# HUBERT H. HUMPHREY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## PA 5311: Program Evaluation

Spring Semester 2016
In-Person On-Campus Class Meetings: in Humhrey School room 35 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm on Fridays, January 29; February 12, March 11, April 15, and May 6
3 credits

## Dr. Jodi Sandfort

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Office Hours: Wednesdays from 8:30 to 11:00. To make an appointment, follow this QR code or the link on the moodle site:

## Trupti Sarode, Teaching Assistant

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Office Location: Public & Nonprofit Leadership Center, Second floor, Cube A
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30 - 2:30

## Course Description & Learning Outcomes

This course provides an introductory overview to program evaluation as it is used in public affairs. Through working on a 'real world' project, students will explore the complexities and realities of conducting program evaluation in community-based settings, such as public agencies, schools, non-profit organizations, and collaborative initiatives.

The course is designed to achieve two primary purposes: 1) provide students conceptual frameworks and practical strategies for conducting community-based evaluation studies, and 2) build their understanding of program evaluation as practiced across the globe. At the end of the term students will:

1. Understand the purposes and uses of program evaluation in public policy and program delivery;
2. Develop familiarity with common program evaluation terminology and professional practices and ethics;
3. Design an appropriate evaluation plan for a specific program or initiative.
4. Recognize the cultural and power dynamics at play in evaluation-related efforts.
5. Use appropriate tactics to encourage primary stakeholders to use results.

We will pursue these learning outcomes through project-based learning that allows students to compare and contrast different evaluation projects across the course -- establishing guiding evaluation questions, theories of action/change, data collection, data analysis, and presentation of an evaluation report. The Spring 2016 offering is offered in a "hybrid format" that leverage both face-to-face and online course elements, using an array of technological tools to learn together even when we are not physically present with each other.

In this hybrid course, we will have five face-to-face meetings over the course of the semester, from 10:00 to 5:00. These sessions will be opportunities for us to apply reading and lecture materials, meet with clients, refine our data collection tools, and make final presentations. Throughout the semester, you will work with a *evaluation project team* in your work for a community-based client. We will establish these groups for our first face-to-face meeting on January 29th. Like all graduate courses, you should plan to spend about 15 -20 hours per week on course related activities and assignments. For example, you will meet face-to-face or virtually with your project team during some weeks we are not meeting as a whole class to make progress on the work for your client.

## *Means of Learning* & Communicating with Each Other

We will draw upon various learning materials to achieve our learning outcomes: readings; multimedia cases; podcasts; twitter feeds; field research; voicethread, and project teams. Although this is a course that leverages technology , this does not mean that communication with the teaching team should be more limited. ***If you have questions, concerns, recommendations, or emerging ideas about the course, let me know!*** The sooner the better. I welcome face-to-face or virtual video conversations about the course. To make an appointment during my set office hours (Wednesday 8:30 – 11:00) follow the link to my calendar on the course web-page or code above. If you would like to meet another time, please send me an email directly to set something up. You also can communicate with me or the Teaching Assistant through our Moodle site, via phone, email, or in person before or after class.

Hybrid courses are suited to students who are interested in active, self-directed learning. The online delivery of parts of this course allows students the flexibility to complete activities at their own pace and in their weekly schedule. However, that flexibility demands that students plan and manage their time efficiently. Students must take responsibility to actively use the online learning material and manage their time to complete assigned reading and online activities before their deadlines.

Students may think the amount of work required in this course to be heavier than normal. Remember work done between in-class meetings take the place of additional class meetings. Depending on your experience and skill level, the online course environment may be unfamiliar to you, and utilizing the online material may take longer than expected. Students must be willing to spend extra time initially to familiarize themselves with the online course environment.

However, the Humphrey School's Technology Enhanced Learning team has assembled a toolbox of online resources, including the project management tool Basecamp relevant to your projects, to support our work. Current practice and research suggests students are successful in these types of technology-enriched classes when they are:

- Open minded about sharing work, life, and educational experiences as part of the learning process;
- Able to communicate through writing;
- Willing to communicate with instructors if problems arise;
- Accept critical thinking and decision making as part of the learning process;
- Able to think ideas through before responding;
- Self-motivated and self-disciplined;
- Able to establish and maintain boundaries with on-line media (and manage your own expectations of you or me always being 'wired').

Remember: Success in the course is dependent on you mastering course content while simultaneously dealing with all of life's other responsibilities. You will need to keep yourself on track because our face-to-face times will focus on application of key concepts and tools rather than merely description of them.

Technical problems online: While these may occur either at home or from an on-campus connection, they are usually not valid reasons for failing to fulfill the online course requirements or to meet deadlines. Students are responsible for allocating enough time to complete online assignments, and they should include the possibility of technical "glitches." Students need to allow enough time to try again later or to travel to a campus computer lab or alternative place to complete the assignment. Exceptions may be made by the instructor in the event of widespread computer viruses or some other large-scale event affecting the University's computer network, but exceptions will not be made for routine computer problems.

### For Technical Support:

- Contact the University's IT department
  - email help@umn.edu
  - phone 612.301.4357 or text 612.548.1191
  - chat online at it.umn.edu/chat
- Contact Moodle Support via email to moodle@umn.edu
  - Include the URL of course Moodle site plus details about your concern
- Post a question to "Ask the Tech Support Lady" on course Moodle site

## Course Prerequisites

Must be graduate student or have instructor's consent

## Required Materials and Location

All course materials will be accessed through the course Moodle site. You should check the website regularly to attain the necessary readings, assignments, announcements, and other information. If you are not familiar with Moodle, a good way to get started is to watch the "student orientation resources" at http://it.umn.edu/course-management-system-moodle-related/students.

Moodle sites can be accessed on any computer that has an internet connection and a web browser. The UMN Moodle support team recommends using Chrome or Mozilla Firefox, which you can download free at [www.google.com/chrome](www.google.com/chrome) or [http://firefox.com](http://firefox.com).

To access the Moodle course website, go to [https://moodle.umn.edu](https://moodle.umn.edu) and sign in with your internet ID and password. For questions, you may contact [moodle@umn.edu](mailto:moodle@umn.edu) or the course instructor.

## Bibliography of Course Materials

Kathryn Newcomer, Harry Hatry, and Joseph Wholey (2010), "Planning and Designing Useful Evaluations," *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Third Edition), Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. Jossey-Bass: pg. 5-23, 25-29.

Huey T. Chen (2015), "Fundamentals of Program Evaluation," *Practical Program Evaluation: Theory-Drive Evaluation and the Integrated Evaluation Perspective* (Second Edition), Sage Publications: pg. 3-31.

American Evaluation Association (July 2004). *Guiding Principles for Evaluators*.

Michael Patton,"The Programs' Theory of Action: Conceptualizing Causal Linkages, *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (Third Edition), Sage Publication: pg. 215-238.

GovInnovator podcast (2013). "Reducing Fear of Program Evaluation: Interview with Paul Decker"

John McLaughlin and Gretchen Jordan (2010). "Using Logic Models," *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Third Edition), Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. Jossey-Bass: pg. 55-80.

Jean King and Laurie Stevahn (2013)."The Nuts and Bolts of Evaluation Conversations," (Chapter 4) *Interactive Evaluation Practice: Mastering the Interpersonal Dynamics of Program Evaluation*. Sage Publications: pg. 66-95.

Jean King and Laurie Stevahn (2013). "Creating a Viable Interactive Evaluation Process," (Chapter 7) *Interactive Evaluation Practice: Mastering the Interpersonal Dynamics of Program Evaluation*. Sage Publications: pg. 195-227.

GovInnovator podcast (2013). "A Provider's Perspective on Random Assignment Evaluation: Interview with Sarah Hurley, Youth Villages"

Hanife Cakici (2015) "Adapting Evaluation for Local Contexts in a Globalized World" Hubert e-study.

John M. Bryson, Michael Quinn Patton, and Ruth Bowman (2011). "Working with Evaluation Stakeholders: A Rationale, step-wise approach and toolkit," *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 34, pg. 1-12.

Michael Quinn Patton,"What is Utilization-Focused Evaluation? How do you get started?" (Chapter 2) *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (Third Edition). Sage Publications: pg. 19-38.

Michael Quinn Patton,"Intended Use of Findings?" (Chapter 4) *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (Third Edition). Sage Publications: pg. 63-85.

Peter H. Rossi, Howard Freeman, & Mark Lipsey, (1999) "Identifying Issues and Formulating Questions (Chapter 3), *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 6th edition. Sage Publications. pg. 79-116.

Center for Disease Control (2013). "Good Evaluation Questions: A Checklist to Help Focus Your Evaluation," National Asthma Control Program.

American Evaluation Association (2010). *An Evaluation Roadmap for a More Effective Government.*
Margaret B. Hargreaves (2010). "Evaluating System Change: A Planning Guide." Method Brief. Mathematica Policy Research.
Arlene Fink (2015). "Designing Program Evaluations," (Chapter 3). *Evaluation Fundamentals*: *Insights into Program Effectiveness, Quality & Values*. Sage Publications, pg. 67-99.
GovInnovator podcast (2014). "Using Opportunistic Experiments to Learn What Works: Interview with Peter Schochet"
Peter Rossi, Howard Freeman, and Mark Lipsey (1999). "Strategies for Impact Assessment," *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 6th edition. Sage Publications: pg. 235-271.
Michael Quinn Patton (2011). "How the World is Changed," *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*. Guildford Press, pg. 152-188.
Stephen Roll, (2016). "Sharpen Your Financial Focus." Hubert e-case.
Demetra Smith Nightingale and Shelli B. Rossman, "Collecting Data in the Field," *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Third Edition), Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. Jossey-Bass: pg. 321-346.
Arlene Fink (2015). "Collecting Information" (Chapter 5) *Evaluation Fundamentals*: *Insights into Program Effectiveness, Quality & Values*. Sage Publications, pg. 119-144.
Carol H. Weiss (1998). "Measures," *Evaluation*, (Second edition). Prentice Hall: pg. 114-151.
Patricia Rogers and Delwyn Goodrick, (2010). "Qualitative Data Analysis," *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Third Edition), Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. Jossey-Bass: pg. 429-453.
Kathryn Newcomer and Dylan Conger (2010). "Using Statistics in Evaluation," *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Third Edition), Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. Jossey-Bass: pg. 454-492.
Michael Baizerman and Donald Compton. (Spring 2009). "A Perspective on Managing Evaluation." *New Directions for Evaluation.* pg, 7-15.
George E. Mitchell (2014). "Measurement and Evaluation in International Development NGOs," Public Performance & Management Review 37:4. pg. 605-631.
Robert Boruch and Anthony Petrosino (201) "Meta-Analyses, Systematic Reviews, and Evaluation Synethsis," *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Third Edition), Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. Jossey-Bass: pg. 531-553.
Emily Hoole and Tracy E Patterson. (Fall 2008). Voices from the Field: Evaluation as Part of a Learning Culture. *New Directions for Evaluation* , pp. 93-113.
Keith Sturges (2015). "Complicity Revisited: Balnacing Stakeholder Input and Roles in Evaluation Use," American Journal of Evaluation 36(4): 461-469.
Stephanie Evergreen & Ann Emery (2014). "Data Visualization Checklist." And two Webinars: "Slide Redesign for Evaluators," and "Delivery Tips for Evaluators"
Gary Miron (2004). "Evaluation Report Checklist."

## eReserves

You can access course written materials on eReserves right on the course Moodle site. Alternately, you can log in to the Reserves Direct website with your internet ID and password. (This is the same information you would use to log in to your U of M email.) Or, choose the course from the Library Course Page and click on the Course Reserves tab.

## Description of Assignments

The assignments for this course were created to move you toward achieving the courses' learning outcomes related to providing students conceptual frameworks and practical strategies for conducting community-based evaluation studies, and building understanding of program evaluation as practiced across the globe.

- ***Contemporary Professional Issues Brief***. This assignment will involve identifying and following eight or more program evaluation professionals (individuals, firms) on Twitter over a four week period and presenting the lessons you learn from them. Due on Wednesday, March 2nd, this is worth *10% of the course grade*.

- ***Professional Poster & Presentation****.* This will provide an opportunity to do more research about a contemporary issue and present the results in a poster to your colleagues. We will share them during the face-to-face class on March 11th. This is worth 5% of the course grade.

- ***Quizzes*** on readings, podcasts and e-studies/e-cases. Throughout the semester, these short-quizzes document your knowledge about core course concepts. There will be three **Practice Reflection Papers**, as well. These 2-3 page papers are designed to give you a chance to reflect upon your own work in the project team. Together, these two course elements are worth 15% of the course grade.

- ***Program Evaluation Fieldwork.*** Your mastery of knowledge in this course will be demonstrated through the development of a complete program evaluation plan and data collection/analysis strategy for a public or nonprofit client. In particular, there will be assignments due related to the following items:
    - Object Description & Logic Model (15%), Due February 26th
    - Draft Evaluation Plan (10%), due March 28
    - Sample Data Collection Tool & Analysis Plan (15%), Due April 13
    - Draft Presentation (Completed Virtually on Voicethread) (10%), Due April 27
    - Final plan & Presentation for Client (10%), Due May 6

  Additionally, 10% of your grade in this class will be determined by the peers in your project team and their assessment of your professionalism and contribution to the product. (Due May 11th).

## Policy for Grading Late Work

Assignments submitted after the due date will be penalized 5 points for each 24-hour period that they are late. Unless otherwise noted, the assignments will be due at 11 pm on the date noted below.

## A week-by-week listing of readings & other learning objects, required lectures to review virtually, and assignments is available in the Course Schedule and on the Course Moodle site.

## University of Minnesota Policy Statements

### Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf.

### Disability Accommodations:

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.
If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.
For more information, please see the DS website, https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/.

### Mental Health and Stress Management:

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu.

### For other University policies go to:
**http://policy.umn.edu/education/syllabusrequirements-appa**