

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Educational Psychology

EDRS 631: DL1 – Program Evaluation
3 Credits, Fall 2020
Tuesday, 4:30pm-7:10pm

Faculty

Name: Nicole Togno, PhD
Office Hours: By appointment: [<https://gmu.zoom.us/j/5487473709>]
Office Location:
Office Phone:
Email Address: ntogno@gmu.edu

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.

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. This course supports the mission of the Educational Psychology Program, which is “to develop professionals who: a. apply principles of learning, cognition and motivation to vital problems in the area of education in a variety of settings; b. develop a solid understanding of research, assessment, and evaluation methodologies; and c. develop an analytical and scholarly approach to critically assessing theoretical perspectives, research, and practice within and across content domains.”

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered 100 percent online using primarily synchronous format in combination with asynchronous via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. At designated times throughout the semester, students will participate in a blend of self-paced and group-paced activities. The course site will be available on August 25, 2020.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard’s supported browsers see:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: Our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the schedule of classes, typically on Tuesdays between 4:30 and 7:10 pm. Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, **our week will start on Tuesday, and finish on Monday.**
- Log-in Frequency:
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 5 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions. Each week, you will read approximately 30 pages, complete online activities, and work on assignments to be submitted through Blackboard.
- Technical Competence:
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:

Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

- **Instructor Support:**
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:**
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- **Accommodations:**
Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Course Logistics

Access to [MyMason](#) and Mason email are required to participate successfully in this course. Check the [IT Support Center](#) website. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Read the information under "Technical Requirements" above.

Though the delivery method is entirely online, it should take you the same amount of time as other 3-credit courses. You should **expect to spend an average of 8 to 10 hours on coursework for each class session** (this includes the time you would have spent in a classroom). Also, we have 2-3 sessions fewer because of the condensed time as compared to a semester.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the major concepts of program evaluation, including theory and techniques
2. Understand the relationship between assessment, analysis, and evaluation
3. Explain components of evaluation models
4. Understand issues related to utilization of evaluation information and evidence use
5. Understand the cultural, political, economic, and social justice implications of program evaluations
6. Develop an evaluation plan for evaluating a program.

Professional Standards

Learner outcomes are consistent with the Educational Psychology Program standards. The standards, expressed as learner outcomes for assessment for data-driven decision making, are:

- Educators will demonstrate an understanding of principles and theories of learning, cognition, motivation, and development as they apply to a wide variety of contemporary assessment contexts.
- Educators will use their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to apply principles and theories of learning, cognition, motivation, and development to analyze and develop instruction based on sound assessment principles.
- Educators will demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts, principles, techniques, approaches, and ethical issues involved in educational data use.

Student Outcomes & Relationship to Professional Standards

The student outcomes for the certificate are informed by standards for what teachers should know and be able to do established by various organizations:

1. [Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students](#) (1990)
2. [Data Quality Campaign](#)
3. [Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium](#) (INTASC)
4. [American Federation of Teachers](#)
4. [The Five Core Propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#)

Required Texts

Alkin, M. C., & Vo, A.C. (2018). *Evaluation Essentials: From A to Z (2nd ed.)*. NY: Guilford.

Patton, Michael Quinn (2012). *Essentials of utilization-focused evaluation: a primer*. Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (7th Ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Other readings will also be assigned for the course and made available on Blackboard.

Recommended Texts

Mertens, D.M., & Wilson, A.T. (2018). *Program evaluation theory and practice: A comprehensive guide*. New York, NY: Guilford

Wyatt Knowlton, L., & Phillips, C. C. (2013). *The logic model guidebook: Better strategies for great results (2nd ed.)*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, hard copy). **Late assignments will not be accepted without prior instructor approval.**

- **Participation and Discussion Prompts (15 percent).** Students are expected to participate in all online activities as listed on the course calendar, as well as discussions, blogs, and other prompts as provided throughout the semester. As part of this assignment, students will be asked to provide a summary or analysis in response to a

series of questions based on the readings or other course material. Assignments must be submitted via blackboard by the given deadline.

- **Request for Proposal (15 percent):** Students will create a 3-4 page hypothetical request for proposal (RFP) for a given program seeking evaluation agencies and evaluators to respond with proposals to evaluate the program. The RFP will contain a description of the program, evaluation needs, budget parameters, and a description of expected evaluator qualifications.
- **Logic Model (10 percent):** Students will develop a logic model for a given program that includes all the key components. The model should clearly provide an illustration of the theory of the program by accurately listing the *inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes* (short, intermediate, long-term).

Evaluation Design Project

The evaluation design project has three parts, due throughout the course (Evaluation Questions assignment, Data Collection Plan, Final Evaluation Plan). This is a performance-based assessment. Students will carefully select an appropriate program to complete an evaluation design.

