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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:** Thursdays, 12:00 - 2:50 pm, Haley Center 2423

**Office:**  Haley Center 4096, phone (334) 844-3062

**Office Hours:** M: 3:00 - 4:15 pm; R: 3:00 - 4:15 pm; (appointment preferred)

**E-mail:** diramio@auburn.edu

**Prerequisites:** None

**2. Date Syllabus Prepared:** December 26, 2016

**3. Required Texts (2):** Mayhew, M. J., & Colleagues. (2016). *How college affects students: 21st century evidence that higher education works.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. ISBN 978-1118462683

(Note: Still known as “**P&T**,” which refers to “Pascarella and Terenzini,” the iconic authors who are contributors to this text and edited previous versions in 2005 and 1991)

Martin, G. L., & Hevel, M. S. (Eds.) (2014). Research-driven practice in student affairs: Implications from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education. *New Directions for Student Services, No. 147.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. ISBN 978-1118979556

**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:

1. critical consumer of the Student Affairs literature;
2. professional who can apply research processes used to complete studies in

Student Affairs, including qualitative and quantitative methodologies;

1. professional who can create a deeper understanding of the facilitation of learning experiences of college students in out of classroom settings;
2. mindful and intentional Student Affairs practitioner who base decisions and actions on thoughtful analyses;
3. professional who can design and carryout a systematic and meaningful assessment of a genuine problem or challenge in the field;
4. professional who can effectively communicate evidence-based ideas, analyses, and recommendations that enhance the practice of Student Affairs; and
5. 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. Learning Outcomes**

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate, through course activities and assignments, **knowledge** of:

1. The purpose and function of research, assessment and program evaluation in student affairs administration.
2. A comprehensive model of research, assessment, and program evaluation to be used to evaluate student affairs practice.
3. Research processes used to complete assessment and program evaluation, including qualitative and quantitative methodologies and a mixed methods approach.
4. The importance of a comprehensive review of literature in planning and conducting assessment, evaluation, and research in student affairs.
5. Ethical considerations in conducting research in Student Affairs.
6. The university Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements for conducting an assessment or program evaluation study that involves human subjects.

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate, through course activities and assignments, attitudes related to:

1. The potential benefits of research, assessment and program evaluation in Student Affairs administration.
2. The importance of producing good research by maximizing the reliability, validation, and/or trustworthiness in all phases of the study.
3. Respecting the rights of participants in an assessment or program evaluation study.
4. The importance of using theoretical and/or empirical evidence to support ideas, decisions, and recommendations for practice

6. Learning Outcomes (cont’d)

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate, through course activities and assignments, skills in:

1. Defining a meaningful Student Affairs problem that is appropriate for assessment or program evaluation.
2. Critically analyzing and synthesizing theoretical and empirical literature related to the problem.
3. Defining a specific research question and/or hypothesis to identify your research focus.
4. Devising an appropriate research design to examine the problem.
5. Acquiring confidence in your ability to design and carry out a systematic assessment of a genuine problem or issue in a functional unit within student affairs.

Several approaches will be employed to attain these course objectives. These may include readings, case studies, discussions, guest presentations, video, consultation, critiques, workshops, and several writing and presentation assignments.

**7. Course Requirements:**

I. **Attendance and class participation** are essential for successful completion of the course, both for the in-person meetings and online activities. Active and mature participation includes asking questions, sharing experiences, and contributing to the “learning community.” You are part of a classroom community and the total learning environment depends upon the contributions of each individual. Absences from the scheduled class meetings must be handled as they would be in a professional position on a college campus: planned for and communicated in advance. Since our class meets in-person only six times, 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 7270 student demonstrates initiative in the area of participation. You are responsible for adding to the knowledge base both online and in class by discussing material and gained from your readings and coursework. The quality (not the quantity) of participation is important. Students who come to in-person class meetings unprepared to discuss course material will be downgraded accordingly. All student voices are important, so please do not monopolize discussion, either online or in-person. Thank you!

II. **Weekly Readings and Canvas Postings.** Post online a short reflection about an assigned reading(s)/research article(s). Assigned readings are posted weekly by the instructor and include sections from the texts (“P&T” and “Wabash”), journal articles, and/or other sources. Instructor may use your posting for discussion in a

**7. Course Requirements (cont’d)**

future class. You may also be directed by the instructor to react to another student’s posting. Ideas for how to frame your reflection/posting are supplied in the HIED 7970 Questions" form (last page of this Syllabus). You do not have to submit this form.

III. **Quizzes.** There will be three (3) online quizzes, approximately every four weeks. These are short assessments based only on the previous weeks’ curriculum block of content, including classroom discussions, presentation articles, and the texts (“P&T” and “Wabash”).

