NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE
PADM-GP 2171/GPH-GU 2371 Section 2
Program Analysis and Evaluation -- FALL 2012
Wednesday 4:55 – 6:35 pm; Tisch Hall (40 West Fourth St), LC-9
Asst Adjunct Prof Jodi F Paroff

To contact professor:  Jodi.Paroff@nyu.edu, Phone: (973) 934-7214
Adjunct mailbox: TBA in the Puck Building
Office hrs: Wed 2:45 – 4:45 pm Adjunct Office 3047 or by appointment
(Please use email to request an appointment in advance or to notify the
professor of any papers left in the adjunct mailbox.)

Course Pre-requisites: You 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
(Evaluation of Health and Social Programs).

Course Description and Objectives: Program evaluation is a critical part of
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 taking this course can
expect to

• 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. You are encouraged
to relate the general material of the course to your specific policy interests.

Readings: The required textbook for this course is:

An optional and recommended text is:


In addition to the required text, you will need to read one chapter from the optional textbook and many journal articles. All of the articles are available through Bobst electronic journals and I will make them available on blackboard. The 3 readings that are chapters from books and are not available for downloading can be downloaded directly from the course Blackboard.

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. You need to read required text and articles in advance and be prepared to participate in class discussion. In addition to class participation, you will: write two brief memos, complete one take-home exam, create a poster with your group for peer review, and write a final evaluation design paper. It is expected that you are familiar with NYU’s honor code and will uphold the university’s standards for academic honesty in all of your work.

Attendance: No grades are given for attendance, but you should notify the professor of any days you will be missing. You are responsible for any missing information and meeting all assignment deadlines during your absences.

Program Statement Memo, due Oct 10, (5%) 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.

Midterm Examination: Take-home essay style exam due Oct 31, (40%)

Measurement Memo, due Nov 14, (5%) 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) due Dec 7
It is important to become a good evaluator and a good consumer of evaluations. Review one of three selected evaluation articles. In 2 - 3 pages, summarize the type of evaluation described, its design and methods, and write a critique of the evaluation.

**Poster Sessions & Feedback due various dates, (10%)**
Each group will create a poster that presents the evaluation design proposal of their final paper/project. Posters will include program theory and descriptions and outcome measures from earlier assignments, as well as design rationale, and data collection strategies. Sharing with your peers will be emphasized.

**Final Paper: Impact Evaluation Design, due Dec 12, (35%)**
The final paper builds on earlier assignments. You will design a comprehensive evaluation plan/design for your chosen program. The design proposal will focus on outcome or impact evaluation but will include a brief section on process evaluation as well.

**Relative Weight of Assignments**

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<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>35%</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>Poster session</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Note:** the above descriptions are not enough to complete the assignments adequately. More detailed instructions for each assignment will follow.

**Course Schedule**

**Part I: Planning and Implementation**

**Sep 5**

Class 1: Introduction to the course and the field of program evaluation; stakeholders; ethical considerations

- Weiss Chapters 1 & 2
- Oakes, J.M. (2002). Risks and wrongs in social science research: an evaluator’s guide to the IRB. (pp. 443-454)

**Sep 12**

Class 2: Pre-program evaluation activities: needs assessment

- Review Weiss Chapter 2 (Purposes of eval)
Sep 19  **Class 3: Explicating and assessing program theory**
- Weiss Chapter 3 (Understanding the program)
- *Optional:* RFL Chapter 5

Sep 26  **YOM KIPPOR -- NO CLASS**

Oct 3  **Class 4: Formative evaluation, program monitoring, and implementation analysis**
- Weiss Chapter 11 (Qualitative Methods)

**Part II: Measuring the Impacts of Programs**

Oct 10  **Class 5: Outcome/Impact evaluation: design, internal and external validity**
- Weiss Chapter 8 (Design of evaluation, pp 180-214)
- [http://www.ted.com/talks/esther_duflo_social_experiments_to_fight_poverty.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/esther_duflo_social_experiments_to_fight_poverty.html)
- *Program memo due*
- *Potential midterm questions handed out*
Oct 17  Class 6: Outcome/Impact evaluation: randomized experimental design
β Weiss Chapter 9
β 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.
β Optional: RFL Chapter 8
β  Program memo returned

Oct 24  Class 7: Outcome/Impact evaluation: quasi-experimental designs with comparison groups
β RFL Chapter 9 pp 265-286
β Actual midterm questions released

Oct 31  Class 8: Formulating research questions and measurement
β Weiss, Chapter 6 (Measures)
β Litwin, M.S. (2003). How to Assess and Interpret Survey Psychometrics, Ch 2 (Reliability) & 3 (Validity)
β Optional: RFL Chapters 3 & 7


Mid-term answers due

Nov 7 Class 9: Sampling

Nov 14 Class 10: Sampling (continued)

Mid-terms returned
Measurement memo due

Nov 21 Class 11: Strengthening full coverage and reflexive designs
Weiss, review Chapter 8 pp. 191-199
RFL Chapter 9 pp. 289-295
Optional: Cook, C.(2002). The effects of skilled health attendants on reducing maternal deaths in developing countries: testing the medical model
Measurement memo returned

Poster Session 1

Nov 28 Class 12: Final review of research design & Ethical Considerations in Program Evaluation (continued)
Weiss, Chapter 14 (Ethics)
Bluestein, J. (2005). Toward a more public discussion of the ethics of federal social program evaluation. (pp. 823-840)

Oakes, J.M. (2002). Risks and wrongs in social science research: an evaluator’s guide to the IRB. (pp. 460-467)


Poster Session 2

Dec 5  Class 13: Evaluation Synthesis

Weiss Chapter 10, pp 235 – 244 (good design)


Poster Session 3

Dec 7  OPTIONAL Evaluation review memo due (for extra credit)

Poster Feedback due

Dec 12  Legislative Day – NO CLASS, Final Paper Due
Semester Syllabus @ a Glance:

Part I: Planning and Implementation

Sep 5  Class 1: Introduction to the course and the field of program evaluation; stakeholders; ethics.

Sep 12 Class 2: Pre-program evaluation activities: needs assessment

Sep 19 Class 3: Explicating and assessing program theory

Sep 26 YOM KIPPOR -- NO CLASS

Oct 3  Class 4: Formative evaluation, program monitoring, and implementation analysis

Part II: Measuring the Impacts of Programs

Oct 10 Class 5: Outcome/Impact evaluation: design, internal and external validity
  ✫ Program memo due
  ✫ Potential midterm questions handed out to you

Oct 17 Class 6: Outcome/Impact evaluation: randomized experimental design
  ✫ Program memo returned to you

Oct 24 Class 7: Outcome/Impact evaluation: quasi-experimental designs with comparison groups
  ✫ Mid-term questions released to students

Oct 31 Class 8: Formulating research questions & measurement
  ✫ Mid-term answers due!

Nov 7  Class 9: Sampling

Nov 14 Class 10: Sampling (continued)
  ✫ Mid-terms returned to you
  ✫ Measurement memo due

Nov 21 Class 11: Strengthening full coverage & reflexive designs
  ✫ Measurement memo returned to you
  ✫ Poster Session 1

Nov 28 Class 12: Final review of research design & Ethical considerations in program evaluation
  ✫ Poster Session 2
Dec 5  Class 13: Evaluation Synthesis
       §  Poster Session 3

Dec 7  OPTIONAL Evaluation review memo due (for extra credit)
       Poster feedback due

Dec 12 Legislative Day – NO CLASS, Final Paper Due