Instructor Information:
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Skype: skfchild

Office Hours via Phone or Skype:
  • By appointment

Course Administration and Materials
http://fairchildprogramevaluation.pbworks.com/
Note: I will send you an email invite to this wiki.

Course Pre-requisites
Students must have completed (or waived) P11.1011 (Statistical Methods) and P11.1022 (Introduction to Public Policy). This course builds on these introductory courses and lays the foundation for P11.2875 (Estimating Impacts).

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. Equally important, and often neglected, is the role of infrastructure in the research process. Students are expected to use the basic version of PBWORKS.COM as their primary collaboration space and work repository. All project work and feedback will be delivered via PBWORKS.
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:


Optional and recommended texts are:


In addition to the required text, there are a number of other readings each week. Most of the articles are available through Bobst electronic journals.

There is a sizable and growing body of literature, which deals with program evaluation and policy analysis. The journal The American Journal of Evaluation and 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, student groups will develop a wiki, collaborate on three brief memos, and turn in a final evaluation design. Individually, students will complete a take-home mid-term exam. Note: the following descriptions are not enough to complete the assignments adequately. More detailed instructions for each assignment will be posted.

Mid-Term Examination
A take-home midterm will be due on 3/21. LATE EXAMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
Final Paper: Impact Evaluation Design
Groups of 4 students will design a comprehensive evaluation plan for a program of their choice. The proposal will focus on outcome or impact evaluation but will include a brief section on process evaluation as well. **LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Writing Assignments – Preliminary Steps in Writing the Final Design Paper
Short, thought pieces in which you are asked to apply the course readings to the development of your evaluation design paper. These assignments serve not only to encourage you to think about your final paper throughout the course, but to struggle with real-world applications of what you are learning in the readings and lectures. They are due in class. You are expected to get some things “wrong” in these exercises – that’s an important part of the learning process as these assignments often ask you to do something that you haven’t had sufficient time to fully understand or process. Don’t be concerned if the class lecture and discussion makes you realize that you “missed the boat” in your writing assignment. I will give constructive feedback on each assignment. These assignments are not graded but points will be deducted if they do not completely address the questions or are not turned in.

#1 Program selection/theory of change: Select a program and indicate the problem to be addressed by the program, the degree to which the need for the program has been established, the intended beneficiaries or targets of the program, the intended benefits, and most importantly the program theory underlying the program. Draw a logic model representing the program theory and/or describe/depict the causal model.

#2 Design Memo: Using your selected program, describe both an experimental and also a quasi-experimental research design that you think could be used to “evaluate” the impact of the program. Describe the goal of each evaluation and then discuss the merits of the design you’ve proposed for achieving that goal. Identify and describe three plausible threats to internal validity and then discuss the degree to which each design controls for or deals with each of these threats.

#3 Measurement Memo: For the program you’ve selected and the design you developed in assignment #2 (or if you’ve come up with an even better research design, use that design), describe the measures, data collection sources and strategies, and sampling procedures you would use to implement the evaluation.

Mandatory Group Feedback
You will be asked to provide feedback on the participation of your group members in the development, conceptualization, and writing of the proposal. Points will be deducted based on your group participation or failure to respond.
Class Participation
Students are encouraged to actively engage with the course materials. To that end, every class will include opportunities for class discussion.

Administrative Notes
The syllabus, course schedule, lecture notes, and other useful resources will all be posted to the wiki I have set up for this course. As soon as I have emails for students in the course, I will email you an invite from PBWORKS.com to join my workspace. You will also invite me to YOUR wiki when you and your team have set it up. We will go over Wiki work in more detail. Also, I post lecture notes AFTER the class lecture.

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 Paper¹</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Participation</td>
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CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

JANUARY 25, 2012
Class 1: Introduction to the course and the field of program evaluation
1. Weiss Chapters 1 & 2

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Feedback Survey 1 Due January 27, 2012

FEBRUARY 1, 2012
Class 2: High Performing Organizations and Program Evaluation
Guest Speaker: Julia Ritchie, MEd, LCSM, President / Founder Richie|Tye Consulting

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Assign Yourself To Project Groups Due Friday, February 3rd

¹ This includes the three memos as well as a well-developed wiki. The final paper will be delivered via your wiki in PBWORKS.com.
FEBRUARY 8, 2012
Class 3: Pre-Program Evaluation Activities: Needs Assessment

