



PA 6315 Program Evaluation Spring Semester 2026

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Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 10am to 12pm or by appointment

Course Description:

Techniques and analytical methods of assessing governmental and nonprofit program and policy success. Emphasis is placed on strategies for impact assessment, measuring efficiency, examining short-term and long-term consequences, identifying both intended and unintended impacts, and the social, political and ethical context of evaluation.

Course Modality and Expectations

Instructional Mode	All instruction and testing will be online.
Course Platform	eLearning
Asynchronous Learning Guidelines	All Materials on eLearning

Learning Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the tools for measuring performance and evaluating the impact of a program or policy
- Critically evaluate the tools and strategies related to program evaluation
- Learn to develop meaningful evaluation questions
- Develop program logic models
- Design, collect, and analyze data for use in evaluation work
- Provide valuable insights and recommendations based on evaluation findings
- Gain ability to use evaluations to improve organizational processes

Format:

The course is completely online and asynchronous.

Required Texts:

Wholey, J. S., Hatry, H. P., & Newcomer, K. E. (2010). *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Vol. 19). John Wiley & Sons.

Other required readings will be available digitally through the eLearning course page.

Citation Style

For your papers, you should use either APA or Chicago style. Also, feel free to use the vast amount of resources on the Internet. Mainly, I expect students to be consistent in regards to

formatting, citations, and references. For more information, please refer to one of these style manuals.

Turabian, Kate L. 2007. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th Edition.

Grading Policy and Written Assignments

Evaluation Design Project and Presentation	35%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
eLearning Discussion Board Case Studies	25%
Total	100%

Grading for this course shall be structured as follows:

93-100=A, 90-92=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73-76=C, Below 73=F.

Course Requirements

1) eLearning Discussion Board Case Studies (25%)

You will be assigned to a small group this semester via eLearning to work on evaluation case studies (i.e., approximately 5 students in each group). One of your group members will be assigned as the discussion leader each week. This will create a smaller group environment as a means to enhance the discussion of the course materials.

Discussion Leader: You will be assigned to lead discussion approximately twice over the semester. You will share your answer on eLearning. After posting your answer, you are responsible to monitor the discussion board and answer questions from the other participants.

Discussion Members: You will provide comments on the answer provided by the discussion leader. In your response (approximately 250 words), please address the following: (1) assess the strengths, (2) assess the weaknesses, (3) provide at least one recommendation, and (4) ask at least one question to the discussion leader (i.e., clarity, content, etc.).

You may use AI tools for brainstorming ideas; however, ensure that your responses on eLearning are written in your own words.

2) Group Project: Evaluation Design Project and Presentation (35%)

Project: You will be assigned to a group (i.e., the same as your eLearning Discussion Board group). You will select an evaluation question of your choice. As a group, you will write and present an applied evaluation proposal. The proposal should be approximately 15 to 20 double-spaced pages in length. Also, your group will present your proposal to

the class at the end of the semester via the discussion board by uploading a PowerPoint with a transcript. In your evaluation design project, your group should provide: (1) an executive summary, (2) background information, (3) research questions, (4) proposed research design, (5) logic model, (6) proposed data collection plan, (7) proposed data analysis plan, (8) proposed presentation and utilization plan, (9) potential problems and fallback strategies, and (10) proposed budgets, budget narrative and work plan.

Presenters: We will not be using video or audio for our presentations; rather write a transcript of your speech into the “notes section” of your PowerPoint. The note section is directly below the slide. You will see, “Click to add notes.” Please do not copy and paste your paper into this section. Literally write what you plan to say. Please save the file as a .pptx and post your file on eLearning. Be prepared to answer questions from your classmates on eLearning.

Information for Non-Presenters: If you are not presenting that week, non-presenters should provide comments to at least two presentations (i.e., presenters don’t need to comment). Discussion board is located under the tab, “Discussion Board.” Please try to diffuse comments equally across all presenters. Presenters will respond to every comment.

In your feedback:

- (1) identify a strength
- (2) identify a potential weakness
- (3) provide a recommendation
- (4) ask a question

3) Exam 1 (20%)

Exam 1 will consist of questions based on the readings and discussion in the course. Additional details for Exam 1 will be posted on eLearning.

4) Exam 2 (20%)

Exam 2 will consist of questions based on the readings and discussion in the course. Additional details for Exam 2 will be posted on eLearning

