



**Office of Professional & Continuing Education
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<http://www.auburn.edu/mycaa>

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Auburn University is an equal opportunity educational institution/employer.

Education & Training Plan **Research Specialist Certificate Program with Externship**

Student Full Name: _____

Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

Program includes National Certification & an Externship Opportunity **Mentor Supported**

Research Specialist Certificate Program with Externship

Course Code: AU-A-RSCH
Program Duration: 6 Months
Course Contact Hours: 375
Student Tuition: \$3,799

The Research Specialist

Whether working on an academic research paper or undertaking a project at work, students and professionals at all levels require an understanding of the most effective research methods available. Effective research allows you to pursue your interests in greater depth, find out more information about a particular subject, learn something new, hone problem solving skills and really push your critical thinking skills. Every field of study has their own research problems and methods, but the fundamental research skills necessary to undertake a project like this are consistent. Professionals in all areas of work must be prepared to take on a research project and have the fundamental skills to do so effectively and accurately.

The Research Specialist Program

The Research Specialist Program takes students through the fundamentals of qualitative research from gathering data, developing surveys, and recording sources properly to thinking critically about your findings and challenging yourself to draw unexpected conclusions from your efforts. More often, the challenge to research is synthesizing your discoveries into written form – turning a collection of notes into a final expression or argument. This program will show students how to get from start to finish on a research project through proven strategies alongside emerging trends in internet and digital research.

Education and National Certifications

- Students should have or be pursuing a high school diploma or GED.
- There are no state approval and/or state requirements associated with this program.
- There is a National Certification exam available to students who successfully complete this program:
 - **Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Certification Exam.**

Program Objectives

At the conclusion of this program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamentals of qualitative research
- Design an original qualitative research question to draw valid conclusions about a socially relevant topic
- Gather data using an appropriate qualitative research method
- Develop an appropriate survey for collecting data
- Gather research data from indirect sources of data
- Synthesize research by writing a white paper
- Evaluate the methodology, evidence, and conclusions of others' research by following a scientific research methodology
- Analyze the challenges and ethical issues in social research
- Enhance your research skills by using the Internet in an effective and efficient manner
- Examine the emerging technical trends in the field of descriptive research
- Use Microsoft Office

National Certification

Upon successful completion of this Auburn University program, students would be eligible to sit for the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam. Although there are no state approval, state registration or other state requirements for this program, students who complete this program at Auburn University will be prepared and are eligible to sit for this national certification exam. Students who complete this program are encouraged to complete the externship option with their program. Students who complete this program can and do sit for the MOS national certification exams and are qualified, eligible and prepared to do so. Auburn University works with each student to complete the exam application and register the student to take their national certification exam.

Externship / Hands on Training / Practicum

Although not a requirement, once students complete the program, they have the ability to participate in an externship and/or hands on practicum so as to practice the skills necessary to perform the job requirements of a professional in this field. Students will be assisted with completing a resume and/or other requirements necessary to work in this field. All students who complete this program are eligible to participate in an externship and will be placed with a participating organization near their location. Auburn University works with national organizations and has the ability to place students in externship opportunities nationwide.

Auburn University contact: If students have any questions regarding this program including national certification and externships, **they should call Shavon Williams of Auburn University at | 334-844-3108 or via email at szw0063@auburn.edu**

Note: No refunds can be issued after the start date published in your Financial Award document.

About Auburn University!

Welcome to Auburn University! Auburn University was established in 1856 as the East Alabama Male College, 20 years after the city of Auburn's founding.

OUR MISSION: The Office of Professional and Continuing Education (OPCE) makes the educational resources of Auburn University available for non-credit education programs and conferences designed to promote lifelong learning, regardless of age, interest, or location. Our programs fall into five general categories: Professional Development, Certificate Programs, Personal Enrichment, Summer Youth Programs, and Conferences.

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Auburn University and Pearson Education

The Auburn University's Office of Professional and Continuing Education eLearning programs were developed in partnership with Pearson Education to produce the highest quality, best-in-class content and delivery necessary to enhance the overall student learning experience, boost understanding and ensure retention. Pearson Education is the premier content and learning company in North America offering solutions to the higher education and career training divisions of colleges and universities across the country aimed at driving quality education programs to ensure student success. Please visit us at www.pearson.com.

About Pearson Education

Welcome to Pearson. We have a simple mission: to help people make more of their lives through learning. We are the world's leading learning company, with 40,000 employees in more than 80 countries helping people of all ages to make measurable progress in their lives. We provide a range of education products and services to institutions, governments and direct to individual learners, that help people everywhere aim higher and fulfil their true potential. Our commitment to them requires a holistic approach to education. It begins by using research to understand what sort of learning works best, it continues by bringing together people and organizations to develop ideas, and it comes back round by measuring the outcomes of our products.

