EDST5458

Researching Special Education

Term 1, 2022

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
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School Contact Information

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Acknowledgement of Country

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture Kensington and Paddington campuses are built on Aboriginal Lands. We pay our respects to the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Custodians of these lands. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.

Image courtesy of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous UNSW's Indigenous strategy

Course Details

Units of Credit 6

Workload

150 hours including class contact hours, readings, class preparation, assessment, follow up activities, etc.

Summary of the Course

This course is designed to support you to explore and critique your chosen area of research by locating it in the context of key issues and approaches in special education and viewing it from a diversity of quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The course provides an introduction to the impact of different epistemological and methodological approaches in quantitative and qualitative special educational research and will also encourage you to build collaboration with others in the course using self and peer review.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate key issues in special education research including purpose(s) of doing research, key philosophical issues, researcher/practitioner positionality/role, and the place of research in teachers' work and in education more broadly
2. Critique the methodology of published research in special education
3. Evaluate the strength and appropriateness of different research methods, including different techniques for data collection, analysis, reporting, and engaging with existing literature
4. Apply the principles of research design to a research project in special education.

Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies:

·   Explicit teaching, including reading and/or listening to audio-visual materials to foster interest and support learning.

·   Structured occasions for critical reflection on issues raised in the course and on others' ideas.

·   Opportunities for peer and instructor interaction via forums, message boards, and chat, allowing you the opportunity to demonstrate your capacity to communicate, to question, and to problem solve.

·   Completion of online modules and activities to permit flexible interaction with course materials.

·   Use of quizzes at the end of each module/prescribed readings for students to self-assess your understanding of key concepts.

Rationale:

Research in education is relevant to all educational contexts and to all teachers. The course will explore an critique a variety of published research texts, and will build participants' skills in engaging with,

making use of, and critiquing existing research in special education. The development of theoretical understanding and analytical skill is a key MEd programme outcome.

But this course positions teachers as *producers* as well as *consumers* of educational research, and beyond engaging with existing research, participants will learn the relevant skills to conduct a small research project relevant to their own teaching context(s). The development of procedural as well as declarative knowledge is therefore the core outcome of the course, and is prioritized throughout.

Teaching on the course is driven by a critical engagement with readings and the core textbook. Online discussions, centred around the key readings, allow for theory and analysis to be developed but also ***applied***, with the aim of producing active, engaged student-researchers who will subsequently be well equipped to apply the knowledge and skills developed in their own teaching/research contexts.

Assessment

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Course Learning Outcomes Assessed
1. Critical Reflection of Published Research	40%	28/03/2022 05:00 PM	1, 2
2. Research Methodology Case Study	60%	29/04/2022 05:00 PM	1, 3, 4

Assessment 1: Critical Reflection of Published Research

Due date: 28/03/2022 05:00 PM

Task 1 - Critical Reflection of published research -2,000 words

Students will receive written feedback within two weeks of submission.

Additional details

This task requires you to find and select two peer reviewed original research papers published within the last 10 years. Answer the following questions critically:

1. *Briefly summarise* each of the two texts in terms of their topic(s) and where they 'fit' into the landscape of special education research (e.g., 'this is a paper about autism that found…')
2. *Briefly describe the research method* used in each paper and each paper's *main finding*/s (e.g., 'this is a qualitative paper that used student focus groups and interpretive data analysis to show that…')
3. For each paper, *critique the research method used as it relates to the topic* – what are the strengths and weaknesses of using this method for this research problem, what other way/s might have been better, and how might *you* have approached the research problem?
4. Comment briefly on the *writing and layout of the paper*: to what extent did you find it easy or difficult (and/or interesting or not interesting!) to read? How might the writer have improved it?

