

EHRD 671: ORGANIZATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING

Instructor Information:

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Course Description and Purpose:

HRD is of a multidisciplinary nature, drawing on many disciplines in the social sciences for its theoretical foundations, research and methods and techniques of practice. In today's global economy, it is HRD's task to maintain an educated, high-performance workforce. Increased competition, regulatory bodies and changing technology make this a difficult task indeed. The need for training, re-training, and lifelong learning by professionals demands that continuing education and staff development accommodate diverse learning environments, including the home, office or off-site. The challenge for an organization is to make learning available to its members when and where the need arises; learning faster than one's competition is being met through distance applications. ***The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage you have!!***

It is the purpose of this course to enable participants: to gain a scholarly understanding of and familiarity with the integration of technology into organizations for the purpose of performance improvement. Performance improvement can be either individual performance or organization performance.

Course Objectives:

By the conclusion of this course participants will:

1. Have knowledge of critical issues facing distance education administrators
2. Have an understanding of adult learning and adult learning theories and their interface with training strategies.
3. Have an understanding of delivery technology in distance learning.
4. Have knowledge of the multimedia designed for use in distance education.
5. Have an understanding of course and program management issues in distance learning today and how they interface with the learner/student.
6. Have an understanding of evaluation and how to evaluate both programs and students.

Prerequisite:

EHRD 673: Introduction to Distance Learning or equivalent.

Required Texts:

Dooley, K.E., Lindner, J.R., & Dooley, L.M. (2005). Advanced methods in Distance education: Applications and practices for educators, administrators, and learners. Hershey, PA: Information Science Publishing.

APA publication manual (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Course Outline:

Following is a tentative overview outline for the course.

FOCUS AREAS	CORE CONTENT TOPICS PER FOCUS AREA	SCHEDULING
LEARNING THEORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviorism• Constructivism• Cognitive Information Processing• Situated Cognition	Week 1-2: 01/17/06 - 01/28/06
DELIVERY TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Print Tools• Audio Tools• Audio and Video Tools• Audio and Video Data Compression and Decompression• Specifications of H.320 and H.323 Standards• Computer Tools• The Internet• LANs, MANs and WANs• The World Wide Web	Week 3-6: 01/29/06 – 02/25/06
MULTIMEDIA DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graphics• Layout of Graphics in the Courses• Access• Audio• Developing Audio Files• Video• Analog vs. Digital Video• Steaming Video• Animations• Simulations	Week 7-10: 02/26/06 – 03/25/06
COURSE AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs Assessment• Use Distance Learning as a Way to Revitalize Existing Programs• Use of Multi-Area Evaluation• Focus on Learning and Not on the Technology• Budget Creation and Management• Marketing the Program• Use Technicians• Ensure all Instructors are Well Trained• Design Programs Specifically for Distance Learning• Use Reliable Equipment• Academic Policies• Fiscal Policies and Budgeting• Faculty Policies• Copyright and Fair Use• Student Support Issues	Week 11-13: 03/26/06 – 04/15/06
EVALUATING DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistency of Program with Institutional Mission• Provisions for Program Oversight and Accountability• Provisions for Instructor Support• Provisions for Learner Support• Implementation of Evaluation and Assessment Measures• Evaluation Models• Data Collection	Week 14-15: 04/16/06 – 04/30/06
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final Exams	Week 16: 05/01/06 – 05/06/06

Please note that the above outline schedule is subject to change.

Assignments:

The assignment #2 for the course are listed below is due by May 5th. This does not mean that you must take until May 5th, You may complete this course whenever you have completed all the assignments.

You may also work in groups of three or four students on assignment #2; it is up to you to make this contact with the other students in the class and all groups must be approved by the instructor.

VERY IMPORTANT:

On all course work, assignments, or examinations at Texas A&M University, the following Honor Pledge shall be pre-printed and signed by the student:

"On my honor, as an Aggie, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work." Failure to add this statement to all work in this class will result in a grade reduction. For additional information, visit <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/>

1. Online Discussions (50 Total Points – 10 points per *Focus Area*)

You are to actively engage in online discussions within the five focus areas. You are responsible for checking the discussion daily and making contributions that indicate you have read the material assigned for the period. It is critical that you participate in this area to have the KSA to contribute to the other written assignment for the semester.

Reflective Overviews for Each Focus Area

You are to submit a brief paper that captures your reflections regarding the assigned readings and discussions for that session. Each of these five papers should be 2-5 double-spaced pages. The purpose of these papers is to ensure that you have grasped the material. To help in your reflection process, the below questions are offered to stimulate your thinking:

How do my own experiences inform these postings and readings (and vice versa)?
How do the concepts from the various discussions fit together? In what ways are they similar or different?
How might I apply the information to my own practice?
What was particularly surprising or frustrating in this focus area? Why?