Course Outline

Date	Topic	Due Dates
Part One: Evaluation Planning and Design		
Session 1: Week of January 19	Introduction to Program and Policy Evaluation	Self-Introduction via Discussion Board by Sun (1/25)
Session 2: Week of January 26	Outcome Logic Models and Performance Measurement	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (1/26) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (1/27 - 1/29) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (1/30 - 2/1)
Session 3: Week of February 2	Validity, Measurement, and Experimental Design	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (2/2) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (2/3 – 2/5) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (2/6 – 2/8)
Session 4: Week of February 9	Quasi-Experimental Design I	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (2/9) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (2/10 – 2/12) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (2/13 – 2/15)
Session 5: Week of February 16	Quasi-Experimental Design II	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (2/16) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (2/17 – 2/19) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (2/20 – 2/22)
Part Two: Practical Data Collection Procedures		
Session 6: Week of February 23	Recruiting Participants and Sampling	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (2/23) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (2/24 – 2/26) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (2/27 – 3/1)
Session 7: Week of March 2	Exam 1 via eLearning	EXAM 1 – Due Sunday March 8
Session 8: Week of March 9	Using Agency Records and Surveys	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (3/9) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (3/10 – 3/12) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (3/13 – 3/15)
Session 9: Week of March 16	Spring Break	
Session 10: Week of March 23	Conducting Interviews	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (3/23) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (3/24 – 3/26) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (3/27 – 3/29)
Part Three: Data Analysis		
Session 11: Week of March 30	Qualitative Data Analysis	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (3/30) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (3/31 – 4/2) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (4/3 – 4/5)
Session 12: Week of April 6	Quantitative Data Analysis	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (4/6) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (4/7 – 4/9) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (4/10 – 4/12)
Part Four: Use of Evaluations		
Session 13: Week of April 13	Stakeholders, Participation, and Communication Report Writing and Ethics	<u>Discussion Board Activity:</u> Leader posts answer by Mon (4/13) <i>Members</i> reply Tues – Thurs (4/14 – 4/16) Leader Responds by Fri – Sun (4/17 – 4/19) Group Project Due Sunday April 19!
Session 14: Week of April 20	Student Presentations (Groups 1 to 4)	Post PowerPoint by Mon (4/20) Discussion Tues – Thurs (4/21 – 4/23)
Session 15: Week of April 27	Student Presentations (Group 5 to 7)	Post PowerPoint by Mon (4/27) Discussion Tues – Thurs (4/28 – 4/30)
Session 16: Week of May 4	Exam 2 via eLearning (12:01am to Midnight)	EXAM 2- Due Sunday May 10

Session 1: Introduction to Program and Policy Evaluation

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 1 – Planning and Designing Useful Evaluations
Wholey Chapter 2 – Analyzing and Engaging Stakeholders
American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles For Evaluators

Session 2: Outcome Logic Models and Performance Measurement

Readings:

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide
Wholey Chapter 3 – Using Logic Models
Wholey Chapter 5 - Performance Measurement: Monitoring Program Outcomes

Session 3: Validity, Measurement, and Experimental Design

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 7 – Randomized Controlled Trails and Nonrandomized Designs
Bingham and Felbinger. 2002. *Evaluation in Practice*. Second Edition. Chatham House: New York. Chapter 2 “Evaluation Designs” and Chapter 3 “Measurement”

Session 4: Quasi-Experimental Design I: Pre/Post intervention No Control Group

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 6 – Comparison Group Design
Bingham and Felbinger, 2002. *Evaluation in Practice*. Second Edition. Chatham House: New York Chapter 11 “One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design”.
Duckart, J.P. (1998). An Evaluation of the Baltimore Community Lead Education and Reduction Corps (CLEARCorps) Program. *Evaluation Review*, 22: 373-402.

Session 5: Quasi-Experimental Design II: Nonequivalent Control Group

Readings:

Bingham and Felbinger, 2002. *Evaluation in Practice*. Second Edition. Chatham House: New York. Chapter 8 “Pretest-Posttest Comparison Group Designs”.
Retting and Kyrychenko. 2002. “Reductions in Injury Crashes Associated with Red Light Camera Enforcement in Oxnard, California.” *American Journal of Public Health* Vol. 92, No.11: 1822-1825.

Session 6: Recruiting Participants and Sampling

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 9 - Recruitment and Retention of Study Participants
Wholey Chapter 10 – Designing, Managing, and Analyzing Multisite Evaluations
Groves, *Survey Methodology*, Chapters 4, 7, 8 and 9.

Session 7: Take-Home Exam 1

Session 8: Using Agency Records and Surveys (Practical Data Collection Procedures)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 11 – Using Agency Records

Wholey Chapter 12 – Using Surveys

Wholey Chapter 15 – Using the Internet

Session 9: Spring Break

Session 10: Conducting Interviews and Case Studies (Practical Data Collection Procedures)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 8 - Conducting Case Studies

Wholey Chapter 16 – Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews

Wholey Chapter 17 – Focus Group Interviewing

Wholey Chapter 18 – Using Stories in Evaluation

Session 11: Qualitative Data Analysis (Data Analysis)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 19 - Qualitative Data Analysis

Session 12: Quantitative Data Analysis (Data Analysis)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 20 - Using Statistics in Evaluation

Session 13: Stakeholders, Participation, and Communication; Report Writing and Ethics

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 23 - Pitfalls in Evaluation

Wholey Chapter 24 - Providing Recommendations, Suggestions, and Options for Improvement

Wholey Chapter 25 - Writing for Impact

Group Project Due April 20 (Paper and PowerPoint)

Session 14: Student Presentations on eLearning

Session 15: Student Presentations on eLearning

Session 16: Take-Home Exam 2

Class Materials

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course, however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Class Attendance

The University's attendance policy requirement is that individual faculty set their course attendance requirements. Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Students who fail to attend class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. In some courses, instructors may have special attendance requirements; these should be made known to students during the first week of classes.

Class Participation

Regular class participation is expected. Students who fail to participate in class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures (and/or labs). Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Class Recordings

Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students.

Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the [credit/no credit](#) or [pass/fail](#) grading option and withdrawal from class.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.