

e-Syllabus

EDU5190 – Introduction to Research in Education

This is your learning e-Syllabus (traditionally known as your course outline). In this e-Syllabus you will find information regarding course structure, your professors, support structures, online learning, posing questions, learning expectations, and assignments. You will want to refer to the e-Syllabus frequently throughout the course as well as the [EDU 5190 Road Map](#).

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Welcome

Welcome to the online version of EDU5190 - Introduction to Research in Education. This course will prepare learners to consult and use research in education. Among other things, it will provide learners with an understanding of how to research topics and read critically, as well as an overview of various types of applied research.

The course has been designed to meet the special educational needs of working adult learners who want to complete their course of study in a stimulating meaningful environment while experiencing the flexibility and convenience of studying anytime and anywhere. Our goal is to offer you an educational experience that will be relevant, meaningful, and convenient.

Units of Study

Face-to-Face (F2F) Class - Introduction to EDU5190

Unit 1 - Getting To Know Each Other & WebCT and Introducing Educational Research

Unit 2 - Refereed Articles

Unit 3 - Finding Resources

Unit 4 - APA Style

Unit 5 - The Introduction: Statement of the Problem and Research Question(s)

Unit 6 - Research Questions

Unit 7 - Research Paradigms

Unit 8 - Conceptual Framework

Unit 9 - Qualitative Research

Unit 10 - Quantitative Research

Unit 11 - Research Ethics

Unit 12 - Wrap Up and Celebration

Your Professor – Colla MacDonald

I have been on faculty at the University of Ottawa since 1987. Much of my research has advanced the field of curriculum development, evaluation and eLearning. It is within this area of specialization that I have carried out my responsibilities as a teacher of undergraduate and graduate courses, supervisor of graduate students, and researcher.

Within this broad and interdisciplinary field, my research has examined learning processes and the conditions under which learning may occur in diverse settings, in direct relation to forces presented by learners and changing environments. The Demand-Driven Learning Model (DDLDM, MacDonald, et al, 2001) is being used as a quality standard to design, develop, deliver, and evaluate teacher education and graduate online courses at the University of Ottawa and in various Education programs across Canada and the United States.

The DDLDM companion online survey provides a psychometrically sound evaluation tool that can be used to assess the quality of eLearning against reputable guidelines (Breithaupt & MacDonald, 2003; MacDonald et al 2002). This survey has been used to evaluate eLearning programs at Royal Roads University, online courses in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa, and online health care courses across Canada.

The Partnership Learning Model was designed to meet the needs of a specific program that had great market demand — Management Education and Training in the Advanced Technology Sector (MacDonald & Gabriel, 1998). The model addresses the need for the development of co-operative partnerships between universities and private industry. The Partnership Model addressed clients' perceived need for university accreditation, which is facilitated by university infrastructures providing a research focus, course delivery, and support, while maximizing the value of core competencies and credibility in the advanced technology sector.

The research project, "ELearning Dementia Care Program for Health Care Teams in Long-Term Care Facilities", was funded by CANARIE. This project adapted the DDLM and companion online survey for use in a health care environment. This project was quickly recognized locally, nationally, and internationally for having an immense impact on the attitudes and practices of health care workers in long-term care facilities across Canada. The project, involving partners across multiple disciplines, developed an online bilingual dementia care program that comprised four modules and was offered at six sites in three provinces across Canada. The timely online dementia care program brought visibility to the University of Ottawa in a number of arenas including being discussed on local radio stations and newspapers, published on CANARIE's website, and in several professional and refereed journals.

I have been very successful at disseminating my research at scholarly conferences and in publishing in distinguished national and international refereed journals in addition to many refereed book chapters refereed professional articles. For more information on my research visit my webpage at <http://courseweb.edteched.uottawa.ca/WBL/>

Supervising graduate students is one of the most rewarding aspects of my work. I had one MA and five PhD students graduate under my supervision in the past five years. I also currently supervise the Faculty of Education's first Post-Doctorate Fellow as well as another PhD student and two MA students who are at various stages in their programs. I have also sat on the thesis committees of an additional 20 PhD and MA students. My graduate students collaborate in all aspects of my research and most of my students graduate with several refereed publications and conference presentations.

Our research on online courses has revealed that one reason students say they miss face-to-face classes is because they do not feel that they get to know all the personal things about the professor that are revealed when you meet in person. In an effort to eradicate this feeling I have decided to share many personal things about myself—you can read about these from a link off my professor page.

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Your Co-Professor – Emma Stodel

Welcome to EDU 5190! I have been closely involved with Colla MacDonald and her research on e-learning since 1999 - first as a research assistant and now as a Post-Doctoral Fellow. I developed this online version of EDU5190 with Colla in 2003 and have revised and improved it a couple of times since then. I hope you enjoy it!

