The Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration

Basic Course Information

Course Number: PPPA 6016
Course Title: Public and Non-Profit Program Evaluation
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:
Katherine Dawes, MPA
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Office hours: Sundays, 10am-12pm. And by appointment.
NOTE: I work full time as a US federal government employee and do not have a GWU office. But I welcome discussions outside of class. Please call, text, or email me to arrange meetings.

Course Approach and Expectations

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.evaluation.gov/assets/resources/Commission%20on%20evidence-based%20policymaking%20report.pdf
- Evaluation Failures: 22 Tales of Mistakes Made and Lessons Learned. Edited by Kylie Hutchinson https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/evaluation-failures/book260109
- Evidence-Building and Evaluation in Government (Evaluation in Practice Series) 1st Edition by Kathryn Newcomer and Nicholas Hart [Note that I do recommend purchasing this book. https://www.amazon.com/Evidence-Building-Evaluation-Government-Practice/dp/1071808729]
- 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.

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.

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.

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 including gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, and political affiliation. 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 program and issues that I use – or that other students use because of their policy content area – are emotionally 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.

Assigned Readings:
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 evaluations. Students are expected to have completed required readings prior to the class meeting for which they are listed.

Guest Speakers: I try to engage 3-4 guest speakers throughout the semester to talk about ongoing and emerging evaluation issues. They will be announced as they are scheduled. Health conditions may limit my efforts/success on this front.

Final Grade: I use a simple percentage calculation for the final grade.

Use of Electronics in the Classroom:

You may use electronics to take notes.

HOWEVER, I Do Notice when you are just surfing the computer and/or your phone while I am presenting. **Really.** If you do this in excess of common sense and respect, I will take points off your final grade. *Without warning.*

Never surf your computer or cell phone when guest speakers are presenting in-person. **Never.** I will take 10 points off your final grade each time you do. *This is your only warning.*

Assignments

ALL written assignments must be submitted in electronic copy, on or before the due date. Due dates are firm for all written assignments. Late papers will be penalized by lower grades.

Submissions are expected no later than the official due date unless a prior agreement on a later due date is negotiated with the instructor. Please note that assignments have an "Expiration Date" in Blackboard after which they will not made available.

Written Assignment submission requirements: Points will be taken off your grades if you do not follow these specifications:
- Submissions must be **single spaced**, **12-point font**
- 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**
- Your name and submission title are required in the ELECTRONIC "document name" (e.g., "Dawes – Assignment 5.pdf") when you post it to Blackboard
- 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.*

1. **Class Participation and Logic Model Presentations: (Points go to overall course grade).**
   a. Attendance is required for successful completion of this course and class will end promptly at 8pm
   b. In-Class Exercises will be held throughout the semester.
   c. Students will be graded on their participation in the exercises, including Memo Guidelines and Logic Model presentations.
   d. Homework exercises to support in class discussions and prepare for tests are assigned throughout the semester and are worth 2-20 points. For actual schedule see KEY DATES below and/or Blackboard.
   e. I will assign students to online discussion groups, just in case we need to go virtual due to COVID19 restrictions or other unexpected events.

2. **Group Assignments**
   Some assignments will be done in groups. Your assigned Group will be posted in the second week of the semester, after you have the opportunity to share whether you have an ongoing study partner or group, because I will consider this information for group assignments. *I reserve the right to change these groups throughout the semester.*

3. **Submitting assignments**
   a. Following assignment(s) are to be submitted via Wiki
      - Logic Model Signup. *Note: Logic Model dates may change based on Guest Speaker availability*

   b. Following assignments will be submitted as group assignments, *and submissions will be shared and discussed with the full class.*
      - Developing a Learning Agenda
      - Four (4) rules for writing memos
      - Visit and assess two (2) "evidence based" websites

   c. Following individual assignment(s) will be part of class discussions:
      - Considering evaluative tools for continuous improvement

4. **Evaluation Critiques:** Over the semester, students will review critically *at least three evaluations* selected by the student. Student will do two individual evaluation critiques, and one comparative analysis of two evaluations. **See the "Evaluation Critique Tracker."**

   Dictionary.com -- Critique
   Noun -- a detailed analysis and assessment of something, especially a literary, philosophical, or political theory.
   Verb -- evaluate (a theory or practice) in a detailed and analytical way.

   - 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 pick</u> an article about how to conduct surveys or research or performance measurement, a literature review, or that summarizes an evaluation.
   - 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- and you must clear them with me first:
     o 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.
     o Auditing agency reports, i.e., GAO or Inspector General report, often do not qualify as an evaluation.
     o If the report or journal research study your critique does not qualify as an evaluation you will receive a "0" grade.

