



University of Southern California
Rossier School of Education
EDUC 710 - Assessment, Organizational Learning and Performance

Syllabus
Summer 2016 (July 5 – August 9)
Tuesdays, 4 PM – 10:15 PM
(rev. 6/22/2016)

Instructor: Hannah Lawler, Ed.D.
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Class Location: WPH 206

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Blackboard: <http://blackboard.usc.edu/>
ARES: <http://reserves.usc.edu/>

Course Description

Assessment, Organizational Learning and Performance is part of the Ed.D. program in the Rossier School of Education. The course prepares postsecondary administrators and faculty to participate in and administer a wide variety of assessment activities. Principles of higher education governance, policy, organizational learning, institutional effectiveness, and measurement are introduced to analyze the purpose and value of particular assessment approaches and instruments.

Students will explore the ways in which institutional quality is communicated externally to accrediting bodies, state governing boards, trustees, and the general public and internally to faculty and administrative leaders and students. The relationships between assessment, accreditation, evaluation, and accountability are examined. Students will gain practical experience incorporating quantitative and qualitative data from their own college or university by developing an assessment plan. The assessment plan will be informed by primary data collected using a variety of methods including: interviews, observations, document review, and discourse analysis. Existing institutional data displays (e.g. tables and graphs in reports from institutional researcher, planning, and assessment offices) concerning student course progression and degree attainment, learning, engagement, and campus climate will be reviewed to choose focal areas for further inquiry.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Understand the role of administrators, staff, faculty, state and federal governing bodies, and accrediting associations in assessing the quality and performance of higher educational institutions.
2. Apply principles of organizational learning, democratic education, student development and public policy to evaluate the use of assessment tools for a variety of purposes.
3. Have a strong working knowledge of measurement concepts (e.g. reliability and validity) necessary to evaluate the use and application of assessment instruments.
4. Gain experience in collecting, analyzing, and presenting assessment data.
5. Be able to link assessment activities to organizational learning and change.
6. Develop a personal philosophy of assessment and institutional effectiveness.

Class Meetings

Students are required to attend all class sessions. Each class session meets for approximately six hours and is held based on the meeting schedule noted below. We will meet six times during the summer session semester. The instructor will provide an overview, class topics, and assignments due for each class. You may find that you will need to meet with your assessment team outside of class time in addition to the group/team meeting time that will be provided during each class.

Blackboard (Bb), ARES (for articles) & Email Communication

All articles and additional readings will be accessible via ARES. We will use Blackboard in this class. It is crucial that you visit the Blackboard site for this class on a regular basis. Emails to the class members will be generated from Blackboard. Blackboard uses the USC email address (and so does the instructor) as the primary mode of email communication. It is your responsibility to have USC email forwarded to any other email service you use. Please refer to USC IT services for instructions on how to forward your USC email and/or open a USC email account.

Team Guidelines

Teamwork is a key component of the EDUC 710 experience. By participating in this course, you are joining a team that will work collaboratively on your assigned assessment projects. An Assessment Team is a preferred approach to assessment and organizational research in higher education. Your contribution to the team is important to completion of assignments, projects, class discussion, and presentations. Each person on the team is to be respected for their own views and thoughts regarding topics of the course and as a colleague in higher education. Collectively, your participation as a team member promotes an environment of information and inquiry. Be prepared to share your knowledge and participate in class discussions each meeting.

Books and Other Readings

Required Texts

Maki, P. L. (2010) *Assessing for learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution, 2nd edition*. Herndon, VA: Stylus. ISBN 9781579224400

Suskie, Linda (2009). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide, 2nd edition*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. ISBN 9780470289648

Secolsky, C. & Denison, D.B. (2012). *Handbook on Measurement, Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. New York: Routledge. ISBN 9780470289648

Unless otherwise noted, additional readings are available via ARES.

Course Assignments

There are three types of assignments due for this course.

- 1. Writing Reflections** Each student will be expected to prepare three short writing reflections. Each reflection should be 2-3 pages long, double-spaced, and respond to the writing prompts provided throughout the syllabus. Please use APA format for citations, but no need to use APA for body of reflection.
- 2. Assessment Plan Project** Each student will participate in an assessment team that develops an assessment plan examining the needs of a current problem or concern within a postsecondary institution. Team members will identify the problem and conduct an analysis of existing information related to the problem. Using concepts learned during the course and the information from their own problem analysis, team members will identify administrative and academic activities for further assessment as well as stakeholders who should be involved in assessment activities and instruments and processes to be adopted and how organizational learning can be promoted.

