



PA 6315 Program Evaluation Spring Semester 2015

Instructor: Dr. James R. Harrington
Time: Wed 7:00 to 9:45 pm
Class Location: SLC 2.203
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Office: GR 2.820
Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 10 to 12 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.

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
- Learn to think critically and know how to access resources

Format:

The course will meet from 7:00-9:45 P.M. in SLC 2.203 on Wednesday from January 14 through May 6. Class sessions will consist of small group activities, exercises, workshops, seminar-style discussions, and lectures.

Required Texts:

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

Frechtling, J. A. (2007). *Logic Modeling Methods in Program Evaluation* (Vol. 5). Jossey-Bass Inc Pub.

Other required readings will be available electronically via our eLearning course page and/or available for reserve at the Eugene McDermott Library.

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	40%
Two Impact Evaluation Critique Papers	15%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Class Preparation / Participation / In Class Activities	15%
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+, 73-77=C, Below 73=F.

Course Requirements

1) Class Preparation and Participation (15%)

Students are expected to do all required readings prior to class and must be able to demonstrate comprehension and adequate reflection. Please note, you are expected to go beyond summarizing the articles in classroom discussion. Students are encouraged to discuss current issues and their own real-world experience as it relates to the course discussion. Course discussion should be an interactive dialogue with the instructor and students that help contextualize the major themes and issues presented in the reading.

2) Two Impact Evaluation Critique Papers (15%)

You are expected to write a brief (5-6 page) critique of an evaluation. In your critique papers, you should: (1) provide a brief description of the focus and findings, (2) identify the evaluation questions, (3) summarize their research design and data collection techniques, and (4) provide a critique of their evaluation (i.e., internal validity, external validity, statistical conclusion validity, measurement issues, and potential improvements).

3) Evaluation Design Project and Presentation (40%)

You will write an applied evaluation proposal. The proposal should be approximately 15 to 20 pages in length. Also, you will present your proposal to the class at the end of the semester. In your evaluation design project, you 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. Further details for this evaluation proposal will be posted on eLearning.

4) Exam 1 (15%)

I will distribute the first exam on March 4. It will be due on March 11 by the beginning of class. The final will consist of five essay questions based on the readings and discussion in the course. Students are expected to write 1 to 2 pages on each question. Further details for Exam 1 will be posted on eLearning.

5) Exam 2 (15%)

I will distribute the second exam two weeks before the end of the semester. The final will consist of five essay questions based on the readings and discussion in the course. Students are expected to write 1 to 2 pages on each question. Further details for Exam 2 will be posted on eLearning.

Course & Instructor Policies

Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Students who fail to attend class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. Because of the importance of attendance and active participation in the design of the course, more than three absences mean that your academic credit for the course is in jeopardy. If for some reason, you must miss a class, please phone or e-mail faculty in advance. It is especially important not to miss class if possible given the course only meets once per week.

Late work

No late papers will be read (any exceptions owing to special circumstances must be arranged in advance of the due date).

Electronic Device

You will be allowed to take notes and access articles on your laptop or tablet. You are expected to use electronic devices for coursework-related activities. Please be respectful to your colleagues and resist the urge to surf the internet. Please remember to keep your cell phone ringer off during class time.

Disability Services

It is the policy and practice of The University of Texas at Dallas to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the Office of Student Access Ability (OSA) is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for a course, please discuss it with an OSA staff member and allow at least one Session's advanced notice. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact the Office of Student Access Ability for a confidential discussion.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty: Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting for credit any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, *Texas Code Annotated*.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one session. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of *TEC 51.911(b)*, and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

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 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.

