

## EDLR 5102: Assessment, Evaluation, and Research in Student Affairs I

Fall 2014 — Tuesdays 2:00-4:30pm — Location: Women's Center (Student Union 421G)

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### Overview

The primary purpose of this course is for students to gain an understanding of how practitioners can engage in and use research to inform their work in a higher education setting. The course is designed to offer students the opportunity to participate in a year-long assessment project as project consultants. To support this year-long project, this is the first of two courses on assessment, evaluation, and research. In this first course students will learn how to formulate research questions, conduct a systematic literature review, become familiar with quantitative and qualitative methods, create a design for their study, and develop instruments for data collection. Students will also undergo training for conducting ethical research and understand the IRB (Internal Review Board) guidelines for their respective project.

### Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Understand the role of assessment, evaluation and research in higher education and student affairs
2. Understand how to identify and use relevant scholarship in higher education and student affairs
3. Understand the role of theory and frameworks for research
4. Understand the features of a research-driven assessment project
5. Understand how to engage in and use research in an ethical and professional manner

### Professional Competencies

Through these objectives, students of this course will be prepared to achieve several HESA competencies including the following:

- Apply research and theories to promote success of college students
- Create programs that foster student learning
- Work effectively advising and helping individual students and student groups
- Demonstrate an understanding of multicultural issues and competencies in higher education and act in ways that promote inclusive practice
- Integrate an understanding of the context of higher education, including the history and organization of the student affairs profession, legal principles, and the academic mission of colleges and universities
- Solve problems that require effective communication, thoughtful decision making, coping with ambiguity, and managing conflict
- Assess genuine professional issues by interpreting and applying qualitative and quantitative research techniques and by developing evaluations of programs and services

In addition to the above competencies, the purpose and objectives of this course can support students' development of several ACPA/NASPA competences such as: advising and helping; assessment, evaluation, and research; ethical professional practice; human and organizational resources; leadership; student learning and development.

## Required Texts:

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C.: APA

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Schuh, J. H., & Associates. (2009). *Assessment methods for student affairs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

\* Other readings are available through HUSKY CT.

## Course Requirements

**Preparation:** You are expected to come to class prepared, having done all the readings due that day and ready to raise questions or make comments of the material assigned. To guide your reading we have provided questions below for each class session. Please bring readings for the week to class. \*\*\* Please note that the assignments and schedule on the syllabus are guides for the course, but are subject to change.\*\*\*

**Participation:** Our classroom will be a community where we will learn together. Your participation is an essential part of having this class be interactive and helpful to you and your peers. You are expected to participate in classroom discussions and to make efforts to further your peers' understanding of the subject. \*\*\*In the event of poor weather conditions/class cancelation the instructor will email the class to announce an online class meeting.\*\*\*

**Electronics:** Laptops and tablets are permitted in class. Please do bring one of these items weekly to class. If you do not own one of these items please me know so I can point you to additional resources available to you on campus. I do ask, however, that you refrain from generally surfing the web or writing emails during class time. You should use electronics for relevant class work. Please do not use your cell phones in class unless accessing material for class use.

**Assignments:** Please upload through Husky CT your assignments by the beginning of class on the due dates listed below. **Late work will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor.** If you miss class, it is your responsibility to follow up with a classmate to get class notes and information related to assignments. If an assignment is due on the day of your absence, you will still need to upload your assignment by the due date unless previously approved by the instructor to submit the work at a later time. All assignments should be typed in 12 point font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins. If anyone would like the opportunity to improve on a grade, you have 1 week to resubmit a revised version of your assignment that incorporates instructor feedback. This revised assignment will be graded separately and that grade will inform your final grade for the course (not the particular assignment). \*\*\*Please note you will receive full credit (5 points) for submitting your reflection papers on time. The idea is to not grade you on what you actually say in your reflection papers, but to give you credit for completing the assignment.

