This course supports the assessments for RET1. The course covers 10 competencies and represents 2 competency units.

Introduction

Overview
Knowing what rigorous application of research has informed practice allows the educated professional to work intentionally and productively. Professionals also should be able and willing to add to the knowledge base. For these reasons, they learn the fundamentals of research.

You have completed the Foundations of Research, Literature Review for Educational Research, and Research Proposal courses. In this course you will reflect on your topic selection and literature review in order to consider alternatives. Then you will demonstrate your understanding of the three approaches to research: qualitative, quantitative, and action research. Finally, you will demonstrate your mastery of this domain of study by completing a study critique.

The activities in this course are built upon the concepts in Literature Review for Research, Foundations of Research Fundamentals, and Research Proposal. If you have not completed those three courses of study, you should work on those first before you start this course. Since most of the concepts have been explained well in the Literature Review for Research, Foundations of Research Fundamentals, and Research Proposal courses, they will not be repeated here. References will be made where applicable and the same readings will be required even though you have read the chapters or pages over and over for Literature Review for Research, Foundations of Research Fundamentals, and Research Proposal. Revisiting the reading materials will ensure the quality of your reasoning and writing.

Watch the following video introduction for this course:

Competencies
This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 10 competencies:

- **Competency 508.1.1: Quantitative Research Paradigms**
  The graduate understands the components of quantitative research.
- **Competency 508.1.2: Qualitative Research Paradigms**
  The graduate understands the components of qualitative research.
- **Competency 508.1.3: Action Research Paradigms**
  The graduate understands the components of action research.
- **Competency 508.2.1: Purpose of Literature Review**
  The graduate understands the purpose of conducting a literature review and understands its relationship to educational or healthcare research and practice.
- **Competency 508.2.2: Topic Selection**
  The graduate understands how to select appropriate research topics and research paradigms.
- **Competency 508.2.3: Resource Identification, Evaluation, and Selection**
The graduate identifies, evaluates, and utilizes information resources in order to investigate specific research topics.

- **Competency 508.2.4: Research Study Critique**
  The graduate critiques the data analysis, results, and conclusions in a research study.

- **Competency 508.2.5: Develop a Literature Review**
  The graduate understands how to organize and develop a thorough and coherent literature review.

- **Competency 508.3.5: Basic Data Evaluation Concepts**
  The graduate understands basic concepts involved in the evaluation of data.

- **Competency: Research Proposal**
  The graduate completes a research proposal.

### Teaching Dispositions Statement

Please review the [Statement of Teaching Dispositions](#).

### Course Instructor Assistance

As you prepare to successfully demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that course instructors stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts, mentors enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. Course instructors are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you.

Successful students report that working with a course instructor is the key to their success. Course instructors are able to share tips on approaches, tools, and skills that can help you apply the content you're studying. They also provide guidance in assessment preparation strategies and troubleshoot areas of deficiency. Even if things don’t work out on your first try, course instructors act as a support system to guide you through the revision process. You should expect to work with course instructors for the duration of your coursework, and you are encouraged to contact them as soon as you begin. Course instructors are fully committed to your success!

### Preparing for Success

The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

Watch the following Getting Started video for additional information which will help you complete this course:

*Note: View the video in full screen at 720p for best results.*

### Learning Resources

The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course. For many resources, WGU has provided automatic access through the course. However, you may need to manually enroll in or independently acquire other resources. Read the full instructions provided to ensure that you have access to all of your resources in a timely manner.  

**Purchase Learning Resources**
Listed below are the learning resource materials you will need to obtain.

**Textbooks**
Purchase the following textbook:


*Note: You may purchase your book through a retailer of your choice. Please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition.*

**Automatically Enrolled Resources**

You can access the learning resources listed in this section by clicking on the links provided throughout the course. You may be prompted to log in to the WGU student portal to access the resources.

**VitalSource E-Texts**

The following textbook is available to you as an e-text within this course. You will be directly linked to the specific readings required within the activities that follow. *This e-text is available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase a hard copy at your own expense through a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition.*


*Note: The e-text includes references to supplemental material in the MyEducationLab environment, however access to this resource is not included. If these resources are required, they have been supplied at the activity level within the course.*

**Other Learning Resources**

You will use the following learning resource for this course of study.

