Instructor:
Jason Winchester, Ph.D.
Office: 208 Ligon Coliseum
E-mail: jason.winchester@mwsu.edu Please do not attempt to e-mail me via Blackboard. Send all communication directly to my MWSU e-mail account.
Office Phone: ?

Office Hours: Wed, 2:00 – 3:30 PM and Thurs, 12:00 – 1:30 PM. On days where class is cancelled (e.g. holiday, fall break, travel, etc.), office hours will also be cancelled unless otherwise noted.

Prerequisites:
Graduate standing in program, or permission of the instructor.

Required Textbook:

*see course schedule for other required readings

Class Description:
An exploration of methods of research relative to exercise and sport professions. Particular attention is given student driven development of research projects.

Objectives:
Develop a solid foundation in the research process. Develop a research proposal using the knowledge developed in this class. Present proposal to class and/or faculty and defend project as needed.
Class Policies and Student Conduct:

✓ Attendance is not required, however it is imperative for success in this class. The student is responsible for any information presented, discussed and assigned in class regardless of whether or not the student was present. Make-up tests, quizzes, assignments, or other grades will be granted for excused absences only:
  - serious illness (doctor’s note required)
  - official university excused absences (with proper documentation and prior notification)
  - extenuating AND unusual circumstances (PRIOR approval should be obtained or direct contact made with the instructor within 24 hours of the event). Whether or not specific circumstances quality as both extenuating AND unusual is at the discretion of the instructor on a case by case basis.
  - Documentation of the reason for any absence must be provided to the instructor.
  - In emergencies where advance notification is not possible, the student must contact the Dean of Students to initiate an official request for an excused absence (940-397-4291).
  - Please be aware that any student who does not attend the lecture during the initial drop/add phase and has not communicated with me is subject to being administratively dropped from the roster. Roll will be taken up until the last day to add a class only and will not be used in grade calculation with the exception of possible extra credit or participation points, which will be dealt with at the discretion of the instructor.

✓ Late assignments will not be accepted for any reason barring the guidelines described in the above bullet.

✓ When contacting the instructor in reference to class issues via e-mail (jason.winchester@mwsu.edu) or other method (for example a note in my mail box or on my office door), if you do not receive confirmation that I have received your message, project, etc., within a reasonable time period (2 work days), then I did not get it! In other words, if you do not hear back from me, please follow up to make sure we are communicating effectively!

✓ I do not check or respond to my work e-mail on weekends, holidays, or past the close of business during the week. In other words, if you write me an e-mail on Friday night, don’t expect to hear back until sometime on Monday or Tuesday.

✓ Please check Blackboard and your MWSU e-mail account prior to coming to class. If I am ill or there is a change in the class location, materials required, or meeting time, I will send an e-mail out via Blackboard to all of your student accounts.

✓ Students are strongly encouraged to ask, and respond to, questions in class, because this identifies problem areas for the instructor.

✓ It is also recommended that every day after class you go through and review and organize the notes you have taken, rectifying the material with what you have read in the text. Preparation immediately before the examinations is greatly facilitated by this process.

✓ Students are always encouraged to come to office hours in order to ask additional questions on the material or to gain a better understanding of grades on exams or assignments.
Please understand that slides are an outline and do not represent all of the information which will be covered in class. If we talk about topics in class, unless I specify otherwise, they are fair game for exam material. If there is something that comes up in class discussion which you do not understand, please be sure to let me know so that I can slow down and help you get it right.

Student employment does not take priority over academic obligations. This includes graduate assistantships. I recognize that many students need to work in order to meet expenses, however, there are distinct guidelines for students in terms of the number of credit hours which should be attempted based on how many hours per week a student has outside employment. If you have questions about this, please see your student handbook.
**Evaluation:**

**EXAM REVIEWS:**
As time allows in class and depending on class progress in each unit, a review *may* be offered before each exam. At that time, students can ask any content question that they would like. Students are not required to participate in the review, and can stay or leave as they choose. If there are no questions related to the content of the unit, the review session will be ended. Whether or not a review is conducted in class depends of class progress through the material for each unit and class participation in previous reviews. If there is no time to have a formal review or, if review sessions are not being utilized, students will need to come to office hours to address any questions on class material.

