COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall 2013

Course Prefix/Number: **POS 6704***(Section 2337 )/ **PAD 6706***(Section 2312 )

Course Title: RESEARCH METHODS

Course Credit Hours: 3.0

Instructor Name and Contact Information:

- **Professor:** Bill Tankersley, Ph.D., CGFM
- **Office:** Pensacola Campus: Bldg. 80-Room 102
- **Telephone:** (850) 474-2338
- **E-Mail:** wtankers@uwf.edu

Campus Office Hours: By Appointment, Fall 2013
Online Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 - 12:00 a.m.

Prerequisites or Co-Requisites: NONE

Course Description:
This course is designed to provide students with introductory and intermediate knowledge of the social research enterprise focusing particularly on topics in public affairs and public management that are of interest to political scientists, policy analysts and public administrators. It addresses the foundational concepts of social research, introducing sampling theory, measurement theory, quantitative and qualitative approaches, experimental and quasi-experimental research design concepts, data analysis techniques and technical report writing. Computer skills necessary for the implementation of social research are introduced utilizing PASW/SPSS. The course provides students with the basic concepts, knowledge and skills required to design and implement applied research projects in the social sciences. Upon completion, students will have a working knowledge of PASW/SPSS, be knowledgeable consumers of public policy, political science and administrative research, and understand the limitations inherent in social science research design.

Goals:
1. To introduce the student to the social research enterprise.
2. To provide the student with knowledge and understanding of the various methodological approaches to applied research.
3. To provide a conceptual framework that integrates principles of social research design with appropriate statistical methods.

About this Course:
This course is delivered completely online. You must have consistent access to the Internet. Learning at a distance may be a very different environment for many of you. You will generally set your own schedules, participate in class activities at your convenience, and work at your own pace. You may spend some additional time online during the first few
weeks while you become acclimated to the online class format and you may feel overwhelmed. You should be prepared to spend a minimum of 12 hours per week reading assignments and completing online lessons and activities and participating in online class discussions.

Finally, you may want to incorporate these tips to help you get started:

- Set yourself a schedule -- check the course website early in the class week to see what tasks you’ll need to work on for the week.
- Become very familiar with the site and how to use it. It is a tool to help you learn!
- Team up with your classmates to discuss class assignments (excluding course quizzes, of course) and questions you might have. Check the “Classlist” link for biography info and email addresses.
- Ask questions of your classmates when you need answers.
- If you have unresolved problems, contact your instructor ASAP!

**Student Learning Outcomes:**
Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of the following:
1. Foundations of Social Research,
2. Sampling Theory,
3. Measurement Theory,
4. Survey Research Theory,
5. Scales and Indexes,
6. Qualitative and Unobtrusive Measurement Theory,
7. Research Design Fundamentals,
8. Experimental Design Theory,
9. Quasi-Experimental Design Theory,
10. Fundamentals of Data Analysis,
11. Analysis and Research Design,
12. Writing Up Research Results,
13. Statistical and Computer Techniques Utilizing PASW/SPSS

**Required Texts and Workbook (four in all):**


**Required Materials:** Internet Access (fast access, broadband almost a necessity) E-mail Account (supplied by UWF) eDesktop Access (supplied by UWF, but requires broadband Internet connection) Note, if you do not have access to a broadband Internet connection, you will need to purchase the student version of SPSS for this course.

**Grading / Evaluation:**
The course grade will be determined as follows:

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<tr>
<td>Trochim Quizzes</td>
<td>52% (based on 55 questions each quiz)</td>
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<td>Fields Quizzes</td>
<td>14% (based on 15 questions each quiz)</td>
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<td>Dropbox/Discussion Forums/Course Participation as judged by the instructor</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Numerical Grade Range** | **Equivalent Letter Grade**
--- | ---
95 - 100 | A
90 - 94 | A-
87 - 89 | B+
84 - 86 | B
80 - 83 | B-
77 - 79 | C+
74 - 76 | C
70 - 73 | C-
67 - 69 | D+
64 - 66 | D
< 64 | F

**Minimum Technical Skills and Special Technology Utilized by Students:**
This course is totally online. All instructional content and interaction takes place over the WWW. In addition to baseline word processing skills and sending/receiving email with attachments, students will be expected to search the internet and upload/download files. In addition, students may need one or more of the following plug-ins:

- eLearning's Accessibility Resource Guides for users: [http://www.desire2learn.com/access/resources/](http://www.desire2learn.com/access/resources/)
- Windows Media Player
- Quicktime Player
- Real Player
- Macromedia Flash
Expectations for Academic Conduct/Plagiarism Policy:
As members of the University of West Florida, we commit ourselves to honesty. As we strive for excellence in performance, integrity—personal and institutional—is our most precious asset. Honesty in our academic work is vital, and we will not knowingly act in ways which erode that integrity. Accordingly, we pledge not to cheat, nor to tolerate cheating, nor to plagiarize the work of others. We pledge to share community resources in ways that are responsible and that comply with established policies of fairness. Cooperation and competition are means to high achievement and are encouraged. Indeed, cooperation is expected unless our directive is to individual performance. We will compete constructively and professionally for the purpose of stimulating high performance standards. Finally, we accept adherence to this set of expectations for academic conduct as a condition of membership in the UWF academic community.

It is particularly important that leaders in public administration, public policy, as well as the private sector, recognize the critical need at this moment in history for nurturing a culture of honesty and ethical behavior in our dealings with each other. Actions speak louder than words.

UWF Library http://libguides.uwf.edu/plagiarism

At the sole discretion of the instructor, all student work is subject to evaluation by TurnItIn or other University authorized evaluation process

The Student Code of Conduct sets forth the rules, regulations, and expected behavior of students enrolled at the University of West Florida. Violations of any rules, regulations, or behavioral expectations may result in a charge of violating the Student Code of Conduct. It is the student’s responsibility to read the Student Code of Conduct and comply with these expectations.

ASSISTANCE:
The University of West Florida supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that hinder your full participation, such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, or the use of non-captioned videos and podcasts, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Prior to receiving accommodations, you must register with the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) at http://uwf.edu/sdrc/internal/. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the individual. For information regarding the registration process, e-mail sdrc@uwf.edu or call 850.474.2387.

WEATHER EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- WUWF-FM (88.1MHz) is the official information source for the University. Any pertinent information regarding closings, cancellations, and the re-opening of campus will be broadcast.
- In the event that hurricane preparation procedures are initiated, the UWF Home Web Page and MyUWF will both provide current information regarding hurricane preparation procedures, the status of classes, and the closing of the University.

Emergency plans for the University of West Florida related to inclement weather are available on the following UWF web pages:
Hurricane preparedness
Other emergency procedures