The Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration
Fall 2020
(As of: 8/25/20)

Basic Course Information

Course Number: PPPA 6016; Tuesday Section

Course Title: Public and Non-Profit Program Evaluation

Class Time: 6:10 – 8:00 p.m.

Course Description:
This course is intended to give the student an appreciation of the contributions and limitations of public and non-profit program evaluation, as well as a familiarity with the basic skills needed to conduct evaluations. Emphasis will be given to coping with the conceptual, methodological, organizational, political, and ethical problems which face evaluators. The various tasks facing evaluators will be discussed, from developing the questions to presenting the data. The specific issues addressed in class sessions are noted on the attached class schedule.

Prerequisites:
Preferably PPPA 6002 or an equivalent basic course on research design.

Professor:
Yvonne M. Watson, PhD
Telephone: 703-560-7175 (cell)
Email: ywatson@gwu.edu

Office hours: By appointment only.
NOTE: I work full time and do not plan to have standing office hours. But I welcome meetings outside of class by phone or virtually. Please call, text, or email me to arrange meetings about assignments outside of class.

Course Approach and Expectations

Student Learning Objectives:
Through course discussions, readings, and assignments, students will develop knowledge and skills to enable them to:

1. develop knowledge of and skills in culturally responsive evaluation;
2. develop theory of change models;
3. develop evaluation questions;
4. understand key elements of data collection instruments for an evaluation;
5. identify pertinent professional standards and ethical principles affecting specific dilemmas confronting evaluators in the field;
6. under the difference between implementation, outcome, and impact evaluations;
7. recognize useful performance measures and performance measurement systems;
8. understand the key elements of user-oriented reports;
9. critically assess the soundness and quality of evaluation methods and
10. recognize useful recommendations based on evaluation findings.

Method of Instruction:
The tasks and constraints facing professionals involved in the design and implementation of program evaluations are explored by class participation in both in-class and written exercises. Questions and problems facing both evaluators and managers of programs being evaluated are examined.

Classroom Expectations:
Higher education works best when it becomes a vigorous and lively marketplace of ideas in which all points of view are heard. Free expression in the classroom is an integral part of this process. At the same time, higher education works best when all of us approach the enterprise with empathy and respect for others, irrespective of their ideology, political views, or identity. We value civility because that is the kind of community we want, and we care for it because civility permits intellectual exploration and growth.

Respect for Diversity:
It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. I strive to create an inclusive classroom and present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity. Your suggestions on how to help me succeed with this are encouraged and appreciated.

General Content Warning:
The content and discussion throughout this course will often engage with difficult to hear content.
You may find that examples of programs and issues that I use – or that other students use because of their policy content area – are emotionally and intellectually challenging for you to engage with.
I will do my best to make this classroom a space where we can engage bravely, empathetically and thoughtfully with difficult content. I respect and understand that you may have individual needs for self-care. If you find that there are strategies that I may have overlooked that can help the class in this regard, please let me know about them.

Grade Scale

A	94+	B+	87-89.9	C+	77-79.9
A-	90-93.9	B	84-86.9	C	74-76.9
		B-	80-83.9	C-	70-73.9

Grading

1. Participation and Readings: **10%**
2. Logic Model, Evaluation Questions, Blog: **15%**
3. Evaluation Critique: **20%**
4. Comparative Evaluation Analysis: **30%**
5. Take Home Exam: **25%**

Assignment Descriptions

1. **Class Participation and Reading (10%):**
    a. Attendance is required for successful completion of this course and class should be expected to run until 8pm
    b. **Students are expected to have completed required readings prior to the class meeting for which they are listed.** Participation in class discussion on the required readings will affect course grades, especially in borderline cases.
    c. Assigned readings are selected to give students a representative sample of the professional evaluation literature, as well as to expose them to the sorts of issues which arise in the context of real life evaluation.
    d. Comments made to Evaluation Blog posts will also be factored into the final grade.
    e. Virtual class exercises will be held throughout the semester to reinforce concepts learned and facilitate application. Student participation will be considered and factored into the final grade.

