

PUB ADM 769/POL SCI 769
ANALYZING AND EVALUATING PUBLIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Spring 2012

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Class Meetings:	Wednesdays, 4:00pm – 6:40 pm
Location:	Curtin Hall 119
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 3 – 4pm or By Appointment

Why Analyze and Evaluate Public Policies and Programs?

Stakeholders such as policymakers, practitioners, program funders, and beneficiaries of public policies and programs are all concerned with the efficacy and effectiveness of public policies and programs. While it is hard enough to make prudent choices about programs and policies, it is equally challenging to discern the fruitfulness of the implemented policies and programs. In order to facilitate program and policy selection, policymakers and administrators need to understand and assess them. They need to be able to determine the “success” (or failures) of social programs or policies or determine their value. The creation of such supporting knowledge will guide policymakers and administrators’ decisions to abandon, modify, replace or expand existing policies or programs. This course is designed to equip you with the some key tools for achieving both. Special attention will be placed on program and policy evaluation.

A couple of key issues matter when conducting a program or policy evaluation:

- ❏ **Process:** How does the evaluation process start and evolves?
- ❏ **The “Evaluand”:** That is, where does the policy or program begin and end?
- ❏ **Key Stakeholders:** Who is involved in the evaluation process itself or has a stake in it?
- ❏ **Values:** Which and whose values are utilized in the process?
- ❏ **Evaluation Uses:** Addressing these key issues may influence how the evaluation results are used, if at all.

Course Objectives

This course aims to develop an understanding of program evaluation and to some limited extent, policy analysis, through the development of evaluation research skill. Such skills will provide students with the means to inform public policy and program development through analysis and assessment. Below are some key course objectives:

- To foster a systematic way to think critically about public policy and programs.
- To equip students with the tools that will enable them to inform public policy decisions.
- To develop an understanding of alternative evaluation concepts and approaches, as well as models/theories used in contemporary evaluation.
- To equip students with the skills to design a competent and comprehensive evaluation proposal.
- To introduce students to a number of evaluation approaches and develop an understanding as to which approaches are appropriate to what contexts and values and expertise.
- To develop awareness to the social, political, ethical, organizational, and interpersonal problems which often undermine the quality of evaluations and evaluation results.

Course Approach

We will start off this course by introducing two approaches to understanding policy; approaches that ought to be kept separate; *policy analysis* and *program or policy evaluation*. While on the one hand, *policy analysis* is concerned with identifying policy problems and then identifying policy alternatives and key factors critical to their implementation; *evaluation* is concerned with placing a value on the policies or programs once they are implemented. This class will spend a lot more time on the latter.

The course will start off by...

1. Briefly introducing the concept of *policy analysis*
2. And then probe into what *evaluation research* entails by,
 - a. Identifying different evaluation theories and approaches
 - b. Identifying key evaluation standards
 - c. Identifying the components of a sound evaluation, and then move into
 - d. How the evaluator can understand the “evaluand,” and plan for its evaluation.

Course Readings

The readings for each week are shown below. It is expected that each student will complete all readings before each week in order to facilitate a healthy and meaningful discussion.

Required readings

- ✚ Weiss, C.H. (1998). "Evaluation: Methods for studying programs and policies." (2nd ed.) Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- ✚ Additional readings will be provided via D2L

Recommended Readings:

- ✚ Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer (2010) "Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation." (3rd ed.) Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA
- ✚ The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (2011). "The program evaluation standards" (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Course Expectations and Requirements

- Each student must complete the assigned readings as scheduled and on time.
- Each student must be prepared to present their assigned topic at the appointed time
- Each student must actively participate in class discussions.
- Each student must complete all assignments and submit them on time.
- Each student must be respectful of other students' ideas and experiences.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty: Established rules covering plagiarism and academic honesty must be followed at all times. It is the student's responsibility to know the meaning of plagiarism and when it occurs. If you have questions about these rules as they apply to written assignments, consult the student academic misconduct procedures specified in UWS Chapter 14 and the UWM implementation provisions (*Source: Faculty Document 1686*).

Plagiarism includes:

- Directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them; or,
 - Using sources of information (published or unpublished) without identifying them; or,
 - Paraphrasing materials or ideas of others without identifying the sources.
 - Academic Integrity means honesty concerning all aspects of academic work.
- Students are encouraged to consult with faculty.

