



AUBURN UNIVERSITY SYLLABUS

1. **Course Number:** HIED 7970 SPECIAL TOPICS
Course Title: Interpreting and Conducting Research in Student Affairs
Instructor: Dr. David DiRamio
Credit Hours: 3 semester hours
Canvas site: <https://auburn.instructure.com/login>
Class Meetings: Wednesdays, 12:00 - 2:50 pm, Haley Center 2423
Office: Haley Center 4096, phone (334) 844-3065
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 - 4:45 p.m. and by appointment (preferred)
E-mail: diramio@auburn.edu
Prerequisites: None
2. **Date Syllabus Prepared:** January 8, 2014
3. **Required Text:** None (online PDFs and handouts provided by the instructor)
4. **Course Description:** This course is designed to provide opportunities for graduate students to review, evaluate, conduct, and disseminate educational research related to the practice of Student Affairs.
5. **Course Objectives:** This course is designed to support students' development of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to be a:
 - I. critical consumer of the Student Affairs literature;
 - II. professional who can apply research processes used to complete studies in Student Affairs, including qualitative and quantitative methodologies;
 - III. professional who can create a deeper understanding of the facilitation of learning experiences of college students in out of classroom settings;
 - IV. mindful and intentional Student Affairs practitioner who base decisions and actions on thoughtful analyses;
 - V. professional who can design and carryout a systematic and meaningful assessment of a genuine problem or challenge in the field;
 - VI. professional who can effectively communicate evidence-based ideas, analyses, and recommendations that enhance the practice of Student Affairs; and
 - VII. professional who understands the ethical considerations in conducting sound research in Student Affairs and the Human Subjects guidelines and University Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements to support such research.

6. Course Content:

- Research in Student Affairs - What is it?
- Research in Student Affairs - How to...
- The History and Legacy Student Affairs Research in the United States
- Student Demographics
- Role of Research and How it Impacts Student Affairs Practice
- Review of Qualitative Research and Assessment of Students
- Assessment in Student Affairs: Needs, Satisfaction, and Benchmarking
- Diversity and Student Outcomes
- College Choice and Student Persistence
- Psychosocial Development in Student Affairs
- Cognitive-Structural Theories and Outcomes
- Research Across Boundaries

7. Course Requirements:

- I. **Regular attendance and class participation** are essential for successful completion of the course. Active and mature participation includes asking questions, sharing experiences, and contributing to the class community. You are part of a classroom community and the total learning environment depends upon the contributions of each individual. Absence must be handled as it would be in a professional position on campus: planned for and communicated. Since our class meets only once weekly, excessive absences (more than two) may result in a lower grade for the course. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis, especially if negotiated ahead of time.

A successful HIED 7970 student demonstrates initiative in the area of participation. You are responsible for adding to the knowledge base during class by discussing input prepared and gained from your readings and coursework. The quality (not the quantity) of participation is important. Students who come to class unprepared to discuss course material will be downgraded accordingly. All student voices are important, so please do not monopolize classroom discussion.

- II. **Weekly readings and Discussions postings.** Post a short reflection about an assigned reading. Assigned readings are posted weekly by the instructor and include sections from the textbook, journal articles, and/or articles from The Chronicle of Higher Education. Instructor may use your posting for discussion in class. You may also be directed by the instructor to react to another student's posting.
- III. **Article Critique.** Each student will be responsible for identifying a research article and producing a written critique. All critiques are due during the final week of classes. . Information about how to approach the critique will be handed out in class.
- IV. **Article Presentation.** Students, working in pairs, will be assigned a research article to present about in class. See also "Information about how to approach research article critiques" handout.
- V. **Final Exam.** A final exam will be administered online in Canvas during the final week of classes. The exam will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

8. Grading and Evaluation Procedures:

The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

Class participation in discussion/activities	200 pts.
Weekly Discussions Postings.....	150 pts.
Article Critique	200 pts.
Article Presentation.....	150 pts.
Final Exam.....	<u>300 pts.</u>
Total.....	1000 points

The following grading scale will be used:

900 - 1000	= A
800 - 899	= B
700 - 799	= C
600 - 699	= D
Below 600	= F

9. Class Policy Statements:

- A. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and participate in all classroom exercises (Tiger Cub, p. 73). Should students need to be absent for any reasons, please contact the course instructor before missing that class meeting.
- B. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work due to excused absences (Tiger Cub, p. 74)
- C. Students who need special accommodations should make an appointment to discuss the Accommodation Memo during office hours as soon as possible. If you do not have an Accommodations Memo, contact the Program for Students with Disabilities, in 1244 Haley Center as soon as possible. Telephone: 334-844-2096.
- D. All portions of the Auburn University Honesty Code can be found in the Tiger Cub (Title XII) will apply in this class.
- E. A grade of incomplete will not be given except under extreme circumstances as determined by the instructor.

