

255:602 Inquiry II

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3 Credits

Instructor: Allison Roda	Day & Time: Thursday 4:50pm to 7:30pm
Phone Number: 717.823.8717 (cell)	Location: Lucy Stone Hall, Room B-110
Email: akr2107@tc.columbia.edu	Office Hrs: By appointment only
Mode of Instruction:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seminar	<input type="checkbox"/> Online

Learning goals

In this class students will:

- a) Be exposed to a multi-dimensional view of evaluation and its uses as social enterprise in which technical merit is only one important aspect of quality.
- b) Develop an appreciation for alternative approaches to evaluation and a critical understanding of the arguments in favor and against various approaches.
- c) Be introduced to concrete methods for developing and conducting useful evaluations including: getting an evaluation started, selecting a research design, collecting data, analyzing data and disseminating findings.

Course catalogue description

Education leaders are constantly trying to produce better results by improving policies, programs, and practices. This requires that they understand what is working or whom, and why. Program evaluation is a systematic approach to collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer these basic questions about practices, policies, and programs, and, ultimately, to determine the relative value of alternatives. This course provides students with a broad introduction to evaluation with an emphasis on understanding the multiple approaches and acquiring the practical skills and knowledge required to conduct evaluations that produce useful information that will be used. Equal attention is devoted to theoretical issues and practical problems.

Prerequisite: Admission in the Ed.D. program at Rutgers GSE.

Class materials/ Textbooks:

Required Texts

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

Patton, M. Q. (2001). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. 3rd edition Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Required readings

- Chatterji, M., Kwon, Y., & Sng, C. (2006). Gathering evidence on an after-school supplemental instruction program: Design challenges and early findings in light of NCLB. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 14(12), 1-46.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. (2011). Choosing a mixed methods design. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miller, S. & Connolly, P. (2012). A randomized controlled trial evaluation of *Time to Read*, a volunteer tutoring program for 8- to 9-year-olds. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 35, 23-37.
- Luttrell, W. (Winter 2000). "'Good Enough' Methods for Ethnographic Research." *Harvard Educational Review*, 70 (4), 499-523.

SAKAI Access

This course will be delivered partially online through a course management system named SAKAI. SAKAI will allow you to engage in discussions about the class, access readings, and submit your assignments online. To access this course on SAKAI you will need access to the Internet and a supported Web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari). If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or need to report a problem with SAKAI visit the main website at <http://sakai.rutgers.edu>.

Grading and Activities:

Class Participation (10%)

Class participation is crucial to your understanding and application of course content. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and to participate in class activities.

Evaluation Matrix and Critique (15%)

You are to select for critique 10 abstracts of evaluations of education programs, which can be from your own work environment, professional journals (e.g., *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, or *American Journal of Evaluation*), and government reports (e.g., the National Impact Evaluation of Head Start). As we proceed throughout the semester you will use an evaluation matrix that you design to examine, compare and critique key ideas about program design and reporting. You are to write a 5-8 page critique of the program evaluations, which identifies the design used, methods, and your views on how the program evaluation could be improved. Throughout the critique you should use class readings to support your argument and you are to conclude the critique with how you might approach a similar evaluation(s) in your own context.

Matrix and Critique Due: 10/9/2013

Collecting, Analyzing, and Presenting Evaluation Data (25%)

Evaluations provide information to clients about how to improve policies, programs, and practices. This assignment provides an opportunity for you to practice developing an evaluation, collecting data, analyzing data, and communicating key findings of a program evaluation to a particular audience. Working together we will develop an approach to evaluating the National Center of Education Statistics,

ECLS-K dataset. We will begin by identifying and organizing the stakeholders and then identifying the goals of the evaluation. A plan to accomplish those goals will be developed and carried out to provide practical evaluation experience. We will collect and analyze data, and present the results. As necessary, the instructor will role play for various stakeholders. When we reach the data collection stage, students will be asked to select either quantitative or qualitative methods. At that time we will divide into smaller groups with each group responsible for a part of the data collection and analysis. After analyses are completed, each group will prepare a presentation of their substantive findings for the class and stakeholders. This presentation should be supported by a PowerPoint or other multimedia presentation. In developing the presentation, you must concisely, clearly, and convincingly convey the most important things the audience should learn. Groups are to submit a copy of the presentation for grading in the assignment tool in SAKAI.

Presentations of findings will be scheduled weeks 14 and 15 and are due the Friday following presentation – either 12/5/2013 or 12/12/2013.

