

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE
PADM-GP 2171/GPH-GU 2371 Section 1
Program Analysis and Evaluation
Spring 2017
Monday 4:55 – 6:35 pm; 28 Waverly Pl (WAVE) Room 366
Professor Carolyn Berry

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Course Pre-requisites

All students must have completed (or waived) P11.1011 (Statistical Methods) or a similar course Wagner students must have completed 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 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:

Carol H. Weiss (1998) Evaluation: Methods for Studying Programs & Policies 2nd edition. Prentice Hall

An optional and recommended text is:

Peter Rossi, Howard Freeman, and Mark Lipsey (2004) Evaluation: A Systematic Approach, 7th ed. Sage Publications. (abbreviated in syllabus as “RFL”)

In addition to the required text, you will need to read one chapter from the optional textbook and 20 additional readings, which are mostly articles. All of the articles are available through Bobst and links are provided on the Required Readings document in the Readings folder in the Resources section of NYUClasses. Three readings

are chapters from books are not available for downloading and can be downloaded directly from the course NYUClasses. The full bibliography (also in the Readings folder) includes all required readings plus additional optional readings.

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, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis,** 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 and be prepared to participate in class discussion. In addition to class participation, students will write two brief memos, one take-home exam, and write a final paper that is a proposal for an outcome evaluation. *Note: the following descriptions are not enough to complete the assignments adequately. More detailed instructions for each assignment are posted in the Assignments section of NYUClasses.*

Program Statement

Feb 27

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.

Examination

Apr 3

There will be a take-home essay style examination due in class April 4. Students are encouraged to prepare for the exam with classmates. Students may submit the answers to the exam individually or in groups up to five.

Measurement Memo

Apr 17

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. This memo represents a critical step towards the final paper.

OPTIONAL Evaluation Review (for extra credit)

May 12

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. The review memo must be submitted individually.

Final Paper: Impact Evaluation Design

May 16

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 **strongly encouraged** to work in groups of 2-5. Groups will submit a single final paper as well as a single program statement memo and measurement memo.

Relative Weight of Assignments

Exam	30%	Two memos	10%
Final Paper	40%	Class Participation	5%
		Debate participation	15%

Course Schedule

Readings are organized by topic. **The class date represents *the date we will begin a topic***, but most topics continue into the following week. We will review specific case studies during the **second** week of a topic; the date of the class where the article will be discussed is indicated in italics. Slides are available on NYUClasses.

Part I: Evaluation Activities for Program Development, Planning and Implementation

Jan 23 **Topic 1: Introduction to the course and the field of program evaluation; stakeholders.**

- Weiss Chapters 1 & 2

Jan 30 **Topic 2: Pre-program evaluation activities: needs assessment**

- Review Weiss Chapter 2
- Witken, B.R. (1994). Needs Assessment Since 1981: The state of the practice
- Collier A.F., Munger, M., & Moua, Y.K. (2012) Hmong mental health needs assessment: a community-based partnership in a small mid-western community. (CS) *Review in 2/6 class.*

Feb 6 **Topic 3: Explicating and assessing program theory**

- Weiss Chapter 3
- Kaplan, S.A. and Garrett, K.E. (2005). The use of logic models by community-based initiatives (CS)
- Chen, W. & Lin (1997). Evaluating the process and outcome of a garbage reduction program in Taiwan (CS) *Review in 2/13 class.*

Feb 13 **Topic 4: Process evaluation, program monitoring, and implementation analysis**

- Mye, S.C. and Moracco, K.E. (2015). “Compassion, pleasantry, and hope”: A process evaluation of a volunteer-based nonprofit. (CS) *Review in 2/27 class.*
- Curran, Gittelsohn, Anliker, et al (2005). Process evaluation of a store-based environmental obesity intervention on two American Indian reservations. (CS)

Feb 20 **NO CLASS: PRESIDENTS’ DAY**

Part II: Measuring the Impacts of Programs

Feb 27 **Topic 5: Outcome/Impact evaluation: design, internal and external validity**

- Weiss Chapter 8
- *Program memo due*

Mar 6 **Topic 6: 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) *Review in class 3/20.*
- Portwood, S.G., Lambert, R.G., Abrams, L.P. and Nelson, E.B. (2011). An evaluation of the Adults and Children Together (ACT) Against Violence Parents Raising Safe Kids program. (CS) *(case study for debate 4/17)*
- *Program memo returned*
- *Potential exam questions posted*