Required Readings:

- Chapters from Kathryn Newcomer, Harry Hatry, and Joseph Wholey, The Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation, Jossey-Bass, 4th Edition, 2015
- U.S. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking Final Report "The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking." https://www.cep.gov/cep-final-report.html
- GAO reports, OMB memos, and other readings by a diverse set of authors are also provided by the instructor on blackboard. All readings are on blackboard.

Optional Readings:

- Ethics and Values, Kimmel
- Moneyball for Government

- ALL written assignments must be submitted in electronic copy through Blackboard. Please note that all assignments have an “Expiration Date/Time” in Blackboard after which the assignment will not be available for submission. **Assignments submitted after their expiration date will receive a lower grade.**

- **Written Assignment submission requirements:** Please follow the specifications below:
  - Your name is required at the top of the document ON EACH PAGE in the header
  - Your name and submission title is required in the ELECTRONIC "document name" (e.g., "Watson – Assignment 5.pdf") when you post it to Blackboard
  - Submissions must be single spaced, 12 point font
  - Follow the page limitations -- however tables/figures/graphic will not count against your page limitations. (E.g. if the page limit is "5" you can have 5 pages of text plus additional pages of graphics)
  - Submissions must have **page numbers**
  - Thoughtful formatting of documents from the perspectives of the reader is expected; poor formatting of tables, paragraphs and bullets in your submissions will receive point deductions.

2. Various Assignments (15%):

a. **Logic Model (5%)** - Students will develop a logic model for a program of their choice. Students will use the Logic Model Sign-Up Wiki to identify a date to deliver their presentation to the class.

b. **Evaluation Questions (5%)** – Students will develop evaluation questions in response to a pre-selected topic and the logic model developed in item "a." above.

c. **Evaluation Blog (5%)** – Students will write a 250-500 word blog focusing on an evaluation topic identified on the syllabus. The student will explain the topic, share a cool tip, trick, resource or lesson learned related to the topic. Students will sign up using the Evaluation Blog Wiki.

3. Evaluation Critique (20%):

Students will select an evaluation of their choice and perform a critique highlighting the threats to validity. The evaluation report to be critiqued must present results about process implementation, outcome or impact evaluation of an existing program, designed to deliver evaluation results to a governmental agency or non-profit organization.

- It may not be an article about how to conduct surveys or research or performance measurement, or a literature review.
- The evaluation must be published (or commissioned) by a non-auditing government Agency/unit, non-profit, or a non-governmental organization.
- The evaluation can be from a research journal or auditing agency- and you must clear them with me first:
  - A research journal article will not be deemed acceptable for critique UNLESS the article explicitly describes evaluation results (i.e. findings and/or recommendations) that were presented to a non-academic organization. You may show me the evaluation you select before you write the critique.
  - Auditing agency reports, i.e., GAO or Inspector General report, often do not qualify as an evaluation.
  - If the report or research study you critique does not qualify as an evaluation you will receive a "0" grade.

CRITIQUE:

The three to five-page single-spaced critique of the evaluation should use the following outline:

I. The formal title, authors, and citation of the document
II. Summarize evaluation and key findings;
III. Key evaluation questions: clearly stated and addressed?
IV. Research design: summarize briefly—was it adequately described?
V. Data: briefly summarize main data sources —were data and data collection adequately described?
VI. Threats to validity: Did they identify and address any threats? What other internal, external, and measurement threats have you identified and how might they be addressed?
    a. a table that contains a systematic list of threats to the: measurement validity, measurement reliability, internal validity, external validity, and statistical conclusion validity. Note that the threats should be clearly presented, for example do not simply state "Hawthorne Effect," but clarify how/why that threat occurred; AND
    b. the threats should be labeled as: those the authors acknowledged and addressed; threats the authors acknowledged but did not address; and those the authors did not acknowledge.
    c. The table must be formatting so that it is easy to read.
VII. Policy/Program implementation relevance: Did they make appropriate policy and/or program implementation recommendations? Recommendations warranted by the analysis?
VIII. Suggestions on how the evaluation could be improved: methodological and report organization
IX. Summarize **<u>your</u>** critique: what do you think of the evaluation's methodological quality and the presentation (e.g., report organization, data visualization)

Please see an example on BlackBoard – *the example is there as a guide to quality, clarity and format, but it may not have all of the elements required above.*

4. <u>Comparative Evaluation Analysis (30%):</u>
Students will be expected to conduct a comparative analysis of two evaluations – this can be done with one other student. Students must get instructor approval of the evaluations to be compared.

