

Introduction to Research, Assessment, and Evaluation (15:245:603:01)

Fall 2013 Mondays 1:00-3:40pm
GSE 025B (College Avenue Campus)
Course Credit: 3 hours

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Course description:

This course will provide overviews of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and methods in higher education as well as an overview of designs and techniques related to assessment and evaluation in student affairs. This course is designed to build basic competencies in evaluating completed studies and designing small-scale research studies and assessment projects.

Overall Course Goal:

This course is intended to assist students to develop an understanding of research methodologies, particularly as it relates to student affairs. More specifically, students will understand how to design a proposed study and be cognizant of how findings can be incorporated into practice.

Supporting Goals:

The course goal will be achieved by addressing the following supporting goals:

- Facilitate reflection to make meaning from experience.
- Differentiate among assessment, program review, evaluation, planning, and research and the methodologies appropriate to each.
- Effectively articulate, interpret, and use results of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research (AER) reports and studies, including professional literature.
- Explain the necessity to follow institutional and divisional procedures and policies (e.g., IRB approval, informed consent) with regard to ethical assessment, evaluation, and other research activities.
- Design culturally relevant and inclusive programs, services, policies, and practices.
- Communicate with others using effective verbal and nonverbal strategies appropriate to the situation in both one-on-one and small group settings.
- Recognize the importance of reflection in personal and professional development.
- Assess teaching, learning, and training while incorporating the results into practice

Course Format:

Given the broad scope of topics to be covered, this course will rely heavily on extensive reading as well as instructor facilitated and student-led discussions. As such, course material must be read prior to class and students must be prepared to engage in critical discussions.

Unit Topics:

- I. Quantitative Research
- II. Qualitative Research
- III. Assessment Methods for Student Affairs

Text/Resources:

Required --

McMillan, J.H. 2015. *Fundamentals of Educational research* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Lichtman, M. (2013). *Qualitative Research in Education: A user's guide* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schuh, J. H., & Associates (2009). *Assessment Methods for Student Affairs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Recommended –

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Supplemental readings: See Sakai course site – Resources link.

GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Activity:

Quantitative Study Proposal (Group)	25
Qualitative Study Proposal (Group)	25
Methodological Reflection (Individual)	20
Assessment in Student Affairs Proposal (Group)	20
Rutgers University IRB Training (Individual)	0
<u>Participation/Engagement (Individual)</u>	<u>10</u>
Total:	100

Assignment Descriptions:

Quantitative Study Proposal (25 points)

This is a group assignment and its purpose is to design and plan all aspects of a quantitative study that addresses an issue in student affairs. Each group (three or four members) will identify a research question relevant to the selected student affairs issue; determine a student population to study; review relevant literature; design, pilot test, and refine an original questionnaire; and analyze pilot data using descriptive statistical procedures.

Team members will co-author a paper (20 pages maximum; inclusive of tables, references, and appendices) reporting on the planning, design, and pilot-testing of their proposed study. All papers must include: introduction, brief literature review, research question(s), design and methods, instrumentation (i.e., original questionnaire), procedures for collecting pilot data, data analyses, results, and interpretations. Papers must contain no more than five grammatical errors and must strictly adhere to APA standards. Because this is a scholarly paper, a minimal of 15 outside references must be included.

All proposals must end with a discussion of revisions to the questionnaire, design, and/or methods that would be made prior to conducting a follow-up study; and a time frame for conducting the follow-up study must be included. Teams must also determine (ideally in advance) the order of listed authors that is acceptable to group members.

Proposals will be evaluated on how well the paper addresses ten equally weighted components: introduction/overview of the issue; statement of the problem; research question(s) development; literature review; instrumentation and data collection; discussion of findings; recommendations for future research; inclusion of appropriate appendices; overall clarity of narrative; and proper use of APA guidelines.

Note About Group Writing Projects: It is each team member's ethical responsibility to fairly and equitably contribute to this assignment. The process will be arduous on several levels, particularly in regards to writing styles. It is imperative for this assignment to read in a coherent and effective manner. With that said, peer review at all stages of this writing project with group members is a must.

Qualitative Study Proposal (25 points)

Note: While not mandatory, the topic identified in your quantitative study should also be used for this qualitative group project. The use of two distinct methodological approaches (quantitative and qualitative) applied to the same topic will facilitate your completion of the methodological reflection paper outlined below.

This is a group assignment and its purpose is to design and plan all aspects of a qualitative study that addresses an issue in student affairs. Each group (three or four members) will identify a research question, determine a student population to study; review relevant literature; create, pilot test, and refine an interview protocol and observation plan; and analyze pilot data from at least three interviews.

