To become a scholar is a lonely pursuit.
- John Adams, late 1700s

I am sorry to have written you such a long letter, but I didn’t have the time to write a short one.
- Samuel Clemens, in a letter to a friend, late 1800s

...nor am I a friend to a scrupulous precision of style. I readily sacrifice the niceties of syntax to euphony and strength.
- Thomas Jefferson, on writing well, 1823

Knowledge will forever govern ignorance. And a people who mean to be their own governors, must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives.
- James Madison, 1822

**OVERVIEW**

Perhaps the most important skill a graduate student should develop during her or his graduate program is the ability to write well. Unfortunately, good writing is becoming a lost art in our contemporary society as we move to predominantly verbal and text communication modes.
There is nothing as certain as the simple fact that the more one engages to any activity precisely and with guidance that practice will hone and refine that skill. This truism is especially true of professional writing – there is no way to learn to write well but to write, receive critical feedback, and to rewrite – many times.

Writing exercises are complicated by the necessary overlay of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) publishing and writing style. Throughout graduate school and in careers in the educational or social science fields, you will find that writing in APA style is a required part of core professional activities in both education and social sciences.

A related characteristic of a successful graduate student, which is equally as important as writing acumen, rests in becoming familiar with the professional literature in a particular area of individual interest. To become a scholar (one of the greatest complements paid in academia), a graduate student should become an expert on a specific, defined subject of one’s own choosing. That area of expertise may form the basis for a project, dissertation, or a long-term research program.

The purpose of this course is to address both professional writing and scholarly knowledge on a subject of each student’s choosing. Specifically, this course offers a structure in which each student can learn and practice their professional writing skills and immerse oneself in the professional literature on a topic of personal interest. Because writing is something that can’t be truly learned except through trail and error, you will assume the primary responsibility for learning how to write and producing a professional literature review outside of class time on your own (see the quote by John Adams on the first page of the syllabus).

This course is designed for graduate students. There typically are two groups of students who take the course: those students who are just beginning to study an area of interest and those students who take the course to prepare the Literature Review, which constitutes the first chapter of the dissertation proposal and ultimately first chapter of the final dissertation.

Class activities include lectures, presentations by other faculty or staff, and small group activities related to the ongoing and structured review of the different sections of each student’s literature review.

I assume that you all will complete the assigned readings and associated exercises in advance of class. Accordingly, I seldom will lecture directly to the readings and tend to cover only what I believe to be key aspects of those different units. I encourage questions and I will do my best to call on each student, prepared or not, at different points throughout the term.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

By successfully completing this course a student will learn the nuances of APA writing style, how to conduct a literature search on a professional topic, and how to write a literature review of research articles and/or reports on a professional topic. The major product from the course, the Literature Review, may serve as the basis for a program of study or part of a graduate capstone (i.e., dissertation proposal).

PREREQUISITES

To read, understand, and analyze, research literature it is essential to have basic knowledge of the research process. Thus, the two prerequisites to take this course include EDUC 614 – Educational Statistics I (4) and EDUC 611 - Survey of Education Research Design (4), or other equivalent courses. It is acceptable to take one or both courses concurrently with this course.

ADVISOR APPROVAL

I require that each student’s advisor sign off on the idea as “acceptable” for a topic of study, both as the final product for this course and as a subject that could form the basis for study over the course of the graduate program. Typically, initial ideas are far too broad and ill defined (something that should change over time as you learn more about the subject area) so it is essential for you to talk through your idea with your advisor. This approval must be secured at the beginning of the term.

Advanced D.Ed. students who are at the point of preparing their dissertation proposal must present the prospectus they have developed as part of their doctoral program. Other students also must offer a short (2-3 page) description of their research topic that must be reviewed and signed off by their advisor. A written summary of the idea must be attached to the approval form. The written summary does not have to be in APA style, but should be typed, double-spaced, use 12-point font, and use 1” margins on each page.