Assessment 2: Research Methodology Case Study

Due date: 29/04/2022 05:00 PM

Task 2 - Research Methodology Case Study - 4,000 words

Students will choose 4 case studies from a list of 10. They will write a methodology section for each that includes:

1. Research questions
2. Participants (if applicable): a. Who would you include in the study? Age? Disability? - Criteria for who is included or excluded from participating b. How many participants would you need? *Justify with research

3. Setting
4. Instruments/Data collection: a. What kind of data are you collecting? (quantitative or qualitative) b. How would you collect it? c. Describe any specific measurement instruments you are using (if applicable)
5. Analysis: Describe how you will analyse the data *Justify with research
6. Ethics a. Does the study require ethics approval? b. Why or why not? c. If yes, what institution(s) would you need to seek approval from?

Students will receive written feedback within two weeks of submission.

This is the final assessment.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Additional details

Your list of research case studies for assessment 2:

1. You want to measure the effectiveness of video modelling compared to traditional paper-based social stories.
2. Your school has traditionally had high rates of student absences and suspensions. To address this, the principal is leading the implementation of a new program on trauma-informed teaching that is being implemented this year. How could you measure its effectiveness?
3. You want to determine if the practice of using mobile technology to support students with disability has an evidence base, and in what areas the practice has been shown to be effective.
4. You use an iPhone and transportation app to teach mobility skills to 3 adults with intellectual disabilities. You accompany each of them on their journeys over 4 weeks and prompt them when they need assistance. You want to know if this is an effective way to teach these 3 adults to get from point A to point B.
5. Your school has committed to developing and implementing transition plans with strong student input for students with disability. You are interested in finding out how the students and their families feel about the instructional program you used to increase their participation.
6. You have recently been assigned to teach in a special education unit in a mainstream school. Your class will consist of high school students with autism. How would you discover what the literature suggests are the best practices for teaching communication?
7. You are interested in discovering what types of sexual education for students with intellectual disabilities exist in your city/school district/state, and how they are perceived by teachers, parents, and students.
8. How would you determine if there was a relationship between students' level of school connectedness and the number of their absences and suspensions?
9. You want to know how students with autism perceive their well-being while they are in school.
10. Your school has committed to implementing UDL to support its diverse learners. Your principal wants to determine if this approach is better than what has been done to include all students. Design a study where you compare the implementation of UDL principles to your school's existing approach.

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Assessment Task 1: Critical Reflection of Published Research

Specific Criteria	(-)————————>(+)				
Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved • Understanding of the task and its relationship to relevant areas of theory, research, and practice • Summaries of texts • Representations of writers' arguments and methods • Understanding of and issues with research methodologies used					
Depth of analysis and critique in response to the task • Depth of discussion of texts • Depth of analysis and critiques of journal articles • Clarity and depth of implications/recommendations					
Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response • Range of research and professional literature on special education; resources are current and relevant					
Structure and organisation of response • Appropriateness of overall structure of reflection paper • Clarity and coherence of organisation, including use of section headings and summaries to enhance readability					
Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions					

Specific Criteria	(-)——————————>(+)				
• Clarity, consistency, and appropriateness of writing conventions • Clarity and consistency in the format of the plan • Clarity and appropriateness of sentence structure, vocabulary use, of spelling, punctuation, and word length • Clarity and consistency of use of APA style					
General comments/recommendations for next time:					

Recommended: **/20 (FL PS CR DN HD)**   **Weighting:**   **40%**

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualise and/or amend these specific criteria. The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.

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Assessment Task 2: Research Methodology Case Study

Specific Criteria	(-)——————————>(+)					
Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved • Understanding of the task and its relationship to relevant areas of theory, research and practice • Extent to which each of the components was addressed adequately • Coordination and cohesion between sections, particularly research questions and research design						
Depth of analysis and critique in response to the task • Depth of understanding of research methodology, methods, and underlying issues • Adequacy of consideration of ethical issues						
Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response • Range of research and professional literature on special education; resources are current and relevant						
Structure and organisation of response • Appropriateness of overall structure • Clarity and coherence of organisation, including use of section headings and summaries to enhance readability						
Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions						

Specific Criteria	(-)——————————>(+)				
• Clarity and consistency of use of APA (7th ed.) style • Clarity and consistency in the format of the report • Clarity and appropriateness of sentence structure, vocabulary use, of spelling, punctuation, and word length					
General comments/recommendations for next time:					

Recommended: /20 (FL PS CR DN HD)   **Weighting:**   **60%**

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualise and/or amend these specific criteria. The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.