Team members will co-author a paper (20 pages maximum; inclusive of figures, references, and appendices) reporting on the planning, design, and piloting of their proposed study. All papers must include: introduction, brief literature review, research question(s), design and methods, data collection strategies, data analyses, findings, interpretations, and researcher reflections. Papers must contain no more than five grammatical errors and must strictly adhere to APA standards. Because this is a scholarly paper, a minimal of 15 outside references must be included.

All papers must end with discussion of the revisions to the interview protocol and/or observation strategy, design, and/or methods that would be made prior to conducting a full-scale follow-up study; and a time frame for conducting the follow-up study must be included. Teams must also determine (ideally in advance) the order of listed authors that is acceptable to group members.

When writing the qualitative paper please do not simply repeat what was used in the earlier quantitative paper. This particularly pertains to the literature review – while you may use some of the literature previously presented in the quantitative study proposal, you may not present them in verbatim fashion. When undertaking a qualitative study, the type of scholarly research you utilize differs slightly.

Proposals will be evaluated on how well the paper addresses ten equally weighted components: introduction/overview of the issue and well explained problem statement; research question(s) development; operationalization of terms, literature review; instrumentation and data collection; discussion of findings; recommendations for future research; inclusion of appropriate appendices; overall clarity of narrative; and proper use of APA guidelines.

Note About Group Writing Projects: It is each team member's ethical responsibility to fairly and equitably contribute to this assignment. The process will be arduous on several levels, particularly in regards to writing styles. It is imperative for this assignment to read in a coherent and effective manner. With that said, peer review at all stages of this writing project with group members is a must.

Methodological Reflection (20 points)

This course assignment requires you to analytically reflect on the purpose of research based on the semester course readings, course discussions, and course assignments. Specifically, the purpose of this assignment is to effectively and concisely articulate the differences between quantitative and qualitative research design. In addition to including an introduction and conclusion to this assignment, it is critical for you to reflect and effectively address the following: 1). What philosophical differences underlie quantitative and qualitative research methods?; 2). What must researchers consider before engaging in a particular method of research?; 3). What is the criterion used to judge rigor in both quantitative and qualitative methods of research?; 4). Based on the completion of the quantitative and qualitative proposal and what you've learned about research methods, discuss which research method best fits your paradigmatic view and why. **Note: Your response to questions #1-4 must utilize references.**

Your individually written methodological reflection paper will be evaluated on how well the paper addresses five equally weighted components: addressing the philosophical difference

between quantitative and qualitative methods; addressing researcher consideration before engaging in a particular method of research; discussion of what constitutes rigor in both methodological traditions; personal reflection on which research tradition fits one's paradigmatic view; concise and effective narrative..

Papers must be 4-5 double-spaced pages in length, succinctly written, contain no more than three grammatical errors, and adhere to APA standards.

Student Affairs Assessment (20 points)

Teams of two to four students will create and propose a formal assessment of a (hypothetical or actual) student affairs related program, service, or intervention. **Membership on these teams for this exercise can be different than the composition of members for the quantitative and qualitative study proposals.** Team members will write a maximum 15-page (all inclusive) proposal that addresses the eight questions in Schuh (2009, pp. 15-17). Team members must create a time frame for conducting the proposed assessment and include reference to at least three guidelines in the AEA Guiding Principles document (on Sakai site). Team members (or a designee) will have 10 minutes to present the proposal (5 minutes) and answer questions.

Proposals will be evaluated on how well the paper addresses Schuh's equally weighted questions. In addition, overall clarity of narrative and proper use of APA guidelines will factor into the evaluation. .

Rutgers Human Subjects Certification (0 points – required)

As a researcher, it is mandatory for you to complete an online training in regards to the protection of human subjects via the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Basic Course. You must go to <http://rbhs.rutgers.edu/hsp/education/> and choose the link "Initial Registration for New Learners". Follow instructions and complete the required training. You **MUST** submit a hard copy of certificate in class. **Note: There will be NO points awarded for this assignment.** Please see the tentative calendar for due date.

Participation/Engagement (10 points)

An important aspect of this course is the exchange of ideas, opinions, questions, and information. Consequently, you are expected to come to each class fully prepared to participate, both by contributing important information from assigned readings and by contributing to class discussion. **NOTE:** Participation includes class attendance – if you are not in class then you are not participating in class discussions! .

Grading:

Unless prior arrangements have been approved by the instructor, assignments submitted after the posted due date are not eligible to earn full points.

Papers must be emailed to me at heffernan@instlres.rutgers.edu prior to the start of class at the designated due date. NO EXCEPTIONS. Papers emailed after the start of class at

the designated due date will automatically be penalized 10% - if the paper is not received within the next 24 hours the penalty will be another 15% of the total grade for the paper (25% total penalty). Additional penalties will be assessed for as long as the assignment remains outstanding – if the course assignment is still not completed and submitted by the beginning of the final class meeting a grade of zero will be assessed.