- The evaluation reports to be critiqued must present results about process implementation, outcome or impact evaluation of an existing program, designed to deliver evaluation results to a governmental agency or non-profit organization.
- You may <u>not use</u> an article about how to conduct surveys or research or performance measurement, or a literature review.
- One of your evaluations must be published (or commissioned) by a non-auditing government Agency/unit, non-profit, or a non-governmental organization.
- Only one of your evaluations can be from a research journal or auditing agency. If you choose to use one, you must clear the report with me first.
- A journal article, GAO report, IG report or other study you submit does not qualify as an evaluation I will not accept them for the evaluation critique; if the report or study you critique does not qualify as an evaluation you will receive a "0" grade.

The analysis is due no later than the official due date unless a prior agreement on a later due date is negotiated with the instructor.

5. <u>Take Home Exam (25%):</u>
A take-home, open-book exam covering the readings, content of the course and concepts applied during virtual in-class exercises will to contribute to 25% of the course grade. Students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge gained throughout the semester in their responses.

Key Dates

SEPTEMBER

September 1 – Session 1: Introduction to the Course and Overview of the Field of Program Evaluation

September 3 – Sign up for your Logic Model presentation
Sign up for the Evaluation Blog

September 8 – Session 2: Scoping Evaluations: Establishing Objectives for Evaluation Work

September 10 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
September 15 – Session 3: Strategies for Engaging Stakeholders
September 17 – Logic Models Due, 11:59 p.m.

September 17 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
September 22 – Session 4: Ethical and Legal Dilemmas
September 22 – Logic Model Presentations

September 24 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
September 29 – Session 5: Evaluating Implementation and Process, and Anticipating Pitfalls in Evaluation
September 29 – Logic Model Presentations

OCTOBER
October 1 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
October 1 – Evaluation Framing Questions Due, 11:59 p.m.
October 6 – Session 6: Outcome and Impact Evaluation
October 6 – Logic Model Presentations

October 8 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
October 13 – Session 7: An Overview of Evaluation in the Non-profit Sector: Conducting Evaluations in Non-profit Agencies and Expectations of Foundations and Other Funders
October 13 – Logic Model Presentations

October 15 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
October 20 – Session 8: Data Collection and Measurement Issues in Program Evaluation
Role of Cultural Competence in Data Collection and Measurement
October 20 – Logic Model Presentations
October 22 – Critique Due, 11:59 p.m.

October 22 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
October 27 – Session 9: Data Collection Instrument Design and Qualitative Data Analysis
October 27 – Logic Model Presentations

NOVEMBER

October 29 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
November 3 – Session 10: Performance Measurement and Performance Management
November 3 – Logic Model Presentations

November 5 – **Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.**
November 10 – Session 11: "Evidence-based Decision-making": Behavioral Insights, Meta-Evaluation and Systematic Reviews.
November 10 – Logic Model Presentations

November 12 – **Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.**

November 17 – Logic Model Presentations
November 19 – Comparative Evaluation Project, 11:59 p.m.
November 19 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
November 19 – Session 12: The Institutional Context for Evaluation and Evaluation Capacity Building

November 24 –
November 24 – Logic Model Presentations

DECEMBER
December 1 – Session 13: Analyzing and Reporting Data
December 1 – Logic Model Presentations

December 3 – **Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.**
December 8 – Session 14A: Understanding and Managing Factors that Affect Evaluation Use
– Session 14B: Course overview slides to assist with the final project.
– Logic Model Presentation

December 8 – Take Home Exam Available

December 10 – Blogs Posted, 11:59 p.m.
December 15 – Take Home Exam Due, 11:59 p.m.

