

Program Evaluation: An Introduction to Methods and Practice
Tuesday 7:40- 10:20pm
15:291:520:01

Instructor: Lindsay Rechtman, MPH, DrPh (c), CHES
Class: Murray Hall, MU-208
Office Hours: Tuesday 6:30-7:30pm, GSE room 304
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Required Textbook: Fitzpatrick, J.L., Sanders, J.R., & Worthen, B.R. (2011). *Program evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (2010). *The program evaluation standards: How to assess evaluations of educational programs* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Resources on course web-page SAKAI

Course Content

This is an introductory, graduate level course on the history, philosophy, and major approaches commonly used to systematically evaluate educational and social programs. The course topics include the basic uses and purposes behind program evaluation, taxonomy of evaluation models (or approaches), descriptions of several important evaluation approaches, and guidelines for planning, conducting, and using evaluations. In addition, you will learn about the guiding principles for professional evaluators as specified by the American Evaluation Association.

Course Structure and Requirements

My goal is to make your experience in this course productive, practical and personally meaningful. To accomplish this, it is important that you understand how the course will be structured and what my expectations from you are. Your active and consistent involvement in the class is a major requirement of this course. This will not be a lecture-only course. Your performance in this course will be evaluated based on your participation and a series of ongoing assignments scheduled throughout the semester.

Class Participation	5%
Reflection Papers/Written Assignments	30%
Midterm	15%
Collaborative Evaluation Proposal	25%
Collaborative Proposal Presentation	15%
Individual Proposal Addendum (this will serve as your final exam)	10%

Class Participation (5%)

You are allowed no more than one unexcused absence. Additional absences will result in a lower grade. However, merely attending all classes is not sufficient. You must actively participate in class in order to earn these points. Before attending class, make sure you have read all assigned readings and are prepared to participate in whole-class and small-group discussion. If you do miss a class for any reason, it is your responsibility to contact your classmates and find out what you missed.

Reflection Papers/Written Assignments (10 total: 30%)

Case Study: A major part of understanding and practicing program evaluation is to familiarize yourself with the Program Evaluation Standards. During class we will discuss each standard and examine case studies of the standards in practice. In groups you will discuss how the standard was addressed in each case and debate whether or not the standard was met. Based on these discussions, each individual will complete a brief report on the specific standard and how it applies to the case. *Evaluation Reflections:* We will spend time discussing various approaches to evaluation. As part of your written assignments you will be asked to reflect on what makes these approaches unique as well as the benefits and limitations of the specific evaluation approaches. *Evaluation Design:* Throughout the semester you will be working on components of your evaluation proposal. Each week you will turn in a brief paper focusing on one aspect of the proposal.

Collaborative Evaluation Proposal (25%)

One way of getting acquainted with the details of an evaluation is to plan one yourself. For this assignment, you will work with a classmate to identify a program in your field that warrants an evaluation and develop an evaluation proposal that provides the details of the program, relevant literature in the field, your choice of evaluation methods, and an overall plan for implementing the evaluation. Proposals should range between 15-20 double spaced pages, and include at least 2 instruments that you have developed jointly. One instrument should be a survey; the second instrument type is up to your team. I will be available to discuss your topic and provide guidance and feedback. Evaluation proposals cannot and should not be written overnight, especially during the learning process.

Collaborative Proposal Presentation (15%)

For the benefit of all class members, you and your partner will present your evaluation proposal in class. These presentations should be approximately 15 minutes long with an additional 5 minutes allotted for questions. The main purpose of these presentations is to be able to communicate your plan briefly, yet effectively, to an audience that may or may not be familiar with your area of interest. The questions posed after the presentation will help you in considering alternatives and perspectives that you might have overlooked.

Individual Proposal Addendum (15%)

Based on feedback from the class on your presentation as well as my feedback on your written proposal, you will each submit a reflective addendum to your proposal detailing what you need to revise and why. In addition, I will pose one question to your team to answer in regards to your evaluation proposal. The addendum should be no more than 3 double-spaced pages and will serve as your final exam.

Course Grade

Your grade in the course will be calculated based on the following scale:

A	90.00-100.00
B+	85.00-89.99
B	80.00-84.99
C+	75.00-79.99
C	70.00-74.99
F	less than 69.99

Technology in Class

Use of laptops in class is not only permitted, but also desirable when you start working on your evaluation project. You may find it useful to use a computer while working collaboratively in designing your evaluation. However, the use of technology to browse the internet, facebook and e-mail during class is strongly discouraged, as is the use of cell phones. Please put cell phones on silent mode during class. If you must take an urgent call, please take it outside the classroom. Violation of this policy will impact your overall grade.

Assignments

All written assignments must be typed, in 12 point font, and be double spaced. Since there are a number of written assignments, it is very important that they are turned in on the day they are due. Late assignments will receive a lower grade unless you have made arrangements with me in advance. Assignments may be turned in via the SAKAI drop box, or a hard copy may be turned in during class.

Academic Integrity Policy

Please familiarize yourself with the University policy on academic integrity.

<http://senate.rutgers.edu/FinalInterimAcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf>

It is essential that any direct quotation or paraphrasing of ideas be accompanied by a reference citation. As well, please avoid borrowing ideas from internet sources. If at any point during the semester you needs help, please see me or other appropriate services at Rutgers.

Meeting Date	Topic	Assigned Reading	Homework (to be turned in the following week)
9/4: Week 1	Introduction to Evaluation	Chapters 1 & 2	Reflection Paper 1 (Case Report)
9/11: Week 2	Evaluating Evaluations and Alternative Models Objectives-Oriented Evaluation Utility Standards	Chapters 4 & 6	Reflection Paper 2 (Case Report)
9/18: Week 3	Expertise and Consumer-Oriented Evaluation Feasibility Standards Propriety Standards *Proposal Teams selected by today*	Chapter 5	Reflection Paper 3 (Evaluation Reflection)
9/25: Week 4	No Class- Yom Kippur Decision Oriented Approaches Evaluation Accountability Standards *Information will be posted on SAKAI*	Chapter 7	Reflection Paper 4 (Evaluation Reflection)
10/2: Week 5	Participant-Oriented Evaluation Comparative Analysis of Evaluation Accuracy Standards	Chapters 8 & 10	Reflection Paper 5 (Evaluation Reflection)
10/9: Week 6	MIDTERM *Program selected by today*	Chapters 9 & 10	Program Description
10/16: Week 7	Clarifying the Evaluation Request & Responsibilities Analyzing the Evaluation Context Identifying & Selecting Questions	Chapters 11,12,13	Evaluation Worksheet 1
10/23: Week 8	Planning How to Conduct Evaluations	Chapter 14	Evaluation Worksheet 2
10/30: Week 9	Design, Sampling and Cost Choices	Chapter 15	Evaluation Worksheet 3
11/6: Week 10	Data Sources, Methods, Analysis and Interpretation *Evaluation Proposal Update*	Chapter 16	Survey Tool Worksheet
11/13: Week 11	Data Sources, Methods, Analysis and Interpretation (cont)	Chapter 16	
11/20:	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING (Thursday Classes Meet)		
11/27: Week 12	Reporting and Using Evaluation Information Ethics *Collaborative Evaluation Proposal Due*	Chapters 3& 17	
12/4: Week 13	Collaborative Proposal Presentations		
12/11: Week 14	Collaborative Proposal Presentations *Individual Proposal Addendum Due*		
12/18: Week 16	Collaborative Proposal Presentations		