

“The world is full of suffering,
it is also [almost] full of overcoming it.”
-Helen Keller

THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND/CUNY
DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

EDD 630 SECTION 7863
Educational Research Seminar: Overcoming Adversity
Fall 2011

Mondays, 4:40 – 6:20 pm
Room 3S-113

INSTRUCTOR: W. Ellery Samuels, Ph.D. OFFICE: 3S-207A
EMAIL: el.samuels@csi.cuny.edu PHONE: 718-982-4130
CONFERENCE HOURS: Mondays, 6:20 - 7:20 pm
Wednesdays, 4:40 – 5:30 pm
And by appointment
COURSE WEBSITE: <http://wesamuels.net/edd630.html>

Consistent with our mission to promote quality teaching and learning in P-12 school settings, our Department of Education prepares educators who possess **intellectual autonomy** and **professional responsibility**. To this end we emphasize the following: **the gaining of content knowledge and pedagogy; the engagement of all students; and the demonstration of professional dispositions.**

COURSE MATERIALS

All course materials will be made available before being covered in class online at the course website, <http://wesamuels.net/edd630.html>. They will also be sent to your preferred email address at the same time.

Although we will occasionally use non-primary sources, most course materials will mostly be primary sources such as peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters.

Course Organization

Our first semester of the EDD 630-631 sequence will be generally devoted to:

1. Exploring the factors and developmental mechanisms related overcoming adversity and nurturing resilience among children and adolescents. You will design an educational program that uses this understanding to support students' academic and personal growth.
2. Understanding scientific inquiry, its proper uses and methods, and its utility for gaining knowledge. You will use this understanding to design an appropriate and feasible evaluation of the program you design.

During the second semester, you will present your program. You will also conduct, analyze, and present the evaluation of your program. Therefore, the program you design must be one you can indeed implement—either alone or in collaboration with a small group of course-, community-, or school-based colleagues. Likewise, the evaluation must be both possible and apposite.

Although I will not be able to avoid teacher-centered lectures fairly often—especially when covering the scientific method— I will incorporate student participation as much as I can. Of course, one cannot participate in a conversation on a topic without information on the topic. Therefore, I will typically assign readings about two weeks before it is covered in class and will expect everyone to have read them enough to discuss them. Given the prominence of topics discussions in this section, a large portion of your final grade (40%) will be composed of class engagement.

Throughout the semester, please feel free to come to me outside of class (in person, through email, etc.) with questions, comments, etc., especially as you develop your idea and then the proposal itself. Nonetheless, as the semester progresses, I will expect you to first go to your fellow students more and more for assistance and feedback. As I'm sure you know, one of the best ways to learn is to teach.

In addition to any meetings outside of class that you initiate, I will meet with you during the course's conference hours to address issues specific to the development of your program and its evaluation. If you cannot meet during the conference hours listed above, please let me know so we can schedule other times to meet.

Electronic Communication

I will post course information online and communicate with you through email. You may use the computers on campus (e.g., in 3S-206) to access relevant websites and email. However, if you do not have ready access to the Internet outside of school and using the college facilities is problematic, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work around this. Please let me know of any problems promptly since I will expect you to read or respond to communications sent to your declared e-mail address or made available to you online.

Special Accommodations

Please let me know as soon as possible of any special accommodations you may require. I will happily do all I possibly can to meet any needs you have.

Course Objectives

Even if not necessarily the final courses you take, the EDD 630/631 sequence likely represents the most advanced course in education you will complete. It provides the opportunity to synthesize your various areas of educational knowledge into an understanding and perspective that is uniquely your own. Therefore, the primary objective of the sequence is the ability to demonstrate the creation of a sophisticated and state-of-the-art position relevant to this section's topic, overcoming adversity.

