

Course Number: PAD 5381 Semester: Spring 2020

CRN: 28631 Tuesdays: 6:00-8:50pm
HSSN 212

Course Title: Public and Nonprofit Program Evaluation

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 4-6pm, or please email me for a time to meet

Course Description:

By the conclusion of this class, you will develop the ability to conduct program evaluations in the public and nonprofit sector; and to better manage or interpret the work of a third-party evaluator. Specifically, you will learn skills that you can apply to your work with a client to develop and execute an evaluation plan that meets their program needs. To accomplish this, you will learn techniques in designing quasi-experimental research designs, as well as techniques in data collection and data analysis. You will also learn how to develop data collection and analysis procedures for measuring program impacts in areas that are often difficult to measure (such as the impact of social and human services on clients and communities); as well as techniques for utilizing program evaluation in strategic planning.

My goal for this course is to examine a number of evaluation practices that will lead to more effective public and nonprofit services.

Student Learning Objectives:

You will learn how to:

- Develop program logic models;
- Develop utilization-oriented evaluation questions;
- Design clear and useful data collection instruments for use in evaluation work;
- Identify pertinent professional standards and ethical principles affecting specific dilemmas confronting evaluators in the field;
- Design implementation, outcome, and impact evaluations;
- Perform analyses of program data to measure program outputs and outcomes;
- Demonstrate competencies in qualitative and quantitative research methods;
- Demonstrate empirical findings through data visualization;
- Design user-oriented reports to convey evaluation findings; and
- Develop useful recommendations based on evaluation findings.

Course Requirements (Also please see grading criteria attached to this syllabus):

1. Class Participation (30%): This will involve reading all course material and contributing to the in-person class sessions, contributing to online sessions, interacting with your peers, and demonstrating your abilities to follow the instructions of assignments.

2. Website Summary (5%): Each student will be assigned one of the following organizations, and write a 300-word summary of the organization's work in evaluation. Your summary should address: 1) general information on the organization, 2) the types of evaluations that they perform, 3) the organization's intended audience, 4) the types of data and research designs that are most commonly adopted, and 5) the techniques the organization uses to translate the findings for practice (utilization). The list of possible organizations is below. You should bring a paper copy of your write-up to class, and be prepared to introduce the website to your peers in class.
 1. IES What Works Clearinghouse (education) <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
 2. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Programs OJJDP Model Programs Guide <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/programs/mpg.html>
 3. National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/
 4. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Effective Health Care <http://www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/what-is-comparative-effectiveness-research1/>
 5. The Campbell Collaboration <http://campbellcollaboration.org/>
 6. The Collaboration for Environmental Evidence <http://www.environmentalevidence.org/>

3. Program Evaluation Critique (15%): Through consultation with the instructor, identify a program evaluation conducted for a public or nonprofit program or organization. The critique should address central issues from the class, including a theory of change and research design standards. This assignment will be due via blackboard. The 2-4 page single-spaced (maximum) critique of the evaluation should be prepared in the following format:
 - 1) a brief description of the focus and findings;
 - 2) identification of the evaluation questions addressed;
 - 3) a brief summary of the research design and data collection methods used;
 - 4) a table that contains a systematic list of threats to the: measurement validity, measurement reliability, internal validity, and external validity. Note that the threats should be clearly presented, for example do not simply state "Hawthorne Effect," but clarify how/why that threat occurred; AND
 - 5) the threats should be labeled as those the authors acknowledged and addressed; threats the authors acknowledged but did not address; and those the authors did not acknowledge.

Please see a good example on Blackboard to emulate.

You can find a sample evaluation to critique for this assignment at the following websites, or you may contact a local organization to request a copy of one of their open-access evaluations. You should email the instructor for approval of your selected program for the critique before you conduct it. You should select only an evaluation that is a summative evaluation, with a logic model and evaluation questions.

<http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=78>

<http://www.urban.org/research>

https://www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-capabilities/case-studies#q1=&q2=&keyword=&p=1&sortby=contenttitle_sort&sortdir=asc&facet s=&datefacets=

Final Course Project – Developing an Applied Program Evaluation or Applied Evaluation Proposal (50%): In consultation with the instructor, each person will develop a proposal for a program evaluation OR an evaluation for a local organization. This assignment will include: a draft project proposal (1-2 paragraphs explaining whether you are doing an evaluation proposal or evaluation, the program you will evaluate, your evaluation questions, and your partners) (5%), your draft logic model for review (5%), your draft design matrix for review (5%), your evaluation presentation (10%), and a final 10-15 page paper (single-spaced) on your evaluation or evaluation proposal (25%).

Required Reading

Newcomer, Kathryn E., Hatry, Harry P., & Wholey, Joseph S. (2015). *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 1118893603.

Other required and recommended material not in the book required for purchase will be available on *Blackboard* or handed out in class.

Sessions

- I. COURSE INTRODUCTION
- II. SCOPING EVALUATIONS
- III. EVALUATION DESIGN
- IV. EVALUATION GOALS: ADDRESSING CAUSAL INFERENCE AND DISCOVERY
- V. THREATS TO VALIDITY, GENERALIZABILITY, RELIABILITY,

AND IMPLEMENTATION

- VI. DATA COLLECTION: ARCHIVAL DATA**
- VII. DATA COLLECTION: PERCEPTUAL DATA**
- VIII. QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING**
- IX. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS & REPORTING**
- X. DATA VISUALIZATION**
- XI. EVALUATION & DECISION-MAKING**
- XII. TRENDS IN EVALUATION**
- XIII. COURSE REVIEW AND FEEDBACK ON EVALUATION PROJECTS**
- XIV. STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**
- XV. FINAL PAPER DUE**