Please be advised that I will expect you to adhere to proper use of citations when using someone's work. When in doubt about how to cite properly, come and see me.

General Rule of Thumb: Place in quotation marks "phrases of 5 words or more quoted verbatim." After doing that; provide the author(s)' lastname(s) and year of publication. **For example:** "Nonprofits are more prepared than for disasters than private agencies" (*Chikoto and Sadiq, 2012*).

Policy on Absences, Tardiness, and Late Assignments

The quality of this class is contingent on the diversity of ideas and perspectives shared in class so please try to minimize absences. If you plan to miss a class, **please notify the instructor at least 2 days in advance**. Unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade, except in the event of extreme circumstances and I will require that you notify me via phone or email, in such cases. Tardiness will also negatively impact your grade.

No late assignments will be accepted. The assignment is due when it is scheduled to be submitted.

In only rare circumstances will I permit you to take the midterm exam late. A death in the immediate family and your hospitalization are the only two reasons that come to mind. In either of these cases, I should be notified as soon as possible and no later than the start of the test.

In only rare circumstances will I award a grade of Incomplete. As with the midterm exam, a death in the immediate family and your hospitalization are the only two reasons that would persuade me to give you an Incomplete.

Policy on Laptops and Cellular phones

Students are not allowed to use cell phones during class. Any student using a cell phone during class will be asked to leave. As far as the use of laptops, I will allow it on condition that they are used strictly for note-taking. There will be no internet surfing during class.

H1N1 Influenza Policy

In the event of disruption of normal classroom activities due to an H1N1 swine flu outbreak, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. *An addendum to this syllabus superseding this version will be provided.*

Course Assignments* and Grading

Your final course grade will be based on an exam, evaluation proposal, and class presentation and participation.

DUE DATES	ASSIGNMENTS	% OF GRADE
Jan 23 – May 16	Individual Presentations & Participation	10%
February 29	Pre-proposal: (1 page)	N/A
March 7	Midterm Exam	25%
March 28	Part 1 of the Proposal (3-5 pages)	15%
April 11	Part II of the Proposal (8-10 pages)	15%
May 2 & May 9	Proposal Presentations	10%
May 16: 7PM	Final Proposal (Parts I, II, & III): Maximum # of Pages: 25 pages	25%
FINAL GRADE		100%

Grade Calculations: The final grade will be calculated as follows:

<i>rade</i>	<i>Overall Score</i>
A	93.00 – 100.00
A-	90.00 – 92.99
B+	87.00 – 89.99
B	83.00 – 86.99
B-	80.00 – 82.99
C+	77.00 – 79.99
C	73.00 – 76.99
C-	70.00 – 72.99
D	60.00 – 69.99
F	<60.00

* For more Details, see the Description of the Assignments (APPENDIX I, on p. 10)

COURSE SCHEDULE, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1: JANUARY 25 -- OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Student Introductions
- Course Introductions, Schedule, and Assignments
- Introduction to the Policy Process
- **Proper Citations (Workshop)**

WEEK 2: FEBRUARY 1 -- POLICY ANALYSIS VS. PROGRAM EVALUATION

- ✓ What is Policy Analysis?
- ✓ What is Program Evaluation?
- ✓ Evaluation as Research
- ✓ There are Multiple Purposes and Stakeholders in Evaluation

READINGS:

- ❏ Weimer and Vining (2011): What is Policy Analysis? (pp23-38) (D2L)
- ❏ Weiss (1998) Chapter 1: Setting the Scene (pp 1-19)
- ❏ Weiss (1998) Chapter 2: Purposes of Evaluation (pp 20- 45)

WEEK 3: FEBRUARY 8 -- EVALUATION THEORIES

- ✓ Comparative Framework
- ✓ What is Program Theory and its Connections to Practice?
- ✓ The Theories of *Programming, Valuing, Utility, Knowledge Construction, & Practice*

READINGS:

- ❏ Shadish, W.R., Cook, T.D.,& Leviton, L.C. (1991). Good theory for social program evaluation. In Shadish, W.R., Cook, T.D.,& Leviton, L.C., "The Foundations of Program Evaluation," pp. 36-67. Newbury Park: Sage. (D2L)

WEEK 4: FEBRUARY 15 -- PROGRAM EVALUATION STANDARDS

- ✓ Utility, Feasibility, Propriety, and Accuracy
- ✓ Are there Trade-offs among them?
- ✓ How Applicable are the Evaluation Standards; and when can they be applied?