5. **Final Comparative Critique Project:**
   Members of the class will be expected to conduct a comparative analysis of two or more program evaluations.
   - 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. It may not be an article that summarizes
   - One of your evaluations must be published (or commissioned) by a non-auditing government Agency/unit, non-profit, foundation, 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, and you must clear the report with me first. There is a strong chance I will say no, *unless they are actually <u>evaluation</u> studies*. If 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***

   <mark>You may do your final project with a partner</mark>. You must submit the same documents in Blackboard as proof of your agreement – both partners will get the same grade. A partner is encouraged but not required.

6. **Take Home Exams:**
   Two take home exams will cover the readings and content of the course. Students will be given the topics and intended executive audiences for each take home exam at least one week before each is due.

   For Exam #1 students are expected to submit 2 documents.
   1. **A memo.** Refer to the "rules for memos" wiki, or other resources for proper formatting and tone. Remember that you need an opening and closing sentence (or short paragraphs).
      - **4 pages maximum** of text
      - **1 page maximum** for graphics that support your text. Draw on your earlier assignment, and/or other graphics/pictures that communicate your information.
   2. Reference list

   For Exam #2 students are expected to submit 3 documents:
   1. A **PowerPoint presentation. 10 pages maximum** for the core PowerPoint, including the cover page and closing page
   2. A **short transmittal memo. 1 page maximum** (just few paragraphs). Refer to the "rules for memos" wiki, or other resources for proper formatting and tone. Remember that you need an opening and closing sentence (or short paragraphs).
   3. A Reference List.

   ==You may do either or both of these exams with a partner==. You must submit the same documents in Blackboard as proof of your agreement – both partners will get the same grade. A partner is encouraged but not required.

Resources

For additional resources and links on topics related to your critiques, see (1) Resource: Evaluation Checklists and (2) Topical Resources folder. Topical resources include: Evaluation for International Development or Aid; US Congress and Evaluation; Performance Measurement and Evaluation (performance stat, Moneyball, etc.); Program Evaluation for Non-Profits and Foundations; Behavioral Insights; Complexity; Evaluation Capacity Building, Cultural Competency; Perspectives on "Evidence"; Ethics; Qualitative Analysis and COVID related issues.

Please use the **Resources for Writing Clearly section on Blackboard**. Getting someone else to look over your paper as an editor is HIGHLY recommended, consider using the GW Writing Center or a fellow student who will be honest with you. Or use an old self-editing trick: read your paper out loud but start with the last paragraph and go backwards – you are more likely to catch your own mistakes this way.

Reference Lists

Several assignments ask for reference lists. The purpose of a reference lists is for you to demonstrate you are paying attention to the assigned readings *or identifying relevant readings on your own*. A list must include program evaluation references but can also include relevant policy references. References that count include assigned readings, newspaper or magazine articles, expert or institutional blog posts, conference or online presentations, and briefs. *PowerPoint slides from this class **do not** count as references*, though you can use the references cited on the PowerPoints or in the session folders. Also, if you refer to the Handbook Of Practical Program Evaluation, you should indicate which chapters.

A list will be rated along these lines: missing, inadequate, good/solid, excellent/strong, and outstanding/authoritative. "Good" is the standard and expected rating. A reference list does not have to be long to get a "good" rating, but it does have to be relevant. A long reference list does not automatically get a good rating if the readings are not relevant to the material and/or clearly not used.

Reference List Guide

Title	From Class Reading list?	Self-identified Evaluation reading?	Policy or other context reference?

References that count include assigned readings, newspaper or magazine articles, expert or institutional blog posts, conference or online presentations, and briefs.
*PowerPoint slides from this class **do not** count as references*, though you can use the references cited on the PowerPoints or in the session folders.

Evaluation Critique Tracker

Students are expected to submit their evaluation critique tracker before turning in the final paper. Occasionally students find that they need to adjust which evaluations they review for the final paper after they receive initial approvals. You can resubmit your requests for approvals, as well as the final evaluation tracker.

Even if you are doing your final project with a partner, you must submit an evaluation tracker.