- **Evaluation Questions (15 percent):** This is the first assignment that will lead to your final project, the evaluation plan. For this assignment, students will write a 4- 5 page memo describing the purpose of the program, the targeted clients, and the conceptual framework/logic model/theory of change diagram that describes how the program is expected to work. This memo should also describe the purpose of the proposed evaluation and the key questions the evaluation will address.
- **Data Collection Plan (15 percent):** For this assignment, you will continue with your evaluation design project from the previous assignment. Students will write a 4-5 page memo (not including applicable appendices) describing a plan for collecting data to answer your evaluation questions. The plan should include strategies for each type of data collection – target population, collection mode, and evaluation question it will address. Students must provide (in the appendices) at least one data collection instrument – focus group or interview protocol, survey, data extraction coding scheme, etc., that is also summarized in the plan.
- **Final Evaluation Plan (30 percent):** Students will complete a 12-15 page evaluation plan comprising the following components:
 - **Program overview/introduction.** Include a description of the program. Provide a justification for the program evaluation. The justification should include a discussion of past or current monitoring, assessment, or evaluation efforts and any key findings pertinent for your evaluation of the program; a discussion of issues, concerns, or challenges that the program faces, and potential factors related to the issues. Include draft evaluation questions. Include a reference list. Include a logic model and/or theory of change diagram.
 - **Evaluation questions.** Revised based on instructor feedback and complete.

- **Detailed data collection plan.** Revised based on instructor feedback and complete.
- **Communication and reporting plan.** Include a detailed plan for how you will engage with stakeholders and communicate evaluation findings. The communication and reporting plan must include at least two data visualization options.
- **Data Collection Instruments.** Revised based on instructor feedback and complete
- **Reflection.** Provide a reflection of your learning experiences that highlight your confidence in your skills initially, what worked well, what were the challenges, lessons learned, and your identity as an evaluator.

Grading

Grading scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C	79-70
F	Below 70

Professional Dispositions

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

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

Class Schedule

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MODULE	WEEK	TOPICS	READINGS DUE	ASSIGNMENTS DUE	FORMAT
1	8/25-8/31	Course Overview Introduction to Evaluation	Alkin & Vo Sections A-B Patton Chapters 1 and 2 AEA's Guiding Principles	Blackboard Discussion 1 Due: 8/31 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
2	9/1-9/7	Understanding Evaluators, Evaluand, and Stakeholders	Alkin & Vo Sections C-F Patton Chapter 3	Blackboard Discussion 2 Due: 9/7 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
3	9/8-9/14	Evaluation Theory, Models Evaluation & Research	Patton Chapter 4 Leeuw & Donaldson (2015)	Blackboard Discussion 3 Due: 9/14 at 11:59 pm	Asynchronous online

			Frye & Hemmer (2012)		
4	9/15-9/21	Understanding the Program Evaluation Models (contd.)	Alkin & Vo Section G-I Patton Chapters 5 and 6	Blackboard Discussion 4 Due 9/21 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
5	9/22-9/28	Framing evaluation questions Evaluability Theories of Change	Alkin & Vo Section J, N Patton Chapters 7 and 9	Blackboard Discussion 5 Due 9/28 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
6	9/29-10/5	Evaluation Plan/Design	Alkin & Vo Sections O,P,Q	Blackboard Discussion 6 Logic Model Due Due: 10/5 at 11:59 pm	Asynchronous online
7	10/6-10/12	Data Collection in Evaluation	Alkin & Vo Section K, L, M Patton Chapters 10 and 13	Blackboard Discussion 7 Evaluation Questions Due Due: 10/12 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
	10/13-10/19	Fall Break			
8	10/20-10/26	Data Analysis & Interpretation	Alkin & Vo Sections R, S, T Patton Chapter 11	Blackboard Discussion 8 Due: 10/26 at 11:59 pm	Asynchronous online
9	10/27-11/2	Data Analysis & Interpretation	Patton Chapter 12	Blackboard Discussion 9 RFP Assignment Due Due: 11/2 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online

10	11/3-11/9	Reporting Findings Evaluator Recommendations Use of Evaluation Results	Alkin & Vo Sections U, V, Appendix A Patton Chapters 14	Blackboard Discussion 10 Due: 11/9 at 11:59 pm	Asynchronous online
11	11/10-11/16	Data Visualization	Patton Chapter 15	Blackboard Discussion 11 Due: 11/16 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
12	11/17-11/23	Managing Evaluations	Alkin & Vo Sections W, X, Y Patton Chapter 16	Blackboard Discussion 12 Data Collection Plan Due Due: 11/23 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
13	11/24-11/30	Evaluation Lessons Becoming an Evaluation Professional Evaluation Resources	Section Z American Evaluation Association Western Michigan University's Center for Evaluation ERIC Clearinghouse for Assessment and Evaluation Online Evaluation Resource Library	Blackboard Discussion 13 Due: 11/30 at 11:59 pm	Synchronous online
14	12/1-12/7	Reflection	Reading: TBD		Synchronous online
15	Final Evaluation Project Report Due: 12/14 at 11:59 pm				

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 <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices 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 <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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