtained from any source, including the Internet, as though they were one's own. Specific offences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using copied material without enclosing that material in quotation marks and/or without appropriately acknowledging its source;
- Paraphrasing or summarizing the original wording too closely;
- Omitting acknowledgment of the source of paraphrases and summaries;
- Submitting work that has been written in full or in part by someone else;
- Submitting work you have submitted for credit in another course without acknowledging its source.
- When working in the context of new and emerging theories, often references are drawn from non-published and non-written sources such as public lectures and personal communications. Students must be diligent to appropriately credit these sources as well.

If students have questions about the correct citation format for any aspect of their academic assessments (written or oral), they should consult their faculty and the library's resource collection on academic integrity.

\*The librarians can help you with APA formatting and referencing and there are several helpful resources available in the library and on line to help you if you are unfamiliar with APA. For example:

APA. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and

Hacker, D. (2004). *A Canadian Writers' Reference*. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

### Class Agenda And Reading Assignments

Date	Topic
January 6	Introduction to the Course, the textbook, and the problems thereof. "What is Research?"
January 11	Introduction to Epistemology. "What is knowledge."
January 13	Introduction to the Three Approaches to Research: Positivism, Interpretive and Critical Social Science
January 18	Reading Research Critically: The anatomy of a research article.
January 20	The Scientific Method: What method, whose science Cozby (2004), Chapter 1
January 25	Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research **Research Article Review #1 DUE**
January 27	CARITAS DAY: No Classes
February 1	Concepts and meaning in research 1: Variables, dependent/independent & control groups Cozby (2004), Chapter 2
February 3	Concepts and meaning in research 2: Operational Definitions Cozby (2004), Chapter 4
February 8	Concepts and meaning in research 3: Reliability and Validity Cozby (2004), Chapter 5, pp. 90-102

February 10	Methods of Sampling and Measurement Cozby (2004), Chapter 5, pp. 102-105; Chapter 7, pp 136-146
February 15	Survey Research Cozby (2004), Chapter 7
February 17	Procedures of Experimental Research Cozby (2004), Chapter 8 **Research Article Review #2 DUE**
February 22	STUDY BREAK: No Classes
February 24	STUDY BREAK: No Classes
March 1	Non-experimental Research Methods Cozby (2004), Chapter 6
March 3	Observational Research Cozby (2004), Chapter 6
March 8	Complex Experimental Design Cozby (2004), Chapter 10
March 10	Quasi-Experimental Design Cozby (2004), Chapter 11
March 15	Descriptive Methods Cozby (2004), Chapter 12, pp. 225-233
March 17	Critical Research Methods **Design a Research Study Part A DUE**
March 22	Correlation Cozby (2004), Chapter 12, pp. 233-246
March 24	Inferential Methods Cozby (2004), Chapter 13
March 29	Ethical and practical considerations in research Cozby (2004), Chapters 3 & 9
March 31	Generalizing Research Results Cozby (2004), Chapter 14
April 5	EASTER MONDAY: No classes

April 7

From Research to Practice . . . making connections  
\*\*Design a Research Study Part B DUE\*\*

April 12

Course Review