



HIED 7520: Issues and Methods of Applied Inquiry in Higher Education

**Spring 2017 Course Syllabus**

Bowling Green State University

Tuesday, 4:30-7:20, 355 Education Building

Section 5001, Course #11763

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**Course Description**

This course is designed for advanced doctoral students in Higher Education; it will provide the opportunity to expand, discuss, and apply what they have learned in other courses concerning inquiry in higher education and student affairs. It focuses on providing information for decision support through such activities as assessment, institutional research, and applied research. The primary goal of the course is to prepare students to assess or supervise the assessment of programs, services, facilities, and student outcomes; to identify information needs and obtain pertinent and accurate information that will assist in the decision-making process; to design and implement applied research and assessment tools; to analyze, synthesize, and interpret information from multiple sources; to communicate information to others; and to apply relevant information to the processes of supervision, program development, policy formation, etc.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Identify assessment/research needs and define assessment/research questions associated with current issues in higher education;
2. Describe historical, social, political, financial, ethical, and other issues pertaining to assessment, evaluation, and research in higher education;
3. Discuss the roles of diverse constituencies in requesting, providing, and receiving information related to assessment, evaluation, and research;
4. Identify sources of data and information;
5. Conduct critical reviews of existing research and identify factors influencing the application of research findings to specific problems in higher education;
6. Prepare a assessment/research plan that includes well-defined questions, research methods, a timeline for implementation, resource requirements, and procedures for communicating results;
7. Gather, organize, analyze, and synthesize data and interpret information from multiple sources;
8. Effectively communicate research findings orally and in writing to diverse constituent groups.

This class is designed to address all of the BGSU Learning Outcomes: inquiry, creative problem solving, examining values in decision making, writing, presenting, participation, and leadership.

This course is also designed to focus on the Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)'s *Professional Competencies for Student Affairs Professionals* (2015).

### **Required Texts**

Bresciani, M.J., Gardner, M.M., & Hickmott, J. (2009). *Demonstrating Student Success*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Henning, G. W., & Roberts, D. (2016). *Student Affairs Assessment: Theory to Practice*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.

### ***Other Required Reading: (all are available on CANVAS each week)***

ASK (Assessment Skills and Knowledge) Content Standards for Student Affairs Practitioners and Scholars by ACPA College Student Educators International.

Busby, K. (2015). Co-curricular outcomes assessment and accreditation. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 164, 39-50.

DeBerard, M. Scott, Glen I. Spielmans, & Deana C. Julka (2004). Predictors of academic achievement and retention among college freshmen: A longitudinal study. *College Student Journal*, 38 (1), 66-80.

Harper, S. R., & Museus, S. D. (2007). Using Qualitative Methods in Institutional Assessment, *New Directions for Evaluation*, 136.

Krueger, R. A. (2002). *Designing and conducting focus group interviews*. Charleston, IL: Illinois Higher Education Center. Retrieved from <http://www.eiu.edu/~ihec/Krueger-FocusGroupInterviews.pdf>

Kuh, G. D., Jankowski, N., Ikenberry, S. O., Kinzie, I. (2014). *Knowing What Students Know and Can Do: The Current State of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment in U.S. Colleges and Universities*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

Perna, L. W. (2004). Understanding the decision to enroll in graduate school: Sex and racial/ethnic group differences, *Journal of Higher Education*, 75 (5), 487-527

Rocconi, L. M., Ribera, A. K., & Nelson Laird, T. F. (2015). College seniors' plans for graduate school: Do deep approaches learning and Holland academic environments matter? *Research in Higher Education*, 56(2), 178-201. doi:10.1007/s11162-014-9358-3

Schuh, J. H., & Gansemer-Topf, A.M. (2010, December). *The Role of Student Affairs in Student Learning Assessment* (NILOA Occasional Paper No.7). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

Roberts, D. (2015). Direct measures of co-curricular learning. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 164, 61-70.

