

HIED 752 – Applied Inquiry in Higher Education
Spring 2007
6:00 Tuesdays
206 Education

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Course Goals and Objectives:

This course is designed for advanced doctoral students in Higher Education Administration, as it gives them the opportunity to discuss, expand, and apply what they have learned in other courses concerning inquiry in higher education. It focuses upon providing information for decision support through such activities as applied research, assessment, institutional research, and planning. The primary goal of the course is to prepare students to assess or supervise the assessment of programs, services, facilities, student outcomes, etc.; 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, budgeting, etc. Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Identify research needs and define research questions associated with current issues in higher education;
2. Describe historical, social, political, financial, ethical, and other issues pertaining to assessment and evaluation in higher education;
3. Discuss the roles of diverse constituencies in requesting, providing, and receiving information related to assessment and evaluation;
4. Identify formal and informal 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 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 University Learning Outcomes: inquiry, creative problem solving, examining values in decision making, writing, presenting, participation, and leadership.

Course Format:

Multiple class formats will be used, including lectures/discussions led by the instructor, students, and guest speakers. Some activities will be completed in class, while others will be completed individually or as part of groups outside of the class setting. Effective contributions to in-class discussions require that readings be completed before the class for which they are assigned.

Texts:

Astin, A. W. (2002). *Assessment for excellence: The philosophy and practice of assessment and evaluation in higher education*. Westport, CT: The Oryx Press.

Hedrick, T. E., Bickman, L., and Rog, D. J. (1993). *Applied research design: A practical guide*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Other course materials will be provided by the instructor, placed on MyBGSU, placed on reserve in the Jerome library, or found on the Web.

Office Hours and Location:

My office is at 708 East Wooster (house across from Founders). I am normally there 8:00-5:00 every day and you are welcome to phone or e-mail me at any time. Because I want to make sure that I am available when you come to see me, I ask that you please contact me ahead of time unless it is for something very brief. Don't hesitate to contact me! I am here for you!

Requirements and Expectations

I expect all students to attend class regularly and to be on time, to make substantial contributions to class discussions, to adhere to the University's Core Values, its standards for academic integrity (see http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/book/Student_Handbook.pdf), and its principles for the ethical treatments of human subjects in research (see http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/book/Student_Handbook.pdf). Please note that all written materials handed in are to be typewritten, double-spaced and in APA format (latest edition). Group assignments will be graded upon a group basis; members of each presentation and research project group will receive the same grade on assignments. Students with disabilities that may affect their performance in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations may be made. While students are encouraged to provide input and feedback about topics, methods, assignments, etc., the instructor holds the final responsibility for the syllabus, methods, and assignments and reserves the right to modify the syllabus as necessary.

Grade Requirements:

| <u>Assignment</u> | <u>Percentage</u> | <u>Due date</u> |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| Self-Assessment of Knowledge and Skills | 5% | Jan. 23 |
| Research Proposal Outline | 5% | Jan. 30 |
| Exam 1 (HBR book) | 10% | Feb. 6 |
| Survey Critique | 5% | Feb. 6 |
| Survey Development Assignment | 5% | Feb. 13 |
| Applied Research Report Critique 1 | 5% | Feb. 20 |
| Assessment Consultation Presentations | 5% | Feb. 27 |
| Exam 2 (Astin, Chapters 1-5) | 10% | March 13 |
| Full Research Proposal | 10% | March 20 |
| Statistical Analysis Assignment | 5% | March 20 |
| Reporting Assignment | 5% | April 12 |
| Presentations on Assessment in Different Kinds of Institutions, Assessment in Student Affairs, the Federal and State Role in Assessment, Assessment Methods, Classroom Research, Diversity Issues in Assessment, Financial Issues in Assessment, Graduate Level Assessment, or Other Topics Approved by the Instructor | 5% | April 10 |
| Applied Research Report Critique 2 | 5% | April 17 |
| Exam 3 (Astin, Chapter 6-8, group presentations) | 10% | April 24 |
| Group Research Presentations and Papers | 10% | |
| Presentations: | | May 1 |
| Papers Due: | | May 3 |