Session Outlines

<u>Session 1</u>: Introduction to the Course and Overview of the Field of Program Evaluation
Readings:
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Planning and Designing Useful Evaluations
Kathryn E. Newcomer, Harry P. Hatry, Joseph S. Wholey
Do You Want a Performance Audit or a Program Evaluation? Davis

Questions:
Theory
- What is program evaluation? What types of studies and analytical support fall under this concept?
- How does program evaluation differ from other forms of analysis?
- What are the different approaches to evaluation?
- How did the field of evaluation evolve?
- Where does evaluation take place and who conducts evaluations?
- What are some of the more critical issues that face the evaluation profession?
- Who are "professional evaluators?"
- What is the program theory? How can it be developed and refined?

Practice
- What is logic modeling?

<u>Session 2</u>: Scoping Evaluations: Establishing Objectives for Evaluation Work
Readings:
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Using Logic Models, John A. McLaughlin, Gretchen B. Jordan
American Evaluation Association Evaluation Guiding Principles (2018)

Questions:
Theory
- What role can the evaluator play in program development and design?
- What pre-design steps are desirable for the evaluator to take?
- How might logic models guide evaluation?
- What are complex, adaptive systems? And what are the key concepts relevant to program evaluation from systems thinking?

Practice
- What should be contained in a Statement of Work (SOW)?
- What is the difference between Audit and Evaluation?

<u>Session 3</u>: Strategies for Engaging Stakeholders
Readings:
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Analyzing and Engaging Stakeholders, John M. Bryson, Michael Quinn Patton
Preskill and Catsambas, Introductory sections and pp. 1-74 [skim].

Questions:

Theory

- What role do stakeholders play in evaluation?
- How might stakeholders be most fruitfully engaged?
- What is appreciative inquiry, and when is it helpful and when is it not as applicable?
- How do nonprofits measure outcomes?
- What is the status of program evaluation in other nations, e.g. performance auditing?
- What role does program evaluation play for international funders, e.g. the World Bank?
- How do current performance measurement efforts relate to program evaluation?
- How does organizational culture shape evaluation capacity?

Practice

- How do you know when a program/organization is ready to engage in evaluation?

Session 4: Ethical and Legal Dilemmas

Readings:

The Good, the Bad, and the Evaluator: 25 Years of AJE Ethics
Feminist Evaluation and Gender Approaches: There's a Difference? Podems

Questions:

Theory

- What protections should be given to participants in an evaluation?
- What are Institutional Review Boards and why are they important?
- What is the ethical role of evaluator as policy advocate?
- What is feminist evaluation?

Practice

- What procedures are possible in ensuring confidentiality?
- What procedures can be developed for maintaining the credibility and fairness of the evaluation?
- What are the essential elements and desired format for informed consent agreements?

Session 5: Evaluating Implementation and Process, and Anticipating Pitfalls in Evaluation Work

Readings:

Holcomb and Nightingale article
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Exploratory Evaluation, Joseph S. Wholey
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Pitfalls in Evaluations, Harry P. Hatry, Kathryn E. Newcomer
"Threats to Validity and Reliability" by Newcomer

Questions:

Theory

- How should formative evaluations be designed?
- How do you measure program implementation?
- How should feedback be incorporated in an implementation study?
- How should an implementation study be linked with an outcome study?
- What are the most common threats to measurement validity and measurement reliability, and to internal, external, and statistical conclusion validity?

Practice

- What is evaluability assessment?
- What are the steps?
- How can it be used to guide evaluation?
- How can it be used as a management tool?

Session 6: Outcome and Impact Evaluation

Readings:

Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Comparison Group Designs, Gary T. Henry
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Randomized Controlled Trials, Carole J. Torgerson, David J. Torgerson, Celia A. Taylor
"Program Evaluation: A Variety of Rigorous Methods Can Help Identify Effective Interventions" (GAO -10-30)
Congress and Program Evaluation- An Overview of Randomized Controlled Trials and Related Issues

Questions:

Theory

- What are the commonly used designs to measure program outcomes?
- What are the considerations in selecting a design to evaluate program impact?
- How do the evaluators weigh the tradeoffs in various designs?
- What strategies are available for controlling or ruling out various rival explanations?