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Set Up Wiki

FEBRUARY 15, 2012
Class 4: Explicating and Assessing Program Theory
1. Weiss Chapter 3

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Wiki Work (At this point I should see the following:)
   1. Preliminary work for program memo
   2. Timeline and Work Responsibilities
   3. Folder Structure

FEBRUARY 22, 2012
Class 5: Outcome/Impact evaluation: design, internal and external validity
1. Weiss Chapter 8
2. Cook & Campbell *Quasi-Experimentation* “Internal Validity”

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Program theory memo due and posted to your wiki
**FEBRUARY 29, 2012**

**Class 6: Outcome/Impact evaluation: randomized experimental design**

1. Weiss Chapter 9

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**MARCH 7, 2012**

**Class 7: Outcome/Impact evaluation: quasi-experimental designs with comparison groups**

1. RFL Chapter 9 pp 265-286

**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Take-Home Midterm Distributed
2. Continue Wiki Work (At this point I should see the following for group projects:)
   1. Ongoing modifications/revisions to Program Memo
   2. Preliminary work on Design Memo
   3. Folder Structure
   4. Article Summaries

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**MARCH 14, 2012**

**SPRING BREAK**

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**MARCH 21, 2012**

**Class 8: Cost-Benefit / Cost-Effectiveness Analysis Presentation**

**Guest Speaker: Gerard E. Carrino, PhD, MPH, Vice President of Mission Support and Chief of Staff, March of Dimes**

1. Forthcoming
ASSIGNMENTS
1. MIDTERM DUE

MARCH 28, 2012
Class 9: Formulating Research Questions and Full Coverage & Reflexive Designs
1. Weiss, review Chapter 8 pp. 191-199, Chapter 10, pp. 235-244

APRIL 4, 2012
Class 10: Measurement
1. Weiss, Chapter 6
2. Litwin, M.S. (2003). How to Assess and Interpret Survey Psychometrics, Ch 3 & 4

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Design Memo Due and posted to your wiki

APRIL 11, 2012
Class 11: Sampling
Guest Speaker: Carolyn Berry, PhD, Associate Professor, Division of General Internal Medicine, NYU School of Medicine

Mid-term exams returned

APRIL 18, 2012
Class 12: Formative evaluation, program monitoring, and implementation analysis

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Measurement Memo Due and posted to your wiki
APRIL 25, 2012

Class 13: Formative evaluation, program monitoring, and implementation analysis (continued)

In Depth Case Study of a Student Information Management System Roll-Out in 65 NYC Schools and the infrastructure required to support ongoing program monitoring


MAY 2, 2012

Class 14: Evaluation Synthesis and Ethics

1. Weiss, Chapter 10, pp 235 - 244
2. Weiss, Chapter 14

MAY 11, 2012

FINAL PROJECT DUE
# Abbreviated Course Schedule and Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week No</th>
<th>Class No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/25/2012</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Feedback Survey due 1/27/2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2/1/2012</td>
<td>High Performing Orgs and Program Evaluation w Julia Ritchie</td>
<td>Assign Yourself To Project Groups 2/3/2012</td>
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<td>2/8/2012</td>
<td>Pre-Program Evaluation Activities: Needs Assessment</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>2/15/2012</td>
<td>Program Theory</td>
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<td>2/22/2012</td>
<td>Impact Evaluation: Threats to Validity</td>
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<td>2/29/2012</td>
<td>Impact Evaluation: RCTs</td>
<td>Sample Questions for Midterm Handed Out</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/7/2012</td>
<td>Impact Evaluation: Quasi Experimental Designs</td>
<td>Take Home Exam Exam Distributed</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>3/14/2012</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/21/2012</td>
<td>Cost-Benefit &amp; Cost Effectiveness w Gerard Carrino</td>
<td>Mid Term Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/28/2012</td>
<td>Research Questions / Full Coverage / Reflexive Designs</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/4/2012</td>
<td>Measurement</td>
<td>Design Memo Due</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/11/2012</td>
<td>Sampling w Carolyn Berry</td>
<td>Mid Term Exams Returned</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>4/18/2012</td>
<td>Formative Evaluation / Process Monitoring Part 1</td>
<td>Measurement Memo Due</td>
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<td>Deep Dive Into Datacation</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5/2/2012</td>
<td>Evaluation Synthesis and Ethics</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5/11/2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Paper Due via Wiki: Papers / Wikis Not accepted after this date</td>
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**Note:** Wiki work will be reviewed OFTEN throughout the semester.