### Assignments

#### ***Class Participation – Every week***

1. ***Individual class participation and attendance:*** It is expected that you will attend class each week and participate actively in class discussions and activities. Your contributions to class discussions are essential to the success of a seminar. Unexplained absences will adversely affect your grade.
2. ***Weekly discussion leader:*** Each person will be assigned to lead discussion on reading materials (textbook or additional reading materials).

#### ***Interview with administrators***

You will create a structured interview guide for a functional area of your choosing. Based on a functional area of interest, you will design an interview guide with structured discussion sections (introduction, transitions, closing). The interview guide should be for a one-on-one, about 30 minutes to 1 hour in length. Plan ahead. Interview the administrators about their assessment efforts, plans, vision, practices, and challenges and difficulties. Prepare 20-30 minutes presentation from your interview and incorporate reading materials into your presentation.

#### ***Survey development***

You will create a 1-2 page assessment questionnaire for a functional area of your choosing with overarching assessment questions (or for your dissertation/research). Based on a functional area of interest, you will design a questionnaire to assess a program or initiative. It is critical not only to consider the appropriateness of questions, functionality, and response format but also to make sure your survey questions actually can help answer your assessment/dissertation/research questions. All students should review others' survey questionnaire and bring a printed or electronic copy of others with feedback into class for discussion.

#### ***Instrument review & critique presentation***

The purpose of this assignment is for you to demonstrate that you can critically evaluate an existing research or assessment instrument and apply that instrument to a new context. For this assignment an existing instrument is any scaled inventory, questionnaire, or interview or focus group protocol that has been used to collect data in the past five years. You will be assigned one of the following survey:

1. CIRP Freshman/Senior Survey (HERI)
2. Diversity Learning Environments Survey (HERI)
3. HERI faculty survey (HERI)
4. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
5. Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)
6. Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)
7. Interfaith Diversity Experiences and Attitudes Longitudinal Survey (IDEALS)
8. National Survey of Longitudinal Freshmen (NSLF)

### ***Article review paper (doctoral students only)***

You will choose an article based on the interests of your dissertation or assessment in your functional area. Choose an article using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. You will review the article and write a paper about what you learn from it (in terms of topics, problem statement, lit review, methodology, and implications) and what you suggest for a future study. (5-6 page)

Add the questions

1. What degree of confidence do you have in the study reported in this article? Comment on the appropriateness of the overall research design and methodology, sample, data collection procedures, data analyses, and presentation of the results, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. Describe any changes that you believe would enhance the quality of the study.
2. Specifically, what additional quantitative/qualitative analyses or additional data collection would you recommend be completed on these data in order to examine them with greater sophistication than what was provided here?

### ***Assessment project (or Research project)***

The assessment project is an opportunity for you to gain real-world experience in conducting assessment and in working on an assessment team. Student teams of three or four students will be assigned to one of the assessment projects listed in the syllabus. The project is divided into smaller parts to assist you in the development, execution, and delivery of a strong assessment project that will result in a well written assessment report that will be an asset to the department for which the assessment was conducted. Each team is responsible for arranging a means for sharing the assessment both in report form and in presentation form with their client (contact at the site) outside of class time. Clients will also be asked to provide an assessment of the work your team completed for them.

Assessment Plan: Intro, Lit review, and Method Plan

Analysis Report: Method, Data analysis and Findings

Final Assessment Presentation

Final Assessment Report

### ***Group Roles for Assessment Project***

You will be working in small groups of ~~three or four~~, but one of you will be assigned the role of contact with the client and one of you will have the role of contact with the instructors. In these roles you are responsible for being the contact for your group with the instructors or your client. This is to avoid multiple people contacting the client. The third group member serves as the team

manager and is responsible for making sure the team functions well. If your team has fourth member your team is responsible for creating a useful role for this team member that will contribute to the strength of the team overall.

### *Assessment Project Sites*

TBD

### *Alternative Assignments*

If you wish to propose an alternate assignment in place of any of those listed above, please develop a short proposal for discussion with me, clearly identifying how your plan will meet the same learning goals as the standard assignment.

