



## **IS-6540: Applied Data Analytics (3 credit hours)**

**Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration / Graduate School of Business**

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### MISSION STATEMENT

**University Mission Statement:** *“Harding's mission is to provide a quality education that will lead to an understanding and philosophy of life consistent with Christian ideals.”*

**College Mission Statement:** *“To prepare Christian business professionals for lives of service.”*

### COURSE INFORMATION

**Prerequisites / Co-requisites:** IS6050, IS6300 and IS6510

#### Catalog Description:

This course equips students to devise creative ways of extracting information from data in order to better solve problems. Students will study the fundamental principles and techniques of data analysis, and will examine real-world examples and cases to place data analysis techniques in context, in order to develop data-analytic thinking, and to illustrate that proper application is as much an art as it is a science.

**Part of Term/Semester, Year, Location:** Spring, 2020, Blended

This course consists of three mandatory onsite visits, one of which will be a guest speaker from the Microsoft (Power BI) company. A detail schedule listing on-campus (at ARC's campus in Fort Smith) and online activities is found below.

Module	Dates	Topic	Notes
1	3/16 - 3/22	Intro to Power BI Environment & Data Ingestion	
2	3/23 - 3/29	Data Ingestion & Cleaning	On-site visit 3/24 HW1 Due (submit in Canvas)
3	3/30 - 4/5	Data Cleaning & Engineering	
4	4/6 - 4/12	Data Exploration & Visualization	Power BI Rep Class Visit HW 2 Due (submit in Canvas)
5	4/13 - 4/19	Decision Tree Basics	
6	4/20 - 4/26	Classification With Decision Trees	HW 3 Due (submit in Canvas)
7	4/27 - 5/3	Regression With Decision Trees and Excel	
8	5/4 - 5/8	Case Study Presentations	On-site visit 5/5 HW 4 Due (submit in Canvas)

## **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Jeff Hendricks  
Adjunct Professor  
Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration

## **INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

[jhendricks1@harding.edu](mailto:jhendricks1@harding.edu)

Cell: 515-480-2593 (except for emergency, please do not call or text after 8 p.m. CST)

Slack: harding-msis.slack.edu (instructions for getting this setup are below)

My preferred method of communication is my Harding email address.

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION**

During this course, interactions between students and/or faculty should take place in Canvas, Harding's learning management system (frequently called an LMS). If you need to email me about the course, please use Canvas' email. My goal is to reply to your communication within one (1) business day. If it is a holiday or a weekend, please keep in mind that a business day may mean more than one (1) day. If you need to reach me sooner, I recommend a phone call.

During this course, online office hours can also be arranged at your request. We can schedule a call or we can use technology like Google Hangout, Slack, or Zoom. These tools are especially helpful when it comes to discussing class concepts and theories, as we can share screens, use white boards to draw equations, etc.

If you need to contact me about another issue (e.g., sickness, an unforeseen hospitalization, a situation beyond your control, prayers, etc.) you may contact me outside of Canvas via my personal email at [jhendricks1@harding.edu](mailto:jhendricks1@harding.edu) or phone. If the matter is urgent (e.g., a missed assignment, unable to meet an assignment deadline), a phone call would be best. If you send me an email, please include "IS 6540" in the subject line of your email message.

Bottom line, I am here for you. Please reach out to me if I can be of assistance or service to you.

### **Slack Setup**

Visit the [Harding MSIS Slack workspace](#) in a web browser. Follow the options to make a new account if you do not already have a Slack account using your Harding email address. Only students who use their Harding email address will be allowed onto Slack since that is how I can verify who I am speaking with. After creating an account, you will be able to navigate to the harding-msis workspace. This tool allows quick and easy communication between me and also

your fellow students. You can send me a direct message or participate in any of the pre-established channels. Slack is not a required communication tool for this course, but it is an easy way to get ahold of me quicker in some instances. I strongly encourage setting up two-factor authentication for added security.

