

**ELMP 7103 NA, Spring 2018**  
**Special Topics in Administration—Institutional Research and Planning**  
**Monday, 5-7:10 PM**

**Syllabus (version 1.1)**  
**Last updated January 5, 2018**

**Contact Information**

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Office Hours: Monday 2:30-4:30, Wednesday 2:30-6:30, or by appointment

Course materials: Blackboard

**Course Description**

Institutional research is a growing area within higher education that fulfills a need to report and effectively communicate information about institutional performance to key internal and external stakeholders. Institutional research practitioners must combine knowledge of higher education policy, research methods, data analysis skills, and communication skills and be able to present and create reports for a wide range of audiences. But knowledge of the institutional research process is important for all people involved in higher education, as administrators, faculty, and staff will all consume these reports as well as producing similar analyses for their own departments.

This course will introduce how institutional research offices function and the various purposes that the offices serve. A key goal of this class is to give students the opportunity to work with institutional-level data and learn to report the data in a user-friendly manner. Other major topics in institutional research and planning that will be covered in this course include resource management, academic program evaluation, assessing student learning outcomes, salary studies, accountability, and enrollment management. It is my goal that the material covered in this course will improve your knowledge of the higher education system and advance your work as a practitioner, researcher, or teacher.

**Course Expectations**

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Students are expected to attend and participate in each class during the course of semester. Although there is no explicit credit given to regular attendance, it is unlikely that a student will succeed in the course without attending class. I recognize that many of your schedules are extremely busy and that a class may be occasionally missed, so please let me know in advance if you will be unable to attend.

If the university is closed due to winter weather, we will have class that week via Blackboard Collaborate. We will attempt to have class synchronously (everyone being online at 5:00), but I will also record the lecture in case there are connection or power issues. We may also have a class via Collaborate at some point in the semester if I get called out of town for meetings. If this is the case, I will let you know as soon as possible and what the alternative arrangements will be.

**Office Hours:** I hope that everyone in the class meets with me on a one-on-one basis at least once during the semester to discuss course assignments and your goals for the class and graduate study. Appointments are not necessary during regular office hours, but are encouraged to avoid a potential wait. I am happy to arrange alternative office hours, either in person or via Skype or Google Hangout, if the regular office hours do not work for you.

**Communications:** I will use both Blackboard and e-mail to communicate important course messages. E-mails will be sent to your SHU account so I can guarantee that they are received. I typically respond to student e-mails within 24 hours; if the message is urgent and you have not received a response acknowledging receipt, please send your message again.

**Submitting Assignments:** All assignments must be submitted via Blackboard, and feedback will be returned in the same manner. If Blackboard is not working, please e-mail me to let me know and you can submit via Blackboard once service is restored. I anticipate returning all assignments with feedback and a grade within one week of the due date.

**Academic Integrity:** All students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity. All completed assignments must be original work for this course, must consist of original ideas and writing, and must include appropriate citations of others' ideas. Your written work may be electronically tested for plagiarized content. As a student in this course, you are responsible for knowing and adhering to the spirit of University and ELMP policies regarding academic integrity and student conduct. Please contact me immediately if you have any questions about the academic integrity policy or if you are concerned about some of your writing inadvertently being considered plagiarism. It is far better to ask questions upfront than face a penalty later in the semester.

### **Department of ELMP – Cheating and Dishonesty**

**I. Statement** —The Department of ELMP will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Infractions will be appropriately penalized; students should understand that suspension or expulsion from the University is a possible result.

**II. Definitions** — “Academic Dishonesty” shall be understood to encompass at least the following:

*Cheating* — whether on tests or on other course assignments, whether by the giving, receiving or taking of information.

*Plagiarism* — stealing and/or passing off as one’s own the ideas or words of another; using without crediting the source. It includes: (1) copying of text/research/assignments; (2) using someone else’s papers/research/assignments without permission and citation; (3) representing as one’s own work what is really the work of another person. This includes downloading from WEB sources.

### **III. Penalties:**

1. A student determined to be cheating on any test or who plagiarizes on a course assignment will be appropriately penalized at the **discretion of the instructor**. This may include receiving a zero on the assignment or “F” for the course.
2. Notice that a student has cheated or plagiarized will be sent to the department chair. All cases of plagiarism resulting in an “F” for the course will be reported to the Dean. This can result in a recommendation to the Dean for suspension or expulsion from the university.
3. If the chair of the ELMP department finds that a student has been found to have committed acts of academic dishonesty in more than one ELMP course, the student is expelled from the ELMP program after due notice of the discovery. After one year, the department may rescind the expulsion upon the application of the student provided the student evidences a genuine, informed, and vigorous commitment to academic integrity to the satisfaction of the department’s faculty as a whole.
4. All department or instructor actions resulting from suspected violations of this policy will be taken in accordance with the students’ due process rights. Nothing in this policy statement shall be construed to preclude the department from taking appropriate disciplinary action against forms of academic dishonesty not stipulated here.

**Services:** Disability Support Services offers services to students with disabilities to facilitate their full participation in all campus activities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The office provides documentation review, reasonable accommodations, training groups, resource materials and referrals. For more information, see <http://www.studentaffairs.shu.edu/dss/>

### **Course Evaluation and Assignments**

**Midterm Assignment:** In the midterm assignment, you will produce a report evaluating a college or university of your choice and comparing it to a predefined set of peer institutions. (Please choose an institution other than one you attended or has ever employed you.) This assignment has the following criteria:

- Choosing a focal institution: Go into the IPEDS Data Center (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>) and under the “compare individual institutions”

option, select your college and then choose the “automatic group” for comparison institutions. (We will discuss how to do this in class.)

- Choosing metrics for comparisons: Select several measures of interest from the IPEDS Institutional Characteristics (IC) survey, as well as measures from at least three of the additional ten IPEDS survey categories (found in the Data Center).
- Producing charts and graphs: Produce a clear set of comparisons of current data between your focal college and its peer group.
- Writing a report: Produce a concise summary of your findings and suggest areas in which the institution should be able to improve.

The grading weights and deadlines for the midterm assignment are as follows:

**Data Tables (15%, due March 5 at 5 PM):** You will be expected to submit a file of charts and graphs summarizing your comparisons between your focal college and its peer institutions. Your grade will be based on the completeness of the tables, your ability to succinctly present key findings in visual or tabular form, and the accuracy of the analyses. Make sure to correctly label axes with intuitive names and to include titles and legends.

**Presentations (5%, in class on March 12):** You will be expected to give a 7-9 minute presentation (depending on final enrollment) introducing your institution and its peers and highlighting some of the key findings in your data table. Your grade will be based on the accuracy of the analyses presented, whether the slides are clear and concise, and adhering to the time limit. If you know in advance that you will be absent that day, please contact me immediately to make alternate arrangements.

**Report (30%, due March 19 at 5 PM):** This report (10-page limit, double-spaced in proper APA format) should introduce your institution, explain key findings, and highlight areas in which your institution needs to improve. This should be accompanied by an updated set of tables and graphs, which you should refer to in your report.

**Final Assignment:** In the final assignment, you will examine trends over time in a topic of your choosing using one of the publicly available datasets from the U.S. Department of Education that we will discuss this semester. The components of the assignment include:

- Introducing the topic. What topic do you want to focus on in this assignment? Why is it of importance to colleges, policymakers, and/or the general public? And if you choose to focus on a particular sector of higher education (such as community colleges or minority-serving institutions), justify that decision.
- Prior research on the topic. Briefly summarize the state of the literature on the topic. What are some of the key studies? Do there appear to be gaps in the literature?

- Trends over time. What do the data show for trends in your topic over time? If possible, I expect you to look back at least 10-15 years. If that is not possible, document that data are not publicly available earlier than the beginning of your analysis.
- Suggestions for future research. Based on your summary of the literature and trend analyses, what types of future research should be conducted? Briefly outline what new research on the topic should look like, and note the potential of any data limitations.

You may choose any topic for which data are available. Some examples include college completion rates, college pricing, enrollment trends, diversity, endowment values, and trends in the number of faculty, staff, or administrators. The final paper should be between 15 and 20 double-spaced pages in length (excluding tables and references) in standard APA format.

The grading weights and deadlines for the final paper are as follows:

**Paper Proposal (5%, due March 26 at 5 PM):** You will be expected to submit a one-page summary of your plans for the paper, which includes a summary of your proposed topic and data source(s). Full credit will be awarded for proposals that meet these requirements. Early submissions are encouraged, as are inquiries about the feasibility of potential topics. Students should meet with me before substantially changing their focus from the submitted proposal.

**Paper Presentation (5%, in class on April 30 and May 7):** You will give a presentation of roughly 10-15 minutes (depending on final course enrollment) to the class summarizing your topic and providing preliminary trend analyses. Grades will be awarded based on these requirements.

**Completed Paper (40%, due May 14 at 5 PM):** The final paper must be submitted by this time and should meet all of the criteria discussed above.

**Notes on Papers:** Your papers will be graded in part based on the quality of writing, which includes clarity, proper formatting and citations, and correct spelling and grammar. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with the Writing Center (<http://www.shu.edu/academics/artsci/writing-center/>) as soon as a draft paper is complete in order to receive feedback. All assignments must be submitted via Blackboard; please let me know immediately if you encounter any problems uploading files.

I encourage students to submit a draft of any assignments to me several weeks in advance of the due date, and to meet with me to discuss their progress. In order for me to give feedback to all students, I ask that students only submit one draft for comments (questions on particular parts of a paper are always welcome) and that they allow at least one week for me to provide feedback.

**Presentation Guidelines:** Learning how to give an effective presentation is one of the most important skills that you can learn in graduate school. The effectiveness of a presentation is strongly correlated with the amount of preparation, so take time to practice your presentation and

make sure it is as clear as possible. I strongly recommend using simple slides with large font sizes that can be easily read in the back of the classroom.

There are three course-specific requirements for presentations. First, all slideshows must be submitted via Blackboard by noon that day so it can be loaded on the computer in advance of class. Second, I request that students not use Prezi for presentations and also avoid special graphics for transitions. (My eyes cannot handle the sudden zooms and transitions of Prezi, and they make some other people dizzy.) Finally, course presentation days are designed to be interactive. Grades will be assigned based on both the quality of the presentation and the feedback you provide to other students' presentations.

**Late Assignments:** There will be a 10% penalty assessed per day for late assignments unless an emergency exists. Late assignments will also receive minimal feedback. Class presentations cannot be made up unless prior arrangements have been made.

**Grading Scale:** The grading scale for assignments and the overall class is as follows:

93-100 pts- A  
90-92 pts - A-  
86-89 pts - B+  
82-85 pts - B  
78-81 pts - B-  
73-77 pts - C+  
70-72 pts - C  
Below 70 pts - F

### **Schedule (subject to change)**

#### **January 22: First day of class**

Introduction

Discuss syllabus and deadlines

#### **January 29: Introduction to institutional research and planning**

Gagliardi, J. S., & Wellman, J. (2015). *Meeting demands for improvements in public system institutional research: Assessing and improving the institutional research function in public university systems*. Washington, DC: National Association of System Heads.

Peterson, M. W. (1999). The role of institutional research: From improvement to redesign. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 104, 83-103.

Reichard, D. J. (2012). The history of institutional research. Pp. 3-21 in R. D. Howard, G. W. McLaughlin, & W. E. Knight (Eds.), *The handbook of institutional research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Volkwein, J. F., Liu, Y., & Woodell, J. (2012). The structure and functions of institutional research. Pp. 22-39 in R. D. Howard, G. W. McLaughlin, & W. E. Knight (Eds.), *The handbook of institutional research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

## **February 5: How institutional research offices work**

### **Guest Speaker: Dr. Lucien Costley, Schreiner University**

Delaney, A. M. (2009). Institutional researchers' expanding roles: Policy, planning, program evaluation, assessment, and new research methodologies. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 143, 29-41.

Knight, W. E., & Leimer, C. L. (2010). Will IR staff stick? An exploration of institutional researchers' intention to remain in or leave their jobs. *Research in Higher Education*, 51(2), 109-131.

Skim through the following colleges' fact books (on Blackboard):

Kean University

Raritan Valley Community College

Seton Hall University

## **February 12: Using publicly available federal datasets**

Council of Economic Advisers (2015). *Using federal data to measure and improve the performance of U.S. institutions of higher education*. Washington, DC: Office of the President of the United States. (focus on section III and the technical appendix—skim the rest)

Jaquette, O., & Parra, E. E. (2016). The problem with the Delta Cost Project database. *Research in Higher Education*, 57(5), 630-651.

National Center for Education Statistics (2015). *IPEDS data center user manual*. Washington, DC: Author. (skim)

Watch the “Introduction to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System” and “Introduction to NCES Postsecondary Education Data” presentations at <http://nces.ed.gov/training/datauser/>

## **February 19: Peer institutions and benchmarking**

Carnegie classification flowcharts: <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/downloads/CCIHE2015-FlowCharts-01Feb16.pdf>

Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2016). *2015 update: Facts & figures*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University School of Education.

Carrigan, S. D. (2012). Selecting peer institutions within IPEDS and other nationally available data. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 156, 61-68.

Fuller, A. (2012, September 10). In selecting peers for comparison’s sake, colleges look upward. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. (Also, look at the interactive database at [http://chronicle.com/article/Who-Does-Your-College-Think/134222/.](http://chronicle.com/article/Who-Does-Your-College-Think/134222/))

Trainer, J. F. (2008). The role of institutional research in conducting comparative analysis of peers. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 141, 21-30.

Look at the College Results Online website at <http://www.collegeresults.org/>.

## **February 26: How to report and present data**

### **Guest Speaker: Dr. Jonathan Stoessel, Princeton University**

Miller, J. E. (2013). *Creating effective tables and charts and Organizing data in tables and charts*. [http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/miller/multivariate/multivariate\\_by\\_chapter.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/miller/multivariate/multivariate_by_chapter.html) (The whole website is a great resource about writing up quantitative analyses.)

Tufte, E. (2003). PowerPoint is evil. *Wired*.

Volkwein, J. F. (2010). Reporting research results effectively. *New Directions for Institutional Research* 2010(S1), 155-163.

Look at sample data presentations from the following institutions (on BlackBoard):

Excelsior College

Monroe Community College

**March 5: Spring break (no class)**

**Data tables due at 5 PM**

**March 12: Midterm project presentations**

**March 19: Institutional research offices and strategic planning**

**Midterm project due at 5 PM**

Anguiano, M. (2013). *Cost structure of postsecondary education: Guide to making activity-based costing meaningful and practical*. Working paper.

Clagett, C. A. (2004). Applying ad hoc institutional research findings to college strategic planning. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 123, 33-48.

Delprino, R. P. (2013). The human side of the strategic planning process in higher education. *Planning for Higher Education Journal*, 41(4), 138-154.

Morest, V. S., & Jenkins, D. (2007). *Institutional research and the culture of evidence at community colleges*. New York, NY: Community College Research Center.

**March 26: Assessing student learning outcomes**

**Final paper proposal due at 5 PM**

Gallup, Inc. (2014). *Great jobs, great lives: The 2014 Gallup-Purdue index report*. Washington, DC: Author.

Hosch, B. J. (2010). *Time on test, student motivation, and performance on the Collegiate Learning Assessment: Implications for institutional accountability*. Paper presented at the Association for Institutional Research annual conference, Chicago, IL.

Shavelson, R. J. (2007). *A brief history of student learning assessment: How we got where we are and a proposal for where to go next*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Suskie, L. (2010). What is assessment? In *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide* (p. 3-18 and 36-54). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Terenzini, P. T. (2010). Assessment with open eyes: Pitfalls in studying student outcomes. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, Assessment Supplement, 29-46.

## **April 2: Easter Monday (no class)**

## **April 9: Recruiting, admissions, and enrollment management**

### **Guest speaker: Jeff Levine: New Jersey City University**

Carey, K. (2014, January 6). The allure of and quick fix of the full-pay foreign student. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. <http://chronicle.com/article/The-AllureQuick-Fix-of/143817/>.

Duniway, R. L. (2012). Benchmarking and enrollment management. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 156, 25-36.

Hossler, D., & Kalsbeek, D. (2013). Enrollment management and managing enrollments: Revisiting the context for institutional strategy. *Strategic Management Quarterly*, 1(1).

Jaschik, S., & Lederman, D. (2016). *The 2016 Inside Higher Ed survey of college & university admissions directors*. Washington, DC: Gallup.

Levine, J. P. (2012). Helping students and the bottom line: Creating a module-based academic program to drive SEM goals. *College & University*, 87(4), 29-32.

## **April 16: Faculty workload and productivity/salary equity**

American Association of University Professors (2017). Visualizing change: The annual report on the economic status of the profession, 2016-17. *Academe*, 103(2), 4-26.

Kelly, H. A., Seybert, J. A., Rossol, P. M., & Walters, A. M. (2012). Measuring and evaluating faculty workload. In *The handbook of institutional research* (Howard, R. D. et al., Eds.) (pp. 550-572). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Luna, A. L. (2006). Faculty salary equity cases: Combining statistics with the law. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 77(2), 193-224.

O'Meara, K., Kuvaeva, A., & Nyunt, G. (2017). Constrained choices: A view of campus service inequality from annual faculty reports. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 88(5), 672-700.

Teodorescu, D. (2012). Examining faculty recruitment: Retention, promotion, and recruitment. In *The handbook of institutional research* (Howard, R. D. et al., Eds.) (pp. 165-182). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

### **April 23: Accreditation, accountability and program evaluation**

Alter, M., & Reback, R. (2014). True for your school? How changing reputations alter demand for selective U.S. colleges. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 36(3), 346-370.

Kelderman, E. (2014, April 14). Accreditation in action: Inside a site visit. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. <http://chronicle.com/article/Accreditation-in-Action-/145883/>.

Matsudaira, J. (2016). *Defining and measuring institutional quality in higher education*. Washington, DC: National Academies of Science.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2005). *Assessing student learning and institutional effectiveness: Understanding Middle States expectations*. Philadelphia, PA: Author.

Volkwein, J. F. (2010). A model for assessing institution effectiveness. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, Assessment Supplement, 13-28.

### **April 30 and May 7: Paper presentations**

**May 14, 5 PM: Final paper due**