

Revised contract for [student's name removed] Ed 399, Fall 2009
with Professor Jen Sandler (and Professor Dougherty as informal advisor)

[student] agrees to conduct her research as a member of the SmartChoices team led by Professor Dougherty. Email all assignments to Prof Dougherty by the deadline. Grades to be officially issued by Prof Sandler, in consultation with Prof Dougherty (on leave). The penalty for overdue assignments will be 10% for every 12-hour period beyond the deadline, with exceptions granted only for documented medical or family emergencies.

This Ed 399 will fulfill the Ed Studies senior requirement for an independent research project. Seniors do not need to work alone, but they must demonstrate their ability, as individuals, to create new research that meets the criteria below.

Given that [student] will be working with the SmartChoices research project, she will be permitted to expand on Professor Dougherty's existing work (eg. the research proposal, the AERA proposal), with proper attribution to the author. But her objective is to add a new dimension -- of her own design -- to the SmartChoices research.

Since there are no scheduled classes for this independent study, [student] is responsible for taking the initiative to schedule meetings and/or phone conversations with Professor Dougherty -- as needed -- to ensure she is making sufficient progress toward the deadlines below.

Research Proposal 20%

date TBA in September Wednesday September 30, 2009 3pm

evaluation based on criteria 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 **Re-read these important criteria below. Most Ed Studies senior research proposals run about 4-5 double-spaced pages, and are written for an audience that is familiar with educational research in general, but not your specific topic, secondary source literature, or methods. If the study involves human subjects, an IRB form should be submitted as a supplement to the research proposal (and if approved by the student's professor, the student must submit it to the Trinity IRB contact person.)

Thesis & Evidence Paper 20%

date TBA in early November Wednesday November 4, 2009 3pm

Evaluation based on criteria 1,4,5, 7 **Re-read these important criteria below. Most thesis & evidence papers run 5-8 double-spaced pages, and lay out an argument (the working thesis) with supporting evidence from the primary source materials. It's designed as an opportunity to write what will become the body of the final paper.

OPTIONAL: In the past, many Ed 399 students have found it helpful to write a revised thesis & evidence paper, for comments only (no grade), after receiving feedback on the early November draft and before the oral presentation.

Oral Presentation 25% December 14, 2009

date TBA, approx 10-15 minutes plus Q&A, same date as Ed 400 students
with an external evaluator nominated by the student

Evaluation based on criteria 1-8

Final Paper 35% December 18, 2009 5pm

Date TBA, approximately 3-4 days after presentation, same date as Ed 400 students

Approximately 15+ pages, evaluated based on criteria 1-8

1. Does the author pose a thought-provoking, researchable question (or hypothesis) and explain its significance to educational studies?

2. Does the author connect the question to the existing research literature (secondary sources) and move beyond into new territory?

3. Does the author identify the most appropriate primary sources and research methods for this study?

4. Does the author present a clear and insightful thesis that directly addresses the research question (or hypothesis)?

5. Is the author's thesis persuasive? Is it supported with convincing evidence and analysis?

6. Is the author's paper/presentation well-organized, and does it include sufficient background for audiences unfamiliar with the topic?

7. Does the author cite sources in an acceptable format so that future readers may easily locate them?

8. Does the author follow ethical guidelines for research?