10. Important Dates & Deadlines

January 8	Week 1. First class session, introductions, syllabus, etc.
January 15	Week 2. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 2" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.

January 22	Week 3. No in-class meeting / online only. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 3" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
January 29	Week 4. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 4" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
February 5	Week 5. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 5" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
February 12	Week 6. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 6" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
February 19	Week 7. No in-class meeting / online only. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 7" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
February 26	Week 8. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 8" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
March 5	Week 9. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 9" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
<i>March 10-14</i>	<i>No class. Spring Break!</i>
March 19	Week 10. No in-class meeting / online only. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 10" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
March 26	Week 11. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 11" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum..
April 2	Week 12. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 12" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
April 9	Week 13. No in-class meeting / online only. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 13" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
April 16	Week 14. Prepare for class via assigned readings in the Canvas folder labeled "Week 14" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum.
April 23	Week 15. All work due. Review for Final Exam. Canvas folder "Week 15" and post about reading(s) in Discussion forum
April 24-29	Final Exam available in Canvas.

11. Relevant Journals/Periodicals/Other resources available in/through Auburn RBD Library:

- Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice (Formerly known as “NASPA Journal”) is a publication of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
- Journal of College Student Development (a publication of the American College Personnel Association)
- About Campus (a publication of the American College Personnel Association)
- Journal of Counseling and Development (the journal of the American Counseling Association)
- Journal of Higher Education
- Change
- Chronicle of Higher Education
- New Directions for Student Services. Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers.
- The CAS Book of Professional Standards for higher education. (from the Council for the Advancement of Standards, Washington, D.C.)

12. Web sites related to Interpreting and Conducting Research in Student Affairs:

- Association for Institutional Research (AIR) <http://airweb.org/>
- Association for the Study of HE www.ashe.ws/
- CAS www.cas.edu/
- SACS www.sacs.org/
- UCLA HERI <http://heri.ucla.edu/>
- ACPA’s Commission –Assessment & Evaluation
<http://www2.myacpa.org/acpa-commission-for-assessment-and-evaluation-home>
- Internet Resources for Higher Education Outcomes Assessment
http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/archives/assmt/rsrc_new.htm
- Sample Size Calculator <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>

Information about how to approach research article critiques

Critiques should include the strengths and weaknesses of the study. Be sure to include the following in your critique:

- Proper article citation
- Abstract –briefly summarize the main thesis of the article in your own words
- Critique:

Introduction – Did the author(s) present a clear rationale for the study? Is the purpose of the study clearly stated? Does the introduction include an outline of what is being researched or assessed and why?

Flow- Are the content and study presented in a logical manner?

Review of Literature- Is the stage set for the exploration of the topic and is the topic adequately framed? Is the reader given an adequate explanation of the topic and is previous research on the topic presented?

Methodology- Is the methodology clearly described? Is the methodology appropriate given the purpose of the study? Are statistics presented in a useful way? Are the population and/or sample clearly described? Are the instrument(s) clearly described? Are the soundness (validity and reliability) of the instrument(s) explored?

Results- Are the results clearly presented? Are tables and/or figures clearly designed/described? Are tables and/or figures necessary? Are personal opinions well supported? Is the data analysis appropriate and clear?

Discussion- Do the author(s) demonstrate how their research impacts practice? Did the author(s) present limitations of the study? Did the author(s) discuss implications for practice and future research? Do the conclusions fit with the results (are the conclusions appropriately made given the results)?

If you were the researcher, how would you improve the study? (Be specific). Please use this section to discuss any design flaws, violations of statistical assumptions, and questionable psychometrics of the instrument. Feel free to suggest alternative data analysis strategies or reporting formats.