HUBERT H. HUMPHREY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PA 5311: Program Evaluation

Spring Semester 2019
In-Person On-Campus Class Meetings: in Humphrey School room 15 from 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm on the following Wednesdays: 1/23, 2/6, 2/13, 2/27, 3/13, 3/27, 4/10, 4/24, and 5/1.

In-Person "Lab" times with your Evaluation Group: Every two weeks, at a minimum. Groups can schedule as they would like.

3 credits

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Course Description & Learning Outcomes

This course provides an overview to program evaluation in public affairs. It explores the complexities and realities of conducting program evaluation studies in community-based settings, such as public agencies, schools, non-profit organizations, and collaborative initiatives. Through working on a 'real world' project, students will understand the complexities and realities of conducting a program evaluation shaped by a utilization approach.

The course is designed to achieve two primary purposes: 1) provide experience applying frameworks and tools to create a utilization-focused evaluation project, and 2) build understanding of the profession 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. Be familiar with common program evaluation terminology, professional practices and ethics;
3. Be able to design an evaluation plan for a specific public or nonprofit program or initiative. Use and employ a logic model, apply appropriate research strategies, and engage primary stakeholders in using products developed;
4. Recognize and navigate the cultural and power dynamics at play in evaluation-related efforts.

We will pursue these learning outcomes through project-based learning that allows students to compare and contrast different evaluation projects across the course. We will establish guiding evaluation questions, articulate a clear evaluation purpose, and incorporate the projects' theories of action/change. The customized plan will lay out a data collection and data analysis strategy and it will be presented to the client.

The course is offered in a "hybrid format" that leverages 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. We will have nine face-to-face meetings over the course of

the semester. These sessions will be opportunities 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 an *evaluation project team* in your work for a client. We will establish these groups during the first week of class. You should plan to spend about 12 hours per week on course related activities and assignments. For example, you will meet face-to-face or virtually with your project team during weeks we are not meeting as a whole class to make progress on the work for your client, as well as do readings and review virtual lectures.

Means of Learning & Communicating with Each Other

We will draw upon various learning materials to achieve our learning outcomes: readings; multimedia cases; podcasts; field research; and project teams. Although this is a course that leverages technology, this does not mean that communication with the instructor 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. If you would like to meet, please send an email to set something up. You also can communicate with me through our Canvas site, via phone, email, or in person before or after class. To make an appointment during my set office hours (Friday 12:-- to 2:00) follow the link to my calendar on the course web-page. If you would like to meet another time, please send me an email directly to set something up.

Hybrid courses are suited to students who are interested in active, self-directed learning. The online delivery of parts of this course gives you the flexibility to arrange your own weekly schedule. However, that flexibility requires that you plan and manage your time efficiently. You are responsible for actively using the online learning material and managing your time to complete assigned reading and online activities before their deadlines.

Work done between face-to-face meetings takes 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. Spend some extra time initially to familiarize yourself with the online course environment.

Current practice and research suggests <u>students are successful in these types of technology-enriched classes</u> 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 the instructor if problems arise;
- 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 available on-line).

Technical problems online: Technical problems are usually not valid reasons for failing to fulfill the online course requirements or to meet deadlines. You are responsible for allocating enough time to complete online assignments, and they should include the possibility of technical "glitches." 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 <u>not</u> be made for routine computer problems.

Course Prerequisites

Must be graduate student or have instructor's consent

Canvas

All course materials will be accessed through the course Canvas site. Find the site at canvas.umn.edu, or go to "Key Links" on MyU.umn.edu and scroll down to Canvas. For help with Canvas, go to https://z.umn.edu/CanvasHelpandSetup or click the "Canvas Help" link on our course Canvas site. You should check the website regularly to attain the necessary readings, assignments, announcements, and other information.

Other Technical Support:

- Contact the University's IT department
    - email help@umn.edu
    - phone 612.301.4357 or text 612.548.1191

eReserves

You can access course written materials on eReserves right on the course Canvas 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.

Access to readings and materials after semester

Student lose access to Canvas sites and course reserves at the end of the semester. If you'd like to download class material (depending on copyright) or your own work for personal use, please do so during the semester.

Session Schedule (next two pages)

Success in the course depends on you learning course content while simultaneously managing 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.