Attendance Requirements

School of Education Attendance Requirement

The School of Education (SED) requires students meet a minimum attendance requirement of 80% of all scheduled classes (i.1. lectures, tutorials, workshops, seminars) for all courses. Attendance in person is required for tutorials, seminars, and workshops when course are delivered in face-to-face mode. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that their attendance is recorded for the face to face either by electronic means or via an attendance register. Attendance in online or blended mode will be assessed through digital. Further information can be found [here](#).

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 14 February - 18 February	Online Activity	**Introduction to special education research**: conducting a literature search, APA style, journal article format Ethical issues in special education: conducting research with vulnerable populations, ***UNSW Students**: National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, UNSW HREC **Principles of Research:** research questions, variables, hypotheses, identifying and recruiting participants
Week 2: 21 February - 25 February	Online Activity	**Introduction to special education research**: conducting a literature search, APA style, journal article format Ethical issues in special education: conducting research with vulnerable populations, ***UNSW Students**: National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, UNSW HREC **Principles of Research:** research questions, variables, hypotheses, identifying and recruiting participants
Week 3: 28 February - 4 March	Online Activity	**Introduction to special education research**: conducting a literature search, APA style, journal article format Ethical issues in special education: conducting research with vulnerable populations, ***UNSW**

		Students: National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, UNSW HREC **Principles of Research:** research questions, variables, hypotheses, identifying and recruiting participants
Week 4: 7 March - 11 March	Online Activity	**Effect size and meta-analysis:** effect size, meta-analysis, systematic reviews, PRISMA **Evaluating and composing research articles:** Selecting a journal, identifying the basic format, reviewing the literature, presenting evidence, getting feedback, making revisions, determining the author's motivation, identifying the contribution to knowledge, theory, or practice, importance of research design and methodology, assessing the findings, conclusions, writing and layout of the article
Week 5: 14 March - 18 March	Online Activity	**Effect size and meta-analysis:** effect size, meta-analysis, systematic reviews, PRISMA **Evaluating and composing research articles:** Selecting a journal, identifying the basic format, reviewing the literature, presenting evidence, getting feedback, making revisions, determining the author's motivation, identifying the contribution to knowledge, theory, or practice, importance of research design and methodology, assessing the findings, conclusions, writing and layout of the article
Week 6: 21 March - 25 March	Online Activity	**Qualitative Research:** epistemologies, paradigms, qualitative research methods, methods of collecting and analysing empirical materials, trustworthiness, and validity in qualitative research, presenting qualitative research
Week 7: 28 March - 1 April	Online Activity	**Qualitative Research:** epistemologies, paradigms, qualitative research methods, methods of collecting and analysing empirical materials, trustworthiness, and validity in qualitative research, presenting qualitative research
Week 8: 4 April - 8 April	Online Activity	**Quantitative Research:** screening and cleaning your data, graphing your data, normal distributions, correlation, regression, comparing means, non-parametric tests, categorical data analysis

Week 9: 11 April - 15 April	Online Activity	**Quantitative Research:** screening and cleaning your data, graphing your data, normal distributions, correlation, regression, comparing means, non-parametric tests, categorical data analysis
Week 10: 18 April - 22 April	Online Activity	**Small n Designs:** ABA, multiple baseline designs

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Required reading:

Rumrill, P. D., Cook, B. G., & Wiley, A. L. (2011). Research in special education: Designs, methods, and applications. Charles C Thomas Publishers. (Available as a free eBook through the Leganto link on the course's Moodle site).

Further readings:

- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th Ed.). London: SAGE.
- Field, A. (2015). Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics. London: SAGE.
- Pallant, J. (2016). SPSS survival manual. Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2016). Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological. London: SAGE.

All students are expected to access the course's LMS on a regular basis for course materials, information, and announcements.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study. Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided.)

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines

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