

## **PADM 5353: Public Administration Capstone Seminar**

### **(Fall 2021)**

#### **Course Description:**

Course provides a capstone experience for students to address an important policy and administrative issue. Students draw on coursework and experiences of their education to develop specific recommendations for design, implementation, and evaluation of this project task. We will also cover significant topics in research methods and statistics that relate to probability, inferential statistics, analysis of nominal and ordinal data, and regression analysis.

#### **Learning Objectives**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Integrate graduate-level knowledge in the context of an applied field project.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking skills.
3. Apply the appropriate tools and techniques to select a focused, manageable research topic.
4. Apply research methods to move from a research problem to identifying and gathering necessary, sufficient, and appropriate data (“quantitative literacy”).
5. Apply appropriate analytical capacities for policy and organizational analysis.
6. Demonstrate advanced written and oral communication skills (“information literacy”) including report writing competencies, for a variety of audiences.
7. Solve problems using probability theory.
8. Create hypotheses and measure differences between groups using inferential statistics.
9. Analyze nominal- and ordinal-level data.
10. Solve problems using regression analysis.

#### **Required Textbooks:**

Meier, K.J., J.L. Brudney, and J. Bohte (2015). *Applied Statistics for Public and Nonprofit Management*. 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Stamford CT: Cengage [ISBN-13: 978-1-285-73723-2]

Polonsky, M. J., and D. S. Waller (2019). *Designing and Managing a Research Project*. 4th edition. Los Angeles: Sage. [ISBN: 978-1-5443-1646-8]

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington, DC: APA. [ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5]

## **Brief Semester Overview**

### **Week 1: Project Management (and Probability, Part I)**

Week 1 (August 23-28):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapters 1-2, Introduction and Choosing a Topic

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 7, The Normal Probability Distribution

Students will need to think about the nature of their paper. Will the paper primarily be a policy-oriented paper, or a process/organizational change or reform paper? Will the paper primarily focus on planning, implementation, or evaluation of a program or a policy? Will students be working with an actual government on a problem – in which case they will need to have a department head, key leader, or their own supervisor as a contact – or will the paper be more theoretical and academic in nature?

**Students will turn in a “scope of work memo” describing the topic and strategies for researching this topic.** This is a plan, at this point.

Students will begin the search for literature related to their topic. Students should access hard copies or electronic journals or magazines and begin to accumulate sources or references for their paper.

**Also, there will be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 7, this week.**

### **Weeks 2-4: Project Definition (and Probability, Part II)**

Week 2 (August 29-Sept. 4):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 3, The Role of the Supervisor

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 8, The Binomial Probability Distribution

There will be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 8, this week

Week 3 (Sept. 5-11):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 4, Group Work, Group Dynamics, and the Role of Conflict

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 9, Some Special Probability Distributions.

Although you will not be working on a group project in this course, the material in this chapter may be helpful to you as you work on groups projects that require teamwork in the workplace.

Students will have collected and will begin to read 10 articles from journals or magazines for the paper. Students will share those 10 sources in a list of references and provide to the instructor.

There will also be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 9, this week

Week 4 (Sept. 12-18):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 5, Ethical Considerations

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 10, Introduction to Inference

There will be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 10, this week

### **Weeks 5-8: Contextualizing Activities (and Inferential Statistics)**

Week 5 (Sept. 19-25):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapters 6 and 7, Planning the Research Project and Literature Review

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 11, Hypothesis Testing

Students should turn in two-page reports, or “reading reviews,” on five of their sources (one-and-one-half to two double-spaced pages for each source).

There will also be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 11, this week.

Week 6 (Sept. 26-Oct. 2): Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 8, Data Gathering  
Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 12, Estimating Population Proportions

Students should turn in two-page reports, or “reading reviews” on five additional sources.

There will also be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 12, this week.

Week 7 (Oct. 3-9): Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 9, Qualitative Data Collection and Issues in Analysis

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 13, Testing the Difference between Two Groups

Students should begin the merging of their individual articles into a tight literature review.