READING:

- ❏ The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). "The program evaluation standards" (2rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp 1-20. (D2L)
- ❏ Summary of Program Evaluation Standards. (D2L)

WEEK 5: FEBRUARY 22 -- IDENTIFYING WHAT IS BEING EVALUATED

- ✓ The “Evaluand” (i.e., Policy, Program or Project)
- ✓ The Notion of “Social Betterment”
- ✓ Philosophical Approaches of *Traditional Positivism; Social Constructivism; Realism*

READINGS:

- ✚ Julnes and Mark (1998), Evaluation as “Sensemaking. Knowledge Construction in a Realist World” *New Directions for Evaluation* 78: 33-52 (D2L)
- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 3: Understanding the Program, pp. 46-71
- ✚ Savaya, Rikki, and Waysman (2005), “The Logic Model: A Tool for Incorporating Theory in Development and Evaluation of Programs.” *Administration in Social Work*, 29(2): 85-103) (D2L)

WEEK 6: FEBRUARY 29 -- PLANNING THE EVALUATION

- ✓ Evaluation Questions
- ✓ Practical Guidelines for Practice
- ✓ What are the Evaluator’s Roles?

REQUIRED READINGS:

- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 4: Planning the Evaluation, pp. 72- 96
- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 5: Roles for the Evaluation, pp. 97 - 113.
- ✚ Worthen, Saunders, et al. (1997) “Identifying and Selecting Evaluation Questions and Criteria” (D2L) **(Recommended)**
- ✚ Henry and Julnes (1998) Specifying Inquiry Modes (D2L) **(Recommended)**
- ✚ **ASSIGNMENT DUE: Pre-proposal**

WEEK 7: MARCH 7 -- -- IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM (CLOSED BOOK)

WEEK 8: March 14 – DESIGNING AN EVALUATION AND THINKING ABOUT MEASURES

- ✓ How to Design an Evaluation
- ✓ How to develop Measures

READINGS:

- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 8: Design of the Evaluation, pp. 180-214
- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 6: Developing Measures, pp. 114-151
- ✚ Rossi and Freeman (1997), “Tailoring Evaluations” (D2L) **(Recommended)**

WEEK 9: NO CLASS -- SPRING RECESS (MARCH 18 – MARCH 25)

WEEK 10: MARCH 28 – QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE EVALUATION DESIGNS

- ✓ Are there any Pitfalls in Quantitative and Qualitative Designs?
- ✓ Data Collection
- ✓ Data Analysis

READINGS:

- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 7: Collecting Data, pp. 152–179
- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 11: Qualitative Methods, pp. 252–270
- ✚ Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer (2010) Chapter 20: Using Statistics in Evaluation (D2L)
- ✚ Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer (2010) Chapter 19: Qualitative Data Analysis (D2L)
- ✚ [ASSIGNMENT DUE: Part I of the Evaluation Proposal](#)

WEEK #11: APRIL 4 -- MIXED EVALUATION DESIGN

- ✓ Informing Measures in Mixed Designs
- ✓ Data Collection
- ✓ Data Analysis

READINGS:

- ✚ Vijayendra Rao and Michael Woolcock (2003), “Intergrating Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches in Program Evaluation, In Francois Bourguignon & Luiz A. Peereira da Silva, (eds.) “The Impact of Economic Policies on Evaluation and Income Distribution: Evaluation Techniques and Tools,” pp. 165 – Oxford University Press: New York
- ✚ Caracelli and Greene (1997), “Crafting Mixed-Methods Evaluation Designs” (D2L)

WEEK #12: APRIL 11 -- DATA ANALYSIS & REPORTING THE EVALUATION FINDINGS

- ✓ What goes into the Writing of the Evaluation Reports
- ✓ Dissemination of Evaluation Results
- ✓ What is the Evaluator’s Stance Toward Utilization

READINGS:

- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 12: Analyzing and Interpreting the Data, pp. 271– 293
- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 13: Writing the Report and Disseminating Results, pp. 294–319
- ✚ [ASSIGNMENT DUE: Part II of the Evaluation Proposal](#)

WEEK # 13: APRIL 18 -- THE MANAGEMENT & UTILIZATION OF EVALUATION FINDINGS

- ✓ The Practice of Evaluation
- ✓ How Does one Manage the Evaluation Process?