Evaluation Plan (50%)

You are to prepare a plan for an evaluation related to some aspect of your work. This evaluation plan should be approximately 25 pages and include three parts:

Part I

- a description of the policy, program, or practices to be evaluated including the goals and objectives, who it serves, and where it is implemented,
- a literature review that summarizes what is known about implementation and outcomes of policies, programs, or practices like the one you propose to evaluate, and studies that may provide a model for your evaluation,

Part II

- a specification of the theoretical framework that will guide your evaluation and a logic model for the policy or program,
- sampling strategy, sample selection and recruitment,
- evaluation design including a justification and explanation of the methods you will use to evaluate the process and outcomes of this program,
- a detailed description of the data collection procedures (including measures and their properties),

Part III

- a detailed explanation of the data analysis methods that should be aligned with the data that is being collected, and
- a description of the audiences for the evaluation, and a communications strategy to ensure use of the evaluation findings. That is, we expect you to plan for use of the evaluation right from the start in your plan.
- “Evaluation Plan on a Page”

Throughout your evaluation plan it must be evident how the design, data collection, analysis and reporting procedures will ensure that the evaluation provides the necessary information for program, policy or practice improvement. To ensure that you make adequate progress on your evaluation plan, drafts of sections are due throughout the semester as noted by dates below:

- Draft of Part 1 with as much detail as possible (10%). Due: 10/2/2013
- Draft of Part 2 with as much detail as possible (10%). Due: 10/30/2013
- Draft of Part 3 with as much detail as possible (10%). Due: 11/27/2013
- Refinement of evaluation design plan and filling in of sections (10%). Due: 12/11/2013

Due: 12/11/2013

Evaluation of Written Work

These qualities will be valued in your work:

- Responsiveness to the task or question: Are you fulfilling the requirements of the assignment?
- Clarity and organization of writing.
- Conciseness: Try to write in a non-repetitious way.
- Completeness and depth: Present the necessary amount of detail to support your points. Write or present as though your audience is not an expert on your topic, and in a way that demonstrates depth of analysis of the topic.
- Independent judgment: Don't simply repeat information presented by others. Critically evaluate strengths and weaknesses and support opinions with your own reasons.
- Relevance: Connections between your work and the content and organization of this class should be clear.
- Attention to professional style: Papers should be typed or word-processed and follow APA format.
- Timeliness – All work is due on the date assigned. We understand the demands of working professionals so if you need an extension of time on an assignment, please contact one of us in advance of the due date to discuss a possible extension.

Letter Grade Equivalents

93-100	A
88-92	B+
83-87	B
78-82	C+
73-77	C
68-72	D+
60-67	D
Below 60	F

Academic Integrity Policy:

The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>). Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_2013.pdf

Office of Disability Services:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Course Schedule:

Tentative list of topics for discussions (by week)

	Class	Topic	Readings	Activities/ Assignments
	1 9/4/2013	Introduction to Program Evaluation Purposes of evaluation Overview of class requirements What do you want to learn more about as a researcher-leader?	• Fitzpatrick, Chapters 1 -3	Getting back into the inquiry groove
	2 9/11/2013	Focusing an Evaluation Alternate Views of Evaluation First Approach: Expertise and Consumer-Oriented	• Fitzpatrick, Chapter 4&5	IRB Certification Due
	3 9/18/13	Program Oriented Evaluation/ Decision Oriented Evaluation	• Fitzpatrick, Chapter 6&7 • Miller & Connolly pp1-3	
	4 9/25/2013	Participant Oriented Approaches/ Cultural Competence & Capacity Building	• Patton, Ch. 3 • Fitzpatrick, Chapter 8&9	
Evaluation Designs	5 10/2/2013	Measuring Outcomes and Summative Evaluation What to look for when critiquing summative evaluations Comparative Analysis of Evaluation Approaches	• Fitzpatrick, Chapter 10 • Miller & Connolly pp4-7	Part 1 of evaluation plan due
	6 10/9/2013	Evaluation Design Part 1 Sampling and collecting qualitative data Focus groups	• Patton, Chapters 5- 7	Evaluation matrix and critiques due
	7 10/16/2013	Data collection - part 2 Intro to Analyzing qualitative data in a formative evaluation part 1	• Patton Ch. 8	In-classwork on qual data
	8 10/23/2013	Qualitative data analysis part 2 Ongoing questions about qualitative inquiry and its uses in evaluation	• Luttrell, 2000	In-classwork on qual data
	9 10/30/2013	Evaluation design Part 2 Assessing Program Impact/Evaluating Outcomes: Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs	• Fitzpatrick: Chapter 13&14	In-classwork on qual data Part II of evaluation plan through data collection due

	Class	Topic	Readings	Activities/ Assignments
	10 11/6/2013	Collecting and Analyzing Quantitative Data in Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitzpatrick: Chapter 15&16 • Miller & Connolly 7-15 	In-classwork on ECLS-K data
	11 11/13/2013	Analyzing Quantitative Data in Evaluation		In-classwork on ECLS-K data
	12 11/20/2013	Collecting and Analyzing Evaluation Data via Mixed methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creswell & Clark (2011) 	In-classwork on qual/quant data
	13 11/25/2013 Thursday classes on Tuesday of Thanksgiving week	Analysis and Critique of a Mixed Methods Evaluation Modeling how to write an evaluation research plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chatterji et al. 	Part III of Evaluation Plan due
	14 12/4/2013	Wrapping it Up: Interpreting, and using results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patton, Chapter 9 	In-class evaluation presentations
	15 12/11/2013	Social-Political Contexts of Evaluation Role of the Evaluator, Presenting and communicating findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitzpatrick: Chapter 17 	In class evaluation presentations Evaluation Plans Due