Mar 13 NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Mar 20 Topic 7: Outcome/Impact evaluation: quasi-experimental designs with comparison groups

- RFL Chapter 9 pp 265-286
- Pulido, M.L, Dauber, S., Tully, B.A., Hamilton, P., Smith, M.J, and Freeman, K. (2015). Knowledge gains following a child sexual abuse prevention program among urban students: A cluster-randomized evaluation. (CS) *Review in class 3/27.*
- Nakamura, R., Suhrcke, M., Pechey, R., Morciano, M., Roland, M., and Marteau, T.M. (2014). Impact on alcohol purchasing of a ban on multi-buy promotions: a quasi-experimental evaluation comparing Scotland with England and Wales. (CS) *(case study for debate 4/24)*
- Cowen, J.M., Fleming, D.J., Witte, J.F., Wolf, P.J., and Kisida, B. (2013). School vouchers and student attainment: Evidence from a state-mandated study of Milwaukee's parental choice program. *(case study for debate 5/1)*

Mar 27 Topic 7 continued: Outcome/Impact evaluation: quasi-experimental designs with comparison groups

- *Time with debate groups*

Apr 3 Topic 8: Formulating research questions and measurement

- Weiss, Chapter 6
- Litwin, M.S. (2003). How to Assess and Interpret Survey Psychometrics, Ch 2 & 3
- Berry, C.A., Shalowitz, M.U, Quinn, K.A., and Wolf, R. (2001) Validation of the Crisis in Family Systems-Revised, a Contemporary Measure of Life Stressors. *(we will review in class 4/10)*
- Kim, M.G. and Kim, J. (2010). Cross-validation of reliability, convergent and discriminant validity for the problematic online game use scale (CS)
- *Exam answers due*

Apr 10 Topic 8 continued: Formulating research questions and measurement

Apr 17 Topic 9: Strengthening full coverage and reflexive designs

- Weiss, review Chapter 8 pp. 191-199
- RFL Chapter 9 pp. 289-295
- Pettifor, A., Taylor, E., Nku, D., Duvall, S., Tabala, M., Mwandagalirwa, K., Meshnick, S., & Behets, F. (2009). Free distribution of insecticide treated bed nets to pregnant women in Kinshasa: an effective way to achieve 80% use by women and their newborns. *(we will review in class 4/24)*
- Potter, S.J. (2012) Using a multimedia social marketing campaign to increase active bystanders on the college campus *(case study for debate 5/8)*
- *Measurement memo due*
- *Exams returned*

Debate 1 Portwood, S.G., Lambert, R.G., Abrams, L.P. and Nelson, E.B. (2011). An evaluation of the Adults and Children Together (ACT) Against Violence Parents Raising Safe Kids program. *(true experiment case study)*

Apr 24 **Final review of research design**

- *Measurement memo returned*

Debate 2 Nakamura, R., Suhrcke, M., Pechey, R., Morciano, M., Roland, M., and Marteau, T.M. (2014). Impact on alcohol purchasing of a ban on multi-buy promotions: a quasi-experimental evaluation comparing Scotland with England and Wales (*quasi-experiment with comparison group case study*)

May 1 **Topic 10: Sampling**

- Babbie,E. (2012). The Practice of Social Research, Chapter 7

Debate 3 Cowen, J.M., Fleming, D.J., Witte, J.F., Wolf, P.J., and Kisida, B. (2013). School vouchers and student attainment: Evidence from a state-mandated study of Milwaukee’s parental choice program (*quasi-experiment with comparison group case study*)

May 8 **Topic 11: Evaluation Synthesis**

- Weiss, Chapter 14
- American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles For Evaluators (2004)
- *Optional*: RFL Chapter 12

Topic 12: Ethical Considerations in Program Evaluation

- Weiss Chapter 10, pp 235 – 244
- Webb, T.L., Joseph, J., Yardley, L., and Michie, S. (2010). Using the internet to promote health behavior change: a systematic review and meta-analysis of the impact of theoretical basis, use of behavior change techniques, and mode of delivery on efficacy. (CS)

Debate 4 Potter, S.J. (2012) Using a multimedia social marketing campaign to increase active bystanders on the college campus (*reflexive design case study*)

May 9 *Debate team ratings due*

May 12 *OPTIONAL Evaluation review memo due (for extra credit)*

May 16 *Final Paper Due*