Grading Scale: To calculate final course grade, the numerical values below will be used: A = 90 or above, B+ = 86-89, B = 80-85, C+ = 76-79, C = 75 or below. A grade of F (numerical value = 0) will be earned for any course assignment still outstanding at the beginning of the final class meeting. As noted above, applicable grade penalties will be factored into the evaluation of assignments submitted after the stipulated deadline.

NO INCOMPLETES WILL BE GIVEN IN THIS CLASS except for major emergencies and only after advance consultation with the instructor. Incompletes will not be granted simply because more time is desired to complete the assignments.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR, ASSIGNED READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES

Sept. 8 (Tues.)	Introduction and Overview
Sept. 14	Study Design I: Quantitative Research Introduction to Research, Research Issues, Literature Review McMillan: Chapters 1-4 Due: Quantitative Groups – Membership and Group Discussion Summary
Sept. 21	Study Design I: Quantitative Research Sampling and Measurement McMillan: Chapters 5-6 Due: Quantitative Groups – Topic, Outline and Member Tasks Due:: Rutgers Human Subjects Certification
Sept. 28	Study Design I: Quantitative Research Data Collection and Non-Experimental Designs McMillan: Chapters 7-8 Due: Annotated Questionnaire and Informed Consent Document In-Class: Questionnaire Pretesting with Informed Consent
Oct. 5	Study Design I: Quantitative Research Experiments, Inferential Introduction, Mixed Methods McMillan: Chapters 9-10, 13 Due: Brief Synopsis of Research Proposal so Far – Issues, Problems, Changes
Oct. 12	Study Design I: Quantitative Research Due: Presentations and Quantitative Study Proposal Assignment

- Oct. 19 Study Design II: Qualitative Research
 Traditions and Influences
 Lichtman, Chapters 1-5
 Denzin & Lincoln: Discipline and practice of qualitative research
 [Posted on Sakai]
 Erickson: History of qualitative inquiry in social and educational
 research [Posted on Sakai]
 Due: Qualitative Groups – Membership and Group Discussion
 Summary
- Oct. 26 Study Design II: Qualitative Research
 Gathering, Organizing and Analyzing – Part I
 Lichtman, Chapters 6-7
 Maxell: Designing a qualitative study [Posted on Sakai]
Due: Qualitative Groups – Topic, Outline and Member Tasks
- Nov. 2 Study Design II: Qualitative Research
 Gathering, Organizing and Analyzing -Part II
 Lichtman, Chapters 8-9
 Olson: The logistics of interviewing [Posted on Sakai]
Due: Annotated Interview Protocol and Informed Consent Document
In-Class: Pretesting of Interview Protocols
- Nov. 9 Study Design II: Qualitative Research
 Putting it All Together
 Lichtman, Chapters 10-13
Due: Brief Synopsis of Research Proposal so Far – Issues, Problems,
 Changes
- Nov. 16 Study Design II: Qualitative Research
Due: Presentations and Quantitative Study Proposal Assignment
- Nov. 23 Study Design III: Assessment in Student Affairs
 Data Collection and Sampling
 Schuh: Chapters 1-4
 American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles
 [Posted on Sakai]
Due: Methodological Reflection
- Nov 30 Study Design III: Assessment in Student Affairs
 Methods, Instrumentation, Ethics
 Schuh, Chapters 5-8
- Dec. 7 Study Design III: Assessment in Student Affairs
 Mixed Methods and the Future
 Schuh, Chapters 9-10

Dec. 14

Study Design III: Assessment in Student Affairs
Due: Assessment Proposal Assignment

OTHER

Class Attendance

If you must miss class, please let me know in advance by emailing me (heffernan@instlres.rutgers.edu). You are responsible for all materials covered in class and for completing any work assigned.

Class Procedures

You are expected to turn in all *assignments prior to the start of class and by the dates* outlined in the tentative course calendar.. Extenuating circumstances will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Written assignment expectations:

All written work must conform to the guidelines and reference formats specified in the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. It is expected for all written work to be word processed, double-spaced, using 12-point font and maximum one inch margins.

Academic Dishonesty

In graduate courses where students utilize and reference the work of others while also developing their own original ideas, conclusions, or contributions, attention to academic integrity is paramount. Violations of academic integrity at Rutgers University include: Plagiarism, Cheating, Fabrication, Facilitation of Dishonesty, Academic Sabotage, Violation of Research or Professional Ethics, and Violations Involving Potentially Criminal Activity. Matters relating to academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the guidelines specified in the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy (http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf).

Students with Disabilities

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the

accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:
<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Students with disabilities should contact the Disabilities Services office to make the necessary arrangements if modifications are required to facilitate the classroom teaching and learning process. This office is located in the Rutgers Office of Disability Services (dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu), Lucy Stone Hall, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Suite A145, Suite A145, Piscataway, New Jersey 08854. They may be contacted directly at (848) 445-6800.

Conference with the Instructor

By appointment.