Week of	Readings and Other Learning Objects (complete prior to date in the first column)	In-class activities	Deliverables (due 11:00pm, unless otherwise noted)
Before 1/23 In person class	**Introduction and Overview** *Watch:* PA5311 Introductory Video *Reading;* Chen (2015); Michael Patton (2012) *Virtual Lecture:* Substantive Introduction	Evaluative thinking	Answer intro questions & rank projects (1/21)
Before 2/6 In person class	**Being an evaluator who works effectively with clients** *Virtual Lectures:* 1) Professional ethics; 2) Utilization; 3) Purposes of Evaluation *Other Learning Materials:* Marvin C. Alkin (2011); American Evaluation Association (July 2004); Jean King and Laurie Stevahn (2013); Rossi et al (1999);	Meet with clients 3:30 – 5:00 Refine questions (CDC handouts)	Reflection paper #1 (2/7)
Before 2/13 In person class	**Shaping Evaluation Questions** *Virtual Lecture*: 1) Program Theory & Theory of Action; 2) Logic Models; 3) Object Description; 4) Focusing Efforts through Evaluation Questions. *Other Learning Materials:* Patton (1997); Bryson, Patton and Bowman (2011); GovInnovator podcast, Decker (2013); GovInnovator podcast, Hurley (2013).	Assessment of field on Twitter Case analysis	Draft object description & logic model (2/12)
Before 2/27 in person class	**Design Options: Assessing Impact, Monitoring Outcomes, Evaluating Process Improvement, and System Change** *Virtual Lectures:* 1) Introduction to Design; 2) Evaluating program impact 3) Process evaluation; 4) Evaluating Complex Systems. *Other Learning Materials:* Peter Rossi, et al (1999); Poister (2010); Posavac (2011); Hargreaves (2010); Roll (2016).	Case analysis Exploration of Design options	Design matrix (2/27) – bring hard copies to class Draft design (2/28)
Before 3/13 In person class	**Gathering Quality Information** Virtual Lectures: 1) Sources of Data; 2) Sampling *Other Learning Materials*: Contribute to and review materials under "Share Information on Data Collection Methods" portal on Canvas site. Fink (2015); Sturges (2015); Mitchell (2014).	Workshop data collection methods	Sample data collection tool and rough analysis plans (by 3/13) – bring hard copies to class

Week of	Readings and Other Learning Objects (complete prior to date in the first column)	In-class activities	Deliverables (due 11:00pm, unless otherwise noted)
Before 3/27 In person class	**Measuring Indicators and Analyzing Data** *Virtual Lectures:* 1) Indicators and Measures; 2) Analytic Approaches. *Other Learning Materials:* Weiss (1998); Rogers and Goodrick, (2010); Newcomer and Conger (2015)		Revised data collection tool and analysis plans (3/26)
Before 4/10 In person class	**Use and Applications** *Other Learning Materials*: Patton (2012). Cases**:** Sherwood (2005); Campbell et al (2005)		Exam (available 3/28 through 4/1) Reflection paper #2 (4/8)
Before 4/24 In person class	**Communicating Findings** *Virtual Lectures:* 1) Bringing the Elements of the Plan Together; 2) Communicating Strategy *Other Learning Materials:* Evergreen & Emery (2014); Miron (2004).	Share draft presentation in class	Draft results, if applicable (4/20) Draft presentation
5/1 In personal class	**Final Presentation of Project with your Team**	Deliverable of products to client Reflection on semester's work	Final Deliverable (by 5/1) Peer assessment of your contribution (by 5/3)

Assignments and Grading

The assignments for this course move you toward achieving the course's learning outcomes related to providing students conceptual frameworks and practical strategies for conducting evaluation projects as well as building understanding of program evaluation as practiced across the globe.

- **Reflection Memos.** You will complete <u>two</u> 2-3 page reflection papers to give you a chance to reflect upon your current and desired knowledge and skills in the context of your group project. Professional practice is improved when people take the time to reflect on what they are doing now, and how they might improve their effectiveness (5% each, total of **10%**)

- *Exam*. You will complete <u>one</u> exam on the readings, podcasts, lectures and e-cases that will document your basic understanding of core technical course concepts. (**15%**)

- *Program Evaluation Fieldwork.* Your mastery of knowledge in this course will be demonstrated mainly through the development of a complete program evaluation plan and data collection/analysis strategy for a public or nonprofit client. There will be assignments due related to the following items:
    - Draft Object Description & Logic Model (**10%**)
    - Draft Evaluation Design, including Design Matrix (**10%**)
    - Revised Data Collection Tool & Analysis Plan (**10%**)
    - Draft Results (**5%**)
    - Draft Presentation (**5%**)
    - Final plan & Presentation for Client (**15%**)

  Additionally, **15%** 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.

- *Contribution to collective learning process.* You will contribute to our collective learning process by sharing substantive questions and insights during face-to-face sessions and via discussion on Canvas (**5%**). You are encouraged to contribute a combined average of one or more questions or insights per week of class.

Assignments submitted after the due date will be penalized 5 percentage 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.

Full List of Readings & Other Learning Materials

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.