Tentative Course Outline:

January 9

Class:

1. Introductions to the course and to each other
2. Discuss issues, concepts and definitions
3. Discuss possible research projects with clients

January 16

Assignment:

1. Read the following:

HBR, Chapter 1

Saupe, J. L. (1990). *The functions of institutional research* (2nd ed.). Tallahassee, FL: The Association for Institutional Research. (MyBGSU; skim the whole book)

Terenzini, P. T. (1999). On the nature of institutional research and the knowledge and skills it requires. In J. F. Volkwein (Ed.), *What is institutional research all about? A critical and comprehensive assessment of the profession* (pp. 21-29). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (MyBGSU)

“24 Linear Inches: The IR Bookshelf” (MyBGSU)

“Useful Resources on Using Assessment Results to Improve Teaching and Learning” (MyBGSU)

2. Read research report for un-graded critique (Coughlan, C., & Ramsey, A. (2006, May). An Examination of Transfer Student Retention and Persistence to Graduation in a Private 4-Year University. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for Institutional Research, Chicago; MyBGSU)

3. Decide on an applied research project.

Class:

1. Discuss readings
2. Discuss external resources for applied research
3. Group critique of applied inquiry report
4. Discuss applied research projects

January 23

Assignment:

1. Read HBR, Chapters 2-3
2. Prepare a 3-4 page self-assessment paper concerning your strengths and weaknesses in the three areas of organizational intelligence identified by Terenzini and your plan of action to address your areas for further development

Class:

1. Discuss HBR, Chapters 2-3
2. Discuss internal resources for applied research and secondary research

January 30

Assignment:

1. Read

HBR, Chapters 4-6

American Statistical Association brochures about survey research at <http://www.amstat.org/sections/SRMS/whatsurvey.html> (skim and use for future reference)

Brodigan, D. L. (1992). Focus group interviews: Applications for institutional research. *AIR Professional File*, 43. (MyBGSU)

Cheng, D. X. (2005). Assessing students' perceptions of campus community: A focus group approach. *AIR Professional File*, 95. (MyBGSU)

Dillman, D. (2000). *Mail and Internet surveys: The tailored design method (2nd ed.)*. New York: Wiley, p. 27. (MyBGSU)

Molasso, W. R. (2005). *Ten Tangible and Practical Tips to Improve Student Participation in Web Surveys*.

http://www.studentaffairs.com/ejournal/Fall_2005/StudentParticipationinWebSurveys.htm

Suskie, L. A. (1992). *Questionnaire survey research: What works*. Tallahassee, FL: The Association for Institutional Research. (on reserve in Library; skim the whole book)

University Bookstore, BGeX peer facilitator, and BGeX faculty focus group protocols (MyBGSU)

copies of Institutional Research printed surveys and focus group protocol (distributed by the instructor) and web surveys, see:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ir/OnlineSurvey/NewStudentTransition.htm>

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ir/OnlineSurvey/GraduatingSeniorSurvey.htm>

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ir/OnlineSurvey/AlumniLetter.htm>

2. Research proposal outline

Class:

1. Discuss HBR, Chapters 4-6
2. Discuss focus groups and survey research

February 6

Assignment:

1. Read

Astin, Chapter 1-2

Erwin, T. D. (1991). *Assessing student learning and development: A guide to the principles, goals, and methods of determining college outcomes*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Chapter 1. (on reserve in Library)

Astin *Chronicle* article on graduation rates, Atlantic Monthly article on “What Makes a College Good,” Chun article on assessing higher education quality, Kuh and Pascarella article on Selectivity and Quality, and Washington Post article on “How to Measure What You Learned in College” (MyBGSU)