REQUIRED MATERIALS


Books I like on the professional writing process are listed below. You may want to secure copies for your own library, reference, and use either in this course or periodically during your careers.


Hill Walker will require that you read a module he has developed on grant writing and critique two case arguments. Those materials are placed on Blackboard.

**APA MANUAL AND STUDENT WORKBOOK AND TRAINING GUIDE**

I will use the APA manual and student workbook to emphasize key aspects of APA style and writing. In the APA manual I focus on chapters 2-6. In the student workbook I will focus on Unit 3, the Term Paper Unit, and also on pages 174-191, which address how to structure tables and figures.

Throughout the course there will be reading assignments in the APA Manual and related exercises in the APA Workbook and Training Guide. I assume that you will complete the readings in the APA Manual and associated exercises the APA Workbook and Training Guide.

You will have an in-class test on APA style during class in Week 8. The test must be completed within the time frame I set during class time. You will be allowed to consult your APA manual during the test. The test will be graded as A (90% correct or higher), B (89-80% correct), or No Pass (less than 80% correct). Please note that at the graduate level a grade lower than a “B’ is regarded as not passing. If you receive a No Pass on the test, I will allow you to re-take the test in Class 10. No matter how well you do on the re-take of the test, however, the highest score that can be earned is 80%.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | - Class Overview  
       - Syllabus  
       - APA Structure | *APAM 2 | Advisor Approval and Research Topic Description  
**APAW p.32-37 |
| 2    | - Literature Search I – Katy Lenn, UO Library  
       - Writing Conventions & Tricks | APAM 3 & 4 | APAW p. 38-57  
Walker Materials/Assignment |
| 3    | - Introduction/Case Argument  
       – Hill Walker  
       - Writing Conventions & Tricks | APAM 3 & 4 | Literature Search Printout  
APAW p. 38-57  
Walker -- Packet | Case Argument Critiques |
| 4    | - Literature Search II – Katy Lenn, UO Library  
       - Description - Literature Search & Process  
       - Description - Way the Literature will be Reviewed and Summarized | Introduction/Case Argument | APAW p. 58-87 |
| 5    | - Tables & Figures – Type of Research & Subjects  
       - Review - Introduction/Case Argument | APAM 5 | Literature Search Process-  
Way the Literature will be Reviewed and Summarized  
APAW p.174-191 |
| 6    | - Settings & Measures  
       - Review - Description of Literature Search & Results &  
       Way the Literature will be Reviewed and Summarized | APAM – 6 | Summary Sections - Type of Research & Subjects  
APAW p. 88-97 |
| 7    | - Results  
       - Review - Summary Sections - Type of Research & Subjects | Summary Sections – Settings & Measures |
| 8    | - Review - Summary Sections – Settings & Measures | Summary Section – Results  
APAS Test |
| 9    | - Review – Summary Section – Results | Final Literature Review  
Retake APA Test |
| 10   | Directions for Review of Final Products | Final Literature Review  
Retake APA Test |
| FINAL | Review of Final Literature Review | Completion of Scoring Templates |

*APAM = APA Publication Manual  **APAW= APA Workbook and Training Guide
LITERATURE SEARCH PRINTOUT

An essential skill for a graduate student to learn relates to the way to search available digital databases on professional literature relating to a particular topic. Ms. Katy Lenn, reference librarian at the Knight Library, will teach the unit on how to conduct a literature search. One of the preliminary products required for the course is a description of the topic for your review (the description attached to your advisor’s approval page will suffice) and a printout of no more than 30 research articles or reports including only the APA citation and the author’s abstract for each. The assignment will be graded as a Pass as long as it conform to the requirements and is completed on time. If the product is not completed in an acceptable manner, it will be impossible to complete the course successfully.

WALKER ASSIGNMENT/CASE ARGUMENT CRITIQUES

Walker’s assignment to critique two case arguments will be due at the beginning of Class 3. The assignment will be graded as Pass/No Pass. If you receive a No Pass or don’t turn in the assignment, your final grade will be affected negatively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The primary product for the course is to produce a Literature Review on a subject of your choosing that could, and in many cases will, form the basis for the first chapter of the dissertation or graduate capstone project. From the Literature Search, you will select 15-20 research articles or reports that “fit” your subject and that will form the foundation for the Literature Review.

At most the narrative for the Literature Review should be no more than 20-pages typed, double spaced, have 1” margins, and conform to APA guidelines. If the Literature Review is not prepared according to APA style, includes more than 20 research articles or reports, or is longer than 20-pages (excluding title page, tables describing the characteristics of each section of the Literature Review, and references) I may not grade the project and may assign a grade of No Pass. By the way, my personal “rule” for dissertation proposals is that I stop reading Chapter I at 20-pages; I have read excellent reviews shorter than 20-pages.

Sections of the paper will be due at different points in the class for review by me, Mr. Irvin, and by a small group of students. The different sections are listed below and briefly described, the dates on which each is due is specified in the schedule offered in the syllabus. The page lengths for the different sections are offered as suggestions only; a particular project may deviate from these suggested guidelines.

It also is possible that the sections I list will not “fit” a particular project. It is permissible to alter the sections with my approval.
✓ **Introduction & Case Argument** - This section should be 2-3 pages in length and describe what you intend to do for a study or project, how the Literature review “fits” that work, and makes a strong case for the importance of what you want to examine.

✓ **Description of the Literature Search & Results** - This section should include a 1-2-page description of the way in which you searched the literature, and then a listing of roughly 15-20 research-based manuscripts that focus on the issue you want to study. The narrative description of the search process should describe which databases you used, key words, search parameters, how many citations you found initially, the criteria you employed to exclude manuscripts, and the final criteria you employed to retain manuscripts. I suggest the general figure of 15-20 manuscripts to comprise the Literature Review as many more than that number will be difficult to summarize and fewer suggest that the topic you want to study has a “shaky” research base.

✓ **Description of the Way the Literature will be Reviewed and Summarized** - This section should be a 1-2-page description of how you intend to summarize the literature you choose to retain and review.

✓ **Summary Sections** – Each of the sections listed below should be 3-4 pages in length and each will have a table in APA format that summarizes the particular characteristic of the various research studies you chose to review. I list the most likely sections here, but you could employ others for your particular topic. I will allow some changes of the sections to reflect a unique issue or subject, but those changes must be negotiated with me in advance and verified in writing (an e-mail exchange will suffice).
  - Type of Research
  - Subjects
  - Settings (in which the studies were conducted)
  - Measures
  - Results

Each section will be submitted through Blackboard and checked for plagiarism through the tool proved by that learning management system. Assignments are due a week in advance of their review and must be submitted with the title convention **YOUR LAST NAME NAME OF SECTION DATE SUBMITTED**. I will check that each section is completed on time.

Although no grades will be assigned the draft sections, all sections must be turned in on time to be considered in good standing. Failure to comply with this requirement will affect your grade negatively.

I strongly believe that the most important part of any paper, including the Literature Review, is the Introduction and Case Argument. Therefore, I will read and provide critical feedback on that specific section. I also will review selected sections (e.g., 5 of 20
students) throughout the class. Additionally, Mr. Irvin also will review sections and provide feedback.

A critical skill to acquire in graduate school is how to give and receive critical feedback in a manner that is professional and helpful. I will assign students to small groups and all members of the group will review one another’s sections. Those reviews are to be done on-line, through Blackboard, using the review tool in Word. Student reviewers also will give feedback to assigned students and their sections in class. Based on this ongoing feedback, each student will revise and finalize their respective manuscripts.

Although no grades will be assigned the reviews, students must complete all reviews on time to be considered in good standing. Failure to comply with this requirement will affect your grade negatively.

The final and entire draft of the Literature Review will be due at the end of Class 10. Before that class, I will assign students to small groups to critique each student’s final Literature Review during the time scheduled for the final exam for the course. I alone, however, will assign a grade to the Literature Review.