I did my Ph.D. here in the Faculty of Education under Colla's supervision. My doctoral research examined the role of mental training in increasing sport enjoyment. As a result of my work in e-learning with Colla, I started to explore the possibilities of merging these two seemingly diverse interests in sport psychology and e-learning with the concept of online mental training. I have published theoretical papers in this area and am hoping that I will find time to put some of these ideas into practice.

When I'm not working you can usually find me on the ultimate field, out on a long run, or hanging out with my pup Nelly who is now getting bigger and loves swimming. My fiancé and I just had a new house built and moved in at the beginning of the year! We are loving it! That was last year's project and this year's is wedding planning!

I hail from England, but only lived there for a few years. I was brought up in Belgium and when I'm not in Canada I call southern Spain home and enjoy the luxury of being able to drink champagne overlooking the Med with my family on Christmas day every year. My life history is complicated and I have no roots (so buying a house was particularly daunting!)! If you want to know more about me you can listen to my abbreviated life story!

I'm looking forward to meeting you all virtually and will enjoy working with you in this course.

Hints for Successful e-Learning

The e-learning experience can be extremely rewarding and highly successful. However you will find that the online learning experience will be different than your traditional face-face classroom learning experiences. The virtual world is yours to control. It is up to you to determine when to log on, what comments to make in relation to the topics covered, and how to actively participate in discussions.

The extraordinary freedom you will experience in the online course may require that you set up a schedule for logging in. I recommend the following tips for successful e-learning in the virtual asynchronous classroom:

- **Log in daily** - even if only for a brief period to check out what people have to say or to look at comments from the e-moderator.
- **Check in with your classmates frequently.** Tell them what you are thinking about the course material and give them examples from your workplace that reflect the course material. Encourage classmates to provide you with feedback about what you are sending them.

Research suggests that the most successful e-learners are:

- highly motivated
- willing to form online friendships and relationships with other learners
- log on frequently
- skilled at written communication.

Posing Questions

It is highly likely that any questions you have will also be of interest to other learners. It is even probable that other learners will have the same questions that you do. Therefore, for efficiency purposes, all course and work related questions should be posted in the discussion groups for all classmates to see. In most cases, your colleagues can add value to, comment on, or answer the questions. For the benefit of all learners, the professor will also respond within one business day to questions in the discussion groups as well as comments and answers to the original question.

Personal questions can be directed to the professor through WebCT e-mail. Please limit your professor e-mail to personal questions only. All course and work related questions are encouraged and welcomed in the discussion groups. A last request, do not email the same question to Colla and Emma in the hope of getting a faster response. We both check our email on a regular basis and will get back to you in a timely fashion. It is a waste of time for both of us to respond to the same question.

Learner Expectations

By the end of this course, it is expected that the learner will:

- understand the basic elements of a research report;
- be able to read a published research report with comprehension;
- be able to determine the scientific value of a research study and discern its practical implication for professional work;
- be familiar with some common research methodologies and the distinct purposes they serve;
- understand the fundamental principles that underpin various research methodologies and how they apply in the formulation of a research project.

Course Assignments

Evaluation of learners in EDU5190 - Introduction to Research in Education will encompass four written assignments and participation. Evaluation of learners rests solely with the course professor.

Professional Participation (10%)

To ensure that everyone feels they have the support he or she needs and does not feel isolated in this online experience, we have designed this course to be a community of learners. As a member of this community you have certain obligations and responsibilities to the group at large. Therefore your regular presence and active involvement is essential for both your learning and the learning of other class members. It is expected that you will log on often (preferably once a day but at the very least every few days) and participate in the discussions (both by reading the postings and making postings when you feel you can contribute to the dialogue).

Within this large community you are also a member of a smaller group (your learning triad). You also have obligations and responsibilities to your triad members. The learning triad is your support group and is there to assist you and for you to assist others. Hopefully, a bond will develop among the three of you that will make the e-learning experience easier and more meaningful. In this course, nothing is evaluated as a group. However, some of the activities are dependent upon your triad members. For example, each member of the triad must provide feedback on the other members' conceptual frameworks in a timely fashion so suggestions can be incorporated and the deadline for submitting the assignment met.

The structure of the course and your success in it requires full participation of all learners in three areas. It is these areas in which your grade for participation will be determined:

1. **learner discussion** - learners will act as consultants for each other by providing support and constructive feedback on each others' work and ideas and graciously accepting the constructive feedback from others.
2. **discussion groups** - learners are expected to prepare for the topic of the week and be ready to discuss his or her opinions and those of others via posting and reacting to comments in the discussion groups.
3. **e-moderating** - each week there is a discussion planned, one or two learners will be in charge of facilitating the discussion. The role of the e-moderator is to stimulate discussion, keep the discussion on topic, and encourage everyone to participate. The week that you will be in charge of facilitating the discussion will be arranged in the first face-to-face class. If you are unable to attend the first face-to-face class, you will be appointed a discussion session. The dates and topics of the discussions will be available to everyone in a posting in the Main discussion forum and in the calendar.