### Grading:

Reflection Papers (3) – Individual Assignment	15 points (5 points each)
Annotated Bibliography – Group Assignment	20 points
Interview Guide – Group Assignment	15 points
Survey Instrument – Group Assignment	15 points
Literature Review – Group Assignment	35 points
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100 points</b>

Each of these assignments will be graded according to two criteria:

(1) **Substance:** Care and thoroughness in completing the assignment; evidence that you have worked hard, reflected carefully on what you are doing, and polished the final product; quality and integrity of the ideas, methods, and materials that are represented in the assignment; and evidence that you have utilized what we have covered in class. Rubrics will be provided for annotated bibliography and literature review assignments.

(2) **Style and Form:** Quality of the format and writing of the assignment.

### Grading Scale:

97-100 = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+
94-96 = A	84-86 = B	74-76 = C
90-93 = A-	80-83 = B-	70-73 = C-
		Below 70=F

**Please note the following UConn policies:**

**Academic Integrity:** Student behavior shall be consistent with conduct delineated in the University of Connecticut statement on *Scholarly Integrity in Graduate Education and Research* contained in the University of Connecticut Policies and Procedures website <http://policy.uconn.edu/?p=3282>. You are responsible for understanding a) what constitutes scholarly and academic misconduct as defined in the statement and b) procedures to be followed in the event of alleged misconduct.

**Reasonable Accommodations:** The Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at UConn provides accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the CSD, please do so as soon as possible. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at [csd@uconn.edu](mailto:csd@uconn.edu). Detailed information regarding the accommodations process is also available on their website at [www.csd.uconn.edu](http://www.csd.uconn.edu).

**Observance of Religious Holidays – CT state statutes: Sec. 10a-50. (Formerly Sec. 10-334g). Absence of students due to religious beliefs.** No person shall be expelled from or refused admission as a student to an institution of higher education for the reason that he [*sic*] is unable, because the tenets of his religion forbid secular activity on a particular day or days or at a particular time of day, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirements on such particular day or days or at such time of day. Any student in an institution of higher education who is unable, because of such reason, to attend classes on a particular day or days or at a particular time of day shall be excused from any examination or any study or work assignments on such particular day or days or at such particular time of day. It shall be the responsibility of the faculty and of the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to make available to each student who is absent from school because of such reason an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which he has missed because of such absence on any particular day or days or at any particular time of day. No special fees of any kind shall be charged to the student for making available to such student such equivalent opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section. For the purposes of this section, "institution of higher education" shall mean any of the schools comprising the state system of higher education, as defined in section 10a-1. (P.A. 75-367, S. 1.)

According to UConn University Senate guidelines, "Students anticipating such a conflict should inform their instructor in writing within the first three weeks of the semester, and prior to the anticipated absence, and should take the initiative to work out with the instructor a schedule for making up missed work." For conflicts with final examinations, students should, as usual, contact the Office of Student Services and Advocacy (formerly the Dean of Students Office).

## Session 1 – August 26

### Introduction to Course and Assessment, Evaluation and Research

#### Guiding Questions:

- What is the difference between assessment, evaluation and research?
- What is assessment doing in student affairs?

#### Readings:

Schuh, J. H., & Associates. (2009). Chapter 1 – Assessment as an essential dimension of contemporary student affairs practice. *Assessment methods for student affairs* (pp. 1-22). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Weiss, C. H. (1998). Chapter 1 – Setting the scene. *Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 15-18). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

ACPA/NASPA. (2010). *Professional competency areas for student affairs practitioners*. The American College Personnel Association and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

[https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Professional\\_Competencies.pdf](https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Professional_Competencies.pdf)

## Session 2 – September 2

### Why assess student learning in student affairs?

#### Guiding Questions:

- How do students experience learning while in college?
- How can student affairs educators play a role in supporting and facilitating student learning?
- Why would student affairs practitioners want to assess student learning?

Kuh, G. D., Jankowski, N., Ikenberry, S. O., & Kinzie, J. (2014). *Knowing what students know and can do: The current state of student learning outcomes assessment in U.S. colleges and universities*. Champaign, IL.: National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/2013%20Abridged%20Survey%20Report%20Final.pdf>

ACPA. (1996). *The student learning imperative: Implications for student affairs*. Washington, D.C.: American College Personnel Association.

<http://www.acpa.nche.edu/sites/default/files/ACPA%27s%20Student%20Learning%20Imperative.pdf>

NASPA, & ACPA. (2004). *Learning reconsidered: A campus-wide focus on the student experience*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the American College Personnel Association.

[https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Learning\\_Reconsidered\\_Report.pdf](https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Learning_Reconsidered_Report.pdf)

## Session 3 – September 9

### Developing Questions to Guide Study

#### Guiding Questions:

- What role do research questions play in the research process?
- How to do researchers develop good research questions?

#### Readings:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 7 – Research questions and hypothesis. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 139-153). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Light, R. J., Singer, J. D., & Willett, J. B. (1990). Building on the work of others. *By design: Planning research on higher education* (pp. 12-40). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Assigned readings related to group projects (will be distributed in advance)

- Assignment Due: Submit draft of research question.

## Session 4 – September 16

### Literature Review- Part I: What does it mean to conduct a literature review?

#### Guiding Questions:

- *What are some reasons for doing a literature review?*
- *What role does the literature review have in the research process?*
- *How do you systematically search for sources?*
- *How do you document your approach?*

#### Readings:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 2 – Review of the literature. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 25-49). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Example of a literature review: Goldrick-Rab, S., Faye Carter, D., & Winkle Wagner, R. (2007). What higher education has to say about the transition to college. *Teachers College Record*, 109, 10, 2444-2481.

Luker, K. (2008). Chapter 5 – Reviewing the literature. *Salsa dancing into the social sciences: Research in an age of info-glut* (pp. 76-98). Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

- Assignment Due: Complete exercise 5 (Luker p. 98) and bring laptop to class.

## Session 5 – September 23

### The Role of Paradigms and the Use of Theory and Frameworks

#### Guiding Questions:

- *How does the researcher's worldview influence their research?*
- *What is the role of theory in research?*
- *How can a framework be helpful for research? How could it hinder research?*

#### Readings:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 1 – The selection of a research approach. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 3-22). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 3 – The use of theory. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 51-76). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Example of using theory and identifying researcher positionality: Minikel-Lacocque, J. (2013). Racism, college, and the power of words: Racial microaggressions reconsidered. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(3), 432-465.

- Assignment Due: one annotated bibliography using template provided
- Monthly reflection paper
- Submit research question

## Session 6 – September 30

### Study Design I. Quantitative Approach

#### Guiding Questions:

- How does a researcher evaluate a study's design and methodology?
- What does it mean to engage in quantitative research?
- What is a construct? How do I measure a construct?

#### Readings:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 8 – Quantitative methods. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 155-181). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Fowler, F. J. (1995). Chapter 4 – Some general rules for designing good survey instruments. In *Improving survey questions: Design and evaluation* (pp.78-103). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Stage, F. K. (2007). Answering critical questions using quantitative data. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, (133), 5-16.

- Assignment Due: Annotated Bibliography.

## Session 7 – October 7

### Designing and Testing Survey Instrument

#### Guiding Questions:

- What is a cognitive interview? How can it help refine my survey instrument?
- What is a good survey question?

#### Readings:

Saunders, K., & Cooper, R. M. (2009). Chapter 5 – Instrumentation. In J. H. Schuh & Associates (Eds.), *Assessment methods for student affairs* (pp. 107-140). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Fowler, F. J. (1995). Chapter 5 – Presurvey evaluation of questions. *Improving survey questions: Design and evaluation* (pp. 104-135). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Willis, G. B. (1999). *Cognitive interviewing: A 'how to' guide*. [www.hkr.se/pagefiles/35002/gordonwillis.pdf](http://www.hkr.se/pagefiles/35002/gordonwillis.pdf)

- Assignment Due: Draft of Survey

## Session 8 – October 14

### Study Design II. Qualitative Approach

#### Guiding Questions:

- What does it mean to engage in qualitative research?
- What type of research does a qualitative approach aim to address?