[Slack's Privacy Policy](#)

[Slack's Accessibility Policy](#)

[Slack's Voluntary Product Accessibility Template \(VPAT\)®](#)

## **Netiquette**

*“Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”* – Prov. 29:20 (NIV)

*“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”* – Prov. 25:11 (NIV)

*“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”* – Col. 4:6 (NIV)

*“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commands knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.”* – Prov. 15: 1-2 (NIV)

*“Be kind and compassionate to one another...”* – Eph. 4:32 (NIV)

Let’s briefly talk about online decorum (referred to as (n)etiquette). As servants of Christ, we must know how to address each other via all methods of communication - whether online or on-ground. We realize that in an online classroom, students may be across the globe - all the more reason to state what to expect when communicating online. According to *The Quality Matters (QM) Higher Education Rubric: Sixth Edition (2018)*, learner behavior may be culturally influenced, thus it is important that detailed standards for communication are applied to the course. While the list is not all inclusive, the following [video](#) reinforces the importance of abiding by generally accepted rules of online netiquette. When it comes to our communication, let's remember the following: Harding University is a Christian University and expectations are that the relationship and communication style between one another should reflect Harding's Christian mission.

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FOR THIS COURSE**

Since this course is being offered in an online format, all course assignments with the exception of the final presentation will be conducted within Canvas. You are not required to travel to any of Harding’s campuses but for on-site visits, you must be present at the ARC’s campus in Fort Smith. See Course schedule above for details.

This class may utilize both synchronous and asynchronous formats. For asynchronous

assignments, you are not required to be online at the same time that I or your fellow students are online. If a particular assignment is synchronous, you will be required to be online at the same time that I or your fellow students are online. Please consult the assignments area of Canvas for synchronous/asynchronous information.

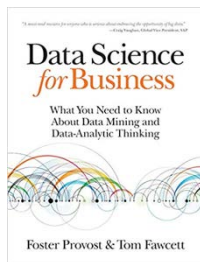
### **Integration of Faith and Learning**

The rapid pace at which technologies are created and evolve gives rise to a world of seemingly never-ending change, especially in the amount of data that they generate. It becomes increasingly important for us as Christians in the business world to behave ethically and responsibly as we use this data to drive change and competitive advantage.

### **OPTIONAL MATERIALS**

Provost, P & Fawcett, T (2013) Data Science for Business: What You Need to Know about Data Mining and Data-Analytic Thinking 1st Edition (ISBN-13: 978-1449361327)

You may purchase the textbook from the [Harding University Bookstore](#), [Amazon](#), etc.



The course text was selected because it is not overly technical and covers the principles of data science. These principles will serve as a foundation when applying data analytics in real-world examples. This is the same text utilized in IS 6510 and will be used as a reference for concepts covered in that course more than a teaching tool in this course.

### **Specific Software**

This course will utilize Microsoft Power BI Desktop and Microsoft Excel.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

There may be supplemental materials (e.g., journals, articles) that serve to provide additional coverage of lecture topics. Any such required supplemental materials will be provided in Canvas (or linked) and will be clearly noted in the appropriate Module.

### **REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY**

Harding University students enrolled in online classes must have access to an appropriate digital device and a reliable Internet connection. A laptop or desktop is still the recommended device

for online learning; the Canvas interface was optimized for desktop displays. Broadband connectivity is required, as many classes incorporate rich media content.

#### Hardware/Operating Systems

- A personal computer running Microsoft Windows 8 / 10 / or Apple Macintosh running OS X
- Camera/microphone/headphones (sometimes called peripherals)

Some Mac users may experience technical issues with certain publisher related course software. For this reason, a PC is recommended.

To see which browsers are supported by Canvas, how to update your browser, and additional required components (e.g., Flash and Java) please visit [Canvas](#).

For mobile users, there is a Canvas app available from the Google Play Store or the Apple iTunes store.

Because technology changes rapidly, the information contained within this requirement may change, and without advance notice.

#### Zoom

[Zoom's Privacy Policy](#)

[Zoom's Accessibility Policy](#)

Zoom is a tool that provides video conferencing and distance communication capabilities which we will use in this class.