**APA Formatting With Purdue OWL**
Successful completion of this course requires an understanding and application of proper APA formatting. Please review the [Purdue OWL APA Formatting and Style Guide](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/) for formatting guidelines and solutions for a range of citation types. If you find yourself in need of additional information on APA formatting, you are welcome to purchase a copy of the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association at your own expense.

**Research Fundamentals Domain**

The webinars are designed to answer many questions you might have about how to approach the coursework. View the following webinar or attend a live version before taking any of the
related assessments.

- **RET1 webinar v2** (duration 00:27:56)

**Topic Selection**

In one of the first sections of Literature Review for Research, you learned the purpose of literature review, the research paradigms, and different research approaches in order to identify an appropriate research topic. You also learned characteristics of good topics. Under the guidance of your mentor and capstone chair, you selected a topic that is manageable and of interest to you. As a result, you completed topic selection for task one in the Literature Review for Research Course. Now you will reflect on the process of completing that task.

**Topic Selection Reflection**

For the Literature Review for Research Course, you were asked to choose a topic. Your topic should have meaning for you or else you will find it difficult to stay with it through the capstone process. Part of the purpose of the course is to help you reflect on that choice as well as to gain competence in understanding how to select appropriate research topics.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 508.2.2: Topic Selection**  
The graduate understands how to select appropriate research topics and research paradigms.

**Reading Assignment: Review Chapter 2 and Chapter 3**

You have read all these chapters for other courses of study. For this task, you will only need to revisit these chapters to refresh your mind.

Review the following from *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*:

- chapter 2 "Selecting and Defining a Research Topic"

Also review the following from *Bookmarks: A Guide to Research and Writing*:

- chapter 3 ("Finding a Topic")

**Topic Selection Reflection Performance Task**

It is very likely that you completed task 1 in Literature Review for Research a while ago; it is important to revisit what you have written for that task.

After you have reviewed the completed Task 1 for Literature Review for Research, open the following task in Issues in Research Fundamentals in *TaskStream*, read the task descriptions and reflect on the process of selecting your topic:

- RET1: Task 1, Topic Selection Reflection
For this task, you will write a brief essay describing the process you used to select your research topic in your problem, search, and evaluation task. Create a word document and follow task directions to write the essay. It is always helpful to break down your writing into sections using the required subtopics as subheadings. It is difficult for the reader to read a very long paragraph without breaks; it is equally difficult for you to check if you have addressed each subtopic fully.

For example, for task 1, you can create a structure like the following:

- Reflection on Topic Selection (Center this main heading in normal font type)
- Introduction (This subheading should be flushed to the left and italicized.)
- What Motivated the Selection of the Research Topic (This subheading should be flushed to the left and italicized.)
- Barriers I Might Encounter with the Research Topic (This subheading should be flushed to the left and italicized.)
- How the Research Topic Will Benefit My Field (This subheading should be flushed to the left and italicized.)
- Summary (This subheading should be flushed to the left and italicized.)

Proofread the completed task carefully, check APA style, and then submit it for evaluation in TaskStream. Keep a copy for yourself.

**Reflecting on Your Literature Review**

In the Literature Review for Research Course, you completed the full literature review task. You are now prepared to write a reflection of your literature review experience. Take a moment to think about the process of conducting literature review and selecting resources and how the review will affect your next step in your research plan. Review the Literature Review for Research Course to refresh what you have learned about conducting a literature review.

**Literature Review Reflection**

It is very likely that you completed Literature Review for Research a while ago. It is important to revisit what you have written for that assessment. After you have reviewed the completed Literature Review for Research, open task 2 in TaskStream, read task descriptions, and reflect on the process of conducting your literature review.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 508.2.1: Purpose of Literature Review**
  The graduate understands the purpose of conducting a literature review and understands its relationship to educational or healthcare research and practice.

- **Competency 508.2.3: Resource Identification, Evaluation, and Selection**
  The graduate identifies, evaluates, and utilizes information resources in order to investigate specific research topics.

- **Competency 508.2.5: Develop a Literature Review**
  The graduate understands how to organize and develop a thorough and coherent literature review.
Reading Assignment: Review Chapter 3 and Chapters 8-11

You have read these chapters for other courses of study. For this task, you will only need to revisit these chapters to refresh your mind.

