

## **Program Evaluation: An Introduction to Methods and Practice**

(15:291:520)

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### **Course Goals:**

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. You will also learn about the University's guidelines for the use of human subjects in research and evaluation studies.

### **Course Text:**

Fitzpatrick, J.L., Sanders, J.R., Worthen, B.R. (2011), Program Evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson Education

Additional Readings are can be found on the ecollege website under doc sharing.

### **Technology Requirements**

You need very reliable access to the internet to successfully complete this course. Please make sure to have a reliable back-up plan in place (local library, friend's house, coffee shop) in case your primary access is not available when you plan to work on the class. Rutgers has a plethora of options for access on terminals (libraries, computing centers) and most buildings have wireless access for a laptop. The final project must be completed in powerpoint with a voiceover. Please make sure that you have access to powerpoint as well as the ability to record your voice.

### **Office Hours**

As this is an online course, I have set-up a discussion area on our ecollege website called "Virtual Office Hours." Rather than email me questions regarding the course, please start a discussion thread and I will answer your questions right online so everyone can benefit from your inquiry. Of course, if your question is personal in nature (you would like explanation of a specific grade, you have a personal issue) please privately email me. I

Please make sure that ecollege has your most updated email address. I frequently use email to communicate with students and pull email address directly from the ecollege system each time.

### **Requirements**

% of Grade	Assignment Description
5%	Syllabus agreement, quick bio, and LinkedIn
5%	IRB certification (take the course, the test, and send me your confirmation)
60%	Class discussions
30%	Final Project (powerpoint and voiceover)

### Surviving the Course:

- 1) What you get out of this course (knowledge and your grade) depends on what you put into it. My best advice to you is to go in seeking knowledge and a good grade will follow.
- 2) As this is a three credit graduate level course you should plan to put in approximately 10 hours per week on this course and then extra time needed to complete your final project. You will need to budget your time between reading, preparing, actively participating in online discussions and completing homework assignments. I make it as easy as possible as all work can be completed on your own time and there are no mandatory check-in times but I do hold you to all deadlines.
- 3) If you find yourself dealing with an unexpected personal situation, please let me know so we can work out a plan for you to complete the class. Please do not disappear for a length of time. And please do not push it with excuses; “I had too many parties to attend this weekend” or “you have no idea what it is like to be a busy student” will not go well.
- 4) Do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments online – it just never goes well
- 5) Please understand that I am not qualified in any way to help you resolve any technical difficulties you may experience with ecollege. It is always best for you to contact the ecollege student hotline for assistance (most problems usually occur when students attempt to submit assignments and posts at the last minute).

### Assignments

1. Quick Bio: I really enjoy getting to know my students and learn what they bring to the class from previous experiences.  
Assignment: In our ecollege class, under the **Course Home** header you will see a **Quick Bio** tab. This is set up as a threaded discussion so please post a short bio.
2. Syllabus  
I put a tremendous amount of time into creating our syllabus and consider it our contact for the curriculum of our course, explanation of assignments, due dates, and grading structures. Please review the syllabus taking note of all details. Assignment: Copy our syllabus into a new word document. Read the blurb I have written at the bottom of the page. Type your name at the bottom of the last page. Save the document and drop it into the **Syllabus drop box** under the Drop box tab (off top navigation bar) on our ecollege web site. I will take this as evidence that you have read and understand the syllabus (and you will also get some practice using the drop box if you have not done so before).
3. Connect on LinkedIn  
While social media is beyond the scope of this course, I would like your career to benefit from my expertise starting immediately. LinkedIn is growing and can be a tremendous resource for job seekers. If you do not already have an account, please sign-up for one (it is free). Please find me: [www.linkedin.com/pub/jennifer-gardella/2a/9b7/408/](http://www.linkedin.com/pub/jennifer-gardella/2a/9b7/408/) and connect.

Grading: Grading: Quick bio, syllabus, and LinkedIn will be graded as completed by deadline (100 points) or not complete (0 points) and will be worth 5% of your final grade and are due by Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>.

4. IRB Certification  
An important pre-requisite before conducting any evaluation study or research project is to participate in education regarding the regulation, policies, and ethical standards governing the protection of human subjects. You are required to complete the Human Subjects Certification Program offered online by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. This is available at <http://orsp.rutgers.edu/Humans/hscpletter.php>. Take the online course, and submit a copy of the letter to the drop box by Sunday, September 15

## Final Project

The final project is a fictitious evaluation management plan. This should be a cohesive plan encompassing all aspects of the course. You are submitting only a powerpoint presentation. Please follow directions for powerpoint presentation very carefully.

Over the course of the semester you will be given the opportunity to share with the class parts of your project and receive feedback from your peers (and me!) with constructive suggestions as you start to plan. Use feedback and other things you have learned to build a cohesive project.

You are expected to use your text, readings, and classroom experience to enhance your work. Please do not define terms but relate them to topics to demonstrate understanding. Most importantly, justify your rationale for each decision.

Triple check and proofread your work ensuring appropriate and excellent writing and grammar is used. APA style must be strictly followed.

### THE POWERPOINT:

You should present your power point as if you were presenting your proposal to evaluate a program. You should not read your slides but they should layout as a guide to your thoughts.

Audio for power point must be one continuous audio file (not one individual audio file for each slide). Please make sure that you have the capability (hardware and software) for the audio well in advance of sitting down to start the project. Your project must play like a movie. This can be accomplished by either downloading it to YouTube or recording it right in Ecollege.