Course Outline

Date	Topic	Due Dates
Part One: Evaluation Planning and Design		
Session 1: January 14	Introduction to Program and Policy Evaluation	
Session 2: January 21	Outcome Logic Models and Performance Measurement	
Session 3: January 28	Validity, Measurement, and Experimental Design	
Session 4: February 4	Quasi-Experimental Design I	
Session 5: February 11	Quasi-Experimental Design II	Critical Review # 1 Due
Part Two: Practical Data Collection Procedures		
Session 6: February 18	Recruiting Participants and Sampling	
Session 7: February 25	Using Agency Records and Surveys	Turn in Evaluation Proposal
Session 8: March 4	Conducting Interviews	Exam 1 Handed Out
Session 9: March 11	Case Studies	Exam 1 Due
March 18: Spring Break		
Part Three: Data Analysis		
Session 10: March 25	Qualitative Data Analysis	Critical Review # 2 Due
Session 11: April 1	Quantitative Data Analysis	
Session 12: April 8	Quantitative Data Analysis Workshop with STATA	Evaluation Peer Feedback
Part Four: Use of Evaluations		
Session 13: April 15	Stakeholders, Participation, and Communication	
Session 14: April 22	Report Writing and Ethics	Exam 2 Handed Out
Session 15: April 29	Student Presentations	Evaluation Project Due
Session 16: May 6	Student Presentations	Exam 2 Due

Session 1: Introduction to Program and Policy Evaluation (January 14)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 1 – Planning and Designing Useful Evaluations
Wholey Chapter 2 – Analyzing and Engaging Stakeholders
American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles For Evaluators
(<http://www.eval.org/p/cm/ld/fid=51>)

In-Class Exercise: Introductions

Session 2: Outcome Logic Models and Performance Measurement (January 21)

Readings:

Frechting – Logic Modeling Methods in Program Evaluation
Wholey Chapter 3 – Using Logic Models
Wholey Chapter 5 - Performance Measurement: Monitoring Program Outcomes
ICMA Center for Performance Measurement. 2001. "Why Performance Matters,"

In-Class Exercise: Designing an Outcome Logic Model

Session 3: Validity, Measurement, and Experimental Design (January 28)

Readings:

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

In-Class Exercise: Identifying Threats to Validity

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

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.

In-Class Exercise: Design a Quasi-Experimental Design

Session 5: Quasi-Experimental Design II: Nonequivalent Control Group (February 11)

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.

In-Class Exercise: Design a Quasi-Experimental Design

Session 6: Recruiting Participants and Sampling (February 18)

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.

Dillman, Don A., 2007, Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method, Second Edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Chapters 1, 4 and 5 (eLearning).

In-Class Exercise: Develop Recruiting and Sampling Strategies

Session 7: Using Agency Records and Surveys (Practical Data Collection Procedures) (February 25)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 11 – Using Agency Records

Wholey Chapter 12 – Using Surveys

Wholey Chapter 15 – Using the Internet

In-Class Exercise: Develop Survey and Identify Potential Agency Records

Session 8: Conducting Interviews (Practical Data Collection Procedures) (March 4)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 16 – Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews

Wholey Chapter 17 – Focus Group Interviewing

Wholey Chapter 18 – Using Stories in Evaluation

In-Class Exercise: Develop Interviewing Strategy

Session 9: Case Studies (Practical Data Collection Procedures) (March 11)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 8 - Conducting Case Studies

Wholey Chapter 13 – Using Trained Observer Ratings

Wholey Chapter 14 – Collecting Data in the Field

In-Class Exercise: Develop Case Study Strategy

Session 10: Qualitative Data Analysis (Data Analysis) (March 25)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 19 - Qualitative Data Analysis

In-Class Exercise: Develop Qualitative Data Analysis Proposal

Session 11: Quantitative Data Analysis (Data Analysis) (April 1)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 20 - Using Statistics in Evaluation

In-Class Exercise: Develop Quantitative Data Analysis Proposal

Session 12: Quantitative Data Analysis Workshop with STATA (Data Analysis) (April 8)

Session 13: Stakeholders, Participation, and Communication (April 15)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 23 - Pitfalls in Evaluation

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

Wholey Chapter 25 - Writing for Impact

In-Class Exercise: Recommendations to Stakeholder Activity

Session 14: Report Writing and Ethics (April 22)

Readings:

Wholey Chapter 26 - Contracting for Evaluation Projects and Services

Wholey Chapter 27 - Use of Evaluation in Government: The Politics of Evaluation

Wholey Chapter 28 - Evaluation Challenges, Issues, and Trends

Morris, Michael and Lynette R. Jacobs. 2000. "You Got a Problem with That?" Evaluation Review, 24(4):384-406.

In-Class Exercise: Wrap-up

Session 15: Student Presentations (April 29)

Session 16: Student Presentations (May 6)

The instructor reserves the right to make reasonable alterations to the syllabus.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.