Read and review the following from *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications in MyEducationLab*:

- chapter 3 ("Reviewing the Literature")

Also read and review the following from *Bookmarks: A Guide to Research and Writing*:

- chapter 8 ("Conducting Field Research")
- chapter 9 ("Keeping Track of Information")
- chapter 10 ("Choosing Appropriate Sources")
- chapter 11 ("Evaluating Sources")

**Literature Review Reflection Performance Task**

For this task, you will write a brief essay describing the process you went through in completing a literature review.

After you have reviewed the completed Literature Review for Research, open the following task in TaskStream, read task descriptions, and reflect on the process of conducting your literature review:

- RET1: Task 2, Literature Review Reflection

Create a word document and follow task directions to write the essay. It is always helpful to break down your writing into sections using the required subtopics as subheadings. It is difficult for the reader to read a very long paragraph without breaks; it is equally difficult for you to check if you have addressed each subtopic fully. For an example of the format, see the "Topic Selection Reflection Performance Task” activity in the "Topic Selection Subject” in this course.

Proofread the completed task carefully, check APA style, and then submit it for evaluation in TaskStream. Keep a copy for yourself.

**Research Paradigms**

During the first few subjects in the Foundations of Research Fundamentals Course, you learned that there are three paradigms of educational research and various research methods under quantitative and qualitative research. For the Research Proposal Course, you have developed a research proposal; therefore, you should be familiar with the various components of a research proposal (nursing majors do this as part of their capstone). For this task you will use the knowledge you learned during those sections to describe three different research scenarios—one each for a quantitative, qualitative, and action research paradigm—that are appropriate for your content area.
Reflection on Research Paradigms

This is a big essay. Each of the finished scenarios should look like a miniature research proposal, or a shorter form of something similar to what you have written in your research proposal, without a literature review. It should include most of the important elements typical of a research proposal with a description of the instructional environment, research questions, hypothesis (for quantitative research), audience or participants, groupings (assigning students into groups), data collection instruments or methods with a description of types of data to be collected, and finally, data analysis. If you have finished the Research Proposal Course of Study, this should sound very familiar to you. Review the Research Proposal Course of Study if you encounter any problems in writing this essay.

Reading Assignment: Review Chapters 1, 5-18, 20

These chapters are included here so that you can review them to refresh your mind on the various research designs and methods. You will need to pick one quantitative research design (such as experimental design or correlational research design), a qualitative research design (such as ethnographic research), and an action research design. You can use the topic you have chosen for all three scenarios. It is helpful to quickly scan the chapters before you select your designs and then review those chapters on your chosen design.

Review the following chapters from Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications in MyEducationLab

- chapter 1 ("Introduction to Educational Research")
- chapter 5 ("Selecting a Sample")
- chapter 6 ("Selecting Measuring instruments")
- chapter 7 ("Survey Research")
- chapter 8 ("Correlational Research")
- chapter 9 ("Causal-Comparative Research")
- chapter 10 ("Experimental Research")
- chapter 11 ("Single-Subject Experimental Research")
- chapter 12 ("Descriptive Statistics")
- chapter 13 ("Inferential Statistics")
- chapter 14 ("Qualitative data Collection")
- chapter 15 ("Narrative Research")
- chapter 16 ("Ethnographic Research")
- chapter 17 ("Case Study Research")
- chapter 18 ("Qualitative Research: Data Analysis and Interpretation")
- chapter 20 ("Action Research")

These chapters are listed for reference purposes only.

Research Paradigms Performance Task

Open task descriptions for the following task in TaskStream and read the descriptions:

- RET1: Task 3 Research Paradigms
Then revisit the Foundations of Research Fundamentals Course and review concepts relating to research paradigms discussed in the first few subjects. Also revisit the Research Proposal Course.

Write a brief essay following task directions in one word document and submit it for evaluation in TaskStream. Use headings and subheadings to break down your discussions of each scenario. For example of format, see the "Topic Selection Reflection Performance Task" activity in the "Topic Selection" subject in this course.

Proofread the completed task carefully, check APA style, and then submit it for evaluation in TaskStream. Keep a copy for yourself.

Research Study Critique

Creating a bridge between research and practice offers practitioners an opportunity to review content-related research, analyze the facts, and determine the research's effects on their environment. In the Foundations of Research Fundamentals Course, you learned the concepts necessary to understand a research study report. In the "Research Study Critique" subject of the Foundations of Research Fundamentals Course, you learned how to critique or evaluate a research study. In this subject, you will use what you have learned so far to analyze and evaluate a published research article in your field.

Research Study Critique

An important element of being a professional is to appropriately critique research studies conducted by others. When you evaluate research studies, you analyze each element:

- Who are the participants?
- What are the procedures?
- How data are analyzed?
- Are the data analysis techniques appropriate?
- What are the results of the study?
- Are the results adequate?
- What are the conclusions?
- Are the conclusions adequate based on the data analysis, the research questions, and hypothesis?

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 508.2.4: Research Study Critique**
  The graduate critiques the data analysis, results, and conclusions in a research study.

Reading Assignment-Review Chapter 22

Read and review the following from *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*:

- chapter 22 ("Evaluating a Research Report")
Again, you already read this chapter. It is included here in case you need to refresh your memory on evaluating educational research in completion of the research study critique performance task.

**Research Study Critique Performance Task**

In task 3 of the Issues in Research Fundamentals Course, you wrote three research scenarios which were judged by whether they had followed research conventions. In task 4, you will be the evaluator using the same criteria to evaluate what other researchers have written.

Just as when you were writing your research proposal and task 3 for the Issues in Research Fundamentals Course, you will need to be very familiar with the components of a research proposal, research conventions, and assumptions in order to critique others' research.

Reading chapter 22 of *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications* will help, but your ability to critique a research study depends on your knowledge of the basic research concepts you learned through all the chapters before chapter 22. If there is any element in the requirement that you do not know how to critique, you should check the corresponding chapters in *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications* or the corresponding sections in the Foundations of Research Fundamentals and Research Proposal Courses of Study.

Open the following task in Issues in Research Fundamentals in TaskStream and read task descriptions:

- RET1: Task 4, Research Study Critique

Read one of the content area research articles located in the WGU e-reserve Library (or see references at the end of the task descriptions for task 4 in Issues in Research Fundamentals). Write a brief essay following the task directions. In your essay, first describe the participants, data analysis procedure, and results. Then critique the article's data analysis, results, and conclusions for adequacy.

For example of format, see the "Topic Selection Reflection Performance Task" activity in the "Topic Selection" subject in this course.

Proofread the completed task carefully, check APA style, and then submit it for evaluation in TaskStream. Keep a copy for yourself.

**Final Steps**

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has prepared you to complete the assessments associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessments, schedule and complete your assessments now.

**The WGU Library**

The WGU Library
The **WGU Library** is available online to WGU students 24 hours a day.

For more information about using the WGU Library, view the following videos on [The WGU Channel](#):

*Introducing the WGU library*

*Note: To download this video, right-click the following link and choose "Save as...":* [download video](#).

*Searching the WGU library*

*Note: To download this video, right-click the following link and choose "Save as...":* [download video](#).

**Center for Writing Excellence: The WGU Writing Center**

If you need help with any part of the writing or revision process, contact the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE). Whatever your needs—writing anxiety, grammar, general college writing concerns, or even ESL language-related writing issues—the CWE is available to help you. The CWE offers personalized individual sessions and weekly group webinars. For an appointment, please e-mail [writingcenter@wgu.edu](mailto:writingcenter@wgu.edu).

**Feedback**

WGU values your input! If you have comments, concerns, or suggestions for improvement of this course, please submit your feedback using the following form:

- Course Feedback

**ADA Policy**

Western Governors University recognizes and fulfills its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and similar state laws. Western Governors University is committed to provide reasonable accommodation(s) to qualified disabled learners in University programs and activities as is required by applicable law(s). ADA Support Services serves as the principal point of contact for students seeking accommodations and can be contacted at [ADASupport@wgu.edu](mailto:ADASupport@wgu.edu). Further information on WGU?s ADA policy and process can be viewed in the student handbook at the following link:

- [Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities](#)