Again, please note that we will meet during the time scheduled for the final for the class (TBD) for small group review of each student’s final and entire Literature Review. This participation is mandatory.

**GRADING**

To receive a final grade in the course, the advisor approval and Literature Search Printout must be completed on time. If either or both of these assignments are not completed a final grade for the course will not be assigned.

All draft sections must be completed on time and all reviews must be completed on time. If these two requirements are not completed, and on time, the final grade will be affected negatively.

The final grade for this course will be determined based on two requirements. First, the in-class test on APA style must receive a minimum score of 80%. Second, the scoring template for the Literature Review is offered at the back of this syllabus.

The scoring template for the Literature Review is offered at the back of this syllabus. There are several requirements that must be met for a grade to be assigned. In the event those required features of the assignment are not met, I reserve the right to return the paper for correction and subsequent grading or to assign a No Pass.

If the requirements are met, I will grade each section of each Literature Review on a 3-point scale (A-B-No Pass). The final grade for the project will be based on the average of the grades for the different sections. That is, I will grade each section of the Literature Review, assigning a grade to each (A = 1, B = 2, NP = 3). I will then average those scores
to come to a final grade for the project; thus an A = 1-1.5, B = 1.51-2.0, NP < 2.0. Because of the importance of the Literature Review, the final grade on the Literature Review will be weighted in calculating final grades.

To calculate the final grade for the course, I will average the scores from the APA test, and a weighted score on the Literature Review. Specifically, I will weight the final grade on the Literature Review by a factor of 4; thus, the APA test will account for 20% of the final grade and the Literature Review for 80%.

I reserve the right to modify this grading plan should circumstances and reason indicate a need to do so.

**INCOMPLETES**

The assignment of an INCOMPLETE or "I" grade is discouraged and will be used only in cases of extreme emergencies where satisfactory progress has been demonstrated and a passing grade may be earned. Should an "I" grade be required, students should notify the instructor at the time such circumstances exist. Upon notification, a course completion contract must be developed and approved by week 9 of the term.

**POLICIES**

**Attendance**

Attendance is necessary to succeed in this course and master the course material. Please note that although I will *not* take attendance, the *only* way to receive credit for assignments is to turn in the assignments in person at the time I specify to do so during class time and to participate in the review process. I will, however, allow late work that conforms to the policies described below. Approved late work, however, will not be reviewed through the in-class process.

**Late Work**

Students must contact me *no later* than the day prior to the day of the class in case of illness or emergencies that preclude attending class sessions and/or turning in the APA assignment or taking the APA test as scheduled. Merely telling me that you will not be able to attend class does not guarantee that late work will be accepted, we must come to a mutual agreement regarding the work that will be completed.

My agreement to accept late work must be confirmed in writing and a date by which the work is to be completed must be agreed upon; an e-mail record between you and me will suffice for this purpose. If no prior arrangements have been made and/or a written agreement is not in place, the product in question will be graded down and may be assigned a non-passing grade.
**Academic Misconduct Policy**

All students are subject to the UO Student Conduct Code: [http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx](http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx)

This code represents a compilation of important regulations, policies, and procedures pertaining to student life. It is intended to inform students of their rights and responsibilities during their association with this institution, and to provide general guidance for enforcing those regulations and policies essential to the educational and research missions of the University.

**Conflict Resolution**

Several options, both informal and formal, are available to resolve conflicts for students who believe they have been subjected to or have witnessed bias, unfairness, or other improper treatment. It is important to exhaust the administrative remedies available to you including discussing the conflict with the specific individual, the course instructor, the EMPL department head, or the college’s associate dean.

