This is a synopsis of the course syllabus intended to provide an overview of the course. Please note that details of the course may change from semester to semester.

**General Course Description**

Through analysis of case studies, independent fieldwork, guided practice, professional readings, and other methods, students learn to use tools, data and systematic methods to assess organizational needs, identify performance problems and their causes, and help decision makers target the more critical problems to solve and the most feasible solutions. **PREREQ: OPWL536.**

**Course Goals**

At the end of this course, you should be able to do the following (evaluation method for each is listed in parentheses):

1. Describe a problem and its dimensions, and identify discrepancies between current and desired performance (Class Participation, Project Plan, Final project).
2. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of different needs assessment models (Class Participation, Project Plan, Final project).
3. Select and use appropriate data gathering tools and techniques (Class Participation, Project Plan, Final project).
4. Determine possible causes of a problem and potential solutions, recommend both instructional and non-instructional solutions when appropriate (Class Participation, Project Plan, Final project).
5. Communicate effectively in visual and written form (Class Participation s, Project Plan, Final project).
6. Identify and explain important concepts, principles, and models related to needs assessment projects and organizational systems (Class Participation).
7. Discuss and analyze ethical issues as they are related to needs assessment projects and organizational systems (Class Participation).

**Assignments**

**Project Plan Document**

The project plan is a team-based activity. Following guidance provided in readings and class discussions, prepare a project proposal and data gathering & analysis plan. This submission should be no longer than about 4000 words and should description and details including:

1. **Situation**
   Describe the situation (problem or opportunity) that you believe calls for a needs assessment or performance analysis.

2. **Data Gathering**
   Describe
   1. types of data you think are required to define the ‘problem’.  

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2. methods/tools you plan to use to gather relevant data (for example, one or more from: observation, interview, survey, document review, etc.
3. sources from which you plan to gather data.

Final Course Project

The final project is a team-based activity. Final project reports should be no longer than 9000 words (not including references and appendices).

1. Executive Summary
A one-page summary of the entire project (client, suspected problem(s), methods, determined problem, suggested next-steps).

2. Presenting Issues & 3. Data Gathering
Criteria for these sections are identical to that submitted with the project planning document, as you deem appropriate. For the final project, include revised and/or updated details to reflect (a) feedback provided on the project planning document, (b) modifications implemented during the conduct of the NA project itself (what actually happened, who you spoke with, what you observed, what documents were collected & where, etc.) and (c) what you've learned about doing NA along the way.

4. Data Analysis
Following guidance provided in readings and class discussions, describe the methods used to analyze data gathered and present the data you've gathered.

5. Conclusions/Recommendations
Conclusions of the nature of the problem and recommendations for solving it as can be directly deduced from data and data analysis.

6. References & Appendices
APA formatted list of references you used to prepare and write the report. Appendices should include copies of original data and any observation schemes, interview questions/protocols, survey or questionnaires and other materials you used during the performance analysis.

Prerequisites

OPWL 536