Instructor - Randy Blair
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Office Hours – By appointment

This course is required for everyone except ParaLegal Studies majors. The class will be conducted in a classroom setting. IDS 206W is a course included in “Writing across the Curriculum.” Therefore, the quality of writing is a grading component of each assignment.


**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**
This course is a general introduction to research methods for the social sciences. Students will learn the essential concepts in contemporary research and will begin to develop their ability to critique and construct their own research. The basic steps involved in conducting any research project are explained. The theory of validity in research is presented as an overarching framework that can be used to design original research and critique existing studies. The major methodologies in applied social research, both quantitative and qualitative, are considered. Students are introduced to the essential ideas in contemporary research including: how to conceptualize a study and review relevant literature; sampling methods and options; measurement methods (questionnaires, scales, interviews) and how to determine their quality (reliability and validity); experimental and quasi-experimental research designs; basic data analysis methods; and ethical issues in applied social research.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**
At the conclusion of this course, students will:

1) Know the characteristics of research and have the skills to evaluate research.

2) Be able to use the library, the computer and its software, the Internet, and selected databases as tools for research.

3) Have a knowledge and understanding of basic research language and concepts.

4) Have a knowledge and understanding of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

5) Have a knowledge and understanding of research designs.

6) Have knowledge and understanding of measurement methods and their quality.

For this course, students will complete a series of small research projects that will guide them in an understanding of the basic tools of academic research and the methodologies employed to convey the results of research in a coherent written manner. Course grade will result from the completion of four (4) short research assignments, each worth twenty-five (25) points, leading to an abbreviated Review of
the Literature on a topic of your choosing. The points accumulated from the assignments will constitute the final course grade.

**GRADING SCALE:**

100 – 90 = A  
89 – 80 = B  
79 – 70 = C  
69 – 60 = D  
59 & below = F

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1**  
- The Definition and Tools of Research

**Week 2 (First Project Due)**  
- Defining the Research Problem

**Week 3**  
- The Literature Review

**Week 4 (Second Project Due)**  
- Quantitative Research

**Week 5**  
- Qualitative Research

**Week 6 (Third Project Due)**  
- The Research Plan and Proposal

**Week 7**  
- The APA Format

**Week 8 (Fourth Project Due)**  
- Using Technology in Research: Excel, Word, and SPSS

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:**

This class follows the policies of student academic integrity as outlined in the Lincoln/G.I. Student Handbook. This handbook can be found online at the Doane College website. This policy requires that you immediately and cheerfully offer the benefit of your knowledge and skills to any fellow student who needs your help. If someone helps you, whether a fellow student, the author of a book/article, a family member, a pastor or priest, a coworker, a child, a pet, or anyone else, say that they helped you. That’s called citing a source. Always show respect for the ideas or words of others by giving them the credit. Failure to show respect will result in an “F”.