### *Course Evaluation:*

1. Class participation and students' reading discussion lead (10%)
2. Presentation: Interview with administrators (10%)
3. Presentation: Instrument Review and Critique (15%)
4. Paper: Article Review (10%)
5. Paper: Survey Development (15%)
6. Individual/Group paper and presentation: Assessment Project (or Research Project) (40%):
  - a. Assessment Plan (10%): Intro, Lit review, and Method Plan
  - b. Analysis Report (10%): Data analysis and Findings
  - c. Final Assessment Presentation (10%)
  - d. Final Assessment Report (10%)

The Assessment project:

Should have 3-4 (not 2) members.

Assign assessment projects/clients

Your final grade in the course is the weighted average of grades received on individual assignments.

A 90-100% B 80-89% C 70-79% D 60-69% F <60%

About grading: **An "A" paper or project is excellent**—it is very strong in every sense. It represents a very solid job in addressing all aspects of the assignment, shows complex thinking and insight, reflects graduate-level writing (including introductory and concluding comments and appropriate transitions linking various sections), and is free of errors (e.g., APA, grammar, spelling, syntax, logic, organization, clarity, style). **A "B" paper is good.** It has some weaknesses in one or more of these areas but captures the essential elements of the assignment.

Lower grades are assigned to papers and projects with more significant weaknesses in the areas noted above and do not reflect the quality expected in graduate-level studies.

Incompletes will not be given except for major emergencies (e.g., hospitalization) late in the term and only after consultation and mutual agreement upon a contract specifying when the work will be completed. Incompletes will not be granted simply because more time is desired to complete the assignments or one wishes to complete the course during a subsequent semester.

### **Academic Integrity**

From the *2008-2009 Graduate Catalog*: “Academic honesty is the central value of an academic community. It is expected that graduate students will neither engage in nor facilitate cheating (using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids), fabrication (falsification or invention of any information or citation), or plagiarism (representing the words or ideas of others as one’s own) in their academic work” (p. 27). Please note that you may not submit an assignment that has been or will be submitted for another course. See the Student Handbook (<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/studentdiscipline/>) for the full policy on academic honesty.

### **Policies and Reminders**

#### Accommodations

##### *Documented disabilities*

Please notify me in advance of the first assignment if you will need any accommodations for a documented disability. *Disability Services for Students, 38 College Park*. The goal of the Disability Services for Students Office is to help provide equal access and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities attending BGSU and to act as a resource to faculty and staff. Students wishing to discuss their eligibility for such accommodations are encouraged to contact the office. **Phone:** 419-372-8495, **Fax:** 419-372-8496, **TDD:** 419-372-0582.

##### *Religious observances*

If you will miss class because of the observance of a religious holiday, please see me as soon as possible to determine an alternate way to cover the material.

Attendance I assume that all students will attend all scheduled classes for the duration of the class time. I recognize that situations (other than religious/civic observances) sometimes occur which are beyond your anticipation or control. However, routine meetings, regularly scheduled events/programs, or other non-emergency situations arising with your internship or practicum office are not sufficient reasons to miss class. If you will miss class, please try to notify me in advance if possible. Contact one of your fellow students to review the material we covered in class and any announcements. Coming to class late disrupts the learning of the class and is disrespectful to all and should therefore be avoided if at all possible. Significant numbers of absences (i.e., more than two) or tardiness will affect your final grade.

Non-sexist/offensive language This class must be a comfortable place for everyone. To that end, you are asked to pay attention to both the effect and the intentions of your words, and to avoid deliberately using language that is demeaning to others. When listening to other students, assess

both the intent and the effect of those words *before* assuming offensive intent. Any papers using sexist, racist, heterosexist, ableist, ageist, or otherwise inappropriate language will be returned without a grade.

Announcements Announcements will be distributed through Canvas messages. Please check your BGSU email account and Canvas regularly.

Cell Phones & Other Electronic Devices If you bring a cell phone to class, please assure that it is off. You should not be emailing, texting, tweeting, or updating your status on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, or any other social networking sites during class. You may bring a laptop to access class readings or the Internet *for class-related purposes only*. If this privilege is abused, then I will rescind permission to have laptops in class.

