

**FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
EDH 5068 Outcomes of Undergraduate Education (3 credits)**

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Office hours: Online via e-mail anytime
Or by appt

DESCRIPTION:

Outcomes are the end product of a college education. This course is designed to explore the basics of assessing and evaluating the outcomes of undergraduate education. The course should help students to develop a foundation for understanding the outcomes of higher education both in and out of the classroom. Outcomes related to students, faculty, student services, and state and national policy issues will be discussed and evaluated in the course. (Suggested prerequisites: EDF5400, EDH 5051).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To relate outcomes to institutional goals and objectives
- 2) To explore models of interaction among student characteristics, processes of undergraduate education, and outcomes.
- 3) To examine the evolution of outcomes in higher education, including the development of policy.
- 4) To review theories related to outcomes assessment.
- 5) To learn how to design and use outcomes assessment and to evaluate programs; to experiment with assessment tools; and to explore technical problems in the development of reliable, valid, and comparable assessments within and across different institutions.
- 6) To use and apply outcomes data

Required TEXTS:

Astin, Alexander W. (1996) Assessment for excellence: The philosophy and practice of assessment and evaluation in higher education. Phoenix, AZ: ACE/The Oryx Press.

Upcraft, M. L. and Schuh, J. (1996) Assessment in Student Affairs. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Suskie, Linda (1996) Questionnaire Survey Research: What Works, 2nd Ed.
Tallahassee, FL: Association for Institutional Research.

Web based readings on Blackboard (campus.fsu.edu)

Course Organization: The course is built around specific units as outlined in the course calendar and in this syllabus. The Blackboard (Bb) site will be used as the primary platform by which information will be disseminated and through which assignments should be posted. Students are expected to log on at least once a week at a minimum to keep track of announcements, discussion, quizzes, and reading assignments.

For each week, a topic with assigned reading will be identified. The course syllabus lists those topics in the order in which they will be addressed. Students should be sure to stay current with those readings as both quizzes and on-line discussions will be based on those reading assignments as well as other appropriate activities. Every effort will be made to provide important information and context for each assignment. Students are expected to have read the assigned material and to contribute on a regular basis. If at anytime you are confused about an assignment or are unclear about the readings assigned, please make sure to contact one of the instructors for help.

REQUIREMENTS:

Each student will complete the following tasks. Students with similar interests are strongly encouraged to consider a team-centered approach.

1. Read the assigned readings each week.
2. Successfully complete three (3) Web-based quizzes on Blackboard based on assigned readings.
3. Participate in three (3) threaded discussion sessions
4. Initiate discussions for at least one discussion session
5. You will be required to write a paper outlining a comprehensive outcomes study. In general, the paper will be 15-20 pages long. However, you will write the paper in sections as the course progresses. These sections are outlined below. (A note on collaboration- sometimes students may share an interest in a topic. If you would like to work with someone else in the class, you may do so. You will be expected to have a more detailed and longer paper than if you were doing the paper individually. Please contact Dr. S. if you are interested in collaborating. Keep in mind that by using Bb, you are not limited to students who are on campus.)

A. PAPER ONE- WHY?- (*What will you assess?*) Write an introduction paper (2-3 pages) that identifies a specific outcome of undergraduate education that you plan to

explore during the course. You should use historical, philosophical, and/or policy perspectives to explain why this particular outcome is worthy of your time and needs to be studied. This introductory section of your paper should explain what you know about the outcome and what you don't know but plan to find out. Be sure to suggest some ways that you might assess the outcome you have selected. You must include 2-3 references in the paper.

B. PAPER TWO- NOW WHAT?- (*Assessment Procedures*) Describe the assessment procedures (5-7 pages) you believe to be appropriate and useful in assessing and evaluating the outcome you have chosen. Again, use references from similar studies, relevant theories, and other sources of literature to support your position and strategy.

There are several approaches you can take to write this section paper. You may find it useful to conduct small-scale, informal surveys and/or interviews to identify how different people or units believe they are achieving an outcome. (For example, a faculty member may believe that writing more papers promotes critical thinking, Greek students may believe that chapter grade point averages are not a valid measure of the benefits of membership, a university may believe that parental notification reduces underage drinking.)

Your analysis should discuss the outcome you are examining, look for a connection between "treatment" or "intervention" (what is being done) and "results" (the outcome), and why the results will be both valid and reliable. It may be easier to start with the outcome and work backward or you may want to institute a new program, plan, or activity and design the outcome at the end. You may want to look at some of the previous papers offered on Bb from past classes to get started.

C. PAPER THREE- SO WHAT?- (*Assessment Results*) Describe the total assessment plan (5-7 pages). Now it is time to describe how you will implement your plan to improve the achievement of the outcome you identified. You have talked about the outcome and why it is important and you have described how you might assess and evaluate progress toward achieving the outcome. The next step is to describe the overall strategy to implement your ideas. Who needs to be involved, what individuals and/or groups do you need to present your findings to, what policy makers and decision makers need to be included?

Keep in mind that you will need to present your findings from Paper Two (the procedures) to some of these individuals but you will also need to interpret what it means to them. You will have to be honest but at the same time, help them understand what your assessment and evaluation steps mean. Why will the ideas you suggest be useful and helpful? What do they have to gain and more importantly, why will it be good for students? Be sure to include recommendations based on the use of your outcomes results such as policy decisions, changes in curriculum, new or updated programs, and the like. You may need to alter an existing program or create a new one to include your steps to achieving the outcome you selected.

D. PAPER FOUR- BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER- (*Final Paper*)- Finally, combine the papers you wrote in Papers One-Three above into one, complete paper

that provides an introduction, describes the assessment of the outcome(s), explains the overall strategy, and discusses how your plan will be implemented in a real setting. Make sure it all flows together. If you look at the pages listed under each section, your final paper should be between 12-15+ pages.

6. Class presentation- Prepare and give a brief class presentation via Power Point on the assessment strategy above. More specifics on the presentation will be given prior to the due date.

Paper Evaluation:

The criterion for evaluating this assignment will be: the degree to which you are able to articulate all of the components of the assessment process, from definition of the outcome, to the “measurement” of the outcome, to the interpretation of the data, to the final evaluation of “what does it all mean?”

GRADES:

Course grades will be calculated by weighting the assignments as follows:

Quizzes (on Blackboard) (3@ 10pts)	30%
Paper One	10%
Paper Two	10%
Paper Three	10%
Paper Four	10%
Class presentation (PP)	10%
Initiate discussion on-line	10%
Class discussion participation	<u>10%</u>
	100%

A	94-100	B+	88-89	C	-below 80
A-	90-93	B	84-87		
		B-	80-83		

Grades of “A” will reflect a high level of understanding and writing consistent with the standards of peer-reviewed publications in the field of higher education. *Assignments that are not written, proofread, spell-checked, and edited with appropriate professional care will be returned. We will review drafts up to one week before the due date.*

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS: Reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities may be arranged by contacting the instructor on an individual basis early in the semester. Please consult with the SDRC as needed.

“**The Academic Honor System** of The Florida State University is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community” (The Florida State University Bulletin and the Student Handbook). Plagiarism or any other academic dishonesty will be immediate grounds for dismissal from the class and university action.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Some related books that may be useful in addition to the required texts.

Astin, A.W. (1993). *What matters in college: Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Banta, T. Lund, J.P., Black, K. E. & Oblander, F. W. (1996) *Assessment in practice: Putting principles to work on college campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Banta, T. & Associates (1993). *Making a difference: Outcomes of a decade of assessment in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Blimling, G.S., Whitt, E.J. & Associates (1999). *Good practice in student affairs: Principles to foster student learning*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass

Bowen, H. (1977). *Investment in learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Baxter-Magolda, M. B. (1992). *Knowing and reasoning in college: Gender related patterns in students intellectual development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kuh, G.. Whitt, E. Schuh, J. and Associates (1991). *Involving colleges: Successful approaches to fostering student learning and personal development outside the classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kuh, G.D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J.H., Whitt, E.J. & Associates (2005). *Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Palomba, C.A. & Banta, T.W. (1999). *Assessment essentials: Planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E.T. & Terenzini, P.T. (1991). *How college affects students*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E.T. & Terenzini, P.T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research (Vol.2)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rudolph, F. (1977/1992). *Curriculum: A history of the American undergraduate course of study since 1636*. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.

Websites: (see Bb site under Course Documents for websites)

Course Calendar and Assignments

Measurement and Assessment of Outcomes- An overview

Week 1

Course overview, introductions, discussion of syllabus, expectations, work load. Why Outcomes may be the most valuable course you will take in your program of study

Activities (3):

1. Introduce yourself on-line!!
2. Special Assignment- Find a copy of your undergraduate institutions' mission statement to discuss during the course discussion activity.
3. Visit the www.airweb.org website.

Measurement and Assessment of Outcomes

Week 2

Unit Objective: *To relate outcomes to institutional goals and objectives and the student experience.*

Required readings:

1. Upcraft and Schuh, p. ix- 51
2. See Assignments on Bb
Bowen (1977) selected excerpts from "The Intended Outcomes of Higher Education" from Investment in Learning.
3. Terenzini, P., (1989). Assessment with open eyes: Pitfalls in studying student outcomes. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 60(6), 644-664. – on Blackboard under Course Documents

Activities: Review the Terenzini article, and Upcraft and Schuh readings

Required Discussion On-line (#1) due by Week 3

Topic: What are the intended outcomes of undergraduate education and how have they changed over time? What do we expect and why? How can we know when we have achieved those goals of an undergraduate education?

Using your undergraduate mission statement: To what degree did your institution achieve the goals listed in the mission statement? How do you, as a former student, think they did? What is your assessment?

Outcomes Assessment
Week 3

Unit Objective: To begin to establish a solid understanding of student outcomes and the use of outcomes measures in student affairs.

Required reading:

1. Upcraft and Schuh, p. 52-109

Assigned readings on Bb (see Assignments button)

Outcomes Assessment
Week 4

Required readings:

1. Upcraft and Schuh, p. 113-272
2. See Bb website under Assignments button

Complete and turn in Quiz #1 by start of Week 5

The Student Perspective
Week 5

Unit Objective: To understand the student experience from an outcomes perspective; how do student services and programs make a difference?

Required reading:

1. Upcraft and Schuh, p. 275-344 (yes, the appendix!)
2. See Bb website under Assignments button

Paper One draft due this week – by start of week 6

The Student Perspective
Week 6

Required reading:

1. Astin (1993) Chapter ix- p. 93 (good stuff, but tough reading- skim and read 2X)

Required Discussion On-line (#2)- due by start of week 7

See Discussion Board for topic.

The Institutional Perspective **Week 7**

Unit Objective: To examine outcomes in higher education at the state and national levels, using institutional research to assess outcomes, benchmarking.

Required readings:

1. Astin, p. 94- 177
2. See Bb website under Assignments button

Complete Quiz #2 by start of week 8

The Institutional Perspective **Week 8**

Topic: *How do outcomes and assessment and evaluation make a difference in the practice of higher education?*

Required reading:

1. Astin, p. 178- 254

Activities: Developing your own outcomes program or strategy--- what is your paper going to cover and why? What questions do you have? What data will you collect?

Paper Two draft due this week by start of week 9

Assessing Outcomes and Their Value to the Institution **Week 9**

Unit Objective: *To become familiar with the design and implementation of measures to assess outcomes and to experiment with assessment tools.*

Topic: *Reporting outcomes information effectively. How can higher education practitioners and researchers account for differences in student populations, programs, and curriculum? What is "right"? Does one size fit all?*

Required readings:

1. Suskie (1996) (2nd Ed) Questionnaire Survey Research – p. vi.- 90.
2. Review FSU IR website- www.ir.fsu.edu
3. See Bb website under Assignments button

Assessing Outcomes and Their Value to the Institution **Week 10**

Unit Objective: To explore technical problems in the development of reliable, valid, and comparable assessments within and across different institutions.

Topic: What instruments, assessment tools, and surveys work? What will you use in your process/strategy sections of the paper? Why? How do you report outcomes research?

Required reading:

1. Suskie, p. 91- 184.

Complete Quiz #3 by start of week 11

Assessment, Accreditation, Policy, and Reporting

Week 11

Unit Objectives: To build a framework for the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in specific assessment strategies in given settings. To identify uses for and applications of outcomes information

Required reading:

1. See Assignments on Bb

Assessment, Accreditation, Policy, and Reporting

Week 12

Topic:

Required reading:

1. See Assignments on Bb

Required Discussion On-line (#3) by start of week 13

See Discussion Board for topic.

Paper Three draft due by start of week 13

Your Outcomes Assessment

Week 13

Required reading:

None – Develop your Power Point presentations and continue work on your Final Paper.

Your Outcomes Assessment
Week 14

Power point due

Your Outcomes Assessment
Week 15

Final paper due

- Class presentations
- Wrap up discussions
- Evaluations

SAMPLE