**Program:** Professional Studies MPS

**College and Department**: College of Interdisciplinary Studies – School of Professional Studies

**Contact:** Dr. Mike Gotcher

**Mission:** The Professional Studies Program is committed to serving and providing traditional and non-traditional students with high quality educational experience utilizing technology through hybrid and online delivery systems in response to changing needs of the diverse population within TTU's service area and beyond as they enhance their professional skills for upward mobility in their respective fields. This graduate professional degree consists of 30 hours of interdisciplinary coursework and is available in eight concentrations:

- Corporate Communication prepares students for a career in which effective communication is vital to an organization's success, especially now as companies rely more on technology to interact with various individuals and groups both inside and outside the organization.

- Healthcare Administration prepares individuals for the vital role of enhancing the quality of care, reducing health care costs and addressing health care issues. The program focuses on administration, leadership, finance, informatics, and research in the various components of health care delivery systems.

- Human Resources Leadership prepares individuals for a leadership role in the area of human resources with the knowledge necessary to invest in human capital through strategic human resource leadership, oversee compensation, benefits and improve employee relations.

- Media and Strategic Communication prepares students for a leadership role in planning communication strategy, designing messages, and developing media content to help inform the public and build relationships between organizations and a variety of audiences, both inside and outside the organization. This includes creating advertising or marketing messages to promote a company's products or services, creating public relations messages to enhance the organization's image or brand, and creating messages to support productive relationships with employees, consumers, community members, constituents, investors, and the media,

- Strategic Leadership prepares individuals to lead in today's rapidly changing professional environment. The interdisciplinary approach focuses on leadership, communication, strategic planning and assessment, organizational systems and research/data analysis.

- Training and Development prepares individuals for the growing field of workplace learning and performance. Build on theoretical and practical knowledge, including organizational needs analysis, planning, instructional design and evaluation.

- Public Safety is designed to provide the public safety professional with leadership and strategic management tools to lead and serve in one of the nation's growing professions. The focus of the program is to provide these professionals with the opportunity to develop important skills in risk assessment and disaster preparations, crisis response, public safety leadership, research and administration in the various components of law enforcement, homeland security, emergency management, and other public service systems that include local, state, and federal agencies.

- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) offers a Certificate and concentration that are designed to meet an ongoing demand for both initial preparation and continuing education for individuals who plan to teach or are currently teaching English as a second/foreign language in various educational settings.  This includes students with strong English-speaking backgrounds who desire to teach English as a second/foreign language to adults in the United States or abroad or to traditional students in another country. This program would also meet the needs of non-native teachers of English in other countries looking to receive additional English language and pedagogical training from an American university. This program is not for students seeking an ESL endorsement for teaching in U.S public schools.

**Stakeholders and Employers**

The MPS degree was designed to facilitate the employment of well qualified students and provide an opportunity for advancement within organizations. Employers include: Tennessee Department of Transportation, Oak Ridge National Laboratories, Tennessee Valley Authority, Tennessee Highway Patrol, Cookeville Regional Medical Center, Tennessee Tech University, Tennessee Wildlife Agency, University of Tennessee, Cleveland State Community College, Anesthesiologist at Munroe Regional Medical Center and Ocala Regional Medical Center, Averitt Express, Law Office of Justin C Walling, State of Tennessee, Dept of Safety and Homeland, Hendersonville Medical Center, ORAU Radiation Emergency Asst Center, Tennessee Board of Regents, Video Gaming Technologies, Inc, Upper Cumberland Family Justice Ctr, Executive Protection Unit for Tennessee Governor, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System, CEO Precision Media Group, HCA Corporate Headquarters, TN Dept of Agriculture, and others.

**Alignment with Tennessee Tech's Mission/Strategic Plan**

TTU has identified six core values (Academic Excellence, Community Engagement, Meaningful Innovation, Student Success, Supportive Environment, and Value Creation).  The MPS degree strategically embraces these values through continuous improvement strategies in course redesign and curriculum improvement, tracking student success through the program and professional development, and by providing a supportive learning environment for students and faculty. Masters of Professional Studies Degree program encompasses Tech's Mission and Strategic Goals by offering multiple experiential learning opportunities in our innovative MPS concentrations that further career readiness in our graduates, provides courses that build global awareness as well as offering stackable credentials and certificates that bring student value in our communities. The faculty demonstrate their commitment to collaboration and lifelong learning and a determination to strengthen our students' intellectual and creative contributions in support of economic development to transform and sustain a thriving hub for innovation and employment opportunities.