2. Survey critique
3. Prepare for Exam 1 (bring paper or computer to class)

Class:

1. Exam 1 (HBR book)
2. Discuss Astin, Chapters 1-2; Erwin, Chapter 1, articles

February 13

Assignment:

1. Read

Astin, Chapter 3

The Conference Board, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Corporate Voices for Working Families, & The Society for Human Resource Management. (2006). *Are they really ready to work?: Employers' perspectives on the basic knowledge and applied skills of new entrants to the 21st Century U.S. workforce*. Retrieved December 13, 2006 from http://www.conference-board.org/pdf_free/BED-06-Workforce.pdf

Maki, P. L. (2004). *Assessment for learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. Sterling, VA: Stylus. Chapters 1-2. (on reserve in Library)

Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. Bolton, MA: Anker. Chapter 1. (MyBGSU)

materials related to research on financial issues (MyBGSU)

2. survey development assignment

Class:

1. Discuss assessing outcomes
2. Discuss Chapters 1-2 of Maki book
3. Discuss Chapter 1 of Suskie book
4. Discuss applied research related to financial issues

February 20

Assignment:

1. Read

Astin, Chapters 4 and 11

Carey, K. (2006). *College rankings reformed: The case for a new order in higher education*. Retrieved January 4, 2007 from http://www.educationsector.org/usr_doc/CollegeRankingsReformed.pdf

materials related to enrollment management research (MyBGSU)

2. first applied research report critique due (pick one of the four reports on MyBGSU)

Class:

1. Discuss assessing inputs
2. Discuss *College Rankings Reformed*
3. Discuss enrollment management research

February 27

Assignment:

1. Read

Astin, Chapters 5 and 12

Erwin, Chapter 9 (on reserve in Library)

Banta, T.W. (1993). *Making a difference: Outcomes of a decade of assessment in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Chapter 24. (MyBGSU)

Collegiate Learning Assessment sample passage (MyBGSU)

Knight, W. E., Hakel, M. D., & Gromko, M. H. (2006). *Research and learning intensive: Bowling Green State University commits to both*. *About Campus*, 10 (6), 24-27. (MyBGSU)

North Central Association Higher Learning Commission assessment resources at http://www.ncahlc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=58&Itemid=80 including skimming all of the materials from the February 2006 HLC assessment workshop as well as

Guide for Institutions and Evaluators -- Assessment of Student Learning (under Current C-RAC Documents on Assessment)

Levels of Implementation (under historical documents)

Good Place Community College Case Study (under historical documents)

"A Decade of Assessing Student Learning: What We Have Learned; What's Next?" (under historical documents)

ACE, AASCU, AACC, AAU, NAICU, and NASULGC (2006), *Addressing the Challenges Facing American Undergraduate Education* (MyBGSU)

materials related to program evaluation (MyBGSU)

2. Prepare for assessment consultation presentations

Class:

1. Discuss assessment at BGSU, electronic portfolios, Calibrated Peer Review, Collegiate Learning Assessment, OBR Student Success Plans, and the future of assessment with guest speaker, Dr. Milt Hakel 6:00 Discuss assessing environments
2. Discuss inputs and trends in assessment
3. Discuss program evaluation examples
4. Assessment consultation presentations

March 6 SPRING BREAK

March 13

Assignment:

1. Read

Astin, Chapters 6, 8 and Appendix

Carson, C. (2004). *The effective use of effect sizes in institutional research*. (MyBGSU)

Coughlin, M. A. (2005). *Applications of intermediate/advanced statistics in institutional research*. Tallahassee, FL: The Association for Institutional Research. (on reserve in Library; skim the whole book)

Erwin, Chapter 7 (on reserve in Library)

statistical design tree (MyBGSU)

2. Prepare for Exam 2 (bring paper or computer to class)

Class:

1. Exam 2 (Astin, Chapters 1-5, Erwin, Chapter 1)

2. Discuss analyzing assessment data

March 20

Assignment:

