DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
SURVEY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION (*ERM-668*)

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Overview of the Course

This graduate level course will cover theories, methods, and procedures for conducting survey research in education. The course will focus on designing survey instruments, planning a survey research study, and basic survey analysis techniques. Sampling issues will be addressed. Prerequisites: ERM-617 (Statistical Methods in Education) and ERM-618 (Intermediate Statistical Methods in Education) or equivalent coursework.

The course will include some lecture, but will be principally conducted in a seminar format to encourage open discussions and dialog. Lectures will be limited to describing technical aspects of survey research and relevant demonstrations. Class discussions and student presentations will also be incorporated to encourage active participation on everyone=s part in learning about survey research in education.

Course Materials

The *required* course textbooks are:

- Fowler, F. J. (1993). Survey Research Methods, 2nd Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications;

- Frey, J. H. (1989), Survey Research by Telephone, 2nd Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications.

Both books are available from the UNCG bookstore and from www.amazon.com.

This course will require you to use SPSS or another statistical package to analyze data. SPSS version 8.0 or higher is recommended. The SPSS program is available on the UNCG compus network. An annual license can be purchased for a minimum fee from the UNCG Office of Instructional and Research Computing, under license arrangements with SPSS, Inc. Optionally, the SPSS Graduate Student Pack (version 9.0) can by purchased on CD in the UNCG bookstore. Spreadsheet or database programs such as Microsoft's Excel or Access can be used to enter, store and create simple statistical

reports or graphical summaries, but will not conveniently handle all of the required analyses. You will need to use these software packages for completing some of the homework, for the midterm examination, and for some of your project work.

Supplementary book chapters and journal article reprints will be made available throughout the course of the semester. Some of these materials may be placed on reserve in the Jackson Library. Students will be expected to read these materials and, in some cases, present selected topics to the class and lead discussions.

Course Requirements and Grading

You are expected to attend the majority of the lectures/discussions. Please advise me in advance if you if intend to miss class. It is your responsibility to acquire any materials, notes, information or handouts from classes that you miss. Also, please come prepared for every class.

There will be one midterm examination, one in-class presentation, and two required projects. They are described below.

Midterm Examination. The midterm examination will be a take-home examination consisting of essay-type questions and some problems requiring simple statistical analyses. The examination will be scored on a scale of 0 to 100 points. Failure to turn in your test on or before the assigned date will result in a score of zero points.

In-Class Presentation. During the course, you will be asked to find an article in your domain of expertise or study that involves survey research. You will be requested to distribute the article to the class prior to your presentation, and then asked to guide your colleagues through the article (for 10-15 minutes). Please show the article to your professor before making or distributing any copies or ancillary presentation materials. This will allow you to consolidate your learning by interpreting a typical journal article that involves survey research. The in-class presentation will be graded on the basis of thoroughness and clarity using the following point values: 100=exceptional, 90=good/adequate, 80=marginal, 70=poor. If you fail to complete the in-class presentation, you will receive a score of zero points for this part of your grade.

Project #1: Survey Design and Piloting. You will be required to create a real survey instrument in your area of study. The survey instrument should have a sufficient number of items to demonstrate reasonable reliability for the construct(s) of interest. You should design the instrument and pilot test your items on a sample of at least 30 people (random sampling not required, but would be good). Note: you will need to fill out IRB for research subjects forms for this project. To receive credit, you must submit a copy of the survey instrument, a one- to two-page summary of the purpose of the instrument, proposed constructs/scales to be measured, etc., your item analysis and an

analysis of the estimated reliability for each scale. Project #1 will be graded on the basis of thoroughness and clarity using the following point values: 100=exceptional, 90=good/adequate, 80=marginal, 70=poor. If you fail to complete the project, you will receive a score of zero points for this part of your grade.

Project #2. This project will involve *conducting a re-analysis* of an existing data set, from an approved and published source. Your professor will provide the source data, however, with prior approval, you may substitute data form your own survey source (e.g., NELS). You will need to have access to the raw data from the original study. This must be an individual project; shared or collaborative projects will not be accepted. You should conduct a thorough analysis of the data and prepare a 8- to 10-page application paper summarizing the research, your analysis methods, and findings. This paper should be written as if you are submitting it to a journal for publication (e.g. using APA style, word processed with figures and tables, as appropriate). Include any supporting computer printouts from your analysis as an appendix to the paper. With the prior approval of your professor, data from an original research study may be substituted (e.g. using your own dissertation research data). Project #2 will be graded using the following point equivalents: 100=exceptional, 90=good/adequate, 80=marginal, 70=poor. If you fail to complete and hand in the project *on time*, you will receive a score of zero points for this part of your grade.

Homework. Homework will be assigned, as appropriate, but is *voluntary* to complete. If you complete the homework, and turn it in on the assigned date, it will be corrected and returned to you. You may find the homework useful in preparing for the midterm examination, or merely to receive free feedback about your progress and understanding of the material.

Final grading will be based on a weighted average, using the following percentage weights:

In-Class Presentation	20%
Midterm Examination	30%
Project #1	25%
Project #2	25%

The scores for your in-class presentation, midterm examination, and two project will be weighted by the above percentages and summed to arrive at the final grade. Final grades will be assigned as follows:

A	90 and higher
B+	87 to 89
B	80 to 86
C	70 to 79

Grades of D or lower are not allowed by the UNCG Graduate School

Course Outline

Because of the wide range of technical and applied aspects of survey research and due to the intended seminar/open discussion format of the course, a good deal of flexibility is necessary in scheduling topics. The following listing is a guideline.

1. History and current practices for sample surveys
2. Sampling theory
3. Applied sampling issues in survey research
4. The role of measurement theory in survey research
5. The role of scaling, factor analysis and structural equation modeling in survey research
6. Developing constructs and content of interest for questionnaires
7. Writing and revising questionnaire items
8. Pilot testing questionnaires
9. Issues and techniques of data encoding/recoding for questionnaire data
10. Developing measurement scales
11. Descriptive statistical analysis, technical issues and interpretation
12. Evaluating measurement reliability for the constructs/scales of interest
13. Introduction to factor analysis, MDS and MANOVA techniques of construct validation
14. Non-response and other response factor effects in survey sampling
15. Longitudinal panel surveys and other complex surveys
16. Web-based questionnaires
17. Questionnaire translations and other issues