**Curriculum**

The program has been revised to require 30 hours of coursework.  The program has 12 required hours and 18 hours in one of the eight concentrations.   Attached is the curriculum map which applies to all concentrations.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1.  Master of Professional Studies graduate will demonstrate effective communication skills.

2.  Master of Professional Studies graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills required to make good decisions and solve problems concerning the human side of business.

3.  Master of Professional Studies students will demonstrate a working knowledge of concepts and theories in his/her concentration area.

A departmentally developed curriculum map can be found in Appendix 1 that shows the connections between courses and student learning outcomes.

**Assessment Methods:**

1.  *Course Activities Linked to Communication Skills:* PRST6300, Research Methods

| Indicator to Evaluate | Selected Criteria |
| --- | --- |
| Development of Communication Skills – Written Project Proposal | Evaluation results of graded final project – research proposal. Value 300 Points. |
| Development of Written Communication Skills – Literature Review (Synthesis of Multiple- Sources of information) | Evaluation results of graded literature review. Value 100 Points. |

2.  *Course Activities Linked to Critical Thinking Skills:* PRST6100, Professional Environment: Issues and Ethics

| Indicator to Evaluate | Selected Criteria |
| --- | --- |
| Develop Critical Thinking Skills Through the development of a personal code of ethics and an evaluation of a corporate code of ethics | Written paper that student develops to analyze and evaluate the strength of corporate code of ethics statement. In addition, student develops a personal code of ethics as part of the paper. Value: 40 Points |

3. *IDEA course evaluations:* IDEA course evaluations provide student assessment engagement in key areas related to Communication, Critical Thinking, and Integration of Knowledge including:

| Communication Skills Criteria |
|---|
| Acquired skills for team work |
| Facilitated understanding of ideas and concepts |
| Stimulated skills in expressing ideas |
| Developed original or creative thinking |
| Critical Thinking Skills Criteria |
| Analyzed and critically evaluated ideas, arguments, and points of view |
| Evaluated methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information |
| Developed knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures |
| Acquired critical skills for in-depth analysis of research topics |
| Integration of Knowledge Criteria |
| Reflected on and evaluated what they have learned |
| Created opportunities for students to apply course content outside the classroom |
| Shared ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own |
| Involved students in research, case studies, or real life activities |
| Developed specific skills and competencies needed by professionals |

**Results:**

*Student Learning Outcome 1: Master of Professional Studies graduate will demonstrate effective communication skills.*

Course Activities Linked to Communication Skills:

| Course | Indicator to Evaluate | Selected Criteria | Student Results |
|---|---|---|---|
| PRST6300, Research Methods, | Development of Communication Skills – Written Project Proposal | Evaluation results of graded final project – research proposal. Value 400 Points. Students: 45 | 80% completed assignment Average score: 315 Score range: 250-395 Feedback completed |
| | Development of Written Communication Skills – Literature Review (Synthesis of Multiple- Sources of information) | Evaluation results of graded literature review. Value 100 Points. Students: 45 | 90% completed assignment Average score: 84 Score range:72-98 Feedback completed |

IDEA Course Evaluations:

| Communication Skills Criteria | Fall 2018 | Spring 2019 | Fall 2019 | Spring 2020 | Fall 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Acquired skills for team work | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 4.0 |
| Facilitated understanding of ideas and concepts | 4.23 | 4.1 | 4.25 | 4.3 | 4.25 |
| Stimulated skills in expressing ideas | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| Developed original or creative thinking | 4.34 | 4.32 | 4.48 | 4.8 | 4.5 |

*Student Learning Outcome 2: Master of Professional Studies graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills required to make good decisions and solve problems concerning the human side of business.*