Michael Patton (2012), "Introduction, Overview, and Context" *Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation* Sage: pg. 1-14.

Marvin C. Alkin (2011), "What is evaluation?" *Evaluation Essentials: From A to Z*. Guilford: pg. 1-15.

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

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: pg. 66-95.

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.

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

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

Michael Patton(1997). "The Programs' Theory of Action: Conceptualizing Causal Linkages, *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (Third Edition), Sage Publication: pg. 215-238.

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.

Peter Rossi, Howard Freeman, and Mark Lipsey (1999). "Strategies for Impact Assessment," *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 6th edition. Sage Publications: pg. 235-271.

Theodore Poister (2010). "Performance Measurement: Monitoring Program Outcomes," *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Third Edition), Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P., and Newcomer, K.E. Jossey-Bass: pg. 100-124.

Emil J. Posavac (2011). "Monitoring the Implementation and the Operation of Programs," Program Evaluation Methods and Case Studies, 8th edition. Prentice-Hall, Inc. pg. 125-144.

Margaret B. Hargreaves (2010). "Evaluating System Change: A Planning Guide." Method Brief. Mathematica.

Stephen Roll, (2016). "Sharpen Your Financial Focus Evaluation." Hubert e-case. https://hubertproject.org/hubert-material/405/

Arlene Fink (2015). "Collecting Information" (Chapter 5) *Evaluation Fundamentals*: *Insights into Program Effectiveness, Quality & Values*. Sage Publications, pg. 119-144.

George E. Mitchell (2014). "Measurement and Evaluation in International Development NGOs," *Public Performance & Management Review* 37:4. pg. 605-631.

Keith Sturges (2015). "Complicity Revisited: Balancing Stakeholder Input and Roles in Evaluation Use," American Journal of Evaluation 36(4): 461-469.

Carol H. Weiss (1998). "Measures," *Evaluation*, (Second edition). Prentice Hall: pg. 114-151.

Patricia Rogers and Delwyn Goodrick, (2010). "Qualitative Data Analysis," (Chapter 19) *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 (2015). "Using Statistics in Evaluation," (Chapter 23) *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (Fourth Edition), Newcomer, K.E., Hatry, H.P., Wholey, J.S. Jossey-Bass: pg. 596-635.

Michael Patton (2012), "Simulating Use of Findings," (Chapter 12) *Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation* Sage Publications: pg. 309-322.

Kay E. Sherwood (2005). "Evaluation of the Fighting Back Initiative," New Directions for Evaluation, 105, pg. 15-36.

Martha S. Campbell, Michael Quinn Patton, Patricia Patrizi (2005). "Evaluation of the Central Valley Partnership of the James Irvine Foundation," *New Directions for Evaluation*, 105, pg. 39-54.

Stephanie Evergreen & Ann Emery (2014). "Data Visualization Checklist."

Gary Miron (2004). "Evaluation Report Checklist."

University and School Policies

For links to University of Minnesota and Humphrey School policies, please click the "U of M Policies" link on our course Canvas site, or see https://z.umn.edu/PolicyStatements. Policies include information on student conduct, scholastic dishonesty, sexual harassment, equal opportunity, disability accommodations, and more.

The following table displays learning objectives for this course and key competencies identified by the Humphrey School and its accrediting body.

Universal Competencies of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration *Students who graduate from an accredited program will be able to:*	Competencies of the Humphrey School of Public Affairs *Studies who graduate with the Master of Public Policy degree from the Humphrey School will be able to:*	Learning Objectives for PA 5311 (Program Evaluation) *Students who complete this course will be able to:*
Participate in and contribute to the public policy process	Participate in problem-solving, policy-making, and institutional and societal change in dynamic, uncertain environments.	Design an evaluation plan for a specific public or nonprofit program or initiative that is focused on engaging primary stakeholders in using the plan to answer important questions.
Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions	Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve complex problems, and make decisions informed by quantitative, qualitative, economic, and other methods.	Understand the purposes and uses of program evaluation in public policy and program delivery. Be familiar with common program evaluation terminology and professional practices and ethics.
Articulate and apply a public service perspective	Articulate the essential role of public institutions in democratic societies and the importance of democratic values in delivery of public services. Understand conceptions of the common good, acknowledge normative and ethical viewpoints, and promote social justice.	Grapple with ethnics in program evaluation design and engagement of diverse stakeholder group in shaping plans.
Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	Communicate and interact productively with individuals in diverse and changing cultures and communities.	Work effectively with your project client.
To lead and manage in public governance	Lead and manage in governance across sectors, institutions, and diverse populations and cultures. Understand global interdependencies and the implications for governance, policy-making, and implementation	Recognize and navigate the cultural and power dynamics at play in evaluation-related efforts.