There will be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 13, this week.

Week 8 (Oct. 10-16):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 10, Quantitative Data Analysis

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 14, Construction and Analysis of Contingency Tables

There will be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 14, this week.

### **Weeks 9-10: Communicating the Results (and Analysis of Nominal and Ordinal Data)**

Week 9 (Oct. 17-23):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 11, Presenting the Results

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 15, Aids for the Interpretation of Contingency Tables

Students should complete the literature review for the paper.

There will also be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 15, this week.

Week 10 (Oct. 24-30):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 12, Identifying the Implications and Establishing Recommendations

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 16, Statistical Control Table Analysis

There will be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 16, this week.

### **Weeks 11-15: Finalizing the Paper and Writing the Report (and Regression Analysis)**

Week 11 (Oct. 31-Nov. 6):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 13, Writing the Report

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 17, Introduction to Regression Analysis

Students should provide an initial articulation of their data collection and data analysis strategies for the paper, if they have not already done so.

There will be a homework problem from Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 17, this week.

Week 12 (Nov. 7-13):

Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 14, Oral Presentations

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 18, The Assumptions of Linear Regression

Students will not be asked to make an oral presentation of their papers in the class. However, there is good information in this chapter that may help you if you must make any oral presentations at work.

If they have not already done so, students should begin to collect the data they will use to support their policy or organizational recommendations

Week 13 (Nov. 14-20): Polonsky and Waller, Chapter 15, Concluding Remarks

Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 20, Multiple Regression

Students should begin writing the first draft of their papers, if they have not done so by now. Outlines of papers should be well developed by this time.

**Thanksgiving Holiday, Nov. 21-27 – No assignments**

Week 14 (Nov. 28-Dec. 4):

No new reading or homework assignments

Students should continue writing the paper. By now, the paper should be virtually complete and it is a matter of “putting the flesh on the bones.”

Week 15: Finals Week (Dec. 5-11)

Final papers are due (Thursday, Dec. 9, 9:00 PM)

## Assignments

Assignments are due:

Assignment 1	Scope of work memo	Due August 28, 9:00 PM	5 points
Assignment 2	Homework problem	Due August 28, 9:00 PM	10 points
Assignment 3	Homework problem	Due September 4, 9:00 PM	10 points
Assignment 4	Homework problem	Due September 11, 9:00 PM	10 points
Assignment 5	Homework problem	Due September 18, 9:00 PM	10 points
Assignment 6	Reading Review #1	Due September 25, 9:00 PM	12.5 points
Assignment 7	Homework problem	Due September 25, 9:00 PM	10 points
Assignment 8	Reading Review #2	Due October 2, 9:00 PM	12.5 points
Assignment 9	Homework problem	Due October 2, 9:00 PM	10 points
Assignment 10	Homework problem	Due October 9, 9:00 PM	10 points
Assignment 11	Homework problem	Due October 16, 9:00 PM	10 points

Assignment 12	Literature Review	Due October 23, 9:00 PM	50 points
Assignment 13	Homework problem	Due October 23, 9:00 PM	5 points
Assignment 14	Homework problem	Due October 30, 9:00 PM	5 points
Assignment 15	Homework problem	Due November 6, 9:00 PM	5 points
Assignment 16	Final Report	Due December 9, 9:00 PM	75 points
<b>Total =</b>			<b>250 points</b>

### Grading Scale:

A = 90-100% -- 225-250 points

B = 80-89% -- 200-224 points

C = 70-79% -- 175-199 points

D = 60-69% -- 150-174 points

F = < 60% -- 0-149 points

### Assignment Details

#### 1. Scope of Work Memo

Students prepare a scope of work memo that details the project activities, due in week 1.

#### 2. Working Paper (WP) or Reading Review Summaries

This assignment allows students to document and summarize material from at least 10 sources (articles, interviews, reports, books, etc.). In weeks 5 and 6, students will submit working papers on at least five sources each week. These summaries, as well as a copy of the article (or other source) will be submitted to the instructor.

#### 3. Literature Review

Due in Week 9, this assignment is intended to reinforce in-depth understanding of the readings. It is not a summary of the readings. Authors should explore theoretical and practical concepts in the readings to identify their strengths, limitations, and benefits. Authors should identify how the approach/model/theory/framework may apply to practical situations. The assignment is intended to continue the development of critical and analytical thinking and writing. The literature review should present a thesis (an argument or viewpoint) about a particular practice, theory, or set of theories. The thesis statement must be included in the first paragraph and must take one of these forms:

1. This paper will demonstrate that the “market theory of efficiency” is not a clear measurement of efficiency when compared to the “polis” view of efficiency.

2. This paper examines Meg Greenfield’s experiences reporting Washington politics in light of Deborah Stone’s discussion of the “distortion of facts in the polis.” The discussion will demonstrate that . . .

3. This paper will examine the effect of the absence of clarity about goal priorities. This paper will show that when goal priorities of the organization are not clear and understood by all executives and senior managers, the organization will not be successful.

4. This paper will show that no matter how much officials talk about the importance of performance measurement, nonprofit and public managers will not be able successfully to adopt and implement the practice.

The paper should demonstrate that the student can related the content to other concepts presented in the class. It is important to demonstrate the ability to write clear, simple, organized prose that is easily understood by any reader.

Although you may include more sources in the final paper, the literature review assignment will ask the student to provide a thorough review of relevant literature and a “complete” bibliography, to create a coherent background in support of project objectives. The review concludes with research questions and hypotheses/propositions.

#### 4. Final Report

This report integrates and extends prior documents to provide a comprehensive report. You may submit a first draft to the instructor and to a government contact, if you have one. The final paper should include:

- Executive summary
- Scope of work memo
- Literature review
- Research design
- Next steps

The Final Report will be graded on these Criteria:

1. The project itself will consist of a substantial project that offers an intellectual contribution to the field and/or a practical contribution to the organization or jurisdiction under which the project is undertaken.

2. The project will be well-researched, with a relatively large number of high-quality published resources being cited in the paper.

3. Students must demonstrate a capstone level of proficiency in critical thinking. According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (the AACU), “critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas,



artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.” On the Value Rubric for Critical Thinking created by the AACU, grading will be focused on the student’s ability to “select and use information to investigate a point of view or conclusion” (the use of evidence). A “capstone” level of proficiency would be demonstrated by showing that “information is taken from sources with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.”

4. Students must demonstrate a capstone level of proficiency in information literacy. According to the AACU, information literacy is “the ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand.” On the Value Rubric for Information Literacy created by the AACU, grading will be focused on the student’s ability to “use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.” A “capstone” level of proficiency would be demonstrated by showing the ability to “communicate, organize, and synthesize information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth.”

5. Students must demonstrate a capstone level of proficiency in critical thinking. According to the AACU, quantitative literacy is “a habit of mind, competency, and comfort in working with numerical data. Individuals with strong Quantitative Literacy skills possess the ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations. They understand and can create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence and they can clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate.” On the Value Rubric for Quantitative Literacy created by the AACU, grading will be focused on the student’s “ability to make and evaluate important assumptions in estimation, modelling, and data analysis.” A “capstone” level of proficiency would be demonstrated when the student “explicitly describes assumptions and provides compelling rationale for why each assumption is appropriate. The student shows awareness that confidence in final conclusions is limited by the accuracy of the assumptions.”

### **Final Note on Written Assignments**

All written assignments will have the following minimum requirements, which are in keeping with standards of the American Psychological Association (APA), which will serve as the style manual for the paper: Paper should be double-spaced; use of 12 pt. font; numbering of all pages; complete citation of sources by author and date, including page number for direct references or quotations; use of a reference section; and careful, well-edited writing.

## University Mandated Statements

### **Students' Rights and Responsibilities**

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

### **Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies**

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness/grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

1. Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail, or Credit/No Credit.
2. Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date).
3. Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a W grade).
4. Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment.
5. Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

### **State-Mandated Course Drop Policy**

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of

the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

### **Disability Services**

In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodation must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services counselor. If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office in UC 3150, or call 903-566-7079.

### **Student Absence Due to Religious Observance**

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

### **Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities**

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

### **Social Security and FERPA Statement**

It is the policy of the University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The university has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

### **Emergency Exits and Evacuation**

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not reenter the building unless given permission by University Police, the Fire Department, or Fire Prevention Services.

### **The Writing Center**

Located in BUS 202, the UT-Tyler Writing Center provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your

learning – you will be expected to write and/or discuss your work during the tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix your paper for you. Appointments: 565-5995. More information: [www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter](http://www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter).

## **Additional Syllabus Information**

### **Important Covid-19 Information for Classrooms and Laboratories**

Students are required to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth, and follow social distancing guidelines, at all times in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories), as specified by [Procedures for Fall 2020 Return to Normal Operations](#). The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its [Honor Code](#) and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher than normal temperature will be excused from class and should stay at home and may join the class remotely. Students who have difficulty adhering to the Covid-19 safety policies for health reasons are also encouraged to join the class remotely. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email [saroffice@uttyler.edu](mailto:saroffice@uttyler.edu).

### **Recording of Class Sessions**

Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.

## **Online Education Task Force**

### **Online Learning Student Privacy & Related Issues FAQ**

This document is intended to provide general guidance regarding frequently asked questions related to online learning environments. This guidance does not supersede institutional policies. Questions regarding specific scenarios or technology should be directed to your institution's office of legal affairs and/or IT office or other appropriate institution offices, including the Provost or your department.

All privacy laws, particularly FERPA, carry potential penalties for non-compliance, including loss of federal funding or other sanctions. The Department of Education has generally indicated a flexible approach where necessary to address the increase in the use of online courses in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic. While it is unlikely that inadvertent FERPA errors will result in loss of federal funding or other sanctions, all UT System institutions and their employees are required to comply with federal and state laws and institution policies. Compliance with laws and policies is distinguishable from best practices, which provide suggested methods of compliance and implementation. It is important to confer with your institution's Provost, department heads or legal offices for any further issues or questions related to the use of online learning platforms.

**1. Can a student refuse to participate in online class or provide their name or email address during an online class?**

No, it is legal and reasonable to require a student to provide a name or email address for participation in an online class without resulting in a violation of law or policy. While students continue to maintain FERPA rights and protections while enrolled in online classes, students do not have the right to be "anonymous" whether classes are in person or online, or for online courses, live (synchronous) or recorded (asynchronous).

Even if a student has opted out of allowing release of their FERPA "directory information," this opt-out cannot be relied on to refuse providing a name, institutional email address, or other identifier in a course in which the student is enrolled. However, in instances involving specific concerns regarding personal safety, you are encouraged to confer with your institution's Title IX and/or Legal Affairs offices for guidance regarding possible solutions to address student concerns. Additionally, students with accommodations may have specific technological requests. In those instances, contact your institution's office for student disability services and accommodations and/or legal affairs to ensure access to online learning tools and to avoid creating barriers for students requiring accommodations.

**2. Can I reuse a course recording from a prior course (including a live synchronous course) or save a course recording to use in a future course? Can I give access to class recordings to non-students or students not enrolled in the class? Can non-students or students not enrolled in a class observe a live online course?**

Provided you follow FERPA and institution policies it is not unlawful to reuse a course recording in a future course, give access to course recording to individuals not enrolled in the course, or to allow individual not enrolled in the course to observe a live online class. To use course recordings in future courses, you must determine whether course recordings contain student personally identifiable information. Course recordings that do not contain student personally identifiable information may be re-used in a future course offering without obtaining consent or editing the recording. To the extent recordings contain student personally identifying information, you must obtain consent or ensure recordings are de-identified prior to use. Additional requirements for the ongoing use of a previously recorded course or the outside use of a recorded course may be required by your institution. Please work with your Provost or legal affairs department.

Non-students or students not enrolled in a course can be given access to class recordings only if the recording does not contain student personally identifiable information or all students whose personally identifiable information or other education records are captured in a recording have provided appropriate consent. To the extent you would like to allow a non-student or student not enrolled in a class to observe a synchronous online course, please follow your institution guidelines regarding course observation, which may necessitate student consent if student personally identifiable information, including student interaction, may be observed during the class.

For courses in which student participation is not integral to the learning experience, instructors could plan courses such that only instructor lecture portions of the course are recorded. To the extent a recording is only from the perspective of the host (course instructor), provided student names or other identifiers are not visible in the chat or other functions, the recording is unlikely to contain information protected by FERPA. Depending on the course platform and technological capabilities, course recordings may also be edited to omit or de-identify students participating during the synchronous course. Please note recordings of student voices are considered personally identifiable information under FERPA, so image blurring and voice alteration may be required to de-identify a recording without completely removing student participation portions of the recording. Students could also be given notice that the recording may be used in future courses or otherwise posted publicly to allow them to edit their screennames after attendance is taken but prior to the start of recording so that they are not identifiable in the video recording and/or to load an unidentifiable image/background so they are not identifiable in the video recording. Many of the options may be dependent on the technology being used. To the extent you wish to ensure use outside the current course, you may consider recording the reusable portion of course material outside of the class session to eliminate the risk of students being identified and avoid the necessity for consent and/or editing.

Institutions may have specific FERPA consent forms for course recordings, which might be built into an online platform. FERPA requires specific consent language, so a non-FERPA specific release in software (such as one TEAMS may utilize) is unlikely to satisfy the legal requirements for release. If your institution or department does not have a specific FERPA recording consent form or built-in platform for collecting the consent forms, your department or institution legal affairs office can assist in providing you with a consent form that students can download and submit electronically

### **3. What requirements should be considered for recording and posting recordings of online classes?**

If the recording of a class does not disclose student personally identifiable information, FERPA does not prohibit recording the live course for use by other students regardless of if they are enrolled in the course. If the recording does contain personally identifiable information from student education records, such as identifiable students asking or answering questions or giving presentations, FERPA does not prohibit making the recording available to other students enrolled in the same course, but best practice would be to provide notice to the students, such as a statement on the course syllabus. Your legal affairs office may have preferred boilerplate language. Otherwise, a simple statement such as the one below may serve to put students on notice of possible

recordings of the class. It is important to note that a statement such as the one below is a notice to students and should not be considered consent from the students.

*Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this class. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the class and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the class in any form without express permission.*

Generally, if the course recording simply includes the captured image of students as part of the background and does not make any particular student the focus of the recording, such a recording would not be considered directly related to a particular student and would therefore not be the student's education record. However, because FERPA is highly contextual and varies case by case, the best practice is to either exclude students identifying information from course recordings or obtain consent from all students enrolled in the course. Obtaining consent may seem daunting for larger courses; therefore, consider providing an affirmative consent statement at the time of providing the course syllabus or at the time of enrollment for the course.

Controlling the transmission and distribution of video recorded classes may also provide compliance with FERPA and prevent unauthorized access to courses. It is recommended that faculty and staff communicate with the institution's IT or information security department for additional resources and trainings on the functionality of online course technology. Some online course platforms allow posting of course recordings for streaming access only without the capability of downloading, which can help provide technological control of the online course. Such tools and functionality may include the ability to add closed captioning or allow students to produce human-based captioning of course lecture recordings. Your institution's office for student disability services and accommodations can assist with these tools and situations.

#### **4. Some students have expressed concern about the invasiveness of live proctoring. What should I tell them?**

Live proctoring is not unlawful. Institutions may have various technological options for live proctoring of tests and exams, including Proctorio (no live observation), Respondus Monitor, or ProctorU. Some students have expressed specific concerns regarding religious beliefs about photographs and recordings or may require additional testing accommodations for disabilities; such questions should be directed to your institution's office for student disability services and accommodations. Your institution or department most likely has required or suggested language to include on your syllabus depending on the live proctoring services utilized. To the extent your institution or department does not have suggested language, a general notice may look something like:

**NOTICE:** Your enrollment in this course requires the use of [program name] for online assessment proctoring. [description of the tool – electronic test proctoring via webcam and other tools without live review by a person, live video and other

monitoring, and/or lockdown browser]. **YOUR ACTIVITIES ARE RECORDED WHILE YOU ARE LOGGED INTO OR TAKING YOUR ASSESSMENT(S). THE RECORDINGS SERVE AS A PROCTOR AND WILL BE REVIEWED AND USED IN AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** You can find more detailed information on [program name] at [institution or department website regarding the tools].

**5. Some students don't have webcams, and for that reason, institutions have developed alternative methods for live proctoring, including using students' cell phone camera to record/stream their test taking. Is this allowed? Are there any best practices for handling these one-off approaches?**

It is not unlawful to allow alternatives to your institution's usual methods of live proctoring, including use of a student's cell phone camera. Where students do not have a webcam or have poor internet connectivity, use of a cell phone camera to record and/or stream test taking is a viable work-around. Consult with your department and available institution resources to ensure compliance with institution policies and to address specific student requests for alternatives to live proctoring. Encourage students to log onto the online testing platform at least 30 minutes prior to an exam to ensure there are no technology issues. Teaching Assistants or department administrative staff can assist instructors with checking access to online tests at least 24 hours in advance to allow time to address any issues with instructor or institution technology. Instruct students to contact you in advance of tests if they anticipate needing an alternative to live proctoring. Additionally, because technology issues are often unplanned, communicate any alternatives with students before-hand and consider being available or having a Teaching Assistant or other employee available for contact during the scheduled test window. Having a plan for acceptable alternatives or an alternative time for students who encounter technological issues and communicating these resources to students can help provide clarity on how to address problems. Your department and institution may have existing guidance and procedures for these situations.

**6. Can I require a student to show his or her webcam during a live online course?**

It is not unlawful to require a student to show his or her webcam during a live online course. Generally, we do not suggest requiring students to use their webcam during synchronous online courses. A better approach is to give students the option to use their webcam or to upload an avatar where the lecturer and/or other students can view participants. However, some specific departments or courses may require use of a webcam during live online courses. If a course requires the use of a webcam, prior to the start of the course and within the syllabus you should provide notice of the requirement and links to resources such as institution IT departments and student emergency fund webpages to enable students without such tools to prepare for the course requirements.

**7. If I do not require students to show their webcam, how will I take attendance for class participation?**

Some institutions have recommended for courses in which flexibility is possible, instructors reconsider "attendance" as including asynchronous learning involving the viewing of course



recordings and materials outside of regularly scheduled course times as necessary. Answering quizzes or submitting comments regarding recorded lectures and posted materials could be used to constitute “attendance.”

For courses requiring “attendance” during synchronous classes, instructors can utilize a platform’s chat function to require students to “check in” and/or answer questions during the class. Additionally, some online learning platforms create log-on rosters and other data instructors can utilize to confirm attendance. For evaluation of participation in class, similar tools to those used during in-person classes can be adapted to the online format, including quizzes, discussion groups, student presentations, and questions and answers. Your institution likely provides resources to assist with the transition to online teaching. Your department or the Office of the Provost may assist you identifying resources.

**8. What if a student discloses sensitive or protected information during a synchronous course that is being recorded and posted for later viewing? Do I need to edit this information out before posting it?**

Students sometimes share sensitive or otherwise confidential information during class discussions. Where the recording will be available only to other students enrolled in the course, this information does not need to be edited before posting. Housing recorded lectures within a protected Learning Management System (“LMS”) environment will assist in protecting the sensitive information. To the extent you feel this information does not add to the course or you prefer to remove the disclosure as a courtesy or at the request of the student, editing the portion out of the lecture or de-identifying the student’s image and voice can help protect the student’s privacy.

**9. Can I post a video of a class to my own or another non-institution website?**

Some institutions may allow this with approval and compliance with Intellectual Property guidelines and other policies. However, please note that as with sharing recordings containing student personally identifiable information with anyone not enrolled in the current course at issue, any student whose personally identifiable information or other education records are contained in the recording must either provide appropriate consent or the recording must be edited to omit or de-identify the student, as discussed above.

## **OTHER FERPA ISSUES & BEST PRACTICES**

Privacy issues that apply to in-person classes also apply to online learning, including:

- Ensuring grades are not posted publicly or for all students to access if identified by name, ID number, or other linkable information.
- Use of student personally identifiable information on personal devices, at home in hard copy, or on University equipment at home must comply with policies and procedures to protect personally identifiable information.

- Sharing of student personally identifiable information or other Education Records must be for official University purposes or other exceptions to disclosure, unless a student provides valid consent in accordance with FERPA.
- FERPA does not have specific security or technical requirements for use of apps or software, but institutions and UT System have policies regarding best security practices and requirements. Check with institution information security offices and/or department IT contacts to ensure the product you want to use is approved or meets policy requirements.
- If sharing your screen or recording a course lecture, consider logging out of your email and/or disabling email alerts to ensure no confidential or personal information is visible to students.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Institution IT and FERPA resources

<b>UT Arlington</b>	<a href="https://oit.uta.edu/support/">https://oit.uta.edu/support/</a>	<a href="https://www.uta.edu/legalaffairs/">https://www.uta.edu/legalaffairs/</a>
<b>UT Austin</b>	<a href="https://it.utexas.edu/">https://it.utexas.edu/</a>	<a href="https://legal.utexas.edu/">https://legal.utexas.edu/</a>
<b>UT Dallas</b>	<a href="https://www.utdallas.edu/oit/">https://www.utdallas.edu/oit/</a>	<a href="https://www.utdallas.edu/legal/">https://www.utdallas.edu/legal/</a>
<b>UT El Paso</b>	<a href="https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/">https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/</a>	<a href="https://www.utep.edu/chief-ostaff/legal-affairs/">https://www.utep.edu/chief-ostaff/legal-affairs/</a>
<b>UT Permian Basin</b>	<a href="https://www.utpb.edu/university-offices/information-technology/index">https://www.utpb.edu/university-offices/information-technology/index</a>	<a href="https://www.utpb.edu/university-offices/compliance-and-accommodations/index">https://www.utpb.edu/university-offices/compliance-and-accommodations/index</a>
<b>UT Rio Grande Valley</b>	<a href="https://www.utrgv.edu/it/">https://www.utrgv.edu/it/</a>	<a href="https://www.utrgv.edu/legalaffairs/index.htm">https://www.utrgv.edu/legalaffairs/index.htm</a>
<b>UT San Antonio</b>	<a href="https://www.utsa.edu/oit/">https://www.utsa.edu/oit/</a>	<a href="https://www.utsa.edu/legalaffairs/">https://www.utsa.edu/legalaffairs/</a>
<b>UT Tyler</b>	<a href="https://www.uttyler.edu/it/">https://www.uttyler.edu/it/</a>	<a href="https://www.uttyler.edu/legal-affairs/">https://www.uttyler.edu/legal-affairs/</a>

UT System Office of General Counsel – Cynthia Tynan available via [ctynan@utsystem.edu](mailto:ctynan@utsystem.edu)

Department of Education Student Privacy Policy Office and Privacy Technical Assistance Center resources for Online Learning and COVID-19 Privacy issues available at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/>.

Separate IP FAQs address questions regarding ownership and use of course materials.