**UNIT EXAMS:**
There will be 1 exam worth 100 points. Content for the exam will come from class discussion, presentations, and the following chapters for your textbook: 1-16, 23-24, and 26-27. Our exam will be in multiple choice and short answer format. Students are required to bring a ScanTron form in order to sit for the exam along with something to write with. Any student who does not have the correct ScanTron form and/or proper writing implements will not be allowed to sit for the exam. Including handing out of exams and any announcements, you will have the 90 minutes to complete the exam.

Please return exams promptly when time is called. Students who give prior notification for a university excused absence will be allowed to complete an alternate version of the exam outside of class. Students who miss an exam for what would not be considered a university excused absence or who do not give prior notification of excused absences will not be allowed to take the exam at an alternate time. Exams one and two will be given during normal class times and exam three will be given during our final exam period.

**EXAM/ASSIGNMENT PICKUP:**
For privacy reason, students are not allowed to pick up exams or assignments for other students without my having prior written permission from the student who’s exam is being collected. If you have extenuating circumstances and wish to e-mail me permission prior to handing back materials, I will be more than happy to allow the person designated in your letter to pick up your work.

Students will have 1 week to return exams to me following my handing them back. All students are encouraged to check the answer key to be sure that their exams are graded correctly. Any student who feels that a question could have been answered differently is encouraged to let me know so that we can talk about it. If the student can make a compelling case for why a particular question could have more than one correct answer, additional points *may* be awarded on a case by case and student by student basis. Students who do not turn in their exams to me within 1 week will suffer a 10% grade reduction off of their total points for each day the exam is late unless the student has a university excused absence.

**EXAM QUESTION RELIABILITY:**
Once I receive exam 1 back from students and all grade disputes have been discussed and resolved, I will run statistical reliability tests on every question. If any questions is found to be unreliable in the top 33% of the class by percentage grade, that question will be removed from grade calculation and all students who missed that particular question will be credited for those points. Students who got the question correct will not be credited any additional points. Students who need to take an alternate version of the exam will not have their exam questions tested for reliability due to small sample size. Due to the alternate nature of the exam, there will be no reliability testing for unit exam 2.
RESEARCH PROPOSAL – DOCUMENT:
All students will produce a research proposal consisting of the first three chapters of the thesis project. For details on what is contained in those chapters, see handouts on Blackboard. Students are required to select a target journal for their manuscript which must be approved by the instructor and their thesis committee chair. The submission guidelines for that journal are to be used by the student for issues related to formatting, headings, citation, referencing, figures, tables, etc. Please note, there are specific guidelines for paper formatting (margins, font, etc.) that may be different from the journal guidelines which are required by the graduate school. See handouts on Blackboard for this information. The following areas will be evaluated as part of this project:

Organization, mechanics, and writing
- Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which reader can follow.
- Student uses appropriate tables and figures to illustrate points where appropriate and helpful
- Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.
- Student correctly follows formatting guidelines for thesis projects, chapters 1-3 based upon university thesis guidelines and target journal submission requirements.
- Student uses correct citation methods throughout document based on requirements for target journal submission.

Content, subject knowledge, quality of proposal
- Student topic selection is pertinent to the field and represents a needed area of study
- Literature review is comprehensive and adequately describes what is currently known on the subject.
- Research question is valid based on the current body of evidence and/or current practice in the field
- The hypothesis chosen on the part of the student is testable and acceptable
- Student presents a clear study design and has followed guidelines of research methodology espoused in this course
- Tentative methods are appropriate to the design of the study and allow for the research questions to be answered properly.

Students will be required to submit their paper via Safe Assign located within Blackboard. I will not the final draft of your research proposals until it has been submitted in this fashion.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL – PRESENTATION AND DEFENSE:
All students will present their research proposals to the class in the final weeks of the semester. Students will be given 15 - 20 minutes to present their proposals. After the project has been presented the proposal will be open for questions, comments, and critique. 10 – 15 minutes will be provided for the defense. Presentations that do not stay in the range for time allowed will suffer significant grade penalty as a result. The following areas will be evaluated by the instructor(s):

Organization, mechanics, and elocution
- Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow.
- Student's graphics explain and reinforce screen text and presentation.
- Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.
- Student maintains eye contact with audience, seldom returning to notes.
- Student uses a clear voice and correct, precise pronunciation of terms so that all audience members can hear presentation.

**Subject knowledge, ability to answer questions, and quality of defense**
- Student demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration.
- Student is able to successfully field questions related to body of literature and general information on chosen topic
- Student is able to defend conclusions and purposes drawn from cited research.
- Student is able to adequately explain and defend decisions made regarding proposed methods, particularly study design.

**STUDENT PARTICIPATION:**
Students will be evaluated on their participation throughout the semester. There will be multiple days where we have in class discussion on readings which were assigned. Students should be prepared at all times to lead the discussion, answer questions about readings, etc. Students will also be expected to know each of the research topics chosen by their classmates. During presentations, students will be expected to ask knowledgeable questions and provide penetrating critique on the discussion at hand. Students who are unprepared for in-class discussions or to participate in the research presentations of their classmates will suffer a severe penalty to their participation grade.

**THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND IRB TRAINING:**
All students in the Master’s program are required to do a thesis project. Part of the goal of this course is to prepare students for this process. As such, students will need to have documentation of a faculty member who is willing to take them on as Chair of their thesis committee. In addition, students must have completed the NIH training for principal investigators which can be found at the Midwestern State University [Institutional Review Board webpage](#). Documentation of successfully completing this training must be provided to the instructor as part of this course. Students who do not provide evidence of an approved thesis chair and IRB completion will receive an incomplete grade until that information is provided. Due dates for these two items can be found in the course schedule later in this syllabus.

**POINTS POSSIBLE BREAKDOWN:**
Research proposal = 50 Points
Proposal presentation and defense = 50 Points
Student participation = 50 points
Exam = 100 Points

*Total points possible = 250 Points

**GRADING SCALE:**
Student’s letter grade is based on the individual point score converted into a percentage grade. Based upon the student’s class performance the following letter grades will be assigned:

90 – 100 % = A
80 – 89.99 % = B
70 – 79.99 % = C
60 – 69.99 % = D*

< 60 % = F

* D grades do not earn graduate credit at Midwestern State University. Please see the graduate catalog for details of grading policies for graduate students.

GRADING CONCERNS:
Students who feel there is a grading error or who wish to gain greater knowledge as to why a particular grade was earned have 1 week following the date exams or papers are handed back to the class to express their concerns. Following this period, all grades are set and will not be altered. Students are encouraged to come and look at their grade on proposals and presentations prior to submission of final course grades. Office hours will be announced in order to facilitate that process. After grade submission is complete, no grade alterations will be made so please come by during office hours or make an appointment to see me at another time if you have concerns.

NO STUDENT WILL BE THOUGHT OF ANY DIFFERENTLY OR PUNISHED IN ANY WAY FOR BRINGING A POTENTIAL GRADE CONCERN TO MY ATTENTION AS LONG AS THINGS ARE HANDLED IN A RESPECTFUL MANNER. I want all students to walk away with an understanding of why you earned the grade that you did. In addition, I want to make sure that any potential mistakes in grading on my part are taken care of immediately. I encourage ALL students to take advantage of opportunities to discuss their grades with me throughout the semester. I cannot treat you 100% fairly if you do not let me know about problems as they arise. Please keep me in the loop and I will make every effort to return the favor.
Tentative schedule:

Week 1, Aug 25th:
Course introduction, thesis discussion, library presentation, begin lecture 1

Week 2, Sep 1st:
Brickyard discussion (students need to have read articles prior to class), Lecture 1 and 2. (Students should be making contact with potential thesis committee chairs at this time)

Week 3, Sep 8th:
Lecture 2 and 3, discussion on how to review article (students need to have read article prior to coming to class). (Approved research topics due to me).

Week 4, Sep 15th:
Lecture 3 and 4 and discussion on how to do a literature review (students need to have done readings prior to coming to class). (Outlines of literature review due to me).

