

## **Developing and Conducting Needs Assessments in Domestic & International Extension Settings**

AEC 6932

Spring 2020; 10:40-11:30 a.m. (T), 11:45 am – 1:40 pm (R)

3 credits

- Instructor:** Dr. Amy Harder  
Professor  
amharder@ufl.edu (E-mail is preferred)  
117B Bryant Hall (across from the Hub)  
352-273-2569
- Office Hours:** By appointment; UF E-mail is the fastest way to reach me (not Canvas).
- Student Feedback:** Please use UF e-mail rather than Canvas. Students can expect a response within 24 hours from Monday - Friday. Questions sent after close of business on Friday (5 p.m.) will not be answered until Monday.
- Required Texts:** Witkin, B. R., & Altschuld, J. W. (1995). *Planning and conducting needs assessments: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Additional Materials:** Course assignment descriptions, additional readings, and other critical documents will be posted on the course Web site on Canvas.

### **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 domestic and international extension settings.

### **Course Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, learners will be able to:

- Explain the relationship between conducting needs assessments and developing programs in domestic and international extension settings
- Determine the appropriate methods for conducting needs assessments based on context in domestic and international settings
- Evaluate the needs of clientele in domestic and international extension settings

### **Course Philosophy**

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.

## Course Policies

Since this is a blended learning course, use of the Internet, e-mail, and Canvas is essential. It is important for all students to access Canvas at least once a week in order to keep up with readings and discussion, as well as to check for any announcements. **It is your responsibility to make sure your assignments have been received by the instructor**; if you suspect you are having computer issues, you will need to submit a copy of a UF Help Desk ticket as proof of your technical issues. Otherwise, any missed assignments will receive zero points.

### Attendance and Make-Up Work

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.

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

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

### Course Assignments

Component	Due Date	Total Point Value
Reflexive Journals	2/18, 3/10, 3/24, 4/7	50/200
Executive Summary	4/21	125
Communication Product	4/14	30
Learning Lab Participation	Various	70
<b>Total</b>		<b>425</b>

### Course Grading Scale

A > 395	B+ = 369 - 381	C+ = 327 - 339	D+ = 284 - 296	E < 255
A- = 382 - 395	B = 352 - 368	C = 310 - 326	D = 267 - 283	
	B- = 340 - 351	C- = 297 - 309	D- = 255 - 266	

## Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## Assignment Descriptions

### Reflexive Journal (50 points)

Throughout the semester, you will practice different needs assessment techniques with a target audience related to Extension in domestic or international settings (e.g. county agents, state specialists, clientele, students, or even an NGO). You will be responsible for writing in a reflexive journal to reflect upon the *methods and techniques* you practiced most recently; reflection is an important step in experiential learning and reflexive journals are often used in qualitative research. Each journal entry should be submitted in class on the date due (see Course Schedule for exact dates). Your entries need to address the following prompts; separate your responses using the prompts as the headings in a “question and answer” format. There is no expected page length; use your discretion to answer questions succinctly.

- What technique(s) did you practice most recently?
- What types of information were you able to collect with the technique(s)?
- How did the technique(s) impact the quality of information you received, compared to your prior experiences?
- What would you do similarly/differently in the future?
- Did you like the technique? Why or why not?

### Final Project (155 points)

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 and a communication product. A rubric will be used to assess the quality of your work. You will need to create:

- Written Executive Summary (125 points)
  - Include detailed description of the individuals/groups whose needs were assessed
  - Methods used to assess needs, including justification for why the methods were appropriate given the context
  - Findings/conclusions
  - Details are required, e.g. quotes or pictures of visuals developed
  - Include copies of needs assessment tools (e.g. survey questionnaires, interview guides, future wheels)
- A communication product designed to be shared with stakeholders; e.g. press release, infographic, or YouTube video (30 points)
  - Highlight findings/conclusions
  - Brief description of the needs assessment process

### Learning Lab Participation (10 points each/70 points total)

We will have seven learning labs interspersed throughout the semester; these are class days that will be dedicated to 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.