Assignment #1 (30%) – Due Unit 4

Summary and critique of two refereed articles

1. The following e-Docs will help you complete this assignment: [Refereed Articles](#), [Finding Resources](#), and [APA Style](#).
2. Find two refereed journal articles that relate to an area you are interested in and think you might want to research. You should choose one article you consider to be of the highest quality and one that you consider to be of lesser quality. The e-Doc [Finding Resources](#) will help you with this part of the assignment.
3. At the top of your page write out the complete reference of the article, making sure that you comply with APA style. The e-Doc [APA Style](#) will help you with this part of the assignment.
4. Summarise (max 1 page per article) and critique (max 2 pages per article) each article. The summary and critique for each article is worth 13% of your final grade. The e-Doc [Refereed Articles](#) will help you with this part of the assignment. Your reports should address the following points and questions:

Summary	Critique
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarise the purpose of the research. What specific research questions or hypotheses were the researchers trying to answer or test? Summarise the methodology. How were participants selected? What were the research procedures? What data was collected and by what means was it gathered and analysed? What were the researchers' principal findings and conclusions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this study relevant and useful? What are the implications? Does the methodology (e.g., sampling procedures, data collection and analysis techniques) permit the research question(s) to be answered adequately? What are the methodological limitations of this study and how do these limit the conclusions that can be made about results? Are the conclusions justified? What, if any, alternate explanations of results are possible?

5. With regards to their quality, what were the factors that made you select these two articles? The e-Doc [Refereed Articles](#) will help you with this part of the assignment. This part of the assignment is worth 4% of your final grade. Consider:

- the authors and their institutional affiliations and credentials
- the journal the article was published in
- the journal's publisher
- the members of the journal's review board
- the nature of the article
- the year of publication
- the number of times the journal article is cited by other authors

Assignment #2 (30%) – Due Unit 7

Write the introduction, statement of the problem, and research question(s) for a research report

- The following e-Docs will help you complete this assignment: [Refereed Articles](#), [Finding Resources](#), [APA Style](#), and [The Introduction: Statement of the Problem and Research Question\(s\)](#).
- Write a 2-3 page introduction (rationale) for a research study you think you might be interested in conducting in the future (NB – You will not have to conduct this study during this course). Your introduction should conclude with a statement

of the problem and the research question(s). The introduction should be referenced according to APA style (5th ed.). You should draw from approximately 10 journal articles, books, book chapters, theses, dissertations etc. when creating your argument. The e-Doc [The Introduction: Statement of the Problem and Research Question\(s\)](#) will help you with this part of the assignment. (25%)

3. Attach a reference list of the resources you cited in your introduction. The references should be in APA format (see e-Doc [APA Style](#)). All works cited in the introduction must be referenced in this list. If you did not cite a reference in the introduction it should not be included in your reference list. (5%)

4. Examples of this assignment can be found in the Introduction section under Examples.

Evaluation criteria

- Clarity and development of ideas
- Degree of support for the argument from the literature
- Focused research question
- Appropriate use of APA

Assignment #3 (25%) – Due Unit 10

Develop a conceptual framework

1. The following e-Doc will help you complete this assignment: [Conceptual Frameworks](#)

2. Use the guidelines in the e-Doc [Conceptual Frameworks](#) to develop a conceptual framework based on the hypothetical study you wrote the introduction, statement of the problem, and research question(s) for in assignment #2.

3. Your assignment should comprise a diagram relating the major ideas of the research created in PowerPoint (or a similar program) and 6-10 sentences explaining the diagram.

4. Examples of this assignment can be found in the Conceptual Framework section under Examples.

Evaluation criteria

- Professional quality of the diagram
- Comprehensiveness of the conceptual framework
- Alignment between the write-up and the diagram

Assignment #4 (5%) – Due Unit 12

Final reflective posting

1. Spend some time reflecting on the course and your experience within it. Revisit your learner page. How have you changed during this course? Update your learner page to reflect these changes, if any.
2. Go to the discussion forum called **Unit 12: Final Reflections**. Share your experiences with this course and indicate how you and your perceptions have changed over the last term. Explain how and why you updated your learner page. You can use the following to guide your posting if you wish:

When I began this course I felt...

Since this course began I have changed in the following way(s)...

The biggest surprise for me in taking this course was....

What I liked best about this course was...

What I liked least about this course was...

The best thing about e-learning is....

The most challenging thing about e-learning is...

The most useful thing I learned in this course was...

If this course were to be offered online again, I think it could be improved by...