Week 5, Sep 22nd:
Lecture 4 and 5, creativity in research discussion (students must have done readings prior to class), (mini-review due to me)

Week 6, Sep 29th:
Lecture 5 and 6

Week 7, Oct 6th:
Lecture 6 and 7 (students should be found a thesis chair by this time; documentation due to me today!) (Full literature review - DRAFT) due to me, in class peer-review session Chapter 2, if time.

Week 8, Oct 13th:
Lecture 7 and 8 – (Draft chapter 1 due to me); in-class peer-review of chapter 1 if time.

Week 9, Oct 20th:
Lecture 8 and 9

Week 10, Oct 27th:
Lecture 9 and 10, (Draft Chapter 3 due to me), in-class peer review session (chapter 3) if time.

Week 11, Nov 3rd:
Finish Lecture 10, discussion about presentations, catch up day (if needed).

Week 12, Nov 10th:
Exam and discussion about presentations; Final version of chapter 1 – 3 due to me via Safe Assign.

Week 13, Nov 17th:
Student presentations

Week 14, Nov 24th:
NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15, Dec 1st:
Student presentations (students should have completed IRB Training, documentation must be provided to instructor – Due today!)
Assumption of risk:
As with any activity there is an assumed risk while participating. We will do all we can to provide a safe environment; however, you are ultimately responsible for your well-being. The university will not be held liable for any injuries that occur.

Any student who has a documented medical condition, (e.g. Asthma, Hypertension, Cardiac Condition, etc.), or any injury that may preclude participation in a specific activity should inform the instructor immediately. Arrangements will be made with an alternate activity for your participation.

ADA Policy Statement:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities, including a requirement that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Students who have special needs as a result of a disability and require accommodations, must contact the Disability Services Office at 940-397-4140 and notify the instructor as soon as possible.

Additional Student Assistance:
Students requiring assistance with class issues beyond that of the instructor should be aware that there are multiple resources at MSU to help them. Help with tutoring and other academic issues can be obtained at the Midwestern State University Academic Success Center at 940-397-5444. Students can seek help on their own or can be referred by the professor of the course they are having difficulty with. If you need a referral or other assistance, please do not hesitate to ask.

Students are also encouraged to seek assistance as needed from the Midwestern State University Counseling Center at 940-397-4618.

Academic Integrity:
As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one’s own the ideas, words, writings, etc. that belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research and academic discourse cannot be safely conducted.

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions which may be imposed through the regular institutional procedures as a result of academic misconduct, the instructor has the authority to assign an "F" or a zero for the exercise or examination, or to assign an "F" in the course. As noted above, plagiarism detection software will be used throughout this course.

Student Honor Creed

As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so."

As students at MSU, we recognize that any great society must be composed of empowered, responsible citizens. We also recognize universities play an important role in helping mold these responsible citizens. We believe students themselves play an important part in developing responsible citizenship
by maintaining a community where integrity and honorable character are the norm, not the exception. Thus, We, the Students of Midwestern State University, resolve to uphold the honor of the University by affirming our commitment to complete academic honesty. We resolve not only to be honest but also to hold our peers accountable for complete honesty in all university matters. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any unauthorized material in examinations, or to present, as one's own, work or ideas which are not entirely one's own. We recognize that any instructor has the right to expect that all student work is honest, original work. We accept and acknowledge that responsibility for lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty fundamentally rests within each individual student. We expect of ourselves academic integrity, personal professionalism, and ethical character. We appreciate steps taken by University officials to protect the honor of the University against any who would disgrace the MSU student body by violating the spirit of this creed. Written and adopted by the 2002-2003 MSU Student Senate.

Final comments:
If a student does not understand an assignment, what is expected of him/her, or is having difficulty mastering the material/skills covered as a part of this class, I am available to help! I have an “open door” policy and students are always encouraged to call or e-mail me for an appointment, or to just come by my office at any time. I will be more than happy to assist any student whom is having difficulty and requests help, or who just wants to dig deeper into the class material. Please let me know if you are having any difficulty at all and do not wait until you are past the point of no return to seek help. Many students in the past could have had better grades had they come and talked with me earlier rather than later upon recognition that there was a problem. I can’t help you if I don’t know there is a problem!

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course syllabus and/or schedule at any time. Students will always be informed of any changes made.