To this end, our section's objectives and their respective outcomes are:

Objective	Outcome
Build a working knowledge of the background and current, major concepts within the field of overcoming adversity to succeed academically	Demonstrate strong grasp of field in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - well-organized and detailed introduction section in program and evaluation manuscripts, and - course-based discussions, e.g., in class and during conference hours.
Understand the scientific inquiry process that constitutes education's vanguard and hone the skills needed to build knowledge based on primary inquiry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design a cogent, feasible, and ethical evaluation of your program, and - demonstrate scientific thinking during course-based discussions.
Acquire a strong grasp of a specific area within that broad field of overcoming adversity to succeed academically.	Base the program you design on rationale and objectives that are well-supported by a deep review of the area's literature.
Relate the knowledge you gain in this course to other areas of your professional expertise.	Design an educational program that not only supports the resilience of students, but also is grounded in sound pedagogy and students' social and/or cognitive development.

In general, I regard students in EDD 630/631 as nascent colleagues. You are, literally, becoming masters of your profession, and I respect your accomplishments. I can lead and teach you, but I believe it is more honest and true-to-life to treat you as fellow professionals who have a lot to offer both your fellow class members and me.

Assessment

Attendance and Participation

Regular class attendance and participation is expected. As per college policy, a student who is absent for more than four hours, (this includes accumulated time missed due to lateness), will be assigned a grade of WU, unless I excuse the absences.

Your active contribution to the course comprise part of your final course grade. Of course, one can contribute to (and detract from) a class in many ways. Therefore, I construe positive class participation broadly: The more your classmates benefit from your active engagement in the course, the more I will consider you to be performing sufficiently in this regard.

Course Work

The writing you will do leading up to your final project for the semester will be reviewed by me and by your peers. Your fellow students will provide most of the formative assessments of your work. I will assess the initial writings you complete to establish the general type and scale of feedback I would like you to give your peers. I will then review both your subsequent writing and the reviews you are given on it. From the writing you do leading up to your final project and from the feedback you give your fellow students I will compute your course writing grade.

Your final project, however, will only be graded by me. I would prefer you to submit this final project electronically (e.g., through email), but you can instead submit a paper copy. The final project and the rubric I will use to assess it are given below.

Any work you submit should conform to American Psychological Association guidelines, using either the fifth or sixth edition. Both I and the library have copies of these manuals.

Honor Policy

It should go without saying that you are expected to conduct yourself in an honorable and honest way in all aspects of this course. Of course, any known deviations from this will result in a failing grade for this section and forfeiture of access to this section in the future.

Online Ethics Training

CSI understandably requires that anyone affiliated with the college who collects “extra” data (e.g., the sorts of data you will collect for your research project) must complete an online training course in research ethics. You will receive the equivalent of an A on a quiz (i.e., 5% of your final grade) for completing this online training.

You must complete this online training before October 3rd. To do this; follow the steps listed online at http://wesamuels.net/edd630_syllabus.html#ird_training.

IRB Proposal

An additional requirement of any investigation conducted in affiliation with higher education is to complete a proposal that is then vetted by the Institutional review Board (IRB), which ensures that the investigation does not present undue harm to the participants. Fortunately, for the evaluations we will conduct here, the proposal is relatively simple. This form is due December 12th, and can be found online at:

<http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/~irb/StudentPractica.determination.form%202.doc>

More about this process that pertains to us is online at:

<http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/~irb/studentpractica.php>

Overall Grading Weights

Material	Course Grade Weight
Class Participation and Course Engagement	30%
Course-Based Writing and Peer Review	30%
Final Project	40%

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Event
Aug 29	Class Canceled	Hurricane Irene
Sept 12	Course Overview, Goals, Strategies, etc.	
Sept 19	Foundations of Science	
Sept 26	Experimental Design and Statistical Inference	Initial Program Considerations Due and Discussed
Oct 3	Design and Evaluation Considerations	Ethics Training Due
Oct 17	Anatomy of an Article and Literature Searches	Initial Evaluation Considerations Due and Discussed
Oct 24	Effects of Poverty and Impoverishment	
Oct 31	Risks to Development, Part I	Initial Literature Review Due
Nov 7	Risks to Development, Part II	Reflections on Initial Program Idea Due and Peer Reviewed
Nov 14	Program Development Workshop	
Nov 21	Introduction to Resilience	Revised Program & Evaluation Due
Nov 28	Resilience and Personality	
Dec 5	Resilience and Environment	Peer Review Due
Dec 12	Further Predictors of Academic Success	Further Development of Program and Evaluation Due and Discussed; IRB Proposal Due
Dec 14	Program and Evaluation Workshop	
Dec 21	Final Proposal Due	

Final Project

Please note: I am going to change this assignment to include the program you will create. So, your final project will not only include a proposed method of evaluating your program (which is described below), but also a detailed description of the program itself. I would like your input as a class about how you believe it is best to present this to me.

