

# EET 500: Research Methods

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## Course

EET 500: Research Methods  
Section: 23750  
Online

## Instructor Information

Instructor: Jaynée Linkous  
Email: [jlinko@acxiom.com](mailto:jlinko@acxiom.com)

Teachers Assistant: none

## Office Hours

Location: Off Campus

Time: You may converse with me via email at any time and via IM until 9:pm your time (this applies whether you see me online or not).

## Course Materials

Textbook: Readings will be supplied under Course Information to aid you with the actual thesis writing process.

Blackboard: we have already been enrolled in blackboard

## Prerequisites

Advisors approval.

## Course Description

The course assignments are designed to provide you with the skills necessary to understand research writing and to help you communicate in plain English. Participation in group activities (discussion board) is not only required but also essential in forming clear thought processes on research writing and the thesis project.

Email is an essential genre in the workforce and you are required to communicate to your classmates (send the email to the whole class) any questions you have for me based on the assignments. This will allow others to benefit from your question. Plan to check your email, blackboard and the discussion board daily and contribute to the online discussion by asking questions and proposing topics of discussion. REMEMBER: The only stupid question is one that is not asked.

This is an online course and because of its nature, it will be taught in a non traditional manner. I expect you to do the readings and ask questions on something you do not understand. The discussion board is for discussion of your readings and you are required to post weekly with more than an "I agree" or "good point" to receive participation credit. All assignments will be posted on the discussion board unless otherwise indicated.

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## Purpose:

1. Aid and encourage students to complete the first three chapters of their thesis.
2. Organize complex ideas into proper I.E.E.E. format or standard format for your department.
3. Improve general research and writing skills essential to future academic and professional success.
4. Improve peer review skills essential to future academic and professional success.
5. Improve electronic collaboration skills essential to future academic and professional success.

## Methodology:

This will be an online based course with no lab.

1. Regularly scheduled online discussions. Your posts are asynchronous but must be posted by certain dates (please refer to schedule).
2. Review of relevant materials.
3. Peer review of chapters.

## Grading Policy

You will be given every opportunity to make an “A” in this class with group work and revision policies. Again, it is up to you what you get out of this class and that includes your grade as well as knowledge. If you have any questions about your scores, point value (Table 1) or the grading scale (Table 2), please email me or talk with me before or after class.

For each assignment, you will be given a breakdown of what is required to get an “A.” We will develop these grading scales in class discussions about what is important to include in each assignment, and you will receive a handout to guide you as to what is expected.

The following is the grade breakdown for the class:

Table 1: Points by Assignment

Assignment	Comments	Points
Discussions	There are eight discussions over about six weeks. Each original post earns 20 points. Your substantive responses to two classmates each earn 15 points.	400 total
Rough Draft of Chapter One of your thesis	Your original post earns 50 points. Your peer review earns 100 points.	150 total
Rough draft of Chapter Two of your thesis	Your original draft earns 100 points. Notice the grade weight increases as your knowledge of writing increases. Your peer review earns 100 points.	200 total

Rough draft of Chapter Three of your thesis	Your original draft earns 150 points. Your peer review earns 150 points.	250 total
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TOTAL POINTS = 1000

Table 2: Grading Scale

<i>POINTS</i>	<i>GRADE</i>
900-1000	A- to A+
800-899	B- to B+
700-799	C- to C+
600-699	NC
0-599	NC

## Course Requirements

### Attendance

Attendance is required for all classroom sessions.

### Email and Internet

You must have an active ASU e-mail account and access to the Internet.

### Studying and Preparation Time

In addition to the time spent in the face-to-face classroom sessions plan on devoting 2 – 3 hours each week to homework. Homework may include assignments and reading related to a face-to-face session already completed or as preparation for the upcoming face-to-face session.

### Late or Missed Assignments

All assignments must be finished and turned in to complete the course.

### Submitting Assignments

Assignments will be submitted both in class and online through blackboard.

### Drop and Add dates

Because this course is only 5 weeks, there is limited opportunity to either drop or add the course. You can drop the course up to the end of the second week and add only to the end of the first week.

## Use of cell phones, pagers, and PDAs

Please turn off or silence *ALL* cell phones, pagers, and PDAs prior to coming to the face-to-face class sessions. If you have an emergency and need to keep in communication with someone, please inform your instructor ahead of time.

## Use of laptops in class

Lap tops are not required for this course. You may use your laptop to take notes. Please do not use class time for emails, chats, web browsing, or other non-class related activities.

## Subject to change notice

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the blackboard regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.

## Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. One element of this legislation requires that all qualified students with documented disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation please contact the Disability Resource Center at ASU Polytechnic located in Student Affairs Quad # 4 or call 480-727-1039 / TTY: 480-727-1009. Eligibility and documentation policies online: <http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/>

## Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is very important to the Electronic Systems Department (ESD). To build a long-lasting base of integrity in the community and elsewhere, ESD will not allow any type of academic dishonesty which includes: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, or falsifying of any academic records. If a student is determined to be academically dishonest then they will receive an XE on their transcripts and will have an immediate review by the department chair.

## Course Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<b>Calendar of Events (assignments)</b>
<b>Jan.</b>	Introduction to class.

14<sup>th</sup>

**Due on the discussion Board January 19th:**

**Read the reading on writing a good term paper located under Course Information.**

Write a one-page response answering the following questions after reading the above assignment. Post your response to the Writing Issues discussion. What advice provided have you followed in the past? How much time might be involved in implementing some of the suggestions? What challenges might you have in following the advice? How does this seem similar or different from what you learned about writing from other teachers?

Jan.

**Due on the Discussion Board January 25th:**

**What is Plain English? Read examples and information and provide thoughts under Plain English Discussion.**

21<sup>st</sup>

Plain English is an international initiative designed to make technical documents easier for readers to understand worldwide. In the United States these are related to ISO requirements. Tony Clark and Jay Richards are two Australian professional writers (thus their use of British spelling conventions) who note the following about Plain English. Many technical professionals cannot write in Plain English so they pay writers such as Mr. Clark and Mr. Richards to translate their ideas for readers. This is unnecessary if one learns to write using Plain English for oneself. Clark and Richards explain: Universal access means making information, services, events and venues accessible to as many people as possible. Part of this concept of being more inclusive may be to provide Plain English or Easy English versions of printed documents. The aim of writing a document in Plain English is to make it:

- Clearer
- More inclusive
- Uncluttered
- User-friendly

A Plain English version of a document should be easier to read and understand. The aim is to:

- Use simpler words
- Use short sentences and paragraphs
- Use point-form for main meanings
- Prioritize key points on a need-to-know basis
- Be specific and direct
- Avoid jargon
- Use examples where helpful
- Use a larger font, use space

A Plain English document should be easier to read or discuss for a person who might have:

- A learning difficulty e.g., dyslexia
- Difficulty with visual processing
- English as their second language
- Age-related reading difficulty e.g., early dementia
- Minimal formal education
- A mild intellectual disability
- Personal preference for a shorter/simpler document

A Plain English Summary Version of a complex document can be a useful alternative to offer people.

Review the Oxford Dictionary's website concerning Plain English at <http://www.askoxford.com/betterwriting/plainenglish/?view=uk>

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<p><b>Feb.</b></p> <p><b>11<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Due on Discussion Board February 15th:</b></p> <p><b>Ideas and Progress Discussion Board</b></p> <p>Post memo detailing your current progress concerning thesis ideas and or actual chapters in the Ideas and Progress discussion. Contact your thesis advisor to obtain the title and author of an article the he or she considers 1) integral to your research, as well as 2) an example of good writing in electrical engineering.</p> <p><b>Due on Discussion Board February 15th:</b></p> <p><b>Ideas and Progress Discussion Board</b></p> <p>Post the title, author, and link of the article recommended by your thesis advisor to the Good Writing discussion.</p>
<p><b>Feb.</b></p> <p><b>18<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Due February 22<sup>nd</sup>:</b></p> <p>Post substantive responses to two of the articles/links provided by classmates in the Good Writing discussion. How does this article relate to your topic? What might you learn from reading your classmates' articles? How might reading the article that you recommended be helpful in your classmates' research?</p>
<p><b>Feb.</b></p> <p><b>25th</b></p>	<p><b>Work Week</b></p>

<p><b>March</b></p> <p><b>3rd</b></p>	<p><b>Due March 5th:</b></p> <p>Post the rough draft of Chapter One of your master’s thesis to the Thesis Chapter 1 discussion and email it to the instructor. This chapter can be rough but it <b>MUST</b> be posted to earn points. The first chapter should introduce the problem studied and describe the main results obtained in the thesis. In order to provide guidance to the reader, the first chapter should briefly describe the organization of the rest of the thesis. The first chapter can also give the background of previous work on the subject and the method used in attacking the problem. Remember that I do not accept late work and posting this chapter is worth 15% of your final grade.</p>
<p><b>March</b></p> <p><b>10<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>SPRING BREAK</b></p>
<p><b>March</b></p> <p><b>17<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Due March 20th:</b></p> <p>Select two classmates’ writing to peer review. No one expects you to function as an English professor but as an honest and knowledgeable reader applying goals/guidelines/recommendations to your analysis that we developed over the first few weeks of class. I will also review each chapter in which I will function as the English professor. Post the review to the appropriate chapter’s discussion board.</p>