#### MINIMUM TECHNICAL SKILLS

During this course, it is expected that students will possess the following set of minimum skills:

- An ability to use a computer
- Competence with Canvas (Harding's LMS)
- Competence with email and file attachments
- Competence with software (e.g., Microsoft Office Suite)
- Installing software
- Competence with search engines (e.g., Google)

#### CANVAS

Canvas is the learning management system (LMS) used by Harding's online courses. For additional information relating to Canvas, including tutorials, please visit [Harding's IST Canvas page](#) or [Instructure Canvas Help Center](#).

## **CANVAS, INTERNET or TECHNOLOGY OUTAGE**

As an online learner you must be able to manage technical difficulties, as power outages, connection problems and other technical issues are always a possibility. Technology will sometimes fail; for this reason, it is advisable to complete your assigned work prior to the due date.

**Instructor** - If your instructor experiences a power outage, an Internet service outage, an LMS (Canvas) or other technical issue that significantly affects online assignments, the ability to grade assignments, or the instructor/student communication channel is significantly disrupted, adjustments to due dates will be made, as appropriate.

**Student** - If you experience a power outage, Internet service outage, LMS (Canvas) or other technical issue, you are held responsible for completing your assigned work in a timely manner. Harding University is not responsible for the student's access to a working computer or reliable Internet service. An Internet outage or computer issue is not an excuse for late work. A backup plan for reliable Internet service and a working computer is prudent. Should you experience any such issues, communicate with your instructor in a timely manner.

## **TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

The first point of contact for questions and concerns relating to your online course is your instructor, who will provide you instructions on how to proceed. For technical assistance or to report a problem, Harding's e-Learning Help Desk is available Monday - Friday between 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST.

Phone: 501-279-5201

Email: [elearning@harding.edu](mailto:elearning@harding.edu) Website: [eLearning website](#)

Again, please remember that your instructor should be your first point of contact.

## **UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT**

Harding University, since its charter in 1924, has been strongly committed to providing the best resources and environment for the teaching---learning process. The board, administration, faculty, and staff are wholeheartedly committed to full compliance with all criteria of the Higher Learning Commission and Schools. The university values continuous, rigorous assessment at every level for its potential to improve student learning and achievement and for its centrality in fulfilling the stated mission of Harding. Thus, a comprehensive assessment program has been developed that includes both the Academic units and the Administrative and Educational Support (AES) units. Specifically, all academic units will be assessed in reference to the following Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose: The University provides programs that enable students to acquire essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their academic disciplines for successful careers, advanced studies, and servant leadership.

In addition to the university compliance with Higher Learning Commission, the College of Business Administration adheres to the standards of assessment set forth by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), a business departmental accreditation agency. ACBSP focuses on teaching excellence in the classroom and high academic standards throughout the business programs. As such, the College of Business is dedicated to compilation and analysis of assessment data for the purpose of maximizing student learning in all of the business programs.

Assessment is becoming more important in all aspects of the operation of Harding University. The university provides programs that enable students to acquire essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their academic disciplines for successful careers, advanced studies, and servant leadership. There is a good probability that what you learn in this course will be assessed in broader measures of student achievement such as standardized exams and/or licensing exams. The ultimate goal of assessment is that Harding University will become a stronger institution of higher learning.

As a part of the assessment process, the following learning outcomes are present.

#### MSIS PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLO)

Students will:

- 1) *Evaluate* business processes and Identify opportunities for IT-enabled organizational improvements
- 2) Apply *analytical thinking* to decompose organizational problems, projects, etc into component parts.
- 3) Demonstrate effective *collaboration* skills and use of collaborative tools.
- 4) Apply *Systems Thinking* to business problem identification and solution
- 5) Demonstrate effective *written communication* such as research papers, position papers, system investment proposals, etc.
- 6) Demonstrate *critical thinking*, present coherent reasons for adopting a position and identify faulty reasoning regarding a proposal or assertion in relations to data-based decisions.
- 7) Demonstrate *creativity* in project management and the development of solutions.
- 8) Evaluate *ethical decisions* in respect to sensitive corporate data.
- 9) Design solutions using *technical skills* within a chosen domain/specialization.

#### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (CLO) and their relationship to PLO's

Students will:

- 1) Apply statistical concepts and data science techniques to analyze and explain patterns within data in the context of real-world case studies. (PLO2, PLO3, PLO 6, PLO 8)
- 2) Demonstrate the ability to identify patterns and relationships within data and



- communicate their findings. (PLO 5, PLO 6, PLO 9)
- 3) Apply data science concepts to support new types of decision analysis to improve management decisions in the context of real-world case studies. (PLO 3, PLO 5, PLO 6, PLO 8, PLO 9)
  - 4) Gain experience using analytical software to explore data and build predictive models in the context of real-world case studies (PLO 1, PLO 4)

## **MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES (MLO) and their relationships to CLO's**

### **Module 1: Introduction to Power BI and Data Ingestion**

Students will:

- 1) Explore the Power BI desktop environment (CLO 4)
- 2) Analyze the Lending Club case study (CLO 3)
- 3) Discuss data-driven prediction, its impact on business decisions, and the problems it tries to solve (CLO 1, CLO 3)
- 4) Ingest a business specific, case study dataset using a Power BI query script (CLO 1, CLO 4)

### **Module 2: Data Ingestion and Data Cleaning**

Students will:

- 1) Recall the importance proper data types and working with missing values from a dataset (CLO1)
- 2) Clean a dataset in Power BI, including changing data types, adding and removing columns, and removing observations from a dataset. (CLO 1, CLO 3, CLO 4)
- 3) Research and discuss data leakage and its applicability in a real-world case study. (CLO 1, CLO 3)

### **Module 3: Data Cleaning and Feature Engineering**

Students will:

- 1) Add calculated variables as features in a Power BI dataset (CLO 2, CLO 4)
- 2) Examine Data Analysis Expressions (DAX) and its use in Power BI. (CLO 4)
- 3) Discuss the characteristics of features appropriate for building a predictive model in the context of a real-world case study. (CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3)

### **Module 4: Data Exploration and Visualization**

Students will:

- 1) Examine the importance of data exploration and how to create visualizations to analyze variable distributions, identify outliers, and obtain insights. (CLO 1, CLO 2)
- 2) Create visualizations to explore the distribution of variables and obtain insights from

- a real-world dataset. (CLO 1, CLO 4)
- 3) Discuss the importance of using visualizations to inform business decisions and make an argument for a position in a real-world case study using insights from visualizations. (CLO 2, CLO 3)

### **Module 5: Decision Trees**

Students will:

- 1) Identify the components of tree classification (CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3)
- 2) Recall the differences between classification trees and probability estimation trees (CLO 1, CLO 3)
- 3) Recall data mining terminology, such as target attribute, attributes, class labels, information gain, and feature vectors (CLO 1, CLO 3)
- 4) Examine a decision tree and produce rulesets for each path from root node to leaf node (CLO 1, CLO 2)
- 5) Recall classification accuracy estimation, confusion matrices, and data leakage. (CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3)

### **Module 6: Classification with Decision Trees**

Students will:

- 1) Create and visualize decision tree classifiers in Power BI (CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 4)
- 2) Evaluate the accuracy of decision tree classifiers (CLO 1, CLO 2)
- 3) Compare decision tree classifiers and make recommendations (CLO 1, CLO 2)
- 4) Discuss how data leakage affects classifier accuracy. (CLO 1)

### **Module 7: Regression with Decision Trees and Excel**

Students will:

- 1) Recall linear regression concepts and the accuracy measures for linear regression models. (CLO 1, CLO 3)
- 2) Create decision tree regression models in Power BI. (CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 4)
- 3) Create multiple linear regression models in Excel. (CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 4)
- 4) Compare linear regression models and make recommendations. (CLO 1, CLO 2)
- 5) Discuss accuracy measures for regression and what those measures may indicate. (CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3)

### **Module 8: Presentation of Case Study Results**

Students will:

- 1) Present findings and results from a real-world, course-long case study to their peers.

(CLO 1, CLO 2, CLO 3, CLO 4)

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

There are a number of places in Canvas to locate the course schedule, which contains all of the assignments and other activities for the course: the Course Summary, the Canvas Calendar, and the Weekly Task Lists. You can view the details of each assignment/activity by selecting them individually.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Module Exercises	400 pts.	50%
Discussions	140 pts.	25%
Participation	70 pts.	10%
Final Presentation	100 pts.	15%

Details relating to each individual course requirement and how you will be assessed (e.g., Homework, Discussions) can be found in Canvas. Please review the individual modules area for details relating to each course assessment.

## **GRADING POLICY**

The student will be provided weekly feedback during the duration of the course. This may be in the form of narrative information and/or component grades, and will be provided in Canvas' Gradebook. It is possible that supplemental feedback may also be provided in Canvas' email. However, the intent of this feedback is to inform the student of how well expectations for these components have been met.

Component details may include, but are not limited to, the following: exams, mid-term, quizzes, case studies, current events, projects, research papers, presentations, and participation.

The final grade will be computed as a weighted average of Total Points Earned/Total Points Possible and reflected as a letter grade.

### **Letter Grade Guideline**

Letter Grade	Average Threshold
A (Excellent)	90%
B (Good)	80%
C (Average)	70%
F (Failure)	<70%

From time to time, an individual may inquire about extra credit and other ways to pull their grade up. There will not be a formal extra credit project, assignment, etc. Once the final grade has been calculated, the course is over and no further work will be accepted for grading. Therefore, any

requests to complete special assignments or projects in an effort to change one's posted grade cannot be honored. If at the end of the class after all assignments have been graded you have accumulated a fraction of a point (e.g., 899.50 points), your total number of points will be rounded to the nearest whole point using the standard rounding rules. For example, 899.50 points will be rounded to 900 points and reported as an "A," but 899.49 points will be rounded to 899 points and reported as a "B." Additionally, a curve will not be applied to individual assignments (i.e., 10 points will not be added to everyone's score if the high score is 90 points earned out of 100 points possible).

### **Attendance/Participation**

The very nature and depth of graduate studies mandate students participate in all course activities. Each student's participation is essential for the success of the entire class and the student. True exchange of graduate-level academic ideas and thoughts can only be achieved with everyone actively participating. The value received from this course will be commensurate with the effort and thought you put into it.

Attendance and participation are not the same thing. A student will be automatically withdrawn and will not be eligible to earn a grade if they miss a single week of attendance. For attendance purposes, a student must log into the course and demonstrate their presence by creating a documentable entry (e.g., a reply to a student, submitting an assignment). Meeting the attendance requirement does not ensure a good participation grade.

As an online student, participation is required and is an essential part of this course. Participation means that you are not only logging into the course, but are actively engaged, too. For this course, participation will take on many forms, including teamwork, the SAP, case analysis, strategy and faith, and assignments.

As the student, you are expected to be prepared for class (e.g., read material, analyzed spreadsheets) and to be an active contributor in the learning process.

### **Rubrics**

There are grading rubrics associated with your assessment in this course. It is good practice to review rubrics before you submit your assignments. It will help you formulate your responses and earn full points. Rubrics are located in two places: 1) discussions – when you go to the discussion forum you will see the gear wheel at the top right of the discussion page. Click on it, a drop down appears and one of the options in that menu is "Show Rubric." 2) assignments (non-discussions) – the rubric is displayed at the bottom of the assignment description.

### **Deadlines/Late Policy**

Students are encouraged to work ahead of deadlines. The deadline for any given assignment represents the date from which points will be taken off for being late. It is important that the posted deadlines for a given assignment are met. This represents the self-paced nature of online

learning. Assignments turned in after the deadline will be charged a 25% per day late penalty. Therefore, no assignment may be turned in after four days have passed from the original deadline. As graduate business students, you are held to a high standard. While this policy may seem harsh, what would happen if you missed a deadline at work (yet alone by four days)? No assignment will be accepted after the ending date of the class has passed.

There are exceptions to the rule above. If there is a problem and you are unable to meet a deadline, the onus is on you, the student, to communicate with the instructor in a timely fashion. If you are ill and cannot meet a deadline, you are responsible for contacting the professor before the deadline, not after it passes. After all, if you were too ill to go to work, you wouldn't call-in the day after you failed to show up to work. If you will be traveling for work, have an illness, family problems, a vacation scheduled, etc., please contact your instructor in advance. If an exception is granted, there must be an agreement between the instructor and the student on a mutually agreeable due date for the missed assignment(s).

### **Writing Style/Referencing**

As the accepted writing style of business, psychology, education, and social science programs across the globe (American Psychological Association, 2014), the American Psychological Association publication format (otherwise known as APA Style) is the required writing style for all M.B.A. students.

Learning to conduct scholarly research is a natural part of academic work, and will help you succeed at Harding University. Conducting scholarly, professional and industry research is required for this course. If a source is questionable, e.g., Wikipedia, other wikis, ask.com, answers.yahoo.com, etc., please contact your professor for clarity and permission before using a source that falls outside the scope of traditional academic standards, especially at the graduate level. It is also important that you show how these references assisted your academic work. So, make sure you reference your sources in every assignment you submit, no matter how mundane the assignment may be. Failure to properly and completely cite your sources may constitute plagiarism or cheating, as delineated in the Academic Code of Conduct. Bottom line, remember these two simple rules: 1) give credit where credit is due, and 2) if it isn't your words, ideas or thoughts, it is someone else's and needs to be cited. The following two websites may be of value to you.

- [APA Resources](#)
- [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#)

### **Turnitin**

During this course, the originality of various assignments submitted by students will be checked via [Turnitin](#), an organization leading the way in both plagiarism detection and student learning. Turnitin provides institutions, faculty, and students with a variety of academic tools, including originality checks, online grading capabilities, and even peer reviewed feedback. Turnitin is integrated with the assignments settings used by the instructor when preparing assignments in

Canvas.

## **Student Declaration**

Submitting an electronic document at Harding University constitutes an agreement with the following declaration:

- I affirm that the work submitted is of my own accord, is original, and contains the necessary and appropriate citations, where the work is of another source.
- I affirm that this assignment has not previously been submitted in any form.
- When submitting assignments to Turnitin, I acknowledge and adhere to its disclaimer statements.
- I affirm to uphold Harding University's [Code of Academic Integrity](#).

## **RESERVATION STATEMENT**

The instructor reserves the right to modify and update any part of the syllabus where necessary. It is your responsibility to stay up to date with any changes communicated by the professor.

## **INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES**

### **Code of Academic Conduct**

Students of Harding University are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of [academic conduct](#) appropriate to a community of Christian scholars. Harding expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. *Cheating*: Use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. *Plagiarism*: Representing the words, ideas or data of another as your own in any academic exercise.
3. *Fabrication*: Falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
4. *Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty*: Intentionally helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty.

5. *Conduct unbecoming a professional while participating in a practicum, internship, field experience, or any similar academic experience:* Conduct unbecoming a professional includes, but is not limited to, standards of conduct stated in the general Harding University catalog as well as standards and codes of conduct associated with professional organizations related to the student's academic discipline.

6. *Respect:* Students are expected to respect other classmate's opinions and ideas at all times. Since students cannot see body language and other non-verbal cues, it is essential that comments be worded carefully and refrain from such things as sarcasm, which can be taken negatively in the online world. Read posts for content and then read posts for context. If the message can be taken negatively in any way, the suggestion is to re-word the post until you are sure that it will not be taken defensively. Another key issue is to refrain from certain discussions that evoke strong reaction. This may include such things as:

- Stereotypes of any nature, whether it be profession or class of people

- Politics

7. *Lurking:* Lurking is when a student signs on and reads the messages and does not post to the classroom. There are many reasons why a student may do this. Some students may feel uncomfortable sharing views in an open forum, may be unsure of the materials being covered, and/or may not want to say the same or similar things that other students have already posted. Discuss these issues with your instructor. Posting 4 out of 7 days is essential to learning and to passing an online class. Lurking is not counted as participation and will only lower your grade. Your instructor may be able to assist you in overcoming or resolving any issue that may drive lurking behavior.

8. *Drifting:* Drifting occurs when the discussion goes in another direction than expected. Drifting is normal and encouraged in the online environment. However, the drifting must be related to academics and the materials discussed in the classroom. The instructor will encourage positive drifting, but will discourage inappropriate drifting and may ask students to take it to the CHAT room or to discuss it through personal email. Inappropriate drift will not be counted toward the participation grade.

### **Accommodations/Students with Disabilities**

It is the policy for Harding University to accommodate [students with disabilities](#), pursuant to federal and state law. Therefore, any student with a *documented disability* condition (e.g. physical, learning, or psychological) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the instructor and the Disabilities Office at the *beginning* of each semester. (If the diagnosis of the disability occurs during the academic year, the student must **self-identify** with the Disabilities Office *as soon as possible* in order to get academic accommodations in place for the remainder of the semester.) The Disabilities Office is located in Room 219 in the Student Center at the Searcy Campus.

M.B.A. courses are taught online and students will not have direct access to the Disability Services located on the Harding University Searcy Campus. The student must self-identify to the instructor of the course and submit documentation by fax or mail to Disability Services on Harding's main campus. The necessary forms are available online at [Disability Services](#). Upon receiving the appropriate documentation approved by ADA Guidelines, academic accommodations may be set up by the instructor via a teleconference with the Disabilities Director. If you have questions, please contact Bridget Smith, Director of Disability Services and Educational Access, at 501-279-4019 or [disabilityservices@harding.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@harding.edu).

### **Academic Grievance Policy**

If a student believes that he or she has reason to question the decision of a faculty member with regard to the final grade received in a course or the unreasonable denial of academic progression, a procedure has been established to resolve the grievance. The student must register his or her complaint in writing to the faculty member within seven business days following the alleged incident, except that if the grievance involves a final grade, it must be filed within ten business days after final grades are posted by the Registrar. Within the written complaint, the student must set forth reasons and grounds for the grievance. The policy set forth in the graduate catalog titled [Academic Grievance Procedure](#) establishes the procedures for such grievance resolution. All students should be familiar with this policy.

### **Time Management Expectations/Credit Hour Calculator Statement**

All courses at Harding meet federal and HLC regulations and meet or exceed university requirements regarding credit hours.

For every course credit hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least forty-five clock hours of concentrated attention on course-related work, including but not limited to time attending class, as well as out-of-class time spent reading, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams, problem solving, developing and completing projects, and other activities that enhance learning. Thus, for a three-hour course, a typical student should expect to spend at least one hundred thirty-five hours dedicated to the course.

### **Additional Academic Policies**

For additional academic policies like course load, changes in registration, incomplete, withdrawal, types of course offerings, please see the following [Academic Information](#).

In regard to the M.B.A. program, the last day to drop a class is Friday of week six. Students may add a class no later than Friday of week one of the class.

### **INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES**

Harding offers a wide variety of academic support services. While this list is not all-inclusive,



the following links may be useful to students (some services may not be applicable for graduate students):

- [Library](#)
- [Testing](#)
- [Tutoring](#)
- [Writing Lab](#)

## **INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Harding offers a wide variety of student support services. While this list is not all-inclusive, the following links may be useful to students (some services may not be applicable for graduate students):

- [Advising](#) (graduate M.B.A. students are advised by the M.B.A. office)
- [Registration](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Student Life](#)
- [Counseling](#)
- [Career Services](#) (M.B.A. students can also utilize the Center for Professional Excellence)
- [Seminars/Workshops](#)

## **References**

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