	Cleared by Professor?	From a research journal or auditing agency?	Use in Critique?	Title
Evaluation 1				
Evaluation 2				
Evaluation 3				
Evaluation 4				

- Students must get instructor approval of the evaluations to be critiqued
- 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. It may not be an article that summarizes
- Two of your evaluations must be published (or commissioned) by a non-auditing government Agency/unit, non-profit, foundation, 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, and you must clear the report with me first. There is a strong chance I will say no, *unless they are actually <u>evaluation</u> studies*. If 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*
- For your final assignment, if you choose to partner with both have to read at least 3 evaluations over the semester. So the evaluations -- including past critiques -- that you pick must reflect that requirement.

Key Dates

August 29 Class 1
- ✓ **August 29–** *Pre-class assignment, in class share – your personal logic model*
- ✓ *September 1 – Upload the logic model you wrote during class to Blackboard. (Pdf, png, other)*

September 5– NO CLASS
- ✓ *September 8– Submit your preferred dates for Logic Model presentations in the wiki*
- ✓ *September 8– Optional: Let me know…(1) your Graduation date; (2) if you have an ongoing study partner or group*
- ✓ *September 8– Describe 10 Threats to Validity using plain language. Due, 11:59pm*

September 12 – Class 2
- ✓ *September 15 – Group Assignment: 4 Rules for Writing Memos.*

September 19 – Class 3
- ✓ *September 19 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *September 22 – Describe 5 Threats to Validity using plain language. Due, 11:59pm*

September 26 – Class 4
- ✓ *September 26 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *September 29 – Find 8 examples of graphics that help demonstrate each of the 8 types of statistical methods*

October 3 – Class 5
- ✓ *October 3 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *October 6 – First Critique Due, 11:59pm*

October 10 – Class 6
- ✓ *October 10 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *October 13 – Group Assignment: Developing a Class Learning Agenda*
- ✓ *October 13 –* First Take-Home Exam available on Blackboard

October 17 – Class 7
- ✓ *October 17 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *October 20 – First Take-Home Exam Due, 11:59pm*

October 24 - Fall Break (no classes)

October 31 – Class 8 [Will be virtual]
- ✓ *October 31 -- Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *November 3 – Considering tools for continuous improvement.* **Come to class prepared to discuss on November 7**

November 7 – Class 9
- ✓ *November 7 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *November 10 – Group Assignment: Visit and assess two (2) "evidence-based" websites.*

November 14 – Class 10
- ✓ *November 14 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *November 17 – 2nd Critique Due, 11:59pm*

November 21 – Class 11 [Will be virtual]
- ✓ *November 21 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *November 21 –* Second Take Home Assignment available on Blackboard

November 28 – Class 12
- ✓ *November 28 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *December 1 – Second Take Home Assignment Due, 11:59pm*

December 5 – Class 13
- ✓ *December 5 – Logic Model Presentations*
- ✓ *December 8 – Final Project's evaluations and Evaluation Critique Tracker*

December 12 – Class 14 (Last Monday class of the semester)
- ✓ *December 19 – Final Paper Due- Comparative Evaluation Project, 11:59pm*

Weekly Reading Outlines

Week 1: **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
- ➢ Congress provides new foundation for evidence-based policymaking (Hart and Shaw)
- ➢ Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act)
- ➢ Program Evaluation and Concepts Key Terms (GAO, March 2021)
- ➢ American Evaluation Association Evaluation Guiding Principles (2018)
- ➢ See Class 1 folder for PowerPoint presentations and helpful videos

Questions:
> ### Theory
> - What is program evaluation? What types of studies and analysis 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?
> - What is program theory?

Week 2: **Scoping Evaluations: Establishing Objectives for Evaluation Work**
Readings:
- ➢ Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: *Using Logic Models,* McLaughlin and Jordan
- ➢ The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking: Chapter 1 - *Introduction: Vision for Evidence-Based Policymaking*
- ➢ Evidence-Building and Evaluation in Government: Chapter 1 *The Evidence-building Mandate*
- ➢ Program Evaluation Standards and Practices (OMB March 2020)
- ➢ Applying complexity theory: A review to inform evaluation design
- ➢ Do You Want a Performance Audit or a Program Evaluation?
- ➢ Comparing Audit and Evaluation in the Government of Canada
- ➢ Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation (aka The Blue Book)– [just skim this resource]

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 Evaluation and Auditing?

