

**PSYC 5910 Independent Research Common Syllabus**  
**Counseling Psychology Program**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**University of North Texas**

**Instructor**

Main Research Advisor

**Eligibility and Credit Hours**

Students who come to the Counseling Psychology Program with an acceptable Master's thesis are eligible and required to complete a minimum of 1 credit hour for this course.

**Course Descriptions**

The main purpose of this independent research course is to assist Psychology graduate students in completing a research project that is of publication or presentation quality. Students who are eligible to take this course must have acquired fundamental knowledge and developed basic research competencies through the completion of a Master's thesis in their previous graduate training.

This course is usually carried out via one-on-one meetings or in a small-group format in which the research advisor and the student(s) meet regularly during the semester(s). The acquired knowledge, developed research competencies, and the quality of the research project will be evaluated by the instructor.

The required readings provide an overview of critical elements and topics related to evaluating, developing, and conducting psychology research as well as the procedures of publishing empirical studies. The assigned readings focus on various types of quantitative and qualitative research designs commonly used in the counseling psychology field, research validity and methodological issues, ethical considerations, and data analysis strategies appropriate for the corresponding research designs.

Upon completion of their research projects, students are expected to submit the work for conference presentations and peer-reviewed journal publication. A copy of the final written product (e.g., manuscript for journal publication, conference presentation, etc.) must be placed in the student's file. Completion of at least one conference presentation and one publication in a peer-reviewed journal before graduation are required for students to demonstrate the developed research competencies.

**Objectives**

Students who successfully complete this course will

1. develop knowledge in various types of quantitative and qualitative research designs as well as the merits and limitations associated with different research designs.
2. acquire understanding in different threats to research validity and strategies of mitigating them.
3. demonstrate familiarity of analytical methods appropriate for different research questions.
4. gain experience in conducting and disseminate research.
5. complete a research project with a written product to be submitted for journal publication or conference presentation.

**Textbooks:**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington: American Psychological Association.

Heppner, P. P., Wampold, B. E., & Kivlighan, D. M. (2008). *Research design in counseling* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson.

**Required Journal Article Readings:**

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 155-159.

Frazier, P. A., Tix, A. P., & Barron, K. E. (2004). Testing moderator and mediator effects in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 51(1), 115-134.

Huang, F. L. (2018). Multilevel modeling myths. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 33, 492-499.

Kelley, K., & Preacher, K. J. (2012). On effect size. *Psychological Methods*, 17, 137-152.

Martens, M. P. (2005). The use of structural equation modeling in counseling psychology research. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 33(3), 269-298.

Parent, M. C. (2013). Handling item-level missing data: Simpler is just as good. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 41, 568-600.

Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 126-136.

Schlomer, G. L., Bauman, S., & Card, N. A. (2010). Best practices for missing data management in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 57(1), 1-10.

**Grading:**

Based on the progress and the quality of their outcome products (evaluated by the research advisor), students will receive a letter grade or "I" before the final project is completed. Students are required to complete the project within 12 months or will be required to enroll in this course again for additional 3 credits.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**Final Note:** This syllabus does not constitute a contract and the plans for this course may be modified during the semester. The instructor, the Department of Psychology, and the College of Arts and Sciences reserve the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus (course requirements, grading policy, etc.) as the curriculum and/or programs require(s).