Loyola University Chicago
School of Education
RMTD 412: Needs Assessment
Summer Session II, 2016
Blended

Instructor: Laura Swanlund, Ph.D.   **Office hours**: By appointment
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Required Text
Sleezer, C., Rus-Eft, D., & Gupta, K. (2014). *A Practical Guide to Needs Assessment* 3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Wiley.

Additional readings will be provided by the instructor.

Course Description
This course will introduce the concept of inquiry and needs assessment used in education, psychology, and other social sciences. Students will learn how to use tools, data and systematic methods to assess organizational needs, identify performance problems, and determine how to help organizations address critical issues.

Course Objectives
As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe a problem and identify discrepancies between current and desired performance
2. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of different needs assessment models
3. Select and use appropriate data gathering tools and techniques
4. Determine possible causes of a problem and potential solutions
5. Communicate effectively in visual and written form
6. Discuss and analyze ethical issues as they are related to needs assessment projects and organizational

School of Education's Conceptual Framework
The School of Education at Loyola University Chicago, a Jesuit and Catholic urban university, supports the Jesuit ideal of knowledge in the service of humanity. We endeavor to advance professional education in the service of social justice, engaged with Chicago, the nation, and the world. To achieve this vision the School of Education participates in the discovery, development, demonstration, and dissemination of professional knowledge and practice within a context of ethics, service to others, and social justice. We fulfill this mission by preparing professionals to serve as teachers, administrators, psychologists, and researchers; by conducting research on issues of professional practice and social justice; and by partnering with schools and community agencies to enhance life-long learning in the Chicago area. This course will equip students with the knowledge, skills of inquiry, and ethics necessary to be professional

and socially just researchers. The case studies used in this course illustrate how educational research can illuminate issues of social justice In addition, the research methods used in this course also add to students' ability to understand the diversity of perspectives that researchers use to address social problems. www.luc.edu/education/mission/

Conceptual Framework Standards Assessed in this Course
CF4 – Candidates demonstrate skills that will enable them to work effectively with diverse clients.
CF8- Candidates apply ethical principles in professional decision-making

IDEA Course Objectives
The Following IDEA objectives will be a primary focus of the course:

1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)
2. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
3. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
4. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course

Diversity
In concert with the conceptual framework for the School of Education, faculty and students will be expected to show respect and sensitivity to individual, cultural, social, and economic diversity. In this spirit, as we look at questions of organizational theory, instructional leadership and student achievement, it will be our challenge to create will and capacity within our schools so that all educational stakeholders can fulfill the promise of education.

Dispositions
Professionalism, Fairness, and the Belief that all students can learn, are indicators of growth for different levels in the program. Dispositions will be assessed through Live Text and are not factored into your grade. Refer to the Dispositions rubric in Live Text for information about those assessed in RMTD 400.

IDEA Course Evaluation
Course evaluations are completed at the end of the course. Use the Student IDEA Log in through the following website: http://luc.edu/idea/

Syllabus Addendums
For information on academic honesty, accessibility, the ethics reporting hotline, and electronic communication policies and guidelines please refer to the syllabus addendum website: www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/

Format of the course
The course calendar on page 7 details the topic and associated chapters and readings for that week. Given that this is a 6-week course, most weeks have an in-class component and then an on-line discussion.
- Discussion question for the week will be posted by Wednesday morning.
- You post an initial response to the discussion by midnight Thursday and response to two peers by midnight Friday
- You will be provided feedback on the discussion by Monday evening of that week. Therefore, each Tuesday is a fresh start to the new topic.

I cannot stress enough how important it is to stay with the course timeline. Everything builds in this course leading up to your final paper. Please pay attention to the feedback and class activities. If you misunderstand a concept and do not read the feedback than you will have a snowball effect of not understanding the content, which will impact your assignments and final paper.

There is no times where we meet as a group on-line. You are more than welcome complete the discussion requirements before Friday. Make the weekly on-line format work for your schedule.

All assignment information is fully posted in Sakai. You will see examples of each assignment and directions posted in the "Assignments" tab.

Course Assignments

Assignment	Points each	Total Points
Discussion Responses	15 points each (x5)	75 points
In class participation	15 points each (x5)	75 points
Theorist group presentation	30 points	30 points
Proposal Presentation	30 points	30 points
Needs Assessment Proposal	100 points (X 1)	100 points

Total = 310 points

Percent of Possible Points	Grade
93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-

67-69	D+
60-66	D
<60	F

Livetext

Dispositions will be assessed in Livetext. All School of Education student's should have an account; if you do not or need help finding out if you have one, please email me. The following hyperlink offers additional information about LiveText.
http://www.luc.edu/education/admission/tuition/course-management-fee/

Assignment details:

In-Class Participation: Each week we will have in-class discussions based on the readings, and most weeks there will be corresponding activities. It is important that you read the assigned materials before class.