Course activities may be conducted as part of an actual institutional self-study conducted for accreditation, accountability, strategic planning, or other purposes. You may also choose to

study a campus other than your own. Each team will present their assessment plan to the class at the end of the course. The assessment presentation will be no longer than 20 minutes with an additional 10 minutes for questions. The presentation will include an overview of the assessment project using presentation materials (i.e. PREZI, PowerPoint, handouts, etc.).

3. Topic Presentations

Each student will **teach** a topic relevant to the readings assigned each class meeting. The presentation will be no more than 10 minutes with 5 minutes for Q&A. Presentations can include a variety of instructional methods in presenting the information and creating a learning environment for all members of the class. Your creativity in your instructional design is your decision, however, please be certain that you provide a lesson plan with objectives and an assessment of learning outcomes for the class. Submit the outline or presentation materials via Blackboard no later than the Friday following the presentation.

All assignments must be typed and should conform to the style and reference notation format outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (2009).

All presentations, individual and group, are to be presented using PowerPoint, PREZI and/or handouts. The materials will be posted on Blackboard after the presentation each week to share with all class members.

Assignment	Description	Points	Due Date
Writing Reflection #1	Respond to ONE of the following prompts: 1) What is the role of the assessment? 2) The assigned readings argue for the use of particular types of evaluative and action research methods to improve institutional effectiveness. Discuss what type of research methods would be best suited to the problem you identified last week. Why would other methods not be as effective?	7.5	July 19, 2016 Bb
Writing Reflection #2	Respond to ONE of the following prompts: 1) What are the appropriate uses of standardized tests for assessing student learning outcomes? 2) What makes a test a valid instrument for evaluating institutional effectiveness in educating students? 3) Why has higher education not traditionally relied on standardized tests to examine student learning in the U.S.? What are the consequences and opportunities for this decision?	7.5	July 26, 2016 Bb
Topic Presentation	“Teach” the article you have selected.	15	Sign up for presentation topic, date/time
Assessment Plan Project	Each student will participate in an assessment team that develops an assessment plan examining the needs of a current problem or concern within a postsecondary institution.	35	August 9, 2016 Bb
Assessment Plan Project Presentation	Group presentations of assessment plan project. The presentation should be designed for an audience of stakeholders who are highly interested in your assessment (i.e., Board of Regents or Board of Trustees, accreditation agency, Provost, Chancellor, etc.).	25	Presented in class on August 9, 2016
In-class participation	Participate in class discussions	10	
Total		100	

Students are expected to attend all class meetings, complete assigned readings and activities required before the class meeting for which they are assigned, and actively participate in class discussions. Students are expected to complete all writing reflections and assessment related assignments on time.

Grading

The final course grade will be a weighted average of letter grades on the criteria described above.

Grade of A: Demonstrates accurate knowledge of course content and applies that knowledge to develop an informed assessment plan.

Grade of B: Demonstrates accurate knowledge of course content and applies that knowledge to develop an informed assessment plan, but the assessment is limited or demonstrates partial understanding of some key concepts.

Grade of C: Demonstrates familiarity with course content but knowledge of key concepts is often incorrect and applications of those concepts are oftentimes limited or misconstrued.

Grades lower than C: Fails to demonstrate familiarity with course content or the ability to apply knowledge of key concepts.

Academic Accommodations

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can then be attained from DSP to be submitted to the instructor of the course. DSP is located in VPD 115. Email: ability@usc.edu Telephone # (213)740-0776. Website address: <http://dsp.usc.edu>.

Academic Integrity

In an academic community, standards of academic integrity are extremely important. USC's standards for academic honesty are posted on-line at <https://scampus.usc.edu/a-general-policy-statements/>

As a member of USC's academic community, you are expected to understand and abide by those standards. Plagiarism, or representing the work of others as your own, is unacceptable in any form. If you are unsure whether you understand the principles of intellectual property and appropriate citation of the work of others, talk to a librarian and ask for resources on this topic. Guidebooks and on-line materials are widely available. This step is recommended for everyone because looking at these materials will also help you to develop your academic writing and develop a more scholarly writing style.

Course Schedule of Readings and Assignments

(subject to revision)

Note: Readings and assignments should be completed prior to the class for which they are assigned. Please bring assigned books and readings to class.

WEEK 1 (July 5)

Unit 1 Topic: Overview of Institutional Assessment

Today's Objectives

1. Review syllabus and class expectations.
2. Discuss higher education as a public or private good.
3. Discuss the role of assessment in higher education.
4. Use USC library resources to conduct research.
5. Identify teams and basic topics.

Class Activities

Guest Speakers

Melanee Vicedo

Head Librarian, Education & Social Work Library Services
University of Southern California

Lisa Wang

Senior Research and Planning Analyst, Office of Research, Planning, & Accreditation
Irvine Valley College

Discussion

- Overview of assessment, including assessment methodology and tools
- Institutional research (IR) and the role of IR in assessment
- Higher education as a public vs private good; or something else?
- Class Discussion Prompt: Identify and discuss a learning or organizational problem with your institution. Based on what you have read so far, what might you want to know about this issue and resolve it?

Due Next Week

Week 2 topic presentations

Readings Due for Today's Class

Maki, P. L. (2010). *Assessing for learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. Herndon, VA: Stylus. (Resource book for assessment principles, models, and templates.) Chapters Preface, 1, 2, 7, and 8.

Milan, J. H. & HigherEd.org, Inc. (2003). Using national datasets for postsecondary research. In W. E. Knight (Ed.), *The primer for institutional research* (pp. 123-149). Tallahassee, FL: Association for Institutional Research.

Tierney, W.G. (2006). Public trust and the recreation of academic community. In *Trust and the public good: Examining the cultural conditions of academic work* (pp. 173-192). New York: Pater Lang.

Volkwein, J. F. (2010). The assessment context: Accreditation, accountability, and performance. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2010(S1), 3-12.

WEEK 2 (July 12)

Unit 2 Topic: Assessment Methodologies, Accreditation, & Organizational Learning

Today's Objectives

1. Discuss organizational learning in postsecondary education.
2. Understand the function, role and climate of accreditation.
3. Understand assessment cycle and appropriate methodologies.

Class Activities

Guest Speakers

Panel Discussion on Accreditation

Lesley Kawaguchi, Ph.D.

Professor, History
Former Academic Senate President
Santa Monica College

Erica LeBlanc

Dean, Academic Affairs
Santa Monica College

Georgia Lorenz, Ph.D.

Vice President, Academic Affairs
Santa Monica College

Topic Presentations

3 - 4 individual presentations on readings.

Discussion

- Role of assessment in promoting organizational learning; relationship between organizational learning and accountability
- Accreditation: ongoing assessment and continuous improvement
- Assessment cycle
- Class Discussion Prompt: The assigned readings argue for the use of specific techniques and methods for assessment (action research, outcomes assessment, experimental design, mixed methods). Based on case study scenario descriptions, discuss the most appropriate strategy for assessment, and discuss the pros and cons of the particular assessment.

Due Next Week

Writing Reflection #1 must be submitted on Bb by 4 PM on July 19, 2016

Week 3 topic presentations

Readings Due for Today's Class

Bensimon, E. M., Polkinghorne, D. E., Bauman, G. L., & Vallejo, E. (2004). Doing research that makes a difference. *Journal of Higher Education*, 75(1), 104-126.

Crossan, M.M., Lane, H.W. & White, R.E. (1999). An organizational learning framework: From intuition to institution. *Academy of Management Review*, 24(3), 522-537.

Harnisch, D.L, Creswell, J.W., & Guetterman, T. (2012). Mixed methods specialists in action: Linking mixed methods research to learning and classroom assessment. In *Handbook on Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation in Higher Education* (pp. 518-538). New York: Routledge.

Kezar, A. (2005). What campuses need to know about organizational learning and the learning organization. In *New Directions for Higher Education* (pp. 7-22). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

Maki, P. L. (2010). *Assessing for learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. Herndon, VA: Stylus. (Resource book for assessment principles, models, and templates). Chapters Preface, 5, & 6.

WEEK 3 (July 19)

Unit 3 Topics: Standardized Testing and Assessing Diverse Student Populations

Learning Goals

1. Discuss the role of testing in higher education.
2. Incorporate diversity issues in the context of higher education assessment.
3. Try out a learning outcomes assessment case study.

Class Activities

Guest Speaker

No guest speaker currently scheduled; may add speaker if time permits

Topic Presentations

3 - 4 individual presentations on readings.

Discussion

- Use of standardized tests for assessing student learning outcomes
- Validity of instruments used for assessing students
- Class Discussion Prompt: What are some considerations to consider when adapting assessments for diverse student populations? What strategies can be used to more effectively assess campus climate?

Due Next Week

Writing Reflection #2 must be submitted on Bb by 4 PM on July 26, 2016
Week 4 topic presentations

Readings Due for Today's Class

Banerjee, M., & Thurlow, M.L. (2012). Using data to find common ground between secondary and postsecondary accommodations for students with disabilities. In C. Secolsky & D. B. Denison (Eds.), *Handbook on Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation in Higher Education* (pp. 553-568). New York: Routledge.

Brown, R.D., Clarke, B., Gortmaker, V., & Robinson-Keilig, Rachael. (2004). Assessing the campus climate for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) students using multiple perspectives approach. *Journal of College Student Development*, 45(1), pp.8-26.

Dwyer, C. A., Millett, C. M., & Payne, D. G. (2006). *A culture of evidence: Postsecondary assessment and learning outcomes*. Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service.

Maki, P. L. (2004). *Assessing for learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. Herndon, VA: Stylus. (Resource book for assessment principles, models, and templates.) Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Hurtado, S., Arellano, L., Griffin, K.A., & Cuellar, M. (2008). Assessing the value of climate assessments: Progress and future directions. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 4(1), 204-221.

Wood, J. L., & Harris III, F. (2013). The community college survey of men: An initial validation of the instrument's non-cognitive outcomes construct. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 37(4), 333-338.

WEEK 4 (July 26)

Unit 4 Topics: Assessing Student Engagement and Campus Climate & Authentic (Direct) Assessments

Learning Goals

1. Explore the various methods of assessing student engagement and campus climate.
2. Discuss the methods of authentic assessment.

Class Activities

Guest Speakers

Ray Gonzalez, Ph.D.

Director, Institutional Research & Educational Assessment
California Institute of Technology

Ross Markle, Ph.D.

Senior Research & Assessment Advisor
Education Testing Service

Topic Presentations

3 - 4 individual presentations on readings.

Discussion

- Assessments of campus climate, including federal mandate to assess campus climate on sexual assault (Not Alone)
- Compare and contrast the methods of assessing student engagement
- Authentic assessment methodologies

Due Next Week

Week 5 topic presentations

Readings Due for Today's Class

Campbell, C. M., & Cabrera, A. F. (2011). How sound is NSSE? Investigating the psychometric properties of NSSE at a public, research-intensive institution. *The Review of Higher Education*, 35(1), 77-104.

Carini, R. M., Kuh, G. D., & Klein, S. P. (2006). Student engagement and student learning: Testing the linkages. *Research in Higher Education*, 47(1), 1-32.

Dowd, A. C., Sawatzky, M., & Korn, R. (2011). Theoretical foundations and a research agenda to validate measures of intercultural effort. *The Review of Higher Education*, 35(1), 17-44.

Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*, 2nd edition. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Chapters 5, 12, and 14.

Wentland, E. (2012). Survey use in academic contexts: Considerations and guidelines. In C. Secolsky & D. B. Denison (Eds.), *Handbook on Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation in Higher Education* (pp. 539-548). New York: Routledge.

WEEK 5 (August 2)

Unit 5 Topics: Role of Faculty Governance & Culture in Assessment

Learning Goals

1. Understand the role of faculty governance in assessment.
2. Understand the role of assessment in faculty governance.
3. Review the IRB process at USC.

Due Today

Week 5 topic presentations

Class Activities

Guest Speakers

Kristin Craun

Director, University Park Institutional Review Board
University of Southern California

David Morse, Ph.D.

English Professor
Former California Community College Academic Senate President
Long Beach City College

Topic Presentations

3 - 4 individual presentations on readings.

Discussion

- Role of faculty in assessment and governance.
- Impact of faculty culture in assessment work.

Due Next Week

Assessment Plan Report must be submitted on Bb by 4 PM on August 9, 2016
Assessment Plan Presentations

Readings Due for Today's Class

Banta, T.W. & Pike, G.R. (2012). The bottom line: Will faculty use assessment findings? In C. Secolsky & D. B. Denison (Eds.), *Handbook on Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation in Higher Education* (pp. 47-56). New York: Routledge.

Ewell, P. T. (2009). *Assessment, accountability, and improvement: Revisiting the tension*. National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.
http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/PeterEwell_005.pdf

Grubb, W. N., & Badway, N. N. (2005). *From compliance to improvement: Accountability and assessment in California community colleges*: Higher Education Evaluation and Research Group.
http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/WED/CEP/PerkinsIV/CoreIndicator/Compliance_to_Improvement.pdf

Palmer, J.C. (2012). The perennial challenges of accountability. In C. Secolsky & D. B. Denison (Eds.), *Handbook on Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation in Higher Education* (pp. 56-70). New York: Routledge.

Suskie, L. (2009). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide, 2nd edition*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Chpts. 17, 18, and 19.

Zubrow, J. (2012). Case study: Engaging adjunct faculty in program assessment. *Journal of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness*, 2(1), 77-102.

WEEK 6 (August 9)

Topic: Final class presentations and class closing

Class Activities

- Present final projects.
- Course evaluations.

Congratulations, Trojans, on completing Education 710!!