### Schedule and Readings

<u>Session 1</u>	<u>Jan 10</u>	<b>Course Overview &amp; Introduction to Research and Assessment in Higher Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapter 1</li><li>• ASK (Assessment Skills and Knowledge)</li></ul>
<u>Session 2</u>	<u>Jan 17</u>	<b>Introduction to Applied Inquiry in Higher Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 3, 4</li><li>• Kuh, Jankowski, Ikenberry, Kinzie (2014)</li></ul>
<u>Session 3</u>	<u>Jan 24</u>	<b>Evolution, Significance, and Development of Learning Outcomes-Based Assessment/Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bresciani et al. – Chapters 1, 2, &amp; 3</li><li>• Schuh &amp; Gansemer-Topf (2010, December)</li><li>• Roberts (2015)</li></ul>
<u>Session 4</u>	<u>Jan 31</u>	<b>Student Presentation: Interview with administrators</b>
<b><i>Due Date</i></b>	<b><i>Feb 6 (9am)</i></b>	<b><i>Assessment Project – Assessment Plan Report</i></b>
<u>Session 5</u>	<u>Feb 7</u>	<b>Survey Design and Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 7, 8</li><li>• Bresciani et al. – Chapter 4</li></ul>
<u>Session 6</u>	<u>Feb 14</u>	<b>Analysis for Quantitative Assessments (Concept)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 9</li><li>• DeBerard, Spielmans, &amp; Julka (2004)</li><li>• Perna (2004)</li><li>• Rocconi, Ribera, &amp; Laird (2015)</li></ul>

<u>Session 7</u>	<u>Feb 21</u>	<b>Student Presentation: Instrument Review and Critique</b>
<u>Session 8</u>	<u>Feb 28</u>	<b>Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 10, 11</li> <li>• Krueger (2002)</li> <li>• Guest lecture</li> <li>• How to do coding (transcribing), process of data analysis,</li> <li>• Actually how to put them (all data) for the audience</li> </ul>
<u>Session 9</u>	<u>Mar 7</u>	<b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</b>
<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Mar 13 (9am)</i>	<i>Article Review Paper</i>
<u>Session 10</u>	<u>Mar 14</u>	<b>Analysis for Qualitative data (NASPA week - Heather, Monda, Dandan)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harper &amp; Museus (2007). (Assign chapters)</li> <li>• Each student will choose one article using qualitative study design.</li> </ul>
<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Mar 20 (9am)</i>	<i>Survey Instrument Development</i>
<u>Session 11</u>	<u>Mar 21</u>	<b>Student Hands-on Practice for Survey Instrument Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will discuss their own survey instruments</li> </ul>
<u>Session 12</u>	<u>Mar 28</u>	<b>ACPA week (Tiffany, Megan, Michael, Washieka – not attending, Dan Dan – not sure)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 5 (Different types of assessment) – allocate chapters to students and prepare for each topic</li> </ul>
<u>Session 13</u>	<u>Apr 4</u>	<b>Implementing the Assessment Plan, Reporting, &amp; Using Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 13, 14</li> <li>• Bresciani et al. – Part 2 (Chapters 6-7)</li> </ul>
<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Apr 10 (9am)</i>	<i>Analysis Report</i>
<u>Session 14</u>	<u>Apr 11</u>	<b>Ethics, Politics &amp; Social Contexts of Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 15, 16, 17</li> <li>• Bresciani et al. – Part 3 (Chapters 8 – 9)</li> <li>• Washieka – survey critique presentation</li> </ul>
<u>Session 15</u>	<u>Apr 18</u>	<b>Accreditation, Benchmarking, &amp; Best Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henning &amp; Roberts – Chapters 19</li> <li>• Busby (2015). Co-curricular outcomes assessment and accreditation. <i>New Directions for Institutional Research</i>, 164,</li> </ul>



39-50.

**Session 16**    **Apr 25**    **Student Presentation: Assessment Project Presentations**

***Due date***    ***May 1***    ***Assessment Project Report***

***(9am)***

***Finals***    **May 2**    ***Course Synthesis and Wrap up***