<p><b>March</b></p> <p><b>24th</b></p>	<p><b>March 29th:</b></p> <p>Review some of your lengthier posts in our previous discussions and find one to revise into Plain English. You may want to review the following documents before preparing this revision:</p> <p>Recommendations for Taking the Control Systems Engineering PE Examination</p> <p>(Originally posted on 6/4/2001 as the <u>Complete Moron's Guide to Taking the Control Systems Engineering P.E. Exam</u>. Posted online with permission of the author.)</p> <p>Author</p> <p>J. A. Miller Tuscaloosa, AL <a href="mailto:jamiller_62@bellsouth.net">jamiller_62@bellsouth.net</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.engr.psu.edu/cde/FE_PE/morons_guide.htm">http://www.engr.psu.edu/cde/FE_PE/morons_guide.htm</a></p> <p>The Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act</p> <p><a href="http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/peg_caa/pegcaa02.html">http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/peg_caa/pegcaa02.html</a></p> <p>By the United States Environmental Protection Agency</p> <p>What have you done differently this time around?</p>
<p><b>March</b></p> <p><b>31st</b></p>	<p><b>Work Week. Review revisions for Chapter 1 and work on Chapter 2</b></p>

<p><b>April</b></p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Due April 11<sup>th</sup>:</b></p> <p>Post the rough draft of Chapter Two of your master’s thesis to the Thesis Chapter 2 discussion and email it to the instructor. This chapter can be rough but it <b>MUST</b> be posted to earn points. Succeeding chapters provide details of the new results obtained by the candidate including, where appropriate, proofs, numerical data, simulation results, and experimental data. In order to properly state the results and to place them in perspective, it may be necessary to include one or more chapters that give further details on the problem being studied, introduce notation and terminology to be used, survey the relevant literature in detail, etc.</p> <p>Remember that I do not accept late work and posting this chapter is worth 20% of your final grade. Notice the weight of the grade increases over time. This is because I assume your writing skills will improve over time.</p>
<p><b>April</b></p> <p><b>14<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Due April 20<sup>th</sup>:</b></p> <p>Continue your review of a peer’s work. I expect this review to be detailed and thorough. Many students who earn graduate degrees work later in corporations or academia where they must review the work of others. I know this can be difficult to do diplomatically and it is not always the reading one would otherwise choose. However, learning to peer review well may be almost as important to professional advancement as learning to write well. So you will have much practice in such review in this course.</p> <p>Post review to appropriate discussion board.</p> <p>Due April 20<sup>th</sup>:</p> <p>Post your goals/guidelines/recommendations in the Better Thesis Guidelines discussion.</p>
<p><b>April</b></p> <p><b>21<sup>st</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Due April 25<sup>th</sup>:</b></p> <p>In our final Good Writing Revised discussion note what your thesis advisor had to say about the writing in your thesis. Based on his or her advice what did you learn this semester that was helpful? What advice might require some revision in future courses?</p>

<p><b>April.</b></p> <p><b>28th</b></p>	<p><b>Due May 2nd:</b></p> <p>Post the rough draft of Chapter Three of your master's thesis to the Thesis Chapter 3 discussion and email it to the instructor. This chapter can be rough but it <b>MUST</b> be posted to earn points. Succeeding chapters provide details of the new results obtained by the candidate including, where appropriate, proofs, numerical data, simulation results, and experimental data. In order to properly state the results and to place them in perspective, it may be necessary to include one or more chapters that give further details on the problem being studied, introduce notation and terminology to be used, survey the relevant literature in detail, etc.</p> <p>If your third chapter is your last chapter then the conclusions drawn from the study are given. The last chapter also can include discussions of the advantages and limitations of the results obtained, comparisons with previous work, possible applications for the results, and suggestions for future work. Matters that are of little conceptual interest but that need to be included for the sake of completeness should be relegated to appendices. Examples of such matters are listings of computer programs used to generate numerical data or simulation results.</p> <p>Also, long and complicated proofs or derivations that unduly disrupt the flow of ideas should be placed in appendices unless the proofs are of independent interest because of the novelty of the techniques used.</p> <p>Remember that I do not accept late work and posting this chapter is worth 20% of your final grade. Notice the weight of the grade increases over time. This is because I assume your writing skills will improve over time.</p>
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