Instructor: Dr. Brian Bourke

Fall 2015

DEPARTMENT: Educational Studies, Leadership and Counseling

COURSE PREFIX: ADM  COURSE NUMBER: 735  CREDIT HOURS: 3

I. TITLE: Institutional Research, Assessment and Accreditation

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITE(S):
   This course provides an overview of best practices of institutional research. Additionally, students have the opportunity to develop strategies to investigate relevant trends or problems within an institution. Field experience required.

   **Prerequisite(s):** ADM 630

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES:
   The student will be able to
   A. identify research needs and define research questions associated with current issues in higher education;
   B. describe historical, social, political, financial, ethical, and other issues pertaining to assessment and evaluation in higher education;
   C. discuss the roles of diverse constituencies in requesting, providing, and receiving information related to assessment and evaluation;
   D. identify accreditation requirements;
   E. identify formal and informal sources of data and information;
   F. conduct critical reviews of existing research and identify factors influencing the application of research findings to specific problems in higher education;
   G. prepare a research plan that includes well-defined questions, research methods, a timeline for implementation, resource requirements, and procedures for communicating results;
   H. gather, organize, analyze, and synthesize data and interpret information from multiple sources; and
   I. effectively communicate research findings orally and in writing to diverse constituencies.

IV. CONTENT OUTLINE:
   A. History of institutional research
   B. Practicing institutional research
   C. Institutional research, change and organizational improvement
   D. Accreditation
   E. Trends and issues in institutional research
   F. Strategies and best practices of institutional research

V. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:
   A. Lecture
B. Assigned readings  
C. Interviews  
D. Field project  

VI. FIELD, CLINICAL, AND/OR LABORATORY EXPERIENCES:  
Field Project: Students will work within a postsecondary institution to identify institutional needs of interest. A plan will be developed and proposed to investigate the problem using appropriate methods and measures.

Doctoral students in the class will complete an additional research report from this field experience.

VII. TEXT(S) AND RESOURCES:  

Other readings noted are available through the Canvas course page.

VIII. EVALUATION AND GRADING PROCEDURES:  
Evaluation and grade will be determined by assignments, tests, and projects based on text, supplementary readings in professional journals, lectures, presentations, group activities, and class discussions.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Plan Part 1</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Plan Part 2</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS Audit – Individual</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS Audit – Collaborative</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Class participation (10%)** - Participation and active engagement in every class session is essential. Specific learning experiences occur in each class session. The vast majority of the class discussions will be spent in discussion of the readings. This course is reading-intensive and requires preparation outside of the class session. Please be prepared to discuss and respond to each reading. Each student in this course is expected to complete assignments in a timely fashion, contribute meaningfully to class discussions, and as appropriate, prepare objective critiques of research, readings, and other class efforts.

Evaluation of class participation will consider the following:

1) To what extent do you incorporate class readings into the discussion?  
2) To what extent do you link readings with your practical experience?
3) To what extent do you engage your colleagues in the class in meaningful thought, analysis, and debate around the course material?

4) To what extent do you contribute to your colleagues’ understanding of complex ideas and perspectives by raising insightful and probing questions?

5) To what extent do you practice active listening as a way of informing your perspective?

(borrowed from Susan K. Gardner, Ph.D., Professor, U of Maine)

**Assessment Plan (Part 1) (25%)**

Choose an administrative unit at a post-secondary institution. Your best bet is to choose a unit that would be involved in direct student experiences/learning that could be assessed. Begin by selecting an institutional site (as defined by the Carnegie Foundation), then browse the listings. It may take a couple of passes, because you need to find an institution whose student affairs division has a robust web presence. When you’ve chosen a unit at a specific institution, you need to search their website and find the following:

- Mission Statement
- Strategic Plan
- Organizational Chart

If you cannot locate all three items, you need to keep searching, either for another unit at that institution, or at another institution.

A framework (labeled Assessment Plan – guiding questions) is provided in Canvas to help you think through the crafting of an assessment plan for the administrative unit. The framework consists of guiding questions to help you think through issues to consider in the creation of your team’s assessment plan. Assessment plans require thorough explanation to facilitate the development of a culture of assessment in the unit. To that end, each component of the assessment plan is to be accompanied by a memo that explains the particular component, the rationale behind it.

Consult Bresciani et al. Chs. 3, 4 and 6 (posted to Canvas) to assist you in completing this assignment. These chapters will provide additional background beyond what is discussed in class.

Required components for this assignment:

1. **Assessment Plan Document**
   - An overview of the assessment plan (providing specifics, not simply generic steps in an assessment process). Draw on the documents provided. If more information is needed, using the Internet to see what similar departments have posted on their sites.
   - What programs or activities will be assessed?
   - An explanation of who will be involved in the assessment process

2. **Memos**
a. Memo to staff within the administrative unit  
b. Memo to interested parties outside the unit who would play a role in the assessment process (this should not include students)

These are two separate memos because the way we talk about our work within an administrative unit is likely to differ from the way we talk about our work to those outside of the administrative unit (e.g. faculty, senior administrators)

Examples of assessment plans are posted to Canvas.

