NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE
PADM-GP 2171/GPH-GU 2371 Section 2
Program Analysis and Evaluation
Tuesday 4:55pm – 6:35pm, Tisch LC 9
Professor Rachel Swaner

Contact Information:  Email: RLS200@nyu.edu
Phone: 917-445-7219
Office hours: by appointment

Course Pre-requisites
Students must have completed (or waived) P11.1011 (Statistical Methods) and P11.1022 (Introduction to Public Policy), as this course builds on these introductory course.

Course Description and Objectives
Program evaluation is a critical component in designing and operating effective programs. Evaluations supply information to program managers and policymakers that can assist them in making decisions about which programs to fund, modify, expand or eliminate. Evaluation can be an accountability tool for program managers and funders. This course serves as an introduction to evaluation methodology and evaluation tools commonly used to assess publicly funded programs. Students will become familiar with the concepts, methods and applications of evaluation research; learn how to read evaluation research critically; understand how to use evaluation results to anticipate or improve program performance; and be able to propose an appropriate evaluation plan to assess the implementation and effectiveness of a program.

Course Structure
The class includes lecture, readings, and discussion. There is no specific policy or sector focus to this course, as evaluation tools are used in all policy areas and by public (government) and private (foundation) funders as well as by public and private sector program managers. Students are encouraged to relate the general material of the course to their specific policy interests.

Readings
The required textbook for this course is:


In addition to the required text, you will have 18 additional readings, which are mostly articles. All of the articles are available through Bobst electronic journals. There are also 24 additional optional readings, all of which can be downloaded.

There is a sizable body of literature, which deals with program evaluation and policy analysis. The journal Evaluation Review (previously Evaluation Quarterly) is an especially rich source on the subject, as is the Evaluation Studies Review Annual (Sage, more or less annually). Evaluation Practice, Evaluation and Program Planning, New Directions for Program Evaluation, and Journal of Policy Analysis and Management are also recommended. There are also evaluation
journals for specific fields, including *Evaluation and the Health Professions*, *Evaluation in Education*, and *Evaluation and Human Services*.

**Course requirements**
Class preparation and participation are important for this “tool based” course. Students need to read required text and articles in advance and be prepared to participate in class discussion. In addition to class participation, students will write three brief memos, complete one take-home exam, and write a final evaluation design paper. *Note: the following descriptions are not enough to complete the assignments adequately. More detailed instructions for each assignment will follow.*

**Midterm Examination**
There will be a take-home essay style examination due **March 27**.

**Program Statement**
Feb 21
Students will submit a short (1 - 2 pages) description of a selected program, indicating the problem to be addressed by the intervention, the intended beneficiaries or targets of the program, the intended benefits, and the causal model/program theory underlying the program. This memo is a preliminary step in writing the final design paper.

**Measurement Memo**
Apr 10
Using the program model developed in the first memo, students will specify the research questions, operational definitions, and specific measures they would use in an evaluation of the program.

**OPTIONAL Evaluation Review (for extra credit)**
May 8
It is important to become a good consumer of evaluations, if not a good evaluator oneself. Review one of three selected evaluation articles. In 2 - 3 pages, students will summarize the type of evaluation described, its design and methods, and write a critique of the evaluation.

**Final Paper: Outcome Evaluation Design**
May 15
The final paper builds on earlier assignments. Students will design a comprehensive evaluation plan for their chosen programs. The proposal will focus on outcome or impact evaluation but will include a brief section on process evaluation as well. Students are encouraged to work in groups.
Relative Weight of Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two memos</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Course Schedule

Part I: Planning and Implementation

Jan 24
Class 1: Introduction to the course and the field of program evaluation; purposes and stakeholders.
- Weiss Chapters 1 & 2

Jan 31
Class 2: Pre-program evaluation activities: needs assessment
- Review Weiss Chapter 2

Feb 7
Class 3: Explicating and assessing program theory
- Weiss Chapter 3
- Chen, W. & Lin (1997). Evaluating the process and outcome of a garbage reduction program in Taiwan (CS)
- Optional: Cooksy, G. & Kelly (2001). The program logic model as an integrative framework for a multimethod evaluation (CS)

Feb 14
Class 4: Process evaluation, formative evaluation and implementation analysis
- Dewa, Horgan, Russell & Keates, What? Another form? The process of measuring and comparing service utilization in a community mental health program model (CS)
- Optional: Heinz & Grant (2003). A process evaluation of a parenting group for parents with intellectual disabilities (CS)

Feb 21  
**Class 5: Program Monitoring: Real World Example**  
- *Program memo due (send electronically)*

Part II: Measuring the Impacts of Programs

Feb 28  
**Class 6: Outcome/Impact evaluation: design, internal and external validity**  
- Weiss Chapter 8  
- *Program memo returned*

Mar 6  
**Class 7: Outcome/Impact evaluation: randomized experimental design**  
- Weiss Chapter 9  
- Seron, C., Ryzin, G.V., Frankel, M., & Kovath, J. (2001). The impact of legal counsel on outcomes for poor tenants in New York City’s housing court: results of a randomized experiment. (CS)  
- *Optional*: Bauman et al, The influence of a family program on adolescent tobacco and alcohol use (CS)  
- *Optional*: Killias, Martin, Aebi, Marcelo and Ribeaud, Denis (2000). Does community service rehabilitate better than a short-term imprisonment?: Results of a controlled experiment.  
- *Potential midterm questions handed out*

Mar 13  
**NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK**

Mar 20  
**Class 8: Outcome/Impact evaluation: quasi-experimental designs with comparison groups**  
- *Optional*: Avery-Leaf, Cascardi, O’Leary & Cano (1997), Efficacy of a dating violence prevention program on attitudes justifying aggression (CS)  
- *Optional*: Jason, Berk, Schnopp-Wyatt & Talbot (1999). Effects of enforcement of youth access laws on smoking prevalence (CS)

Mar 27  
**Class 9: Formulating Research Questions and Measurement**  
- Weiss, Chapter 6
- Litwin, M.S. (2003). How to Assess and Interpret Survey Psychometrics, Ch 3 & 4
- Optional: Christo, George, Spurrell, Sally, and Alcorn, Ron (2000). Validation of the Christo Inventory for Substance-misuse Services (CISS): A simple outcome evaluation tool. (CS)
- Midterm answers due

Apr 3

Class 10: Formulating Research Questions and Measurement (continued)

Full coverage and reflexive designs
- Weiss, review Chapter 8 pp. 191-199
- Optional: Cook, C.(2002, The effects of skilled health attendants on reducing maternal deaths in developing countries: testing the medical model (CS)

Apr 10

Class 11: Full coverage and reflexive designs (continued)

Sampling
- Babbie,E. (1992). The Practice of Social Research, Chapter 8
- Measurement memo due
- Mid-term exams returned

Apr 17

Class 12: Sampling (continued)

Preparation for debates
- Measurement memo returned

Apr 24

Class 13: Two Debates & Discussion

Evaluations in the real world: context, politics, and ethics
- Weiss, Chapter 14
- Knickman & Jellinek (1997). Four lessons from evaluating controversial programs
Optional: Allen, Gilchrist, Brown, Cox, Semke, Thomas & Perry (1994). One system, many perspectives: Stakeholders and mental health system evaluation

May 1  Class 13: Two Debates & Discussion

Evaluation Synthesis
- Weiss Chapter 10, pp 235 - 244

May 8  OPTIONAL Evaluation review memo due (for extra credit)

May 15  Final Paper Due