Course Activities Linked to Critical Thinking Skills:

| Course | Indicator to Evaluate | Selected Criteria | Student Results |
|---|---|---|---|
| PRST6100, Professional Environment: Issues and Ethics | Develop Critical Thinking Skills Through the development of a personal code of ethics and an evaluation of a corporate code of ethics | Written paper that student develops to analyze and evaluate the strength of corporate code of ethics statement. In addition, student develops a personal code of ethics as part of the paper.<br><br>Value: 40 Points<br><br>Students: 30 | 28 of 30 students completed assignment<br><br>Average score: 33 points (81.6%)<br><br>Score range:14-40 |

IDEA Evaluations:

| Critical Thinking Skills Criteria | Fall 2018 | Spring 2019 | Fall 2019 | Spring 2020 | Fall 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Analyzed and critically evaluated ideas, arguments, and points of view | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 4.4 |
| Evaluated methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.5 | 3.8 |
| Developed knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.2 | 4.0 |
| Acquired critical skills for in-depth analysis of research topics | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.8 |

*Student Learning Outcome 3: Master of Professional Studies students will demonstrate a working knowledge of concepts and theories in his/her concentration area.*

IDEA Evaluations:

| Integration of Knowledge Criteria | Fall 2018 | Spring 2019 | Fall 2019 | Spring 2020 | Fall 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reflected on and evaluated what they have learned | 4.31 | 4.36 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.4 |
| Created opportunities for students to apply course content outside the classroom | 4.18 | 4.24 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| Shared ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own | 4.25 | 4.38 | 4.35 | 4.6 | 4.7 |
| Involved students in research, case studies, or real life activities | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| Developed specific skills and competencies needed by professionals | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.1 |

All students complete a professional project with directly relates to their program of study. The project requires students to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of all completed coursework. The final project is evaluated by their advisor and the director of the program. Most of the projects link academic research to a specific issue/problem within the students work environment. The Internship course requires not only a working knowledge but direct application of skills and expertise.

**Modifications:**

The overall modification was reducing the program from 33 hours to 30 hours. The revision in hours was the result of examining the needs of employers and the challenges faced by students. The 30-hour program is consistent with programs across the state of Tennessee and similar programs in the region.

Additionally, the program added two new concentrations (Corporate Communication and Media and Strategic Communication as options. The new options provided a pathway for students that desired a graduate degree in the field of communication.

*Student Learning Outcome 1: Master of Professional Studies graduate will demonstrate effective communication skills.*

PRST – 6300 Research Methods was redesigned to address communication issues related to writing, developing, and explaining a research proposal. The redesign included the implementation of a new rubric to assess student performance in written scholarly communication. The course was redesigned to

incorporate more academic writing activities.  Students submitted a sample literature review, designed a methods section, and prepared a full proposal for a research study.

*Student Learning Outcome 2: Master of Professional Studies graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills required to make good decisions and solve problems concerning the human side of business.*

PRST 6700 was redesigned to address the needs of students to better understand the role of conflict and negotiation within a business setting. The redesign incorporated extensive case study analysis and a rubric to assess conflict management strategies. The course incorporated case studies that explored the work setting as well as family conflict.

**Appendices**

1. Curriculum Map
2. PRST 6100 Rubric
3. PRST 6300 Rubric
4. PRST 6700 Rubric

**Appendix 1: Curriculum Map**

| | | Learning Outcomes for all MPS Concentrations | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Required Courses** | **Title** | **Communication Skills** | **Critical Thinking Skills** | **Concepts and Theories** |
| PRST 6100 | Professional Environmental Issues and Ethics | | x | x |
| PRST 6110 | Leadership and Communication | x | x | x |
| PRST 6300 | Research Methods | | x | x |
| PRST 6998 | Professional Project | x | x | x |

## CRITICAL THINKING RUBRIC PRST 6100

This rubric is designed to evaluate the extent to which graduate students evaluate claims, arguments, evidence, and hypotheses.