**Learning Outcomes (15%)**

Your task is to write learning outcomes for each of the assessment activities laid out in your assessment plan. You need to have a minimum of 4 learning outcomes associated with each portion of your assessment plan.

Consult the handouts posted to Canvas for more background information on learning outcomes.

**Assessment Plan (Part 2) (15%)** - Now that you've written a broad assessment plan (Part 1), and learning outcomes, you need to add depth to your assessment plan by explaining how you will go about assessing each learning outcome. For this assignment, you will add to what you submitted for #1 in Assessment Plan (Part 1). Start with that document, incorporate any feedback I provide, weave your learning outcomes into the document, and address the following for each learning outcome:

1. assessment approaches to be employed  
2. plans for reporting results  
3. plans for evaluation  
4. Intended participants for data collection  

Item 4 might seem like it is redundant, but you do not want to take anything for granted or make assumptions in your assessment plan.

Due Wednesday, October 28, 2015

**PSE Program CAS Audit - Individual Section (30%)**

Students will perform an accreditation audit for the Master of Arts in Postsecondary Education Administration at Murray State University. Students will use the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) 8th Edition Guidelines to audit the academic program based on nine parts: mission and objectives, recruitment and admission, curriculum policies, pedagogy, curriculum, equity and access, academic and student support, professional ethics and legal responsibilities, and program evaluation. Students will assess program deliverables and syllabi, conduct interviews, and critique the administrative operations of the program in order to
provide a thorough review. Students will create an audit report highlighting strengths, deficiencies and recommendations per the nine parts mentioned above. The report will be addressed to the coordinator of the Postsecondary Education Administration (PSE) program.

Fall 2015: each student will be assigned one of the nine program parts listed above. Each student will follow the CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Master's Programs (provided by Dr. Bourke) for the assigned section. Any section(s) not assigned to individual students will be completed as a class.

The final report will be combined by Dr. Bourke and shared with other PSE Program faculty and ELC Department Chair.

First Draft Due Wednesday, October 14, 2015

Final Submission Due Wednesday, December 9, 2015

**PSE Program CAS Audit – Collaborative Sections (5%)**
As a class, you will complete the following sections of the CAS Audit. At points throughout the semester, I will make sure there is time during our class meeting time for you to collaborate. To aid in pull the final submission together, our final class meeting will be set aside as a workshop time, where we will meet in a computer lab in Alexander Hall.

**IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY:**
Students are expected to adhere to the MSU Attendance Policy outlined in the current MSU Bulletin. As a graduate level course that meets weekly, students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings.

**X. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**
Murray State University takes seriously its moral and educational obligation to maintain high standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior. Instructors are expected to evaluate students’ academic achievements accurately, as well as ascertain that work submitted by students is authentic and the result of their own efforts, and consistent with established academic standards. Students are obligated to respect and abide by the basic standards of personal and professional integrity.

**Violations of Academic Honesty include:**
- **Cheating** - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized information such as books, notes, study aids, or other electronic, online, or digital devices in any academic exercise; as well as unauthorized communication of information by any means to or from others during any academic exercise.

- **Fabrication and Falsification** - Intentional alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves changing information whereas fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information.
**Multiple Submission** - The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work, including oral reports, for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor.

**Plagiarism** - Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, creative work, or data of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise, without due and proper acknowledgement.

Instructors should outline their expectations that may go beyond the scope of this policy at the beginning of each course and identify such expectations and restrictions in the course syllabus. When an instructor receives evidence, either directly or indirectly, of academic dishonesty, he or she should investigate the instance. The faculty member should then take appropriate disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to the following:

1) Requiring the student(s) to repeat the exercise or do additional related exercise(s).
2) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) on the particular exercise(s) involved.
3) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) in the course.

**If the disciplinary action results in the awarding of a grade of E in the course, the student(s) may not drop the course.**

Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any exercise or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the exercise has been compromised. Faculty also reserve the right to document in the course syllabi further academic honesty policy elements related to the individual disciplines.

A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member with the department chair in writing within five working days. Note: If, at any point in this process, the student alleges that actions have taken place that may be in violation of the Murray State University Non-Discrimination Statement, this process must be suspended and the matter be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity. Any appeal will be forwarded to the appropriate university committee as determined by the Provost.

**XI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT:**

Policy Statement
Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. For more information, contact the Executive Director of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access, 103 Wells Hall, (270) 809-3155 (voice), (270) 809-3361 (TDD).
Students with Disabilities

Students requiring special assistance due to a disability should visit the Office of Student Disability Services immediately for assistance with accommodations. For more information, students should contact the Office of Student Disability Services, 423 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071. 270-809-2018 (voice) 270-809-5889(TDD).