



PRST 6998 Professional Project

3 or 4 credit hours

Students applying for EXL Scholar Status will take the course for 4 credit hours

Instructor Information

In addition to providing instructor information in the syllabus, a separate page containing instructor contact information, virtual office hours and other communication information is located inside the course.

Instructor: Pamela Morris
Office Location: KOM 103D
Office Phone: 615 898-5920 or 615 482-5687 (cell)
Email Address: Pamela.Morris@mtsu.edu
Office Hours: M W 12-5, T 12-3, R 12-2

Course Information

Description

The Master of Professional Studies (MPS) program requires every student to complete a professional project as the culminating experience in earning the degree. All students taking the class will complete a professional project, which for some will be a research paper and for others will be an internship opportunity. EXL Scholars who take this course for 4 hours credit will also be required to complete an ePortfolio. Please carefully read each section of this syllabus and follow its guidelines.

Objectives and Outcomes

The professional project is the capstone course for the Master of Professional Studies Degree, serving as the integrative culmination of your program of study. The professional project should be a substantial piece of independent research, a significant professional project, or an internship that is logically consistent with the content of your program of study. The project proposal should demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of a body of professional literature related to a specific topic. The project or internship should grow out of your program of study and should demonstrate your ability to incorporate the knowledge from the MPS courses you have

taken. As your culminating experience, the professional project should demonstrate your use of the knowledge gained in the program.

Prerequisites and Co-requisites

PRST 6998 should be completed in the last semester of the MPS program. The professional project proposal should be sent to Pamela.Morris@mtsu.edu before departmental permission will be granted for registration purposes.

Specific Course Requirements

The Professional Project Proposal

Your Proposal should have already been submitted and accepted by the MPS Program Director.

Submit Your Proposal to the Human Subjects Research Review

All students who propose to engage in any research activity involving the use of human subjects must have prior approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is responsible for safeguarding rights and welfare of all persons participating in research projects. If you plan to do research with human subjects, please check with your Project Class Instructor at the very beginning of the semester to start, what is for most projects, the IRB exempt review process.

Conduct Research and Complete the Project

Professional projects that require the completion of a research paper

Once the semester begins, you will have two weeks to complete your project proposal with at least 20 scholarly references published within the last ten years. The proposal contains the introduction, literature review, and methodology sections of the project. Training and Development students who are developing a training module will have a literature review which is a needs assessment for the project. Three weeks into the semester you will submit a detailed outline of your project paper with a list of bibliographical resources you are using. Approximately, two months into the semester you will submit a first draft of your paper, including the proposal, results and conclusions. Your professional project class instructor will give you feedback. You must incorporate the Instructor's recommendations and make all necessary revisions before the final draft is complete. Your instructor will notify you when the paper is ready to be bound for submission.

Professional projects that are based on an internship

The planning of the internship opportunity is solely the student's responsibility and must be approved by the project class instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. A detailed description of the internship opportunity, including the location, department, contact information of the supervisor, relationship to the program curriculum, and planned weekly schedule, should be submitted to the course instructor for approval. Weekly reflections by the intern will be turned in to the dropbox detailing the activities that were required and how those activities relate to the course material studied throughout the program. The final project from the intern will be a detailed reflection of the internship as defined in the content section of the course.

Project requirements for all students

The formatting of your project papers must follow the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) (6th ed). A good web-based resource on utilizing APA, as well as using appropriate punctuation and grammar, is available at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

Your paper will include an abstract of one page or less. The abstract should be informative and contain the following sections:

- Background: A brief statement of objectives
- Methods: A concise statement of methods
- Results: A clear presentation of results

Because of the range of approaches possible for Professional Projects in the Master of Professional Studies, defining minimal standards for project papers is difficult. However, if you are following a traditional approach to a Professional Project, a report of original research, policy study, or training module, the paper documenting your research including the literature review should be at least 7,500 words, not including references.

Those students whose Professional Project is based on an internship should complete a series of reflection exercise. The reflections consist of weekly explanations of internship experiences and an overall reflection of the entire semester internship focusing on how the internship experience related to the coursework in the MPS program and how the experience will advance them in their future career.

Formal Presentation/Defense of Your Professional Project

In the presentation of the project, the student will be asked to: (1) present a summary of the project in a PowerPoint presentation, (2) explain the way the project was organized and carried out, and (3) explain the relationship between the Professional Project and the content of the MPS program. The presentation should be submitted to the dropbox with Audio/Visual formatting. The student's presentation can be uploaded to the dropbox as a mp4 file or as a link to a YouTube video created by the student.




Final Corrected, Bound Copy of Your Professional Project

After the final draft of your project has been approved and any final corrections noted by your Professional Project Instructor have been made, the student should submit two bound copies of your project. Your project must (1) be spiral bound and (2) include a cover page, abstract, table of contents and reference list. Acceptable binding is a spiral binding with a plastic cover sheet and either blue or black backing, available at most photocopy centers. Please contact your instructor if you have questions.

Requirements

All students should have access to Microsoft Word or be able to submit files to the dropbox in Word document format.

Common applications you might need:

- To read a PDF file download the latest version of [Adobe Reader](#) 
- Don't have Microsoft Word? Explore an alternative [OpenOffice](#) 
- Accessing a PowerPoint file? Download [PowerPoint Viewer](#) 

Course Materials


Required Textbooks

There are no textbooks required for the course.

Supplementary Materials

Optional course materials: *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) (6th ed)

Web Resources:

- [Purdue OWL Online Writing Lab](#)  (for APA style)
- [MTSU Writing Center](#)

Assessment and Grading

Grading Procedure

The Project Instructor will evaluate your work on the Project. Your Project Instructor will assign a grade reflecting the quality of the Professional Project. The project will be assessed for quality of

writing as well as the adequacy in addressing the proposed purpose of the project. Grades of A-F, or Incomplete will be given.

Assigned Grade	
Point Range	Assigned Grade
90 - 100 Points	A
80 - 89 Points	B
70 - 79 Points	C
60 - 69 Points	D
50 - 59 Points	F

Graded Items for Professional Projects based on Student Conducted Research or Training Module	
Description	Weight of Grade
Proposal	5%
Outline	5%
First Draft	10%
Final Draft	20%
Presentation/Defense	30%
Final Corrected, Bound Paper, (and ePortfolio if student is taking the course for 4 hours credit)	30%
Total	100%

Graded Items for Professional Projects based on approved Student Internship	
Description	Weight of Grade
Internship Proposal	10%
Weekly Internship Reflections	30%
Presentation/Defense	30%
Final Corrected, Bound Paper, (and ePortfolio if student is taking the course for 4 hours credit)	30%
Total	100%

Feedback

- Responses to emails will be received within 24 to 48 hours unless prior notification is given.
- Grades and assignment feedback will be provided within two weeks after the assignment deadline.
- Assignments must be submitted to the Dropbox and will not be accepted via email.
- All assignment deadlines are located in the Dropbox and on the course calendar.

Academic Integrity/Misconduct

Please review the [information on Academic Integrity and Misconduct](#). The instructor will be submitting materials to an online service (Turnitin.com) which will review the work for plagiarism. Students should also review the report generated for each assignment and self-check for plagiarism. Information and resources on how to cite work correctly are provided within the course.

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited.

Students guilty of academic misconduct are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions (including expulsion from the university), which may be imposed through the regular institutional procedures as a result of academic misconduct, the instructor has the authority to assign an “F” or zero for an activity or to assign an “F” for the course. Students guilty of plagiarism will be immediately reported to the Director of Student Academic Ethics.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades are given rarely and only in extenuating circumstances. The MTSU Undergraduate Catalog states: “The grade I indicates that the student has not completed all course requirements because of illness or other uncontrollable circumstances, especially those which may occur toward the close of the term. Mere failure to make up work or turn in required work on time does not provide a basis for the grade of I unless the extenuating circumstances noted above are present for reasons acceptable to the instructor.” Please refer to the Undergraduate catalog for the complete [Incomplete Grade Policy](#).

Assignments and Participation

Assignments and Projects

The course assignments are listed below. Please refer to the due dates in the dropbox and the course calendar.

For students conducting a research-based project or training-based project:

- Academic Integrity Form
- Proposal (Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology)
- Outline
- Results section for research-based project or Needs Analysis for training-based project
- Conclusions for research-based project or detailed presentation of Training Module including evaluation and conclusions for training-based project
- First Draft
- Final Draft
- Power Point Presentation with Audio/Video submitted as mp4file or YouTube link

For students with an approved internship opportunity:

- Academic Integrity Form
- Internship Proposal
- Weekly reflection report on internship activities
- Overall reflection assignment
- PowerPoint Presentation with Audio/Video submitted as mp4file or YouTube link

Class Participation

Students must login to the course to keep updated on announcements and due dates. All course assignments should be submitted to the dropbox by the due date posted in the dropbox.

- communicate with the instructor as a learning resource;
- check the course news frequently for announcements;
- actively participate in threaded discussion events.