#### Readings:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 9 – Qualitative methods. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 183-213). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). Chapter 8 – The structure of the responsive interview. *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 115-129). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

- Assignment Due: Survey

## Session 9 – October 21

### Assessing Interview Guides

#### Guiding Questions:

- How do you know that your interview questions will help surface data relevant to research questions?
- What are elements of a good interview protocol?

#### Readings:

Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2009). Chapter 3 – Developing a questioning route. *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (pp. 35-60). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Schuh, J. H., & Associates. (2009). Appendix 1 – Example of a focus group protocol. *Assessment methods for student affairs* (pp. 249-254). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Assignment Due: Draft of Interview Guide

## Session 10 – October 28

### Planning Educational Research- Part IV: Study Design I. Mixed-Methods Approach

#### Guiding Questions:

- What does it mean to engage in a mixed-methods research?
- What type of research does a mixed-methods approach aim to address?

#### Readings:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 10 – Mixed method approaches. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 215-240). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Schuh, J. H., & Associates. (2009). Chapter 9 – Using a mixed methodological approach to assessment: A case study. *Assessment methods for student affairs* (pp. 211-230). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Assignment Due: Interview Guide and monthly reflection paper

## Session 11 – November 4

### Ethical Considerations

#### Guiding Questions:

- What does a researcher need to consider to protect his/her study participants?
- What does it mean to conduct a study that is valid and reliable?

#### Readings:

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Chapter 4 – Writing strategies and ethical considerations. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (pp. 92-101). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Maxwell, J. A. (2013). Chapter 6 – Validity: How might you be wrong? *Qualitative research design: An iterative approach* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 121-138). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Schuh, J. H., & Associates. (2009). Chapter 8 – Ethics. *Assessment methods for student affairs* (pp. 191-210). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

\* Read appendices 7 (Informed consent checklist) and 8 (Codes of ethics...to Conducting assessment studies in student affairs).

- Assignment Due: Complete the Basic Course/Human Subject Research- Social-Behavioral- Educational (SBE) Modules for the CITI training through the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board: [www.irb.uconn.edu](http://www.irb.uconn.edu). \*\*\*Please bring your report of completion to class.\*\*\*
- Read over IRB application, consent form, and recruitment guidelines. Begin draft of consent form and recruitment materials.

## Session 12 – November 11

### Doing Research I: Creating a Plan for Collecting Data

#### Guiding Questions:

- *What is it like to actually do a research study?*
- *What are the challenges and joys of conducting research?*
- *How to plan for collecting data?*

#### Readings:

Sanders, J. R., & Sullins, C. D. (2006). Chapter 3 – Collecting information. *Evaluating school programs: An educator's guide* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 37-43). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Sanders, J. R., & Sullins, C. D. (2006). Chapter 6 – Administering the evaluation. *Evaluating school programs: An educator's guide* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 61-66). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Gansemmer-Topf, A., & Wohlgemuth, D. R. (2009). Chapter 4 – Selecting, sampling, and soliciting subjects. In J. H. Schuh & Associates (Eds.), *Assessment methods for student affairs* (pp. 77-106). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Assignment Due: Literature Review

## Session 13 – November 18

### Doing Research II: Creating Online Survey Using Qualtrics

#### Guiding Questions:

- *How do I get my survey online?*
- *What is skip logic and why do I need to know about it?*
- *How will students access the survey?*

#### Review the following videos:

Basic Training < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEEedq-PYQAQ>>

Advanced Survey Editing < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYNjL0Aa2aE>>

Non-anonymous Distribution Training <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VDqUY-vRTI>>

- Assignment Due: Draft of data collection plans for spring semester and monthly reflection paper

## Session 14 – November 25 \*\*\* THANKSGIVING BREAK\*\*\*NO CLASS

## Session 15 – December 2

### Semester Wrap-up and Preparation for Data Collection

- Assignment Due: Final Qualtrics survey submission