IV. **Presentation.** Student groups will present weekly about assigned topics from the course. Groups will be self-selected based on interest areas and with assistance from the instructor. Presentations shall be creative, in-depth, and typically 40-60 minutes long. Your group will “teach” the topics to your student colleagues in class. Starting with the seminal research from P&T, research published after 2013 and not cited in P&T, and the Wabash.

V. **Final Exam.** A final exam will be administered online in Canvas during the final week of classes or during the exam period. 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.. …………… 150 pts.

Weekly readings and

 Canvas postings………………… 200 pts.

Quizzes (3 @50 pts.)……………… 150 pts.

Presentation …………………….… 250 pts.

Final Exam………………………... 250 pts.

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:**

I. 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.

II. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work due to excused absences (Tiger Cub, p. 74)

III. 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.

IV. All portions of the Auburn University Honesty Code can be found in the Tiger Cub (Title XII) will apply in this class.

V. A grade of incomplete will not be given except under extreme circumstances as determined by the instructor.

**10. Important Dates & Deadlines**

January 12 Week 1. First class session, introductions, syllabus, etc.

January 19 Week 2. **Online only.** Understanding Research, Methods, and Studying College Outcomes in the 2000s. Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 1-22, 603-620, Wabash pp. 3-11, and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 2"

*January 19 New Educator's Workshop – Preconference event (11am to 4pm)*

 *2017 NASPA Region III Alabama Drive-In Conference*

 *Birmingham-Southern College (BSC)*

*January 20 2017 NASPA Region III Alabama Drive-In Conference @BSC (8am)*

January 26 Week 3 – Information Literacy Skills for Research. Library visit w/ Todd Shipman at RBD Library – 12pm – Meet in the lobby down near the circulation desk (only library entrance during construction) Assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 3"

February 2 Week 4 – Diversity Experiences. **Group 1 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 115-119, 124-129, Wabash pp. 37-48, and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 4"

February 9 Week 5 – **Online only.** Development of Competence. Read P&T pp. 23-104 and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 5"

February 16 Week 6 – Cognitive Skills & Intellectual Development (excluding Moral Dev.). **Group 2 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 105-158 and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 6" Quiz #1 available

February 23 Week 7 – Greek Life. **Group 3 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 135-142, 272, 280-297, 305-326, Wabash pp. 23-36, and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 7"

March 2 Week 8 – Moral Development. **Group 4 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 331-360, Wabash pp. 13-22, and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 8"

March 9 Week 9 – Interactions with Faculty, Campus Staff, & Student Affairs Educators. **Group 5 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 78-103, 199-203, Wabash pp. 13-22, and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 9" Quiz #2 available

 *March 13-17 Spring Break (NASPA Conference in Indianapolis, Mar. 11-15)*

March 23 Week 10 – Student Athletes & Collegiate Athletics. **Group 6 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T (see Index – multiple pages) and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 10"

March 30 Week 11 – After College Effects. **Group 7 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 421-522, Wabash pp. 59-75, and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 11"

April 6 Week 12 – Educational Attainment & Persistence. **Group 8 presentation.** Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 361-420 and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 12" Quiz #3 available

April 13 Week 13 – **Online only.** Contemporary Issues in Student Affairs Research. Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read Wabash pp. 89-98 and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 13"

April 20 Week 14. Wrap-up & Review for Final. Complete assigned reading(s) and posting(s) in Canvas as directed. Read P&T pp. 523-602 and assigned readings in Canvas folder "Week 14"

April 27 – May 2 Final exam (available online in Canvas)

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

* Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice (formerly NASPA Journal)
* 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
* College Student Affairs Journal
* Change
* Leadership Exchange (NASPA)
* 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 Student Affairs, College Counseling, and Higher Education:

* American College Counseling Association (ACCA) http://www.collegecounseling.org
* American College Personnel Association (ACPA) http://www.myacpa.org
* The Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I) http://www.acuho.ohio-state.edu/
* Association for Student Judicial Affairs (ASJA) http://asja.tamu.edu/
* Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) http://www.cas.edu/index.htm
* National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/
* National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) http://www.naspa.org/
* Chronicle of Higher Education ("The Chronicle") http://chronicle.com
* American Counseling Association (ACA) http://www.counseling.org/ Ideas for online postings and discussions

HIED 7270 (DiRamio) Questions

1. What is the specific issue and/or research area?

2. Why is this worth studying?

3. What research method(s) were used and can you critique?

4. What were the findings?

5. Can you comment and/or reflect on the discussion section?

6. What are some implications for practice?