

Research Methods in Educational Technology Leadership was another important course in my doctoral journey. I have previously earned two Master's degrees, but have never done an original research project. This course was extremely challenging for me, and I am very glad it was in Year 1, to give me time to assimilate everything that was presented before I begin my own original research.



My undergraduate degree is in Biology, so I am comfortable with the scientific method. I always believed that quantitative research was the only sound research. For my quantitative research proposal, I chose to study the impact of an eleven-week simulation experience on undergraduate students. The biggest lesson I learned was to keep it simple, as my scenario was complex and the research had too many moving parts.

As the semester progressed, I realized how valuable qualitative research could be for certain research problems. I chose to study simulation from a different perspective for this project. The scenario came from my experience in the School of Business, as one faculty member has consistently excellent results in the simulation. As you might imagine, the rest of us would love to know her secret. The project was a case study of this professor's course to attempt to craft a best practices aid for the faculty. Again, I think the project was too complex, but it was a learning experience for me.

Last, but not least, was the mixed methods project. Mixed methods research takes quantitative and qualitative research and combines them to get information that neither method could discover on their own. For this project, I turned away from simulation to another research interest of mine, international students. International students have particular needs, because they live in a foreign culture, with a different language, foods, and everyday lifestyle. I wanted to explore the perceptions and experiences of international students, to find appropriate programs and offerings to help them adjust to their time in the United States. This project taught me how important it is to properly mix the quantitative and qualitative portions, to ensure that the end result is meaningful.