1. Read

The Association for Institutional Research Code of Ethics and Suggestions for Avoiding Ethical Dilemmas in the Institutional Research Office (MyBGSU)

Astin, Chapter 7

Bers, T. H., and Seybert, J. A. (1999). *Effective reporting*. Tallahassee, FL: The Association for Institutional Research. (on reserve in Library; skim the whole book)

Erwin, last part of Chapter 7 and, all of Chapter 8 (on reserve in Library)

Suskie, L. (2004). Assessing student learning: A common sense guide. Bolton, MA: Anker. Chapter 3. (MyBGSU)

<http://regents.ohio.gov/perfrpt/index.php>

http://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate_pubs/CP269/CP269.pdf

2. Research project full proposal
3. Statistical analysis assignment

Class:

1. Discuss reporting and using assessment results, resistance to change

March 27 NO CLASS

April 10

Assignment:

1. Prepare individual presentations on Assessment in Different Kinds of Institutions, Assessment in Student Affairs, the Federal and State Role in Assessment, Assessment Methods, Classroom Research, Diversity Issues in Assessment, Financial Issues in Assessment, or Other Assessment-Related Topics Approved by the Instructor
2. Read materials provided by classmates on these topics

Class:

1. Presentations on Assessment in Different Kinds of Institutions, Assessment in Student Affairs, the Federal and State Role in Assessment, Assessment Methods, Classroom Research, Diversity Issues in Assessment, Financial Issues in Assessment, or Other Assessment-Related Topics Approved by the Instructor

April 12 (formerly April 3)

Assignment:

1. Read

Teeter, D. J., and Brinkman, P. T. (2003). Peer institutions. In W. E. Knight (Ed.), *The primer for institutional research* (pp. 103-113). Tallahassee, FL: The Association for Institutional Research. (MyBGSU)

<http://www.udel.edu/IR/cost/index.html>

<http://www.occe.ou.edu/csrde/index.html>

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ir/studies/NSSE/NSSE03/2003.htm>

2. Presenting/Reporting assignment

Class:

1. Discuss benchmarking
2. Discuss the National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity

April 17

Assignment:

1. Read

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/provost/academicprograms/programreview/programreview.htm>

Black, K. E., & Kline, K. A. (2002). Program review: A spectrum of perspectives and practices. In T. W. Banta and Associates (Eds.), *Building a scholarship of assessment* (pp. 223-239). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (on reserve in Library)

Brown, M. K. (1994). Developing and implementing a process for the review of nonacademic units. In J. Stark & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Assessment and program evaluation (ASHE Reader Series)* (pp. 445-463). Needham Heights, MA: Simon & Schuster. (on reserve in Library)

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ir/nca/> and particularly
<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/ir/nca/selfstudy/index.htm>

Muffo, J. A. (2003). Institutional research in support of accountability. In W. E. Knight (Ed.), *The primer for institutional research* (pp. 1-8). Tallahassee, FL: The Association for Institutional Research. (MyBGSU)

Wright, B. D. (2002). Accreditation and the scholarship of assessment. In T. W. Banta and Associates (Eds.), *Building a scholarship of assessment* (pp. 240-258). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (on reserve in Library)

3. Turn in second critique of an applied research report (pick one of the three reports on reserve in the Library)

Class:

1. Speaker on program review (Dr. Lou Katzner) 6:00
2. Group analysis and discussion of BGSU Collegiate Learning Assessment data

April 24

Assignment:

1. Prepare for Exam 3 (bring paper or computer to class)

Class:

1. Exam 3 (Astin, Chapters 6-8, Erwin, 7-8, individual presentation topics)
2. ???

May 1

Assignment:

1. Prepare for group research project presentations
2. Group research project papers due Thursday, May 3, 5:00

Class:

1. Group research project presentations
2. Course evaluation and wind-up