INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Course Number: REC 4100
Semester Hours: Three
Prerequisites: Completed a minimum of 30 credits or permission of instructor
Limitations on Enrollment: 25
Requirements:
☒ Required for Recreation Administration majors
☐ Elective
☐ Experimental
☐ Continuing Education
☐ Hybrid (Type I; Type II)
☐ Distance Learning Course Offerings

Catalogue Description:

The principles and process of systematic evaluation and research methods as applied to recreation and leisure services. Designing and developing research studies/evaluation projects, and in the analysis, interpretation, and reporting of evaluation/research data.

N.B. In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disability condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., tape recorder, special adaptive equipment, special note taking or test taking procedures or sign/oral interpreter) is strongly urged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.
I. INTRODUCTION

Conceptual Cornerstones is the name of Kean University’s College of Education’s foundational statement of goals for its preparation of future educators. The statement represents a collaborative synthesis of the thinking of the College’s faculty and was formally adopted in the summer of 2014.

The learning by teacher education candidates in the College of Education is based upon a foundation of four philosophical constructs, the Conceptual Cornerstones:

A. 21st Century Skills
B. Equity and Diversity
C. The Whole Learner
D. Global Competencies

Generally, the Conceptual Cornerstones are enacted when candidates demonstrate knowledge, skill, and dispositions in the following five domains:

I. Academic Content Knowledge and Planning for Learning
II. Clinical Partnerships and Environments for Learning
III. Instructional Practice for Learning
IV. Professional Development and Values for Learning
V. Networks for Learning

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

A. describe research and evaluation concepts, techniques, and procedures within the context of recreation and leisure services. (Domains: I, II, IV, V)

B. differentiate approaches used to in recreation and leisure to evaluate research. (Domains: I, II, IV)

C. identify a specific area of interest to investigate relevant to current issues in the recreation and leisure field. (Domains: I, II, IV, V)

D. constructively apply political, legal, ethical, and moral issues in research and evaluation practice. (Domains: I, II, III, IV)
E. critically dissect the research area of interest, synthesize and evaluate past studies for soundness of research question, study design, sample, conceptualization, measurement outcomes, and statistical data analysis. (Domains: I, III, IV)

F. evaluate and construct a research problem/question and hypothesis within the selected area of interest that will be of merit to recreation and leisure field. (Domains: I, II, IV, V)

G. develop a needs assessment and/or research survey/measurement tool, or interview guide on variables relevant to the research problem/question and hypothesis. (Domains: II, III, IV, V)

H. draw a sample for research/evaluation, establishing reliability and validity. (Domains: I, II, III, IV, V)

I. identify the mean, mode, median, range, standard deviation, and variance and how they are used in data analyses for testing statistical significance. (Domains: I, III, V)

J. demonstrate how to enter, clean, use tables and graphs to demonstrate findings from data analysis using statistical software. (Domains: I, III, V)

K. communicate evaluation/research findings of various sample/population, effectively and efficiently. (Domains: I, II, III, IV, V)

III. COURSE CONTENT

A. Description of research concepts, techniques, and procedures within the context of recreation and leisure services
   1. Systematic inquiry
   2. Competency in systematic evaluations
   3. Examine the differences between evaluation and research
   4. Reasons for evaluation
   5. Knowing how to evaluate
   6. From ideas to reality

B. Approaches to evaluation and research in recreation and leisure
   1. Explorations of models and theories
   2. New concepts in the 21st century
3. Process and systems approach

4. The five P’s of evaluation

5. Timing of evaluation

6. Assessment and planning

7. Formative and summative evaluation

C. Identification of specific area of interest and designs to investigate evaluation and research projects
   1. Developing plans for specific evaluation and research project
   2. From ideas to reality
   3. Competencies and the art of systematic inquiry
   4. Internal versus external evaluations
   5. Developing competencies
   6. From ideas to reality

D. Political, legal, ethical, and moral issues in research and evaluation
   1. Political issues
   2. Legal issues
   3. Ethical issues
   4. Moral issues
   5. Role of institutional review boards (IRB)
   6. Avoiding problems

E. Evaluate and construct research/evaluation questions, study design, sample, conceptualization
   1. Qualitative and quantitative data
   2. World views and data
   3. Data types
   4. Describing differences in data
5. Using qualitative and quantitative data together

6. Choosing designs and methods
   a. Reliability
   b. Validity
   c. Usability

7. Choosing a sample
   a. Sampling errors
   b. Sampling theory

8. Experimental designs
   a. True experimental designs
   b. Quasi-experimental designs
   c. Making experimental design decisions

9. Specific applications to recreation
   a. Importance-performance
   b. Case studies
   c. SOPLAY and SOPARC
   d. Devices to measure physical activity
   e. Economic analysis techniques
   f. Consensus techniques

10. Triangulation or mixed modes
    a. Triangulated sources of data
    b. Triangulation using multiple data collectors
    c. Cautions in using triangulation

F. Develop a needs assessment and/or research surveys specific to appropriate measurement outcomes, and conducting statistical data analysis
1. Measurement instruments

2. Test locating

3. Standardized measurements

4. Making instrument choices

5. The process of instrument development

6. Contents of questionnaires

7. Question structures

8. Formats and instrument design
9. Surveys

10. Self-administered questionnaires

11. Interviews

G. Administering questionnaires and conducting telephone, in-person, and group interviews
   1. Pilot-testing field testing
   2. Implementing questionnaires
   3. Conducting the interviews

H. Draw a sample for research/evaluation
   1. People with disabilities
   2. Children and youth
   3. Older adults
   4. Cultural groups
   5. People with low socioeconomic status
   6. Participatory inquiry

I. Data analyses for testing statistical significance (identifying means, mode, etc.)
   1. Univariate statistical analysis
   2. Inferential statistics

   3. Using computers and data analysis
      a. SPSS and excel
      b. Interpreting statistics
      c. Computer use with qualitative data
      d. Other uses for the computer in data collection and analysis

   4. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation
      a. Organizing
      b. Techniques for data analysis
      c. Making interpretations

J. Develop skills on how to enter, clean, use tables and graphs to demonstrate findings.
   1. Using visuals
      a. Tables
b. Figures  
c. Infographics

K. Communicate evaluation/research findings.  
   1. Developing conclusions and recommendations  
   2. Report writing  
   3. Oral presentations  
   4. Evaluating projects  
   5. Using evaluations and research for decision making

IV. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION
   
   A. Mini-lectures, video clips and website exploration  
   B. Individualized reading and written assignments  
   C. Small and whole-class discussions  
   D. Group research project and presentation  
   E. Individualized activities  
   F. Community research activities

V. METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
   
   A. Written test (SLOs A-I)  
   B. Written performance on sections of research project (i.e., research problem design and hypothesis; literature review, research methodology, data analysis and reporting) (SLOs A-I)  
   C. Community based project (SLOs B, C, D, E, F)  
   D. Group project and small group meetings (SLOs B-I)  
   E. Discussion of research findings in a formal class presentation (SLOs F-I)
VI. SUGGESTED TEXT


Optional texts (suggested reference readings):


*Most recent edition

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Print


**B. Seminal**


C. Non-Print:

ATRA Annual in Therapeutic Recreation.
https://www.atra-online.com/resources/publication

Journal of leisure sciences:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ulsc20

Journal of leisure studies.
http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rlst20/current

Journal of outdoor recreation, education, and leadership.
http://js.sagamorepub.com/jorel

Journal of park and recreation.
http://js.sagamorepub.com/jpra

National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification.
www.nctrc.org

National Parks and Recreation Association.
http://www.nrpa.org/

Therapeutic Recreation Journal.
http://js.sagamorepub.com/trj/index