Week 3: Strategies for Engaging Stakeholders
Readings:
  - Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: *Analyzing and Engaging Stakeholders*, John M. Bryson, Michael Quinn Patton
  - A "Failed" Logic Model: How I Learned to Connect with All Stakeholders by Hallie Preskill
  - Using Appreciative Inquiry in Evaluation Practice, Preskill and Catsambas
  - Evidence Use in Congress: Executive Summary
  - The Readiness for Organizational Learning and Evaluation Instrument (ROLE)
  - What's Race Got to Do with It? Equity and Philanthropic Evaluation Practice by Jara Dean-Coffey
  - Millions of black people affected by racial bias in health-care algorithms
  - A Guide to Developing Your Agency's Learning Agenda: Section 3 -- Who should be involved in the learning agenda development process?

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 does organizational culture shape evaluation capacity?

  ### Practice
  - How do you know when a program/organization is ready to engage in evaluation?
  - How do you grapple with difficult diversity issues with stakeholders?

Week 4: Evaluating Implementation and Process, and Anticipating Pitfalls in Evaluation Work
Readings:
  - Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Exploratory Evaluation, Joseph S. Wholey
  - Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Pitfalls in Evaluations, Hatry and Newcomer
  - Evidence-Building and Evaluation in Government: Chapter 2 Assessing the Quality of Evidence
  - "Threats to Validity and Reliability" by Newcomer
  - Conceptual Underpinnings of Implementation Analysis, Holcomb, and Nightingale
  - Issues of rigor and feasibility when observing the quality of program implementation: A case study
  - OMG, Why Can't We Get the Data: A Lesson in Managing Evaluation Expectations by Bisgard and Selvaggio
  - Adapting evaluation designs in times of COVID-19 (coronavirus)_ four questions to guide decisions

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
  - How do you plan for implementation evaluation?
  - How do you use evaluability assessment to guide evaluation?

Week 5: 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
- Congress and Program Evaluation: Overview of Randomized Controlled Trials and Related Issues
- The rise of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) in international development in historical perspective
- Randomized Controlled Trials: Powerful, But Only When Used Right
- Getting Off the "Gold Standard": Randomized Controlled Trials and Education Research
- Conditions to Consider in the Use of Randomized Experimental Designs in Evaluation
- A Guide to Developing Your Agency's Learning Agenda, Section 2 -- What types of questions go into a learning agenda?
- Evidence-Building and Evaluation in Government: Chapter 4 Developing Learning Agenda for Public Organizations

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 are the arguments, pro and con, of the use of RCTs in the international context?

Practice
- What is propensity scoring, and how do you implement the technique?
- What strategies are available for controlling or ruling out various rival explanations?

Week 6: 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
- Dealing with Complexity in Development Evaluation, Chapter 2
- State of Evaluation 2016
- Benchmarking Foundation Evaluation Practices 2020
- Engaging Boards and Trustees in Strategic Learning
- Are You My Amigo, or My Chero? The Importance of Cultural Competence in Data Collection and Evaluation by Isaac D. Castillo
- Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines for Federal Departments and Agencies
- Complexity in Evaluation in International Development, Raimondo, Vaessen, and Bamberger
- Shifting The Evaluation Paradigm: The Equitable Evaluation Framework, pages 7-18

Questions:
Theory
- 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?

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 challenges facing nonprofit agencies in developing countries in evaluation?

Week 7: Data Collection and Measurement Issues in Program Evaluation
Role of Cultural Competence in Data Collection and Measurement
Readings:
- The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking: Appendix D: Examples of Data Productive for Evidence Building
- Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Using Agency Records, Hatry
- Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Collecting Data in the Field, Nightingale and Rossman
- Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Culturally Responsive Evaluation, Stafford Hood, Rodney K. Hopson, Karen E. Kirkhart
- AEA Statement on Cultural Competence in Evaluation
- Ross on Unconscious Bias
- Raising the Bar – Integrating Cultural Competence and Equity: Equitable Evaluation, Jara Dean-Coffey, Jill Casey, Leon D. Caldwell
- The Feature Is the Bug: For all the criticism they get, algorithms can be unlikely allies in exposing deep, structural injustices that entrench mass incarceration. By Colin Doyle
- Shifting The Evaluation Paradigm: The Equitable Evaluation Framework, pages 19-37

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?

Week 8: Data Collection Instrument Design and Qualitative Data Analysis
Readings:
- Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Using Surveys, Newcomer and 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
- The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking. Chapter 4 -- Modernizing America's Data Infrastructure for Accountability and Privacy
- A Field Guide to Ripple Effects Mapping: PART I The Origins of Ripple Effects Mapping; PART 2 The Core Ingredients of Ripple Effects Mapping

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?

