

PRLS 450 (Section 002) — Research Methods (3)
Fall 2008

DAY/TIME:	Tue/Thur 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.	LOCATION:	249 Bull Run Hall
PROFESSOR:	Dr. Laurie Harmon	EMAIL ADDRESS:	lharmon3@gmu.edu
OFFICE LOCATION:	204 Bull Run Hall	PHONE NUMBER:	703-993-4565
OFFICE HOURS:	Tuesdays 12-2:00 pm Fridays 9-10:15 a.m.	FAX NUMBER:	703-993-2025

PREREQUISITES: HEAL 323 and STAT 250, and 60 credits.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Covers the development of empirical research designs for both practical and theoretical problems in health, fitness, and recreation resources management. Includes literature review of hypothesized relationships, and formulation of research proposals.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Define and demonstrate appropriate use of research terminology;
2. Critically evaluate published research in scientific journals and the popular press;
3. Formulate research problem statements;
4. Enumerate the values inherent in the practice of scientific research;
5. Conduct a thorough review of literature and synthesize the findings; and
6. Prepare a sound and feasible research proposal.

COURSE OVERVIEW

As this course has been designated “Writing-Intensive” (*WI*) – fulfilling in part the *WI* requirement for all HFRR majors – each person will complete at least 3,500 words of graded writing assignments. In order to make this a manageable task, we divide the course into **five** smaller writing exercises that you’ll complete over the semester. These will be thoroughly critiqued and graded and will form the basis for your final Research Proposal. I’ll do all that I can to share knowledge, skills, and techniques for success, but it will be your responsibility to study and incorporate the comments on your papers, suggestions from your colleagues, and information from the text. We’ll be following the guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* (5th ed.) for all papers, and unless otherwise noted, will be submitting them to turnitin.com as a .doc file.

In this course, we’ll all be held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code. We will all be expected to attend all class sections, actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class exercises, and fulfill all assignments. Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the specified date due. **Papers received AFTER 10:30 a.m. will be considered late and receive a 20% deduction in points per 24 hour period.** If you are confronted with extreme emergencies or are participating in a pre-approved university-sponsored function, exceptions may be made, however, these must be discussed with me to determine if they fall into this category. I highly recommend that you make a back-up copy of any work submitted since computers have been known to crash at the most inopportune times.

In this course, we’ll turn in all written assignments electronically to “www.turnitin.com”. You’ll be able to view your originality reports after the due date of each assignment to review and can keep them for your file.

Class ID for www.turnitin.com: 2257314

Password: PRLS450

***Note: You’ll need to register before turning in your first paper at their website!**

Communication is an important facet of this course. As such, I ask that you check our Blackboard account each morning for any relevant messages. Keep a special eye out for weather related announcements!

REQUIRED READINGS & CLASS ITEMS

Gay, L. R., Mills, & Airasian, P. (2006). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application* (8th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Websites and handouts as provided in class.

1 USB Drive (Flash drive or similar rewriteable drive which will need to be submitted during the last 2 weeks of this course)

EVALUATION

This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 500 possible points.

Requirements	Points
Assignments	
#1 Article Review and Research Classification	25
#2 Introduction, Problem Statement, Literature Review, Hypotheses, Variables and Definitions	100
#3 Sampling Plan	25
#4 Research Design, Measurement and Data Collection (including Instrument and Cover Letter)	100
#5 Analysis Plan	25
<i>Research Presentation and Outline</i>	50
<i>Research Proposal</i>	125
<i>Participation</i>	<u>50</u>
TOTAL	500

Grading Scale

A+ = 98 – 100	B+ = 88 – 89	C+ = 78 – 79	D = 60 – 69
A = 94 – 97	B = 84 – 87	C = 74 – 77	F = 0 – 59
A- = 90 – 93	B- = 80 – 83	C- = 70 – 73	



- ❖ All students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12>]
- ❖ University policy states that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the professor
- ❖ Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See www.gmu.edu/student/drc]
- ❖ For additional School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism information, please visit the website at <http://rht.gmu.edu>

'The most exciting phrase to hear in science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not "Eureka!"... but rather "hmm....that's funny..."' Isaac Asimov