These questions are meant to help you identify reflection points for your overview paper. You are not required to answer all or any of these questions. What is important to note is that you should *reflect* upon the experience and not merely summarize the readings and postings!

2. Design a the Administration and Management of a Distance Learning Program (25 points)

In this assignment, you will describe a distance learning program completely (either an existing program or one you will simulate). Your next step is to discuss in complete detail the administration and management of this distance learning program. You will need to use all of the bulleted points listed on previous page under the *Course and Program Management* in this discussion.

3. Final Exam (25 Points)

The final exam will be comprehensive but open book and open note. The exam will be given over WebCT with a time allotment of two hours. You will not have time during this time to "look up cold" all your answers, however with proper preparation, you will be fine.

Grading Policy:

The grading scale for this course will be:

A	90 – 100 points
B	80 - 89.9 points
C	70 – 79.9 points
D	60 – 69.9 points
F	0 – 59.9 points

Late Assignments and Incompletes

I prefer that none of you take an incomplete. However, as working adults we all have many demands upon our time and some of you may not be able to complete your course requirements prior to the final scheduled meeting time. If you feel you cannot meet the course requirements, please speak with me as soon as possible.

Texas A&M University policy requires that grades submitted as incomplete (I) be converted to a letter grade no later than the end of the semester following the semester in which the course was taken. If the coursework has not been completed and, therefore, a grade change is not submitted, the "I" automatically converts to an "F". My policy is that I will not consider converting an "F" to another letter grade if the coursework to complete the class was not turned in by the last class day of *my* class in the semester following the semester in which the course was taken.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities in Room 126 of the Koldus Building. The phone number is 979-845-1637.

Individuals who have any disability that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the start of the course. Adaptation of methods, materials, or testing may be made as required to provide for equitable participation.

Scholastic Misconduct

Aggies do not lie, cheat or steal nor do they tolerate those who do.

Texas A&M University encourages Academic Integrity and strictly enforces policies against any form of scholastic dishonesty or misconduct. Scholastic misconduct is broadly defined by this university as "any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work or

that involves misrepresentation of your own work is considered scholastic misconduct.”

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Cheating on assignments or examinations;
- Plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own, or submitting the same paper or *substantially* similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval of all involved instructors
- Interfering with another student’s work
- Depriving another student of necessary course materials

Any student who engages in scholastic misconduct will be subject to University disciplinary action. Please review the Student Rules at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu> for more information regarding these policies; more specific details regarding the Aggie Code of Honor can be found at <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/>.

On any written document you submit, you should a cover sheet that contains the following signed statement:

“On my honor, as an Aggie, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work.”

Advising

My goal is to be as available as possible to meet your needs during the semester. There are three basic ways you can reach me:

- E-mail: This is the best way to contact me. I check e-mail frequently and, unless I am out of town, I will usually respond to your e-mail within 24 hours.
- In Person: Although I will try to make myself available to you if you ‘drop by’, please do not expect a substantive conversation; I may have other commitments. I am available for appointments, however, and will be happy to meet with you in person.
- Phone: If you are just trying to contact me, the phone is perhaps the least reliable mechanism since I often overlook my voice mail! However, I do try to check voice mail several times each week. I am happy to do advising by phone and will make appointments to do so.

Program Listserv

Another avenue for obtaining information about the program and for getting guidance from peer advising is through the program listserv. If you are interested in receiving updates on courses, scholarship opportunities, calls for papers or presentations, or if you are interested in having a forum to access your fellow students for any reason (e.g., setting up study groups, finding resources), subscribe to the listserv.

You can subscribe by sending an email to listserv@listserv.tamu.edu and in the BODY put: SUBSCRIBE am-ehrdprogram firstname lastname.

If you decide to unsubscribe, simply send a message to listserv@listserv.tamu.edu and in the BODY put: UNSUB am-ehrdprogram

Guidelines for Written Assignments

Written assignments should follow the below guidelines as a minimum, unless alternative arrangements are made with the instructor:

- Use APA formatting for your papers. Either 4th or 5th edition is acceptable.
- Please double-space, use 12-point Times New Roman font, and left justify your papers

For additional assistance, consult the Writing Center website at <http://uwc.tamu.edu/>.