## Helpful Information

### Academic Honesty

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 academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. 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: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

### Online Course Evaluation Process

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/>.

## 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, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

## U Matter, We Care

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

## Campus Helping Resources

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. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

1. University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575, counseling services, groups and workshops, outreach and consultation, self-help library, training programs, community provider database, [www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/) ;
2. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
3. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling; and
4. Career Resource Center, First Floor Reitz Union; 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling, [www.crc.ufl.edu/](http://www.crc.ufl.edu/).

## 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.

## Student Complaints

Each online distance learning program has a process for, and will make every attempt to resolve, student complaints within its academic and administrative departments at the program level. See <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> for more details.

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- *University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, [www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/)*
  - Counseling Services
  - Groups and Workshops
  - Outreach and Consultation
  - Self-Help Library
  - Wellness Coaching
- *Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, [www.crc.ufl.edu/](http://www.crc.ufl.edu/)*

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**AEC 6905 – Developing and Conducting Needs Assessments in Domestic & International  
Extension Settings**  
Class Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings*	Assignments Due
1	<u>January 7</u> Introductions Overview of Syllabus Needs Assessments and Program Development  <u>January 9**</u> Three-Phase Model of Needs Assessment	Chapter 1	
2	<u>January 14</u> Phase 1 - Preassessment  <u>January 16</u> Phase 2 - Assessment	Chapter 2  Chapter 3	
3	<u>January 21</u> Records and Social Indicators  <u>January 23</u> Records and Social Indicators – Guest Presentation (Ms. Diane Craig, PDEC)	Chapter 5	
4	<u>January 28</u> Interviews  <u>January 30</u> Learning Lab - Interviews	Chapter 6, p. 145-150	
5	<u>February 4</u> Surveys & Critical Incident Technique  <u>February 6</u> Competency Assessments – Guest Presentation (Dr. Lendel Narine, USU Extension)	Chapter 6, p. 128-144; 150- 152	

6	<u>February 11</u> Delphi Surveys	Chapter 8, p. 193-202	
	<u>February 13</u> Learning Lab – Survey Instruments		
7	<u>February 18</u> Nominal Group Technique	Chapter 7, p. 67- 170	Reflexive Journal #1 due
	<u>February 20</u> Learning Lab – Nominal Group Technique		
8	<u>February 25**</u> Focus Group Interviews	Chapter 7, p. 154-159; 171- 178	
	<u>February 27</u> Focus Group Interviews continued – Guest Presentation, Dr. Angie Lindsey, FYCS		
9	<u>March 3</u> Spring Break		
	<u>March 5</u> Spring Break		
10	<u>March 10</u> Future-Oriented Needs Assessment Procedures	Chapter 9	Reflexive Journal #2 due
	<u>March 12</u> Learning Lab – Scenarios and Future Wheels		
11	<u>March 17</u> Causal Analysis	Chapter 10	
	<u>March 19</u> Learning Lab – Fishboning; Cause and Consequence		
12	<u>March 24</u> Creating Effective Visual Aids		Reflexive Journal #3 due
	<u>March 26</u> Learning Lab – Visual Aids		



13	<u>March 31</u> No class		
	<u>April 2**</u> Field trip – all day		
14	<u>April 7</u> Phase 3 - Postassessment	Chapter 4	Reflective Journal #4 due
	<u>April 9</u> Learning Lab – final product reviews		
15	<u>April 14</u> Results Forum I		Communication products due
	<u>April 16</u> Results Forum II		
16	<u>April 21**</u> Course reflection		Written executive summary submitted via Canvas by 5 p.m. ET

\*Additional content may be posted on Canvas; students should check weekly.

\*\*A portion of class time will occur online or off-campus during these weeks; details to be provided in class.