Research Specialist Program Detailed Student Objectives:

OVERVIEW OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- Compare and contrast everyday learning and a scientific approach to learning
- Describe the natural world versus the social world with respect to research methods
- Describe the role of the scientific method in social science research methods
- Describe the causal law
- Describe the key elements, terms, and concepts in qualitative research
- Describe controls and random assignment

FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

- Describe the key elements, terms, and concepts in qualitative research
- Describe controls and random assignment
- Define the role of variables, measurement, and statistics in qualitative research
- Describe the causal law
- Start to identify the goal for your research

“STICKY” PROBLEMS IN RESEARCH

- Illustrate how individual biases and beliefs affect social research
- Describe common problems in conducting educational research and how they can be avoided
- Examine the practical dilemmas and ethical issues faced by modern social researchers
- Determine the appropriate ethical response to various legal scenarios

INDIRECT METHODS OF RESEARCH

- Compare and contrast contemporary records, archival and historical records, and physical traces as indirect sources of data
- Use content analysis to extract data from any of the indirect sources
- Use unobtrusive observation in a given scenario
- Describe the relative strengths and limitations of two indirect methods of data collection
- Conduct a literature review for your course project using the library or other Internet resources
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of evidences used and conclusions drawn in other research

USING DIRECT RESEARCH METHODS: SURVEYS

- Identify an appropriate survey type for a given social research topic
- Differentiate the relative strengths and limitations of personal interviews, telephone interviews, mail questionnaires, and Internet surveys
- Develop questions for a survey
- Describe how to pretest and conduct a survey
- Compare the strengths and limitations of survey research

USING DIRECT RESEARCH METHODS: OBSERVATION AND ETHNOGRAPHY

- Select the site and subjects for observational study
- Select an appropriate data collection method
- Record observational data
- Analyze the methodology employed by other researchers
- Evaluate a research report for evidence of bias or ethical rigidity
- Examine the practical dilemmas and ethical issues faced by modern social researchers

WRITING YOUR RESEARCH PAPER

- Develop a comprehensive statement of the research problem
- Identify an appropriate strategy for initiating qualitative research for a given topic

REPORTING

- Select an appropriate report format for your research paper

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

- Describe the sociological effects of technology
- Summarize the advantages and disadvantages of the software that aid qualitative research
- Analyze online journals that address the needs of qualitative researchers

HEALTH, STRESS, AND ITS MANAGEMENT

- Collate and analyze your research findings
- Record observational data
- Apply all the skills learned to synthesize the research paper project

Note: This program can be completed in 6 months. However, students will have online access to this program for a 24-month period.

MICROSOFT OFFICE Module

- Use an integrated software package, specifically the applications included in the Microsoft Office suite
- Demonstrate marketable skills for enhanced employment opportunities
- Describe proper computer techniques for designing and producing various types of documents
- Demonstrate the common commands & techniques used in Windows desktop
- List the meaning of basic PC acronyms like MHz, MB, KB, HD and RAM
- Use WordPad and MSWord to create various types of documents
- Create headings and titles with Word Art
- Create and format spreadsheets, including the use of mathematical formulas
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of computer database functions, including putting, processing, querying and outputting data
- Define computer terminology in definition matching quizzes
- Use the Windows Paint program to alter graphics
- Use a presentation application to create a presentation with both text and graphics
- Copy data from one MS Office application to another application in the suite
- Use e-mail and the Internet to send Word and Excel file attachments
- Demonstrate how to use the Windows Taskbar and Windows Tooltips
- Explain how copyright laws pertain to data and graphics posted on the Internet
- Take the college computer competency test after course completion
- Follow oral and written directions and complete assignments when working under time limitations

Note: Although the Microsoft Office Module is not required to successfully complete this program, students interested in pursuing free Microsoft MOS certification may want to consider completing this Microsoft Office Module at no additional cost.

System Requirements:

Windows Users:

- Windows 8, 7, XP or Vista
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Internet Explorer

Mac OS User:

- Mac OS X or higher (in classic mode)
- 56K modem or higher
- Soundcard & Speakers
- Apple Safari

iPad Users:

- Due to Flash limitations, eLearning programs are NOT compatible with iPads

Screen Resolution:

- We recommend setting your screen resolution to 1024 x 768 pixels.

Browser Requirements:

- System will support the two latest releases of each browser. When using older versions of a browser, users risk running into problems with the course software.
- Windows Users: Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Microsoft Internet Explorer
- Mac OS Users: Safari, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox

Suggested Plug-ins:

- Flash Player
- Real Player
- Adobe Reader
- Java