Course:                          Instructor:                          Student:                          Date:

| Component | Component Fully Met (Rating = 3) | Component Met (Rating = 2) | Component Partially Met (Rating = 1) | Component Not Met (Rating = 0) | Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accurately interpret evidence and thoughtfully evaluate alternative points of view | Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly. | Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning. | Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning. | Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/ evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question. | |
| Draw judicious conclusions, justify results, and explain reasoning | Not only develops a logical, consistent plan to solve problem, but recognizes consequences of solution and can articulate reason for choosing solution. Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order. | Having selected from among alternatives, develops a logical, consistent plan to solve the problem. Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly. | Considers and rejects less acceptable approaches to solving problem. Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly. | Only a single approach is considered and is used to solve the problem. Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified. | |

| Engage in skepticism, judgment, and free thinking | Extends a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product to create new knowledge or knowledge that crosses boundaries. | Creates a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product. | Experiments with creating a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product. | Reformulates a collection of available ideas. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engage in abstract reasoning, questioning and understanding | Actively seeks out and follows through on untested and potentially risky directions or approaches to the assignment in the final product.<br><br>Integrates alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas fully. | Incorporates new directions or approaches to the assignment in the final product.<br><br>Incorporates alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas in a exploratory way. | Considers new directions or approaches without going beyond the guidelines of the assignment.<br><br>Includes (recognizes the value of) alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas in a small way. | Stays strictly within the guidelines of the assignment.<br><br>Acknowledges (mentions in passing) alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas. | |

Notes:

## Appendix 3: PRST 6300 Rubric

| CATEGORY | 12-15 points | 8-11 points | 4-7 points | 0-3 points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Introduction/Topic<br><br>____ *points* | Exceptional introduction that grabs interest of reader and states topic. Thesis/topic is exceptionally clear, well-developed, and a definitive statement. | Proficient introduction that is interesting and states topic. Thesis/topic is clear and arguable statement of position. | Basic introduction that states topic but lacks interest. Thesis/topic is somewhat clear and arguable. | Weak or no introduction of topic. Paper's purpose is unclear. Thesis/topic is weak or missing. |
| Content knowledge: Quality of Research<br><br>____ *points* | Paper is exceptionally researched, contains 7 sources total (including 3 peer reviewed articles); the sources support the thesis argument in a logical manner. References are correctly cited. | Information relates to the main topic. Paper, is well-researched in detail and from 7 good sources (including 3 peer-reviewed articles). References are correctly cited. | Information relates to the main topic, but few details and/or examples are given. Shows a limited variety of sources. References are not cited correctly. | Information has little or nothing to do with the thesis. Information has weak or no connection to the thesis. References are not cited correctly. |
| Content application: Support of Thesis & Analysis<br><br>____ *points* | Exceptionally critical, relevant and consistent connections made between evidence and thesis. Excellent analysis. | Consistent connections are made between evidence and thesis. Good analysis. | Some connections made between evidence and thesis. Some analysis. | Limited or no connections made between evidence and thesis. Lack of analysis. |
| Conclusion<br><br>____ *points* | Excellent summary of thesis argument with concluding ideas that impact reader. Introduces no new information. | Good summary of topic with clear concluding ideas. Introduces no new information. | Basic summary of topic with some final concluding ideas. Introduces no new information. | Lack of summary of topic. |
| Writing<br><br>____ *points* | Writing is clear and relevant, with no grammatical and/or spelling errors – polished and professional. Reference, citations and images are properly formatted. | Most ideas are stated clearly and are related to the topic, with only minor grammatical and/or spelling errors. References, citations and images are adequate. | Many ideas require clarification, are off-topic or have little relevance to the assignment. Many grammatical and/or spelling errors; very challenging to read, poor writing flow. Improper references and/or citations section. | Paper does not meet the criteria for the assignment (too short or incomplete, too long, and/or completely off-topic). Reference, citations and images section is missing. |
| Annotated Bibliography<br><br>____ *points* | Annotations sufficiently and succinctly summarize, evaluate, and reflect on the source. | Annotations sufficiently and adequately summarize, evaluate, and reflect on the source. | Some annotations provide inadequate summary, evaluation, and/or reflection. | Most annotations provide inadequate summary, evaluation, and/or reflection. |
| Total: _____/90 | | | | |