Practice

- What is propensity scoring, and how do you implement the technique?
- What designs are applicable for longitudinal data?

Session 7: An Overview of Evaluation in the Non-profit Sector: Conducting Evaluations in Non-profit Agencies and Expectations of Foundations and Other Funders

Readings:

Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Evaluating Community Change Programs, Brett Theodos, Joseph Firschein
Dealing with Complexity in Development Evaluation, Chapter 2
"Randomistas" set of two articles on Blackboard
State of Evaluation 2016
Engaging Boards and Trustees in Strategic Learning

Questions:

Theory

- What information is sought?
- What do stakeholders do with the findings?
- What are the challenges of applying evaluation in the sector?
- In what ways can evaluation be useful to nonprofits?
- What are the various models or approaches used in the sector?
- What are the arguments, pro and con, of the use of RCTs in the international context?

Practice

- What/who drives evaluation in the nonprofit sector? Who funds it?
- How do funders approach the evaluation process?
- Who conducts evaluation in the nonprofit sector?

- What is the state of practice of evaluation in international development?
- What are expectations of funders of capacity building in developing countries? And how realistic are they?
- What are challenges facing nonprofit agencies in developing countries in monitoring and evaluation?

Session 8: Data Collection, Measurement and the Role of Cultural Competence in Program Evaluation

Readings:

Ross on Unconscious Bias
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Culturally Responsive Evaluation, Stafford Hood, Rodney K. Hopson, Karen E. Kirkhart
AEA Statement on Cultural Competence in Evaluation
Raising the Bar – Integrating Cultural Competence and Equity: Equitable Evaluation, Jara Dean-Coffey, Jill Casey, Leon D. Caldwell
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Using Agency Records, Harry P. Hatry
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Collecting Data in the Field, Demetra Smith Nightingale, Shelli Balter Rossman

Questions:

Theory

- What are the relative advantages of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods?
- What are the considerations in using existing data?
- What is the role of cultural competency in data collection, analysis, and delivering results?
- What are "multi-method" evaluations and what purpose do they serve?

Practice

- How do we ensure more cultural competency in our evaluation work?
- What is involved in planning data collection and analysis?
- What procedures can enhance validity and reliability in measurement?

Session 9: Data Collection Instrument Design and Qualitative Data Analysis

Readings:

Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Using Surveys, Kathryn E. Newcomer, Timothy Triplett
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Focus Group Interviewing, Richard A. Krueger, Mary Anne Casey
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Qualitative Data Analysis, Delwyn Goodrick, Patricia J. Rogers

Questions:

Theory

- What design characteristics bolster the validity of survey instruments?
- When are focus groups most helpful?

Practice

- How are program participants most effectively surveyed?
- How should focus groups be designed and implemented?
- What are useful strategies for analyzing "qualitative" data?

<u>Session 10</u>: Performance Measurement and Performance Management

Readings:

Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Performance Measurement, Theodore H. Poister
Evidence Toolkit: PerformanceStat by Andrew Feldman
The Seven Big Errors of PerformanceStat by Behn
Algorithmic bias detection and mitigation: Best practices and policies, Brookings

Questions:

Theory

- What is performance measurement?
- What is program monitoring?
- What is meant by performance management?
- What is outcome monitoring?
- What is the "balanced score card?"
- Why is selecting (or changing) what to measure about performance difficult in any organizational culture that has been shaped over many years?

Practice

- How might performance measurement and program evaluation be effectively coordinated?
- What are the challenges to measuring performance?
- What are challenges to "PerformanceStat"-like processes in government?

<u>Session 11:</u> "Evidence-based Decision-making": Behavioral Insights, Meta-Evaluation and Systematic Reviews

Readings:

U.S. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking Final Report "The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking." Chapter 1 and Chapter 6
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Meta-Analyses, Systematic Reviews, and Evaluation Syntheses, Robert Boruch, Anthony Petrosino, Claire Morgan Burkhardt, et. al.
Means, et. Al
Skim Pew and MacArthur Guide to Evidence-based Policymaking
Tools and Ethics for Applied Behavioural Insights, OECD

Questions:

Theory

- What is meta-evaluation and how is it best conducted?
- What are systematic reviews?
- What are behavioral insights?
- What is "evidence-based" policy/management/practice?
- Why is it difficult to transfer evaluation and research findings into practice?
- What is practice-based evidence?

Practice

- Is the model proposed to support evidence-policymaking proposed by the Pew and MacArthur foundations feasible for states to implement?

- When are findings from evaluations sufficient to constitute such "Evidence?"

<u>Session 12:</u> The Institutional Context for Evaluation and Evaluation Capacity Building

Readings:

U.S. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking Final Report "The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking." Chapter 5
Evidence Based Policymaking Primer
American Evaluation Association Evaluation Roadmap
An Evaluation Culture and Collaborative Partnerships Help Build Agency Capacity (GAO-03-454)
Partizi & MacMullan Evaluation in Foundations

Questions:

Theory

- What is evaluation capacity-building?
- What difference does the source of evaluation expertise make in approach, methods and use?
- How do auditors (Inspector General offices) approach evaluation?
- What skills are required for effective evaluation practice and for oversight of contracted evaluation work?

Practice

- What does the AEA recommend in terms of institutionalizing evaluation?

<u>Session 13:</u> Analyzing and Reporting Data

Readings:

Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Providing Recommendations, Suggestions, and Options for Improvement, George F. Grob
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Writing for Impact, George F. Grob
One Pagers: Simple and Engaging Reporting, Emma Perk and Lyssa Wilson Becho
Data Visualization Checklist, by Stephanie Evergreen & Ann K. Emery

Questions:

Theory

- What are characteristics of effective data presentation?
- What are rigorous procedures for analyzing and presenting qualitative data?
- How should results be displayed?
- How are "null results" most appropriately reported?
- What do useful recommendations look like?

Practice

- What are alternative report formats?
- How should evaluators choose the right graphics?

<u>Session 14:</u> Understanding and Managing Factors that Affect Evaluation Use

Readings:

Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Evaluation Challenges, Issues, and Trends 816
Harry P. Hatry, Kathryn E. Newcomer, Joseph S. Wholey

Questions:

Theory

- What factors influence utilization of evaluation results?

- What are the various types of utilization? How can they be measured?
- What can be done during evaluation design and implementation to enhance utilization?
- What are emerging and continuing significant issues in the evaluation profession?

Practice

- How can you help to build an evaluation and performance-friendly culture?

Policies in the Trachtenberg School Courses

1. Incompletes: A student must consult with the instructor to obtain a grade of I (incomplete) no later than the last day of classes in a semester. At that time, the student and instructor will both sign the CCAS contract for incompletes and submit a copy to the School Director. Please consult the TSPPPA Student Handbook or visit our website for the complete CCAS policy on incompletes.

2. Submission of Written Work Products Outside of the Classroom: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that an instructor receives each written assignment. Students must submit written work electronically.

3. Submission of Written Work Products after Due Date: Policy on Late Work: All work must be turned in by the assigned due date in order to receive full credit for that assignment, unless an exception is expressly made by the instructor.

4. Academic Honesty: Please consult the "policies" section of the GW student handbook for the university code of academic integrity. Note especially the definition of plagiarism: "intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information." All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. See the GW Academic Integrity Code (http://www.gwu.edu/~integrity).

5. Changing Grades after Completion of Course: No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.

6. The Syllabus: This syllabus is a guide to the course for the student. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and the instructor may therefore, at her/his discretion, change content and requirements during the semester. Excused absences will be given for absences due to religious holidays as per the university schedule, but please advise the instructor ahead of time.

7. Out of Class Learning: Average minimum amount of independent, out-of- class, learning expected per week: In a 15 week semester, including exam week, students are expected to spend a minimum of 100 minutes of out-of- class work for every 50 minutes of direct instruction, for a minimum total of 2.5 hours a week.

University Policies

University Policy on Religious Holidays

1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

Academic Integrity Code

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. For the remainder of the code, see: studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity

Support for Students Outside of the Classroom

Disability Support Services (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

Mental Health Services 202-994-5300
The University's Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. counselingcenter.gwu.edu/