The final project demonstrates your ability to design an educational program that addresses more than just academic development, but also students' greater success in the face of real challenges. The project also must contain a workable evaluation that accurately assesses the extent to which your program meets its goals.

The most important elements of the draft proposal is the methods and results sections. Nonetheless, the draft should include all relevant sections of a full research paper:

1. Abstract

A 100 - 200 word summary of the entire proposal containing parts recommended by APA.

2. Introduction

Background and context of study given related research, justification for the current study, and statement of the hypothesis and its predictions. This section should be at least 300 words long.

3. Methods

Detailed description of the participants, materials, and procedure. This section should be however long it needs to be to sufficiently cover the content.

4. Results

Presentiment of *expected* results—both in graphical form and in text. Normally, the results section of a proposal covers the statistical analyses one expects to conduct. However, here you only need to discuss the results in lay terms. For example, "I expect that those students who score highly on the self-esteem scale will perform better in group tasks than those who score lowly." This section should also be as long as needed. In addition, this section should include at least one graphical representation of the results (table, histogram, line chart, box-and-whisker plot, etc.).

5. Discussion

For the draft proposal, this section need only contain a discussion of the implications for practice and theory. Please discuss the implications if you obtain the expected findings as well as the implications if you obtain another, likely set of outcomes. This section should be at least 300 words.

6. References

A properly formatted list of articles cited in the other sections. Please include at least six articles.

Although you are graded on the quality of your initial proposal, your grade is not fully based on your own ability. You will (hopefully) work closely with the other members of the entire class (and your group if you're not working on your project alone) to help your fellow students hone their own proposals into first-rate products. I will not necessarily grade the extent to which you

help each other (unless it infringes on cheating, of course), but I hope that this structure will nurture an appreciation for the role of collaboration in research. Research is almost never a solitary endeavor—even beyond the rudimentary collaboration between researcher and participant there is almost always an active and rich arena where ideas, passions, and work flourish through sharing.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL

N.b., Criteria within each section are listed in general order of importance, the most important being first

Element	Percent Weight	Target/Criteria
Abstract	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains all requisite parts - Is requisite length - Succinctly, comprehensibly summarizes proposal
Introduction	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates a thorough understanding of pertinent background - Background well-presented and sufficiently covered - Connection between background and current study well-made
Methods	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All major, relevant sources of bias, confounds, and barriers addressed - Variables are operationalized in practical and relevant ways - Addresses hypothesis - Is simple - Contains all requisite parts
Results	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes expected outcomes easy to understand - Covers all important aspects of results - Graphics strike a good balance between amount of information and clarity - Text compliments graphics without being unnecessarily redundant
Discussion	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connections between expected results and both hypothesis and theory are well-reasoned and clearly presented - Implications for practice and theory are sufficiently discussed and thought out - Implications of at least one other, possible set of outcomes are addressed
References	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Articles are well-chosen given topic - At least six are given - Are properly formatted
Overall Writing Quality	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is well-organized (paragraphs build on each other, each paragraph has a topic sentence that is supported by all other sentences, etc.) - Is strongly succinct, clear, and engaging - Adheres to APA style - Is grammatically correct and spelled correctly
Overall Quality and Sophistication of Thinking	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates an expert grasp of the scientific process and scientific thinking - Logic is flawless while implementation is practical - Demonstrates sophisticated critical thinking about sources, hypothesis creation, and implementation - Demonstrates encyclopedic understanding of field and its relation topic