READINGS:

- ✚ Weiss (1998) Chapter 14: Evaluating with Integrity, pp 320-326
- ✚ Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer (2010) Chapter 23: Pitfalls in Evaluations (**D2L**)
- ✚ Posavac (2011) Chapter 5: Ethics in Program Evaluation (**D2L**; Recommended)

WEEK #14: APRIL 25 -- CHALLENGES, ISSUES AND TRENDS

- ✓ Challenges, Issues, and Trends in Evaluation

READINGS:

- ✚ Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer (2010) Chapter 28: Evaluation Challenges, Issues, and Trends (**D2L**)
- ✚ Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer (2010) Chapter 27: Use of Evaluation in Government: The Politics of Evaluation (**D2L**)

WEEK #15: MAY 2

- ✚ **ASSIGNMENTS: Student Presentations**

WEEK #16: MAY 9

- ✚ **ASSIGNMENTS: Student Presentations**

WEEK # 17: MAY 16 -- Final Proposal (Parts I, II, and III) DUE VIA D2L DROPBOX 7PM

APPENDIX I
SUMMARY OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

The following assignments are intended to help you gain the knowledge and skill necessary in program evaluation.

Expectations for ALL Written Assignments

Note that ALL assignments are DUE on the DATES and TIMES stipulated in the syllabus. I will expect you to exhibit high cognitive skills on each of the assignments through skills of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

You **MUST** take into account for the following general criteria as you prepare your assignments:

- a. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS (including the MIDTERM)** should be clearly written and well-developed. Be sure to revise and proofread so that your work is professional in appearance.
- b. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS (including the MIDTERM)** should be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-point font.
- c. It is also crucial that you reference and cite all your work (e.g., *APA Style*).
- d. You **MUST** provide a **List of References** consulted for **ALL** paper assignments you submit.
- e. You **MUST** include a **COVER PAGE** and **NUMBER EACH PAGE** appropriately for **ALL** paper assignments you submit.
- f. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS, Take Home Midterm Exam** should be placed in the DROPBOX via D2L when DUE. I will NOT accept Email Submissions.

MIDTERM EXAM ON MARCH 7 (IN-CLASS; CLOSED BOOK)

The in-class midterm exam will explore your knowledge of the foundational material in evaluation research covered in the first six (6) weeks of the course. The exam may contain some multiple choice questions; some closed-ended questions; short answer questions and one or two essay questions. **The exam is worth 25% of your final course grade.** Your responses will be graded on the basis of their accuracy, the depth of your understanding of concepts introduced and your ability to apply the ideas and insights, including the connection among them.

THE EVALUATION PROPOSAL (PRE-PROPOSAL; PART I; II & II)

This course is designed with an application component in mind. In order to demonstrate your understanding of the course materials, **your evaluation team (2 people)** will be required to develop a proposal to evaluate a policy or program of interest and relevance to you. I strongly advise you to select a policy or program that you are familiar with, either by virtue of being in it, or having been involved in it in the past. **Plainly stated, choose something you know something about!**

The Work on the Evaluation Proposal will be **divided into 3 crucial parts**, each building upon the other. As such, each component of the assignment allows you to develop your evaluation proposal as the semester progresses.

PART 1. ONE-PAGE PRE-PROPOSAL: DUE ON FEBRUARY 29TH

This should describe the “evaluand,” that is, the thing you are evaluating. Focus your pre-proposal on: –

- ❏ The nature of the policy or program to be evaluated,
- ❏ Your relationship to it,
- ❏ A rough budget estimate, and
- ❏ The anticipated inquiry approach (i.e., how do you propose to evaluate this program or policy?)

Please NOTE that, before you can proceed to the other parts of the proposal, my approval of your evaluand is absolutely necessary.

PAGE LIMIT: 1 PAGE, SINGLE-SPACED (**D2L DROPBOX SUBMISSION**)

PART 2. PART I OF THE PROPOSAL: DUE ON MARCH 28TH

The work in this paper lays the foundation for subsequent parts of the proposal.

Part I should contain the following elements based on the materials covered in the course to date:

- ❏ *Purposes of the Evaluation*: Who wants the evaluation done and why? Include an identification of stakeholders and their interests, uses of the evaluation, the kind of evaluation (formative vs. summative), and your position in the process.
- ❏ *Description of the Policy or Program*: What are the relevant characteristics of the policy or program to be evaluated, including the social problem intended to be improved (think in terms of social betterment). What is the program "theory?" What services are offered? By whom? For whom?
- ❏ *Budget*: What is the approximate overall budget for the evaluation? (no details, just the parameters for funding) Who funds the program? Who funds the evaluation?

PAGE LIMIT: Please limit Part I of the proposal to approximately 3–5 pages; DOUBLE-SPACED (**D2L DROPBOX SUBMISSION**)

PART 3. PART II OF THE PROPOSAL: DUE ON APRIL 11TH

Build on the work done in Part I.

Part II should focus on evaluation design & data collection.

It should contain the following elements based on materials covered in the course to date:

- ❏ ***Evaluation questions:*** What are the key questions for the study?
- ❏ ***Family of inquiry:*** Which family (families) of inquiry will be used to meet the purposes of the evaluation and answer the questions posed? Defend your choice for its appropriateness and feasibility.
- ❏ ***Data:*** If this is a quantitative study, which measures will be used? If this is a qualitative study, what will guide data collection?
- ❏ ***Data collection:*** From what sources, sites, and/or samples will data be collected? How will it be collected? How will the quality of the data be assured?
- ❏ ***Data analysis:*** What approaches will be used to analyze the data? Justify these decisions in light of the evaluation purpose and questions?

PAGE LIMIT: Please limit Part II of the proposal to approximately 8–10 pages; **DOUBLE-SPACED. (D2L DROPBOX SUBMISSION)**

3(b). PROPOSALS PRESENTATION (Parts I & II)

Each Evaluation Team will present **Parts I & II** of their evaluation proposal in-class on either MAY 5 or MAY 11. You will have approx. 15 minutes for the presentation and 10 minutes for questions and discussions of your proposal. This will be an opportunity to get feedback on these parts before their inclusion in the final proposal. The grade will consider the completeness of your presentation, the ability to stimulate and respond to class suggestions, and coherency of the presentation.

4. PART III AND FINAL PROPOSAL: DUE ON MAY 16TH (VIA D2L DROPBOX: 7PM)

It is expected that this final paper will be build on and include Parts I and II (they will count for approximately 15 of the 25 expected pages; ALL DOUBLE-SPACED). It will also contain Part III, which is intended to analyze and summarize the proposal.

PAGE LIMT: Part III should be 8–10 pages in length; DOUBLE-SPACED.

The Final Evaluation Proposal should include the following:

a) Parts I and II of the proposal should be resubmitted after having been strengthened by the professor's previous review and suggestions, class feedback during your presentation, and your increased understanding of the topic and issues. Make changes as necessary to strengthen these sections. It is critical that you include a summary sheet (limit this to a max of 1 page) to highlight changes made in these parts. **Failure to include the professor's recommendations will result in losses in overall points.**

b) Part III of the Final Proposal *should build on final weeks of the course and include the following:*

- ❏ **Timeline:** What is the overall timeline for the evaluation? What is the timeline for specific components of the evaluation?
- ❏ **Budget:** Provide a budget of sufficient detail to show expenses for personnel, materials, travel, and other major items
- ❏ **Reporting and dissemination:** What form will the report(s) take? How will results be disseminated?
- ❏ **Evaluation standards:** Critically analyze your own proposal using the standards for program evaluation. Describe how this evaluation has taken into consideration the standards for program evaluation, (i.e., Accuracy, Propriety, Feasibility, and Utilization). What kinds of trade-offs were necessary to complete the final evaluation proposal?

Grading of Parts I and II of the proposal will consider the inclusion (at a minimum) of the components requested, the clarity of your presentation, the connection among the components and parts, the use of ideas from the readings and class discussion, and insights applicable to your own circumstances.

Grading of the final proposal will look for evidence of learning in revisions to **Parts I and II**, the connection of **Part III** to the preceding parts, the quality and clarity of the writing and presentation of ideas, the ability to think critically about your own proposal, and accuracy, feasibility, propriety, and utility of the proposal.