

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Educational Psychology

EDRS 631 (001) – Program Evaluation
3 Credits, Fall 2017
Tuesday 4:30-7:10 p.m. Thompson L018 – Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

None.

University Catalog Course Description

Focuses on perspectives of existing and emerging issues, theories, and models of program evaluation. Involves implementation of program evaluation in related fields and school districts. Offered by Graduate School of Education. May not be repeated for credit.

Course Overview

This course examines the theory, ethics, and practice of program evaluation. Areas of focus include understanding the nature of program evaluation, understanding applications of appropriate methods used in program evaluation, and using program evaluation in applied settings, including education, state or federal agencies, community health, nonprofits, etc.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture and class discussion format, with occasional online discussions and assignments.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

- Understand the nature of program evaluation
- Compare and contrast program evaluation and social science research
- Apply the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles in planning and conducting program evaluations
- Distinguish among the major models and methods of conducting program evaluation
- Apply evaluation models and methods appropriately within a given evaluation context
- Understand program evaluation questions, including but not limited to, satisfaction, program implementation, program outcomes, etc.
- Understand how to develop, implement, and analyze evaluation data from a variety of evaluation tools
- Understand the linkages between program evaluation, program design, and program implementation

- Understand issues related to utilization of evaluation information
- Understand the cultural, political, economic, and social justice implications of program evaluations

Professional Standards

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

Masters of Science (MS) Educational Psychology Program Standards

Standard 3: Knowledge of Educational Research and Assessment.

Candidates will demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts, principles, techniques, approaches, and ethical issues involved in educational research.

Standard 4: Analysis, Critique, and Evaluation of Educational Research.

Candidates will use their knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methodology to critically read and evaluate quantitative and qualitative research articles.

Standard 5: Planning and Implementation of Educational Research.

Candidates will use their knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methodology to develop a research proposal and conduct research.

Standard 6: Communication and Dissemination of Educational Research.

Candidates will demonstrate critical thinking, oral presentation, technological, and writing skills as they are used in the profession. These include:

- a. Knowledge and use of APA style
- b. Oral presentations
- c. Poster presentations
- d. Article abstracts
- e. Research proposals
- f. Literature reviews
- g. Technological skills (including library/reference skills, interactive displays skills, data analysis skills)

Program Evaluation Standards (American Evaluation Association, Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2011)

Utility Standards: The utility standards are intended to increase the extent to which program stakeholders find evaluation processes and products valuable in meeting their needs.

Feasibility Standards: The feasibility standards are intended to increase evaluation effectiveness and efficiency.

Proprietary Standards: The proprietary standards support what is proper, fair, legal, right, and just in evaluations.

Accuracy Standards: The accuracy standards are intended to increase the dependability and truthfulness of evaluation representations, propositions, and findings, especially those that support interpretations and judgments about quality.

Evaluation Accountability Standards: The evaluation accountability standards encourage adequate documentation of evaluations and a meta-evaluative perspective focused on improvement and accountability for evaluation processes and products.

Required Texts

Alkin, M. C. (2011). *Evaluation Essentials: From A to Z*. NY: Guilford.

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th Ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

*Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Relevant Websites

www.eval.org: The website for the American Evaluation Association, the leading professional association for evaluators.

www.wmich.edu/evalctr: Western Michigan University's Center for Evaluation, which is one of the premier sites for thought and practice in evaluation.

<http://ericae.net> is the ERIC Clearinghouse for Assessment and Evaluation. Also chronicles education news on a daily basis from media outlets around the country.

<http://oerl.sri.com> is the Online Evaluation Resource Library, which catalogues countless plans, data collection instruments and evaluation reports.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

Assignments and/or Examinations

- **In-class Responses:** Throughout the semester, students will take 10-15 minutes at the beginning of class to provide a written response to thought questions based on that week's material. These responses will help spur that week's discussion, and will also provide a basis for one of the elements of the reflection paper. **(10 points)**
- **Initial Planning Paper:** Early in the semester, students will write a paper describing their initial plans and ideas for the evaluation they will conduct. This paper will include the potential program, discussion of why the evaluation is needed, initial question areas, and identified stakeholders. **(15 points)**
- **Logic Model:** Students will use the information about logic models from the readings and class discussion to help them identify an appropriate logic model for their planned evaluation and will provide a model that details the specifics of their program. **(5 points)**
- **Evaluation Plan:** Students will design a clear plan for their evaluation of the program they have identified. This paper will include evaluation questions, evaluation design, data sources and sampling plan, methods and measures (i.e., a clear protocol) used to collect and analyze the data, a timeline, and references. **(20 points)**
- **Evaluation Paper:** After conducting their evaluation, students will write an evaluation report that incorporates not only the information from the evaluation but also the lessons they have learned from the readings and class discussions. The report will include a description of the program and need for the evaluation, a review of relevant literature, methods used to collect and analyze the data, findings, and a discussion that both interprets the findings and includes recommendations for the program. **(25 points)**
- **Presentation:** Students will give a PowerPoint presentation for the class that summarizes the key points of their evaluation and evaluation paper. **(10 points)**
- **Reflection paper:** At the end of the semester, students will write a reflection paper that discusses their views on and understanding of program evaluation. This paper will highlight lessons learned, ways their perspectives may have grown or changed after doing their evaluation, unexpected discoveries or complications, and their plans for the future. **(15 points)**

Other Requirements

Active discussion and engagement with peers and the instructor is *critical* to this course. It is expected that students will arrive at all course meetings having read the assigned text and other materials, ready to interact with their classmates, and prepared to ask relevant questions and share their perspectives.

Grading

The grading scale for this course is the following:

98-100= A+

92-97= A

89-91= B+

84-88= B

80-83= C+

74-79= C

70-73= D

Below 70= F

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading/Assignment Due
August 29	Course Overview Introduction to Program Evaluation	Sections A-B
September 5	Stakeholders and Stakeholder Relationships Evaluation Context	Sections C-F
September 12	Describing and Understanding the Program Logic Models	Sections G-H Initial Planning Paper Due
September 19	Defining Questions and Data Sources	Sections I-J Logic Model Due
September 26	Collecting Data	Sections K-N
October 3	The Evaluation Plan	Sections O-Q
October 10	Columbus Day Holiday: CLASS DOES NOT MEET	
October 17	Analyzing Quantitative Data	Section R
October 24	Analyzing Qualitative Data	Section S Evaluation Plan Due
October 31	Using Data to Answer Questions Note: Class will be online this week	Section T
November 7	Reporting Results Using Evaluation Results	Sections U-V
November 14	Evaluation Management Standards and Codes	Sections W-X
November 21	Cost Analysis	Section Y
November 28	Evaluation Lessons Presentations: Group One	Section Z Evaluation Report Due
December 5	Presentations: Group Two	
December 12	Reading Day: CLASS DOES NOT MEET	Reflection Paper Due

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .