Developing and Conducting Needs Assessments in Extension Settings
AEC 6501
Spring 2024 - 3 credit hours

Instructor

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Class Times	Location
Monday (2-4 periods (8:30-11:30am))	Florida Gym 0245

Course Description

This course is intended to help educators in the field of extension and other non-formal education organizations: (a) acquire an understanding of needs assessments from theory to practice and (b) strengthen or develop their skills in planning and conducting needs assessments within extension settings. Learners are encouraged to tailor course assignments to reflect their own interests.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, learners will be able to:
1. Explain the relationship between conducting needs assessments and developing programs in extension settings.
2. Select the appropriate methods for conducting needs assessments based on context in extension settings.
3. Evaluate the needs of clientele in extension settings.

Course Design

The course will utilize an in-person meeting modality. A Canvas course shell will be used to house the course activities schedule, assignment submissions, and grade posting.

This course is heavily influenced by the philosophers John Dewey and David Kolb, both of whom emphasized the critical importance of actual experience in learning and then reflecting upon that experience to see how it connects with prior knowledge. Accordingly, you will have many opportunities to experience new things and then an equal number of opportunities to process what you have experienced through personal and group reflection activities designed to help you create meaning. I value cultural awareness, critical thinking,

real-world experience, diversity, life-long learning and teamwork; this course is guided by those values.

Requirements

Textbook:
Witkin, B. R., & Altschuld, J. W. (1995). *Planning and conducting needs assessments: A practical guide.* Sage.

Technology:
To succeed in this course, you must have access to the following technology:
- Desktop Computer or Laptop
  - Audio Capabilities
  - Webcam and Microphone for synchronous sessions
- Microsoft Word - Microsoft 365 basics video training
- Adobe Reader - Acrobat tutorials
- Zoom - Zoom Privacy Policy
- Internet Connection with access to Canvas
  - Canvas is the course management system at the University of Florida in which students will find course content, links to video lectures, assignments, quizzes, discussions, and grades. The use of this system will vary by instructor, but the following videos describe the most common tools in Canvas. The full student guide is provided if you have additional questions.
  - View Canvas Privacy Policy
- **Web Browser - Chrome** is the preferred browser for Canvas. If you do not have Chrome, you can download it.
- University of Florida Email
  - Students are expected to check their my.ufl emails daily. View the Student Computing Requirements page for information on technology requirements and expectations.

Prerequisite Knowledge:
None.

Minimum Technical Skills:
Minimum technical skills required:
  - Proficiency in utilizing Canvas and navigating the internet effectively.
  - Competence in using email for communication purposes, including sending and receiving messages and managing attachments.
  - Familiarity with commonly used word processing applications (such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs), including the ability to create, edit, and format documents.
  - Basic computer skills, including understanding fundamental operations like file management, using menus and toolbars, and navigating between different applications.
  - Ability to perform online research using a variety of search engines and library databases.

Instructor Response & Feedback

The instructor is committed to responding to your Canvas and email messages **within 24 hours** when feasible during the work week, Monday through Friday, *except holidays*. I also hold office hours each week in person, and can alternatively schedule a meeting via Zoom if needed. The major assignments will be graded, with *meaningful feedback* provided, **within one week of their submission**. Quizzes are graded automatically upon submission.

Assignments

You will find participating in class on a regular basis provides the best opportunity for success in this course. You are expected to complete all assignments within the course during the time frame specified. Assignments are due on the dates listed in the syllabus.

Course Grading:

You can find the course assignment rubrics on the Canvas site. Once I have completed grading each assignment, I will post the grade in Canvas and provide feedback with a completed rubric in class.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade & Point Percentage	Total Points
A = 90 – 100%	900 – 1,000
B+ = 86 – 89.99%	870 – 899
B = 80 – 85.99%	800 – 869
C+ = 76 – 79.99%	770 – 799
C = 70 – 75.99%	700 – 769
D+ = 66 – 69.99%	670 – 699
D = 60 – 65.99%	600 – 669
F = Below 60%	599 or less

Further information about UF grading policies can be found here:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

Reading Schedule:

Reading assignments are posted on the Canvas site.

Assignment Points, Explanation, & Schedule:

The following table provides a summary of the course assignments, their due dates, and total points available for each. **ALL** assignments are **ALWAYS** due on **Thursdays at 11:59 pm ET**. Please note the following regarding course assignments:

- Format: All assignments are to be typed, single-space with 1" margins.
- Document Type: Only .doc and .docx files will be accepted.
- Grammar: Spelling and grammar will be considered when grades are assigned.
- APA: All assignments must follow guidelines according to the American Psychological Association (APA, 7th ed.). If you do not own an APA manual, Purdue University offers a decent formatting and style guide here.

Assignment	Points Available	Due Date	Course Objective(s)
Voices in Action (7 total @ 25 pts. each)	175	Varies	All

Learning Labs Participation (2 @ 50 pts. each)	100	Varies	All
Phase 1 Assignment	150	Feb 1	All
NA Benchmark Project	175	Mar 7	All
Executive NA Summary	300	Apr 11	All
Visual Communications Project	100	Apr 18	All

Voices in Action
Due Date: Varies
Points Available: 175
Description: Several weeks of class will feature an expert guest speaker with experiencing conducting needs assessments. They will share their experience and then answer questions from the class. You will need to prepare for the guest speaker by reviewing the assigned readings in preparation for the guest speaker's presentations. Then, write two questions that you would like to ask the speaker based on that week's reading (these will be due to the instructor via email prior to class). You may get information that answers your questions during the speaker's formal presentation; take careful notes. If not, use the discussion time after to ask at least one of your questions. By the end of Thursday, you need to post your questions and answers in the survey link posted on the Canvas site.

Learning Labs Participation
Due Date: Varies
Points Available: 100
Description: We will have two learning labs; these are class days that will include peer review of products (e.g., surveys, interview guides) and practicing techniques (e.g., nominal group technique, future wheels) with your peers. The learning labs are designed to provide you with an opportunity to improve your skills prior to collecting data from your real audience for your final project. Participation points will be awarded for showing up to the lab with a product ready for your peers to review, active engagement during the lab, and respectful feedback to your peers.

Phase 1 Assignment
Due Date: February 1
Points Available: 150
Description: Conduct the first phase of the needs assessment process. Put on your investigator hat and seek out areas where data might exist that can help you make decisions to drive your program forward. You will seek both intern and external data on your potential area (or areas) of need. Remember, the data you can gather on your topic area need will dictate what avenues you might pursue for conducting your three needs assessment techniques.

NA Benchmark Assignment
Due Date: March 7
Points Available: 175
Description: For the NA Benchmark Assignment, you will report your methods, findings, and conclusions for your first two needs assessments. This assignment is designed to help you progress with your needs assessment activities for your Executive Summary and to provide hands-on practical experience on needs assessment theory.

Executive NA Summary
Due Date: April 11
Points Available: 300
Description: Communicating the results of a needs assessment to stakeholders is an important part of building positive relationships and serves as a form of member checking. Therefore, you will need to use the data collected from the needs assessments you conducted during the course to create a written executive summary. The executive summary will consist of portions from the previous assignments (Phase 1 and NA Benchmark assignments), as well as sections such the prioritization of needs and conclusions.

Visual Communications Project
Due Date: April 18
Points Available: 100
Description: For this last course assignment you will create a visual communications product to demonstrate the important data and needs you found through your three needs assessments to your stakeholders. The communications product could be a press release, a poster, recorded PowerPoint presentations, etc.

Academic Integrity

UF's Academic Honesty Statement:
As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: ***"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."*** You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ***"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."***
It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g., assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the instructor, department chair, college dean or Student Honor Court. **It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code.** Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: UF Student Code of Conduct Webpage.

Plagiarism:
Plagiarism includes taking **verbatim phrases of *just a few words*** without permission or full attribution. It includes *quoting too much* from your sources, thereby substituting their expression for your own, or quoting too much from one source, effectively taking more than a *fair use* of their work. **Over quoting (direct quotes)** comprising more than 10% of any assignment will be considered plagiarism. Plagiarism includes ***unique expression***, which can be a phrase of a few words or a simple moniker. Our writing is mostly *our own expression*. When writing for science and business, we base our work on **facts** obtained

from a variety of **credible sources.** We give credit where it is due. We **cite our sources** so others can access the information we present. When appropriate, we very carefully, ethically, and lawfully use others' expression of that information. We obtain permission to use our sources' expression or give full credit for a *limited, fair use,* including direct quotes.

Attendance Policies

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: UF Attendance Policies..

Institutional Policies

Recording Statement

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. UF IN-CLASS RECORDING

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. UF ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Course Evaluations

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email, they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/

Student Services

Health & Wellness

- U Matter, We Care
  - If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center
  - Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
  - Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students.
- Student Health Care Center
  - Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.
- University Police Department
  - Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- GatorWell Health Promotion Services
  - For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support
  - Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- Career Connections Center
  - Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- Library Support
  - Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center
  - Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- Writing Studio

- - 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
  - Student Complaints On-Campus
    - Visit the [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage](#) for more information.
  - On-Line Students Complaints
    - View the [Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation
0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [UF Disability Resource Center.](#)
[Canvas Accessibility Standards](#)
[Zoom Accessibility Information](#)