Final rubric for this assignment will be posted in doc sharing on our ecollege website

**Final Presentation Due by December 16<sup>th</sup> at Midnight.**

**All presentations must be submitted to the drop box on our ecollege website or recorded directly in ecollege using the Live feature**

### **Submitting Assignments**

We do not have that many assignments to submit as I have rolled most of them into discussion questions. However, when submitting an assignment, please make sure to only submit assignments in the drop box. If you submit an assignment in any other manner (another location on our site, via email) I cannot provide feedback and it becomes difficult for me to grade.

Should you submit an assignment after the due date, your grade will drop by 25% for each day late. Prior approval for a late assignment to receive full credit needs an acceptable reason: illness (with note from physician), family emergency, or religious holiday. In these cases, arrangements should be made with me as soon as possible for alternative due date. I realize that certain unexpected life situations are stressful, so the sooner I am informed of an unusual circumstance the greater my chances are of helping you navigate the course.

### **Participation**

As with any graduate level course, discussions are a critical part of your learning experience. You are expected to be an active participant in all discussion threads by bringing issues, questions, concerns, and experiences to all online discussions. There are no seats in the back of room!

Discussions will prompt you to first read some specified material and then ask you to post a single response to a question. Your goal is to demonstrate that you have read and pondered the material. For each discussion please contribute one original post to these discussions and answer any follow-ups your original post receives (from me or your classmates) by Sunday at midnight. You should spend some time reading and commenting on the posts of your classmates. At the conclusion of each discussion I highly recommend you revisiting and reading all submissions as the ideas will be of great help to you. You will notice that many of our discussions are directly related to your final paper and the ideas of your classmates will be invaluable as you complete that project. Please be respectful and professional when responding to others.

**\*\*Important tip\*\*** I highly recommend composing your posts in a word processing program first, then cutting and pasting on the discussion thread in ecollege. Writing directly to ecollege presents the risk of a technology failure or lock-up.

Each discussion has a deadline for your original post. All substantive comments (by me or your peers) to your original post need to be addressed when the week closes out. Late entries are not accepted. After the deadline each discussion should be in a “read only” state so you can review.

Each discussion will be graded on a scale of 0-100. Full credit is given for original responses which demonstrate that you have read, studied and pondered the information and topic/question. I search for evidence that you have digested the applicable information. Initial posts should be no more than 300 words and all deadlines must be met. Your classmates and I may pose a question/comment under your original which must be addressed by the end of the week.

### **Grading:**

A: 90-100	B+: 87-89	B: 80-86	C+: 77-79
C: 73-76.9	C- 70-72.9	D: 60-70	F: <60

Please bring all questions regarding grades to my attention within 24 hours after receiving your grade.

**Tentative Course Schedule**  
**Please always check ecollege for our weekly plan**

<b>Week /Date</b>	<b>Topic and Class Activities</b>	<b>Readings/Assignment Due</b>
1 / September 2	Introduction to Evaluation Alternative Views of Evaluation Evaluation Standards	Fitzpatrick, Chapters 1 -3 pp 499-504
2 / September 9	Alternate Views of Evaluation First Approaches: Expertise and Consumer-Oriented How to evaluate a Case Study	Fitzpatrick, Chapter 4&5 Reading: Dewey, et.al IRB certification Due
3 / September 16	Program Oriented Evaluation	Fitzpatrick, Chapter 6 Reading : Weiss, et.al.
4 / September 23	Decision Oriented Evaluation	Fitzpatrick, Chapter 7 Reading : Eddy & Berry
5 / September 30	Participant Oriented Approaches	Fitzpatrick, Chapter 8 Reading : House
6 / October 7	Cultural Competence & Capacity Building Comp Analysis of Evaluation Approaches	Fitzpatrick, Chapter 9 Reading : Birman
7/ October 14	Comparative Analysis of Approaches	Fitzpatrick, Chapter 10
8/ October 21	Clarifying the Evaluation Request and Responsibilities Setting Boundaries	Fitzpatrick, Chapters 11, 12, Reading : Birman
9 / October 28	Identifying and Selecting the Evaluation Questions	Fitzpatrick, Chapters 13 Reading: Gajda & Jewiss
10 / November 4	Planning how to conduct evaluations	Fitzpatrick, Chapter 14
11 / November 11	Collecting Evaluative Information: Design, Sampling...	Fitzpatrick: Chapter 15 & 16
12 / November 18	Surveys/Survey monkey Interviews	Reading: RMcMillan; Solomon Reading : 2 Seidman articles
13 / November 18	Reporting Evaluation Results	Fitzpatrick: Chapter 17 Reading: Stoneberg; Rudner
14 / December 2	No Child Left Behind Using Standardized Test Scores Steph's story	
15 / December 9	Meta-Evaluation	

### **Students with Special Needs**

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and require academic accommodations or modifications, please notify me immediately. I will make every effort to support your work and success in this class.

### **Academic Integrity**

I expect that you have read and will comply with the university's standards on academic integrity which can be found here:

[http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI\\_Policy\\_9\\_01\\_2011.pdf](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf) . Appropriate action will be taken should you be caught submitting dishonest work. All assignments are to be completed on your own unless specified as a group activity. All references to another's work must be properly cited.

I have read and understand all requirements of Program Evaluation. I understand it is my responsibility to find reliable internet access, audio capability for PowerPoint presentation and to manage my schedule to accommodate all deadlines.

Signed:

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