Some basics you should consider in all written assignments:

- Have a clear and concise thesis statement very near the beginning of your paper. Thesis statements in the social sciences are somewhat different than what you might have experienced in the humanities. While in the humanities the general preference is to make the thesis statement blend seamlessly with the introduction, the general preference in the social sciences is to make the thesis statement stand out very clearly in articulating the purpose of the paper. In many cases, thesis statements begin with phrases such as, "The purpose of this paper is" or "In this paper, I will."
- If a sentence requires more than four lines, it is probably too long. Break it up into two or more sentences.
- If a paragraph takes up more than one computer screen or more than half of a double-spaced page, it is probably too long. Break it down into two or more paragraphs. I suggest that you try to have a minimum of three sentences per paragraph.
- Proofread before you turn in any materials. If you find a typing error, at least make the correction with a pen or pencil. If errors become distracting, your grade will suffer.
- Follow basic grammar guidelines. For example, be sure that your sentences have subject-verb and tense agreement and that you are using punctuation appropriately. Do not trust blindly the spell and grammar checkers on your word processor; they are often incorrect!
- Make effective use of structuring techniques for your paper. Academic papers should be written in a professional, formal manner. (Note: This does not mean that you cannot use "I" in your papers. See the APA manual for guidelines on when and how to use "I" in your writing.) Every paper should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Help the reader understand the structure of your paper by including appropriate headings (e.g., Literature Review, Conclusion).
 - The introduction informs the reader where you are going by introducing the main points. It is the "roadmap" for the rest of the paper and should include the thesis statement.
 - The body of the paper often contains separate sections for each of the main points. In these sections, each of the points is explained in detail and, in particularly long papers, separate headings are even used for each point.

- The conclusion or summary of the paper should summarize how the points you developed in the body of the paper support the main points you described in the introduction. Just as its name suggests, the summary 'sums up' your paper by tying it all together.

Library Resources

Quick Reference Sheets

The below reference sheets will help you critically assess the sources you have found:

Critically analyzing information sources:

<http://library.tamu.edu/bi/handouts/Critically%20Analyzing%20Information%20Sources.pdf>

Checklist for analyzing information sources:

<http://library.tamu.edu/bi/handouts/Critical%20Analysis%20Checklist.pdf>

Evaluating Web sources:

<http://library.tamu.edu/bi/handouts/Evaluating%20Web%20Sources.pdf>

In general, I am skeptical about WWW sources. When they are reported as references for class assignments, it is difficult for me to easily assess the quality of the resource. While WWW sources are often quite appropriate for the topic at hand, I typically prefer scholarly journal articles as a primary source. That said, how do you find 'scholarly' journal articles?

The below reference sheets will help you identify scholarly journals and how to find articles within them:

Scholarly vs. Popular?

<http://library.tamu.edu/bi/handouts/Scholarly%20Journal%20or%20Popular%20Magazine.pdf>

This reference sheet gives some basic guidelines about the differences between scholarly and trade/professional/popular journals. I would add a few more distinctions to help you identify the different types of publications.

1. Non-sequential ordering of page numbers on the citation usually indicates a popular article. For example, if the index for the article lists the page numbers as "31+", it is probably a popular journal. If the pages are listed as "31-45" it is more likely to be a scholarly journal.
2. Very short (i.e., 1-2 pages) articles usually are either popular journal articles or non-refereed articles in scholarly journals. Abstract publications (such as Psychological Bulletin) are an exception to this guideline.
3. Some examples of popular journals in fields associated with HRD include: Training & Development, Phi Delta Kappan, HRMagazine, and OD Practitioner.

Finding articles in journals:

<http://library.tamu.edu/bi/handouts/Finding%20Articles%20in%20Journals.pdf>

This reference sheet will help you understand what you'll get when you use one of the hundreds of databases (or 'indexes') maintained by the TAMU Library system. You pay for this resource; use it! Some indexes I use frequently include: ABI-Inform, Web of Science Social Science Citation Index, ERIC, EBSCO, and Academic Search Premier.

For a listing of journals relevant to things 'management' or 'organizational', refer to:

http://library.tamu.edu/wcl/buguides/management_journals.htm

For a listing of journals relevant to things 'adult learning' or, to a certain extent, 'education' in general, refer to:

<http://people.tamu.edu/~leemcq/adultteaching.html>

For a listing of journals relevant to the 'psychological' realm of HRD (as well as some 'sociological' areas), refer to:

<http://library.tamu.edu/bi/handouts/Psych%20and%20EdPsych%20Resources%20Guide.pdf>

Please remember that sometimes database search engines give you the opportunity to select whether or not you want 'peer reviewed' or 'refereed' or 'scholarly' publications. Just because you select that you do want this type of article does *not* mean that all the articles that emerge in your search will be from scholarly sources. I cannot stress this enough!!! You must follow the critical analysis guidelines to determine if you have a scholarly source or not.

THE FOLLOWING IS USED BY PERMISSION BY DR. CALLAHAN

General Guidelines for Searching Databases

By

Polly Silva
Virginia Tech

&

Jamie Callahan
Texas A&M University

Searching for resources to support your research and writing is almost an art. It can be very difficult to begin a search when you don't have a foundation of literature on which to build. The purpose of this brief handout is to help you develop strategies for finding a variety of works to use in your own writing as you as you study HRD.

If you are unfamiliar to a topic, we suggest the following approaches.

- A. Look for *general information*
- B. Search for information on some *component* of the topic
- C. Look at the different *worldviews*, to find different approaches to the topic
- D. Decide what *disciplinary approach* (or *multidisciplinary approach*) you want to take (psychology, business, linguistics, sociological) etc.

E. Relate the topic to a particular *field*.

A. General Information

1. Read the relevant materials provided in your class and use the bibliographies offered.
2. Databases --
 - a. ABI-Inform: For topics associated with the field of management, such as HRD, you may want to start by using ABI (Business and social sciences) and search for the terms "human resource development" and whatever topic interests you at the time (e.g., leadership, globalization, technology); then select "combine" to see which articles have both terms. Keep in mind, however, that many articles that are very relevant to the field of HRD do not actually use the term 'HRD'. Be open and creative in selecting the terms for your search.
 - b. ERIC: Because we are concerned with human resource *development*, doing a similar search from ERIC (educational database) is also appropriate.
 - c. Texas A&M University has hundreds of electronic databases that can be accessed by students from any location. Many of these databases include full-text articles! For other possible database sources, see the handout on library resources or contact the reference librarian.
3. ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (<http://ericacve.org/>) has many good summary pieces on topics. There are Trends and Issues Alerts and ERIC digests (and other reports) that give you overviews on major topics, including lists of the major theories and many references.
4. Annual Reviews -- this is another database that provides overview articles on topics. While not all of our areas of interest will be covered, it is an excellent resource to check out to get overviews (or at the end of your research to make sure you covered key topics/authors).

B. Search for information on some *component* of the topic

Sometimes, it is most useful to explore one or two aspects of complex or multi-faceted topics. You can use many of the tools listed above, but focus the research more narrowly.

A few examples include -

- global leadership development
- cross-cultural or multi-cultural understandings
- diversity and HRD
- developing work groups from those with differing values and beliefs
- jobs of the future
- immigrant workforce
- ex-patriots/repatriotization
- skills needed for a global marketplace
- virtual workplace
- HRD and varying political/legal requirements

C. Look at the different *worldviews*, to find different approaches to the topic

There are many different views of any topic that we might study within the field of HRD. One way to approach this is to look at literature from various countries and from various resource

methods. Begin to ask questions about the assumptions held by the authors. What questions are the authors trying to address? What paradigm informs their work (i.e., functionalism, structuralism, interpretivism, etc.)?

Another good resource is to consider alternative research methods. Researchers taking a critical theory perspective provide one avenue. Another approach would be social constructionism or symbolic interactionism. How do researchers approach their topic methodologically?

(Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Handbook of qualitative research, 2nd Ed.. Thousand Oaks: Sage. is a good resource for alternative methodologies.)

You can also keep some issues central to your own mind as you read articles. Consider what the underlying norms of the authors. Also, consider what changes may need to be made in the field, based on what the authors are discussing. What changes will we want to incorporate into our HRD programs?

D. Decide what *disciplinary approach* (or *multidisciplinary approach*) you want to take (psychology, business, linguistics, sociological) etc.

Your preference will help guide which databases you use (librarians can help). Also, it may provide you some alternative approaches. For example, if you are looking at cross-cultural issues in the workplace, you may want to approach it through the study of linguistics, discourse analysis, or conversation. This can address both problems and solutions that we are likely to encounter in organizations on a day-to-day basis.

E. Relate the topic to a particular *field*.

This can be particularly useful if you have a specialty interest. For example, if you work in the school system and are interested in HRD as it relates to school administrators, use the research databases or resources that you are familiar with and focus on a component topic. This can lead to interesting discussions for your writing and for our class discussions as we can begin to look at themes and issues across disciplines. Sometimes, we may find the research is fairly similar. Other times, we may find that there are theories in one field (e.g., school administration) that would help inform another (e.g., business).