Discussions: During this course there will be 5 online discussions on Sakai. You need to participate on the discussions, and I will be monitoring your written responses. I will post a "**Threaded Discussion**" questions for the week based on the chapter(s) and topic assigned. **Each student in the class will provide one thoughtful initial response to each threaded discussion and two responses to peers.**

> Your responses to each of these questions should be brief (2-4 paragraphs) but thoughtful, providing evidence that you have read the required reading and thought about the material. It is a good practice to cite the reading to support your argument. Note that the threaded discussion section is not where you ask me questions; it is where you discuss the material with the class. The initial responses are due by *midnight on Thursday.*

> In addition, each student must provide a brief response to two posts by peers. These responses should be 3-5 sentences in length, and provide a thoughtful analysis of the discussion thread. Posting a message saying "I agree with person X" with no additional elaboration or logical thought is not an acceptable message *The responses to peers are due by 11:59pm on Friday.*

> **Please spread out your initial response and response to peers so that all conversations include a thoughtful analysis.** I will be monitoring the discussion threads and clarify content throughout the discussion, as well as provide feedback at the end of the discussion.

Theorist Group Presentation: With a partner you will prepare a 15-minute presentation on a influential theorist in needs assessment. The presentation will be on the 2nd week of class (July 5th), and we will determine which theorist you will cover during the first class. A detailed rubric for the presentation is posted in Sakai.

<u>Proposal Presentation</u>: You will prepare a 15-minute presentation of your research proposal for the class, and be provided an opportunity for feedback in order to enhance the needs assessment proposal. A detailed rubric for the presentation is posted in Sakai.

<u>Needs Assessment Proposal:</u> The largest portion of your points awarded for this course will derive from the needs assessment proposal. This assignment will be discussed at length during the course. It will consist of information of the phases of needs assessment. Each activity, discussion, and assignment will assist in the preparation of this proposal. A detailed description of the types of information necessary will be provided in Sakai and announcements.

Assignment due dates
Due dates for assignments are listed on the course calendar.

Late Work
Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Note that for individual assignments, you will not be able to submit your work after 11:59 pm on the due date. Unlike traditional live taught classes, the option of turning in work late is not feasible because of rigid time constraints. As such, if a situation occurs and the need to turn in work late presents itself, it is imperative that the student contacts the instructor immediately.

Late assignments will automatically be worth only half of their original point value.

Online Course Requirements
From reading this syllabus it should be clear that the online classroom differs from the live-taught. As such, there are certain expectations and guidelines we must follow in order to ensure academic achievement. The following describes an explicit however non-exclusive list of expectations to ensure a successful semester:

       Reliable internet access
       Be able to download and attach files
       Microsoft Office Package
              Microsoft Word
              Microsoft Excel
              Microsoft PowerPoint

Access to Software – All are available for free download if needed this semester.
       Adobe Flash Player
       Java Software QuickTime RealPlayer

In addition to hardware access and software utilization, the following represent factors that facilitate a productive and effective online learning experience. (Material adapted from the University of Wisconsin Online website on Online Etiquette. http://online.uwc.edu/technology/Etiquette.asp)

       • Tone down your language. Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language and the

excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

• Keep a straight face. In general, avoid humor and sarcasm. These frequently depend either on facial or tone of voice cues absent in text communication or on familiarity with the reader.

• Be forgiving. If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the instructor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the instructor.

• The recorder is on. Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. Also, although the grammar and spelling of a message typically are not graded and they do reflect on you; your audience might not be able to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor before posting them.

• Test for clarity. Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, then even better.

• Netspeak. Although electronic communication is still young, many conventions have already been established. DO NOT TYPE IN ALL CAPS. This is regarded as shouting and is out of place in a classroom. Acronyms and emoticons (arrangements of symbols to express emotions) are popular, but excessive use of them can make your message difficult to read.

Course Calendar

DATES	TOPICS	READING	ACTIVITIES
Week 1 6/27	Introduce needs assessment and its use in community and workplace settings; review syllabus	Sleezer, Russ-Eft, & Gupta, Introduction & Chapter 1

Altshuld & Watkins, 2014 | Review syllabus and needs assessment introduction

Online discussion: needs assessment ideas |
| Week 2 7/4 | Needs assessment theorists

Provide overview and experiences with data collection and analysis methods | Sleezer, Russ-Eft, & Gupta, Chapter 2 and 3

Leigh et. Al. 2000

Lunderburg 2010 | Group presentations on needs assessment theorist. Group activity on data collection methods.

Online discussion: Preferred model |
| Week 3 7/11 | Review ethical issues in data collection

Knowledge and skills assessment
Job and task analysis | Sleezer, Russ-Eft, & Gupta, Chapter 10
Ethics websites

Sleezer, Russ-Eft, & Gupta, Chapter 4 and 5 | Case studies on ethical issues and discussion; Overview of approaches

Online discussion: implications of approaches to your topic |
| Week 4 7/18 | Competency and strategic needs assessment | Sleezer, Russ-Eft, & Gupta, Chapter 6 and 7 | Overview of approaches

Online discussion: implications of approaches to your topic |
| Week 5 7/25 | Review of connecting data collection and analysis with solutions | Sleezer, Russ-Eft, & Gupta, Chapter 8 and 9 | In class role play of a needs assessment

Online discussion: Phases, process, outcomes, and timeline table |
| Week 6 8/1 | Summary and Q&A | Sleezer, Russ-Eft, & Gupta, Tool Kit documents | Needs assessment proposal presentation

Online: Turn in needs assessment report with discussion of data collection, data analysis, and suggested solutions. Needs assessment proposal due 8/5 at 12pm |