Outside the college, you may contact:
- UO Bias Response Team: 541-346-1139 or [http://bias.uoregon.edu/whatbrt.htm](http://bias.uoregon.edu/whatbrt.htm)
- Conflict Resolution Services 346-0617 or [http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/SupportandEducation/StudentConflictResolutionServices/Services/tabid/135/Default.aspx](http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/SupportandEducation/StudentConflictResolutionServices/Services/tabid/135/Default.aspx)

**Diversity and Appropriate Language**

It is the policy of the University of Oregon and the College of Education to support and value diversity; to do so, requires that we as a college and class:

- ✓ respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals;
- ✓ promote a culture of respect throughout the University community;
- ✓ respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others;
- ✓ reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidation of any kind;
- ✓ practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others; and
- ✓ promote the diversity of opinions, ideas, and backgrounds that are the lifeblood of the university.

Finally, Language used in assignments and class discussions (written and spoken) should be respectful and professional at all times. Use "people first" language in speaking and writing about people with disabilities or other elements of diversity.
Documented Disability

I will provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, arrange to meet with me by the end of week 2 of the term. The documentation of your disability must come in writing from the Disability Services in the Office of Academic Advising and Student Services. For more information on Disability Services, please see http://ds.uoregon.edu/

Expected Classroom Behavior

✓ Participate in class activities.
✓ Respect the diversity of cultures, opinions, and viewpoint in the classroom.
✓ Listen to other students, professors, and lecturers with respect.
✓ Arrive on time, prepared for class.
✓ Do not use your phone or laptop during class time to access personal or work contacts and/or correspondence.
✓ Racist, homophobic, sexist, and other disrespectful comments will not be tolerated.

Inclement Weather

In the event the university operates on a curtailed schedule or closes, UO media relations will notify the Eugene-Springfield area radio and television stations as quickly as possible. In addition, a notice regarding the university’s schedule will be posted on the UO main homepage (in the “News” section) at http://www.uoregon.edu.
APPROVAL OF THE SUBJECT AREA TO BE ADDRESSED

I have met with the student and discussed the subject area that she or he wants to address through the Literature Review & Professional Writing course. I approve this student’s idea and subject area as the focus for the course and as a potential subject area for further study in the form of a dissertation or capstone project. The student’s written product on which I am basing my approval is attached to this form.

Student’s Name (Please Print)

Advisor’s Name (Please Print)

Advisor’s Signature
SCORING TEMPLATE - LITERATURE REVIEW

Student: ____________________________________________________________

Title: _______________________________________________________________

Required Elements (yes/no)
✓ Narrative no more than 20-pages _____
✓ Prepared in APA style _____
✓ 15-20 research manuscripts identified and cited in APA style _____
✓ Appendix listing references that were reviewed _____
✓ All required sections are evident _____
✓ “Blueprint” paragraphs provided where appropriate _____

Introduction and Case Argument (A B NP)
✓ Description of the purpose of the review
✓ Description of the project/study’s importance
✓ Well Written

Description of the Literature Search Process & Results (A B NP)
✓ Key words and databases identified
✓ Initial parameters (e.g., years)
✓ # of initial citations
✓ Exclusion process described
✓ Final criteria for inclusion

Description of the Literature Review & Summary (A B NP)
✓ Description of the way the literature is to be reviewed
✓ Description of the accuracy/reliability of the review/summary

Type of Research (A B NP)
✓ Summary of the type of research employed
✓ Each of the citations are classified according to the type of research
✓ Table summarizing citations X research type

Subjects (A B NP)
✓ Summary of the subject characteristics across the citations
✓ Subjects characteristics in each of the citations are classified
✓ Table summarizing citations X subject characteristics

Settings (A B NP)
✓ Summary of the setting characteristics across the citations
✓ Setting characteristics in each of the citations are classified
✓ Table summarizing citations X setting characteristics
Measures (A B NP)
✓ Summary of the measures across the citations
✓ Measure characteristics for each of the citations are classified
✓ Table summarizing citations X measure characteristics

Results (A B NP)
✓ Summary of the results across the citations
✓ Results for each of the citations are classified
✓ Table summarizing citations X results

Strengths of the Review

Areas for Improvement

Final Grade: