

University of North Texas
College of Education
Department of Educational Psychology
HDFS 4253 Administration of Programs for Children, Youth, and Families
SPRING 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Emily McKnight, PhD
Email: Emily.Mcknight@unt.edu
Office Hours (Virtual): Wednesdays, 10 am – 3 pm; Thursdays, 6 – 8 pm
Appointment scheduler: <https://calendly.com/dremilymcknight/1-on-1-with-dr-mcknight>
Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays | 2:00 – 3:20 pm
Class Location: Matthew Hall 306

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Kettner, P. M., Moroney, R., & Martin, L. L. (2022). *Designing and managing programs: An effectiveness-based approach*. Sixth Ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Analysis of programs, personnel policies, facility administration, and related topics for teachers and administrators who work with children, youth, and families.

PREREQUISITE(S):

HDFS 3123 or 3113.

COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to help students understand the complexities of leading, administrating, and implementing effective programs aimed at improving the lives of children, youth, and families. This course will use an effectiveness-based approach to program planning in order to highlight the necessity of a researched understanding of social problems, populations in need, and human services. Through the course, you will learn about conducting a needs assessment, designing, implementing, and measuring effective programs. We will also explore the management and leadership of human service programs, particularly those centered on children, youth, and families. You will identify your leadership style and gain an understanding of self-management, team management, and organizational management. This senior-level course will require personal reflection, critical thinking, analysis, and evaluation. These critical thinking skills are necessary for anyone to be successful not only in this course but as administrators and leaders in the field of human services.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing this course, you should have the knowledge, skill, and ability to:

1. Identify effective and ineffective programs aimed at serving children, youth, and families.
2. Use (or apply) theory and an effectiveness-based approach to plan, implement, and evaluate programs designed for children, youth, and families.
3. Identify and appraise contemporary issues in human service program planning, administration and leadership.
4. Develop your leadership and management style.
5. Recognize the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to be an effective leader of an effective program and meet community needs through service provision.
6. Develop a sense of social responsibility in programs for children, youth, and families
7. Demonstrate the ability to incorporate theory and research into the program planning process and the administration of programs.

COURSE ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Reflections (50 x 4 = 200 points):

For this course, reflection and critical thinking are essential elements. You get to express your ideas and views about specific topics through reflection. Reflections for this course will center on topics that require you to think about situations one might encounter when serving children, youth, and families. You will be asked to apply concepts you are reading and your own experiences. **Reflections are due on Sundays at 11:59 pm.**

Program Directory Assignment (50 points):

For this assignment, you will contribute to the creation of a class-wide directory of local, regional, state, and national programs for children, youth, and families. Detailed assignment instructions and a rubric are available on Canvas.

Evaluate, Analyze, Reflect (EAR) Exercises (25 x 4 = 100 points):

EAR Exercises are intended to deepen and reinforce your knowledge by asking you to apply course concepts to the evaluation or analysis of an existing program. EAR Exercises should be written in APA format and should include references to the course textbook. Detailed assignment instructions and rubrics are available on Canvas.

Program Design (300 points):

In this major course project, you will work in groups to develop a program aimed at supporting children, youth, and families. Groups will be assigned by the instructor during the second week of class. This assignment will be completed in stages, with each stage aligning with the topics we explore in class, ultimately resulting in a comprehensive program design that demonstrates your understanding of program development, implementation, and administration.

This project will require you to think critically about programs, both from a "big picture" perspective and in terms of how individual components work together. By the end of the semester, your group will submit a finalized project as a comprehensive paper, incorporating all required elements of the Program Design Project.

This project has multiple parts:

Part One – 100 points

- Program Description/Definition
- Population Assessment
- Problem Analysis
- Needs Assessment

Part Two – 100 points

- Program Hypothesis
- Goals and Objectives
- Program Design
- Documentation and Data Collection Plan

Part Three – 100 points

- Performance Measurement Plan
- Logic Model
- Program Evaluation Plan
- Organizational Chart w/ Job Descriptions
- Program Budget

Final Submission will include all three parts combined into one document.

Program Presentation (50 points):

Your group will also present your program design to your classmates. The final submission must be uploaded to Canvas. A peer evaluation of your group members will be required and counted as a reflection (more as follows).

Reflection Assignments (4 X 50):

Self-reflection is a necessary skill for lifelong development. Throughout the semester, we will have an assortment of activities designed to provide opportunities to develop personally and professionally. The assignments will require you to reflect on your knowledge, skills, abilities, beliefs, biases, and emotions that may enhance or limit personal and professional growth. The reflective writing assignments are designed to challenge your cultural beliefs, group memberships, and social positions within society (ascribed and earned) that may shape your perceptions, attitudes, cognitive processes, and actions when it comes to children, youth, and families. More details will be provided in class and with each individual assignment.

HOW DO I FIGURE MY GRADE?

Grading Scale: This is a point-based grading system. Grades will be decided based on points accumulated from the above assignments. Your final grade will be converted to percentages and will follow the traditional grading scale below. (This is all tracked in the grade book on Canvas)

This is an approximation. The number of assignments and points may vary slightly and are subject to change. If changes are made, you will be informed, and it will be reflected on Canvas. The grading scale will not change (A-F)

Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range
A	90-100 %	D	60-69%
B	80-89%	F	0-59%
C	70-79%		

Only percentages equal to or greater than 0.5% will be rounded up (e.g., 79.5% will be rounded up; 79.4% will not).

Here is how your grade will be calculated:

Assessment	Total Points
Reflections (4 @ 50 points each)	200
Assignment: Program Directory	50
EAR Exercises (4 @ 25 Points each)	100
Group Project: Program Design (Parts 1-3; 100 points each)	300
Group Project: Program Presentation (High Level)	50
Assessments (Midterm & Final)	200
<i>Total Points Possible</i>	900 points

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COURSE CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS

Students are required to keep up with all course assignments and requirements. All assignments **MUST** be submitted in class or through the designated submission links within the corresponding modules on the Canvas course. **Assignments are due by 11:59 pm on Sundays** (unless otherwise indicated). I recommend that you work ahead of schedule.

Week	Class Session	Materials	Topics/Agenda	Assignment Due	Due Date	Points
MODULE 1: ASSESSING CURRENT PRACTICES						
1	1/13/26	Syllabus	Introduction to the Course Review of Syllabus	1) Discussion (Canvas): Introductions	1/14/26	0
				2) Student Information Form	1/14/26	0
				3) Syllabus Quiz	1/14/26	0
	1/15/26	Chapter 1	Contemporary Issues in Human Services	Reflection #1: Story of Life Quilt	1/18/26	50
MODULE 2: PROBLEM ANALYSIS/NEEDS ASSESSMENT						
2	1/20/26	Chapter 2	Contribution of Theory to Program Planning			
	1/22/26		Group Placement			
			Group Work: Topic Selection	Reflection #2: Theory and Program Planning	1/25/26	50
3	1/27/26	Chapter 3	Understanding Social Problems			
	1/29/26		Group Work: Preliminary Data	Assignment: Program Directory	2/1/26	50
4	2/3/26	Chapter 4	Needs Assessment			
		Chapter 5	Approaches to Measurement			
	2/5/26		Group Work	EAR Exercise 1: Human Trafficking	2/8/26	25
MODULE 3: PLANNING, DESIGNING, AND TRACKING THE INTERVENTION						

5	2/10/26	Chapter 6	Selecting the Appropriate Intervention Strategy			
	2/12/26		Group Work			
6	2/17/26	Chapter 7	Organizational Mission and Program Goals, Objectives, and Activities			
	2/19/26		Group Work	Group Project: Part One DUE	2/22/26	100
7	2/24/26	Chapter 8	Designing Effective Programs			
	2/26/26		Group Work	EAR Exercise 2: Literacy Snapshot	3/1/26	25
8	3/3/26	Chapter 9	Designing Effectiveness-Based Information Systems			
	3/5/26		Group Work			
9 SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS [3/9 - 3/13]						
MODULE 4: CALCULATING THE VALUE AND COST OF THE INTERVENTION						
10	3/17/26		MIDTERM EXAM			100
	3/19/26	Chapter 10	Performance Measurement, Monitoring, and Program Evaluation			
			Group Work	EAR Exercise 3: Calculating Success Rates	3/22/26	25
11	3/24/26	Chapter 11	Impact Program Evaluation and Hypothesis Testing			
	3/26/26		Group Work	Group Project: Part Two DUE	3/29/26	100
12	3/31/26	Chapter 12	Budgeting for Financial Control, Management, and Planning			
	4/2/26		Group Work			
13	4/7/26	Chapter 13	Developing Line-Item, Functional, and Program Budgeting Systems			

	4/9/26		Group Work	EAR Exercise 4: Program Budgeting	4/12/26	25
14	4/14/26		Group Work			
	4/16/26		Group Work	Reflection 3: Self Reflection	4/19/26	50
15	4/18/26		Group Work	Group Project: Parts 1-3 (Combined) DUE	4/22/26	100
	4/23/26		Presentations: Group 1			
16	4/25/26		Presentations: Group 2	Group Presentation		50
	4/30/26		Presentations: Group 3	Reflection 4: Peer Evaluations		50
17	5/4/26	MONDAY	FINAL EXAM: 3:00 - 5:00 PM	ONLINE CANVAS		100
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS						900

COURSE POLICIES AND UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

Syllabus and Schedule Changes: Should the need arise; due dates may be delayed, benefiting the student by the instructor. This syllabus is a tentative plan, and I reserve the right to change it at any time, with proper communication of all changes.

Grades: Grades are figured according to the policies laid out in the syllabus. This course is based on a point system and will be converted to a percentage grade.

Late work: This is a senior-level class. **I will not accept late work.** You need to ensure you are keeping up with your work and turning it in on time. **If you do not turn your assignments in on time, you will receive a zero for that assignment.** If you need an excused absence, then you need to contact me for authorization to submit your assignment. If you do your work in advance, this should not be an issue. **Please do not ask me otherwise.**

Submission of Assignments: All assignments will be submitted on Canvas or in class. Canvas assignments should be submitted prior to the due date to avoid any technical issues that may arise. Employment, time management, and computer problems are examples of excuses that are not valid. Follow instructions on LEARN and/or call the student helpline if a technical problem arises. A windstorm and lack of electric power is an example of a verifiable excuse for lack of computer access. However, there are free access computer labs available on campus and in libraries in communities.

All written assignments should be professional in appearance. Your work is expected to be at the level of a professional in the field and well edited. Written work should be spelling, grammar, and typographical error free. Points will be deducted for any assignment not meeting these expectations. Be sure to follow the formatting guidelines provided for each assignment in this course.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY:

- Check for announcements often
- Contact your instructor (by email) for questions about the course that cannot be answered by reading the syllabus or LEARN (i.e., requirements, assignments, exams, or grades).
- During the week you will receive a response to questions within 48 hours. On the weekends, expect to wait until the work week for a response.
- Course questions may be posted in the General Discussion Board as students often have the same questions. Please do not include "technical" questions.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

It is my expectation that you come to class regularly. This has a direct correlation on how well you perform in the course. I expect students to come to class prepared and capable of adding to the intellectual discourse during class. Should you have any questions; I will do my best to support you.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalties. According to the UNT catalog, the term "**cheating**" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

The term "**plagiarism**" includes but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

The course is designed in learning modules. Each module contains all the necessary information about the course objectives, including readings, assignments, and videos. When all else fails,

What Should Students Do First?

When you log in to Canvas, you will see a menu bar on the left-hand side of the course. There is a variety of information located here. Please begin by reading the course introduction and syllabus in its entirety. **Due dates are firm but will be adjusted if needed.**

SCHOLARLY EXPECTATIONS

All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical to duplicate a single work for multiple classes.

RESOURCES

Links to Academic Support Services, such as Office of Disability Accommodation, Counseling and Testing Services, UNT Libraries, Online Tutoring, UNT Writing Lab, and Math Tutor Lab, can be located within Canvas on the “Academic Support” tab.

UNT Portal:	http://my.unt.edu
UNT Canvas Student Resources/Technical Support	http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/
UNT Library Information for Off-Campus Users	http://www.library.unt.edu/services/facilities-and-systems/campus-access
Course Library Page	http://guides.library.unt.edu/dfst3423
UNT Computing and Information Technology Center	http://citc.unt.edu/services-solutions/students
UNT Academic Resources for Students	http://www.unt.edu/academics.htm
Computer Labs	College of Education General Access Lab Matthews Hall Room 309 https://www.coe.unt.edu/student-computer-lab General access computer lab information (including locations and hours of operation) can be located at: http://www.gacl.unt.edu/

Readings Assignments

Reading assignments and online materials are provided for your convenience to help you understand the material at a deeper level. Read all material thoroughly.

Tools Used in the Course

- Announcements: Weekly announcements will be posted to allow students the opportunity to see what will be done in the week to come.
- Email / Messages: Main mode of communication between the student and the instructor.
- Discussions: Individual and whole group methods of communication about the course content.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

There are two primary methods of communication for this course. If you have a personal concern or question, please use email to contact me at Emily.mcknight@unt.edu. Students should expect to have all assignments graded within two weeks of the due date. Please avoid the use of texting language when sending emails. Writing should be at a college level.

Assignment Policy

The due dates for all assignments may be found on the course calendar and in each module. This calendar is subject to change to benefit you and the student. Assignments should be saved as .DOC or .RTF files for access. If you cannot save it as a .doc or .rtf, you may save it as a .pdf. Please do not submit assignments via email.

HOW DO I SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE?

The following information provides you with expectations about course etiquette. Etiquette is the expectation of appropriate behavior and interaction during this course.

1. The first thing we all need to remember is that we are all humans. Please treat everyone with the same dignity and respect you would want. Your comments should not be personal attacks in nature, but constructive comments to support learning. Asking questions is an important part of this process.
2. Respect the learning process. Many of the assignments you will have in the course require you to collaborate with others. If you are not participating, you are preventing others from participating fully.
3. Be clear and concise in your assignments/posts. Make sure you are answering the question and responding with a thoughtful response.
4. Language should be used at the collegiate level. In posts, avoid the use of texting language. Keep this professional.
5. Make sure your comments/posts add something to the conversation. We do not want to just say what someone else has said. We want to hear your original thoughts.
6. Ask yourself, "How can you add value to the discussion?"
7. No flaming. In a debate, be open-minded and respect the person's opinion. Back up your own opinion with proof to support your case. Do not resort to name-calling, inflammatory remarks, or tantrums.
8. Respect the diversity of the course membership. We are all from different backgrounds. Be careful not to make judgments about others or their situation.

If we follow these rules, we can build a community of learners who feel safe and confident expressing their thoughts.

Incomplete

An incomplete will only be granted in extenuating circumstances. “I did not have time” is **not** an extenuating circumstance. **You must be passing in order to be considered and there must be a verifiable medical situation or other excuse that is documented.** The student must initiate the request and must complete the required University paperwork. Just because the instructor allows the incomplete does not mean it will be approved. It has to be approved by the department head and dean.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences.

According to [UNT Policy 06.003](#), Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

In this course, all written work must be your own (or your group’s) original work. AI tools (such as ChatGPT or Grammarly) may be used only for grammar, proofreading, or basic formatting—not for generating ideas, paragraphs, or full responses.

If I suspect improper AI use, I may use plagiarism or AI-detection tools and request verification. Students will receive one warning; continued or confirmed misuse may result in the assignment not being accepted and being treated as an academic integrity violation.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in inappropriate behavior will be directed to leave the classroom, and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu>.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at <http://www.my.unt.edu>. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your e-mail: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>.

ADA STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to the faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>). You may also contact ODA at (940) 565-4323.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty, staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at <http://www.my.unt.edu>. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans to cover course materials.

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records, such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course, are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Coursework completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will only be divulged to other individuals with the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link: <http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html>.

SUCCEED AT UNT

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grow. And as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here's how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find Support. Get advised. Be

prepared. Get involved. Stay focused. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, go to <http://success.unt.edu/>.

Student Support Services (SSS)

All activities and services provided by Student Support Services (SSS) are intended to help students progress through their degree to an on-time graduation. Please refer to the website <https://trio.unt.edu/ss> for a detailed list of services.

ADD/DROP POLICY

To drop a class, log in at www.myunt.edu and follow the directions:

If you miss more than two weeks of class without documented excuses, you will be dropped from the class during the instructor's drop dates. You must be passing the class to receive a grade of W. If you fail the class due to low grades or not turning in work, you will receive a grade of WF.

POLICY ON SERVER UNAVAILABILITY OTHER TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty that prevents students from completing a time-sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.