Attendance and Punctuality Reporting

Students should login to the course on a daily basis to check for instructor emails and announcements. Assignments should be submitted to the course dropbox by the due date posted. If a due date is adjusted students will be notified by email and an announcement will be posted in the course. (No due dates will be changed to an earlier date.) MTSU Administration requires that instructors complete an attendance report for each course each semester. Regular class attendance is required and will be monitored. Attendance will be monitored by course login information and dropbox submissions.

Communication Guidelines

Email

Per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), all course communication will be conducted using D2L email. Faculty will not respond to student emails via a non-institutional assigned email account.

Email Netiquette

The University of South Florida, recommends the guidelines below when communicating in an online course.

- *Always identify yourself and keep your messages brief and to the point. Remember that not everyone accesses email from a computer these days. Many people use portable devices such as cell phones to quickly check their email while they are away from a computer. They will appreciate not having to wait for the long messages to download.*
- *Include a concise subject line with all of your emails. Use standard fonts.*
- *Let your recipient know right away if any action is required of them.*
- *Avoid “flaming” (inflammatory or antagonistic criticism) or sending insulting, abusive, or threatening remarks.*
- *Avoid using all capital letters in a message.*
- *Remember that email is not necessarily private. Your messages can be forwarded to many people without your knowledge. Before sending a message, read it over, double check the recipient(s) and make sure it would not become an embarrassment if it were forwarded to others not on your recipient list.*
- *Do not spam others. Spam is the practice of sending unsolicited email messages in bulk or overloading someone’s mailbox or server with messages.*
- *Include a signature that has your phone number or if you are sending internal email, your extension. This will make it easier for your recipient to contact you if they need to speak to you in person. Avoid recalling messages. Take the time to really determine if a message is necessary or not before sending it in the first place.*

Student Feedback

All students have the opportunity to communicate with their instructor via email. A response to the outreach will be made in 24 to 48 hours. Students will receive feedback on dropbox submissions within 2 weeks of the assignment deadline. Students will have the opportunity to evaluate the course to provide constructive input regarding their experiences in the course throughout the semester.

D2L Chat

You can schedule a time to chat with your classmates in D2L Chat. If you use this feature:

- Introduce yourself to the other learners in the chat session.
- Be polite. Choose your words carefully. Do not use derogatory statements.
- Be concise in responding to others in the chat session.
- Be prepared to open the chat session at the scheduled time.
- Be constructive in your comments and suggestions

Student Resources

Frequently Used Student Resources

Technical Support

Students who experience problems logging into their course, timing out of their course, using the course web site tools or experience other technical problems, should be encouraged to contact the MTSU Help Desk online (24/7) or at 1-615/898-5345.

Students with Disabilities

Middle Tennessee State University is committed to campus access in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any student interested in reasonable accommodations can consult the Disability & Access Center (DAC) website and/or contact the DAC for assistance at 615-898-2783 or dacemail@mtsu.edu. Also, if you require the use of assistive technology, please make sure to download the documents in order to access the accessibility that I have built into the content for you.

The True Blue Pledge

I am True Blue

As a member of this diverse community, I am a valuable contributor to its progress and success. I am engaged in the life of this community. I am a recipient and a giver. I am a listener and a speaker. I am honest in word and deed. I am committed to reason, not violence. I am a learner now and forever. I am a BLUE RAIDER. True Blue!

FREE TUTORING!

Learn how to study, get help with understanding difficult course material, receive better test grades, or simply improve your grade point average! Our FREE tutoring service is available in *study skills* and *learning strategies* that includes sessions on time management, notetaking, when and where to study, and memory principles. Tutoring is also available in several courses including biology, history, computer information systems, physics, math, psychology, chemistry, economics, recording industry, and many more. The central location for tutoring is the Tutoring Spot, located in Walker Library, but is also conducted at various other campus sites. For available tutoring opportunities, visit <http://mtsu.edu/studentsuccess/tutoring.php#on> . For questions, call the Tutoring Spot at 615-904-8014.

This course is an **experiential learning course**. This course includes a hands-on learning project (applied learning, service learning, creative activity, teacher education, laboratory, co-op, or internship). MTSU wants to provide relevant real-world learning opportunities that will benefit students. This course will count toward completion of the designation, EXL Scholars Program. For more information about the EXL Scholars Program, check the website: <http://www.mtsu.edu/exl/>. It is strongly recommended that you retain copies of all coursework as it will be helpful if you wish to pursue the EXL Scholars designation.