Week 9: **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
- ➢ Adaptation of Lean Six Sigma Methodologies for the Evaluation of Veterans Choice Program at 3 Urban Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, Ball et al
- ➢ Forging a Strategic and Comprehensive Approach to Evaluation Within Public and Nonprofit Organizations: Integrating Measurement and Analytics Within Evaluation
- ➢ Guide for Adopting Remote Monitoring Approaches During COVID-19 (USAID)

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?

Week 10: **Behavioral Insights, Meta-Evaluation and Systematic Reviews**
Readings:
- ➢ The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking: Chapter 6 - Conclusion: Possibilities with More and Better Evidence
- ➢ Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Meta-Analyses, Systematic Reviews, and Evaluation Syntheses, Boruch, Petrosino, Burkhardt, et. al.
- ➢ Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses
- ➢ Similarities and differences in program registers: A case study
- ➢ Comparing rating paradigms for evidence-based program registers in behavioral health: Evidentiary criteria and implications for assessing programs
- ➢ Intervention Research in Highly Unstable Environments
- ➢ Moving to a World Beyond "p < 0.05"

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?"

Week 11: **The Institutional Context for Evaluation and Evaluation Capacity Building**
Readings:
- ➢ The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking: Chapter 5 - Strengthening the Evidence-Building Capacity within the Federal Government
- ➢ Evidence Based Policymaking Primer
- ➢ Evidence-Based Policymaking: A guide for effective government
- ➢ American Evaluation Association Evaluation Roadmap (2019)
- ➢ "Program Evaluation: A Variety of Rigorous Methods Can Help Identify Effective Interventions" (GAO - 10-30)
- ➢ I2L2 Formula for Change
- ➢ GEO 2017 Field Survey: Chapters on Smarter Grantmaking, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Organizational Culture

Questions:
Theory
- What is evaluation capacity-building?
- What difference does the source of evaluation expertise make in approach, methods, and use?
- What skills are required for effective evaluation practice or oversight of contracted evaluation work?

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

Week 12: **Ethical and Legal Dilemmas;**
Readings:
- ➢ The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking: Chapter 2 – Secure, Restricted Access to Confidential Data
- ➢ The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking: Chapter 3 – Enhancing Privacy Protections for Federal Evidence Building
- ➢ The Good, the Bad, and the Evaluator: 25 Years of AJE Ethics
- ➢ Tools and Ethics for Applied Behavioural Insights, OECD
- ➢ Feminist Evaluation and Gender Approaches: There's a Difference? Dr. Donna Podems
- ➢ Guidance for Addressing Gender in Evaluations (IOM/UN)
- ➢ International Ethical Guidelines for Health-related Research Involving Humans: Chapters – Preface, Evidence Retrieval and Synthesis, Preamble and Guideline 1
- ➢ Equitable Evaluation Framework™ Framing Paper

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 credibility and fairness
- What are the essential elements and desired format for informed consent agreements?

Week 13: 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
- ➤ Developing an effective evaluation report: Setting the course for effective program evaluation. Part II: Exercise, Worksheets, and Tools by CDC
- ➤ 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?

Week 14: Understanding and Managing Factors that Affect Evaluation Use
Readings:
- ➤ Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation: Evaluation Challenges, Issues, and Trends
  Harry P. Hatry, Kathryn E. Newcomer, Joseph S. Wholey
- ➤ Betterment, undermining, support, and distortion: A heuristic model for the analysis of pressure on evaluators, Lyn Pleger and Fritz Sager, Ph.D.

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. <u>Incompletes:</u> 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. <u>Submission of Written Work Products Outside of the Classroom:</u> It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that an instructor receives each written assignment. Students must submit written work electronically.
3. <u>Submission of Written Work Products after Due Date: Policy on Late Work:</u> All work must be turned in by the assigned due date to receive full credit for that assignment unless an exception is expressly made by the instructor.
4. <u>Academic Honesty:</u> 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. <u>Changing Grades after Completion of Course:</u> No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.
7. <u>The Syllabus:</u> 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.
8. <u>Out of Class Learning</u>: 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.
9. <u>Accessibility</u>: If a resource for the class (article, link, etc.,) posted to Blackboard is non-accessible (e.g., not 508 compliant), please contact the instructor, immediately. Instructor should address the issue in a timely fashion to meet student needs.

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/

GW Writing Center - A division of the University Writing Program
The GW Writing Center offers free, peer-based support to students and faculty from across the university. Clients participate in one-on-one sessions with student consultants on their projects at all stages of the writing process. The center welcomes undergraduate and graduate students at all levels, from all schools, as well as staff, and faculty seeking feedback on assignments and their own writing projects.