**Appendix 4: PRST 6700 Rubric**

| Rating Criteria | NA | Rating Scale | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Emerging** | | **Developing** | | **Mastering** | |
| **Summarized problem, question, or issue** | | Does not attempt to or fails to identify and summarize accurately. | | Summarizes issue, though some aspects are incorrect or confused. Nuances and key details are missing or glossed over. | | Clearly identifies the challenge and subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the issue. Identifies integral relationships essential to analyzing the issue. | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| **Considers context and assumptions** | | Approach to the issue is in egocentric and socio- centric terms. Does not relate to other contexts. Analysis is grounded in absolutes, with little acknowledgement of own biases. Does not recognize context and underlying ethical implications. | | Presents and explores relevant contexts and assumptions, although in a limited way. Analysis includes some outside verification, but primarily relies on authorities. Provides some consideration of assumptions and their implications. | | Analyzes the issue with a clear sense of scope and context, including an assessment of audience. Identifies influence of context. Questions assumptions, addressing ethical dimensions underlying the issue. | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| **Communicates own perspective, hypothesis, or position.** | | Position is clearly adopted with little consideration. Addresses a single view of the argument, failing to clarify the position relative to one's own. Fails to justify own opinion or hypothesis is unclear or simplistic. | | Presents own position, which includes some original thinking, though inconsistently. Justifies own position without addressing other views or does so superficially. Position is generally clear, although gaps may exist. | | Position demonstrates ownership. Appropriately identifies own position, drawing support from experience and information not from assigned sources. Justifies own view while integrating contrary interpretations. Hypothesis demonstrates sophisticated thought. | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| **Analyzes supporting data and evidence** | | No evidence of selection or source evaluation skills. Repeats information without question or dismisses evidence without justification. Does not distinguish between fact and opinion. Evidence is simplistic, inappropriate or not related to topic. | | Demonstrates adequate skill in selecting and evaluating sources to meet information need. Use of evidence is selective, discerns fact from opinion and may recognize bias. Appropriate evidence is provided although exploration is routine. | | Evidence of source evaluation skills. Examines evidence and questions accuracy and relevance. Recognizes bias. Sequence of presentation reflects clear organization of ideas, subordinating for importance and impact. | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| **Uses other perspectives and positions** | | Deals with a single perspective and fails to discuss others' perspective. Adopts a single idea with little question. Alternatives are not integrated. Ideas are obvious. Avoids discomforting ideas. Treats other positions superficially. No evidence of self-assessment. | | Begins to relate alternative views. Rough integration of multiple viewpoints. Ideas are investigated in a limited way. May overstate conflict or dismiss alternative views hastily. Analysis of other views mostly accurate. Some evidence of self-assessment. | | Addresses diverse perspectives from a variety of sources to qualify analysis. Any analogies are used effectively. Clearly justifies own view while respecting views of others. Analysis of other positions is accurate and respectful. Evidence of reflection and self-assessment. | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| Assesses conclusions, implications, and consequences | | Fails to identify conclusions, implications, and consequences, or conclusion is a simplistic summary. Conclusions are absolute, and may attribute conclusion to external authority. | | Conclusions consider evidence of consequences extending beyond a single issue. Presents implications that may impact other people or issues. Presents conclusions as only loosely related to consequences. Implications may include vague reference to conclusions. | | Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications, and consequences. Considers context, assumptions, and evidence. Qualifies own assertions. Consequences are considered and integrated. Implications are developed and consider ambiguities. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Communicates effectively | | In many places, language obscures meaning. Grammar, syntax, or other errors are distracting or repeated. Little evidence of proofreading. Style is inconsistent or inappropriate. Work is unfocused and poorly organized; lacks logical connection of ideas. Format is absent, inconsistent or distracting. Few sources are cited or used correctly. | | In general, language does not interfere with communication. Errors are not distracting or frequent, although there may be some problems with more difficult aspects of style and voice. Basic organization is apparent; transitions connect ideas, although they may be mechanical. Format is appropriate although at times inconsistent. Most sources are cited and used correctly. | | Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas. May at times be nuanced and eloquent. Errors are minimal. Style is appropriate for audience. Organization is clear; transitions between ideas enhance presentation. Consistent use of appropriate format. Few problems with other components of presentation. All sources are cited and used correctly, demonstrating understanding or economic, legal, and social issues involved with the use of the information. | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |