Masters in Public Administration (MPA)
Local Government Program, Western University

PA 9915 Program Evaluation

Office Hours and Contact Information

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Class Room: UCC Rm 66. WALS Classroom

Fridays (4:00 pm to 7:00 pm)	*Saturdays (9:00 am to 12:00noon, lunch, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm)*
September 17	September 18
October 15	October 16
November 12	November 3
	December 4 (**9:00 am – 12 noon, online presentations**)

Course Description:

The purpose of the course is to familiarize students with the major issues in the fields of program evaluation. Students will develop an understanding of the theoretical frameworks used for evaluative research, validity issues in evaluative research, and the multi-methods, theory-driven approach to evaluation.

The course begins with an overview of the process through which policies and programs are considered, developed, approved, implemented and evaluated. Evaluation research can be expensive, difficult, rarely conclusive, and politically unpopular. Still evaluation research is of increasing relevance in an era where economy, efficiency and effectiveness are integral to the delivery of public sector services. The new emphasis on results, coupled with a shift to contracting out, partnerships, and special operating agencies has increased the need for evaluation.

The major types of evaluations will be considered, including: formative, process and summative evaluation, economic evaluation, and performance measurement. A major focus in the course will be evaluation design and delivery in a climate of evolving citizen and political expectations regarding public services.

The evaluation process does not, however, take place in a vacuum. Issues and externalities such as professional judgment, ethics and objectivity, public expectation, and political sensitivities can (and do) have profound impact on the process. Understanding of and strategies to cope with these issues will be a key part of this course.

Course Objectives:

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Think critically and solve problems about the challenges of program implementation, improvements and accountability that you may face, in the public or non-profit sectors
- Frame performance / accountability issues in analytical and policy terms
- Understand performance monitoring and program evaluation in their different purposes, methods, and relationships
- Explore and understand the key differences between alternative empirical methods commonly used in program evaluation
- Discuss the uses and limitations of ongoing performance information and periodic evaluations in policy decision-making
- Plan, develop, present and negotiate the terms of a simple program evaluation as group work to a non-technical authority
- Carry out a simple evaluation

Enrollment Restrictions:

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Local Government Program's Master of Public Administration stream, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program.

Source Materials:

A combination of articles, book chapters and handouts will be used. The assigned readings will be made available in web-accessible electronic journals, or directly through the Internet (indicated below in url's provided). The course outline below is in draft and the final full list of readings will be provided at the start of the course.

Resource Materials:

Required Texts

Howlett, M., Ramesh, M. & Perl, A. (2009) Studying public policy: Policy cycles & policy subcycles (3rd ed.) Don Mills ON.: Oxford

Mc David, J., Huse, I. and Hawthorn, L. (2013) *Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement: an introduction to the practice (2nd Ed.).* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage

Other

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide
http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf

 Case Studies

 Additional readings and case studies will also be posted on the class website.

Report of the Auditor General of Canada (2002) *Costs of Implementing the Canadian Firearms Program.* Chapter Ten which can be accessed at:
http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/osh_20030224_e_23380.html

Supplemental references

Pal, L. (2010) Beyond Policy Analysis: public issue management in turbulent times (4th ed.). Chapters 1 – 4, Toronto: Nelson

Other downloadable references

Literature Review - Study on the Function of Evaluation Focusing on Results: A Guide to Performance Measurement)
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/eval/stud_etud/func-fonc-02_e.asp

Evaluation Standards for the Government of Canada – Appendix B
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/tbm_161/ep-pe1_e.asp

User-Friendly Handbook for Mixes Method Evaluation
http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/start.htm

Evaluation – A Beginners Guide
http://web.amnesty.org/802568F7005C4453/0/2173DDD1E48C37BA802569A500545572?Open&Highlight=2,evaluation

Course format:

This course involves a combination of lecture/seminar, case analysis, and project simulation. The course consists of readings from the literature as well as individual and team assignments designed to do three things: reinforce learning of key concepts and methods; utilize that learning in the critique of actual case studies; and simulate the monitoring and evaluation work. These will be presented and discussed at the class sessions.

Evaluation:

Topic	Mark (%)
Program Logic Model – case study application	**20**
Review of an evaluation	**20**
Program evaluation proposal	**30**
Program evaluation proposal presentation (Online)	**10**
Class participation/ case studies	**20**
TOTAL	**100**

Program Logic Model – case study application. Each student will select/identify a program case study at end of class on Sept. 18th. Your assignment will be to evaluate the overall design and effectiveness of the evaluation using the techniques inherent in the Program Logic Model, due Oct. 15.

Review of an evaluation. Each student will be provided with a published evaluation, at the conclusion of class on Oct. 16th. Your assignment is to critique the evaluation on the basis of design, validity threats, conclusions and recommendations.

Program evaluation proposal. Each student team will develop a proposal to evaluate a program of a community partner. Due date will be in mid-December, to be determined at the first September class. This course has been structured in a problem-based learning format with a Community Service Learning (CEL) element. This means that students will work in project teams throughout the course to create a program evaluation plan for an organization in the local London community. Depending on the requirements of the organization and the project, each team will work at their own pace through the course material and rely on the resources provided by the instructor as well as external resources to meet their learning goals and the deliverables contracted to the community partner. The course requires active learning and that students come to each class prepared to engage in class and group discussion and work on tasks at hand. A final written Evaluation Plan is a major deliverable in the course, but the intention and focus throughout will be on learning the material and practicing the techniques; therefore, our attention will be on the process through which this takes place rather than the product per se.

Program evaluation proposal presentation. Each student Team will be allotted time during the Dec. 4th online class for a presentation of a summary of their program evaluation proposal . It is intended that the presentations provide an opportunity for feedback of their work in progress, including constructive criticism and peer input.

Class participation. At the graduate level the basic expectations in any course include attendance, completion in advance of all assigned readings, and participation in classroom discussions.

As a guide to grading the instructor uses the following measurement: Consistent Top Quality Contributions - 85 % or above; Good Level of Participation - 75 to 84 %; Spoke But Contributed Little - 65 to 74 %; Spoke Sporadically - 50 to 64 %; Rarely Participated - 0 to 49 %.

Deadlines:
As deadlines are of the essence to performance monitoring and evaluation – observing the "expiry date" of requested information should be part of your training and discipline. This is true of individual and group assignments. Unless the assignment indicates otherwise (e.g. seminar memos one day prior to class), written responses to homework assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date, and must be on paper with the pages neatly stapled together, and identified with the student's name and student number. Unless there is a valid (e.g. medical) excuse, assignments will not be accepted more than one class late, and late assignments will be given a 20% penalty. Students are encouraged to work together on individual assignments, but the work handed in must be the student's own. For group assignments, in addition to the overall group presentation, students are to submit a write-up of their understanding of the project and their personal contributions to its development.

Class Schedule:

Module	Participants	Date	Readings	
Introduction Course Outline What is evaluation research and how do we apply it to programs and policies?		Sept 20 & 21	Mc David et al (2013), Chapters 1 – 2 Pal (2010), Chapters 1 – 2	
Key Concepts and Issues in Program Evaluation Key Concepts Program Evaluation Process Policy Cycles	Causation Discussion		Shriven (2004), *Causation* Grasso (2003), *What makes an evaluation useful*	
Program Logic Model Introduction to Logic models			Mc David et al (2013), Chapter 3 W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide	
Program Logic Model (Cont'd) Design and Use Limitations	Case study presentation		The Canadian Firearms Program: a case study	
Research Designs for Program Evaluation What is Research Design? Validity Performance Measure Key issues in Evaluation	Project Logic Model due	Oct 25 & 26	Mc David et al., (2013), Chapters 4 – 6 Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat (1998) *Program*	

			Evaluation Methods	
Performance Measures Introduction Growth of Performance Measure Comparison with performance evaluation			Howlett et al., (2009), Chapter 4	
Performance Measures – continued Design and implementation Intended vs. actual uses Problems and issues in implementation and sustaining	Evaluation Review due		Mc David et al., (2013), Chapters 7 – 8	
Joining Theory and Practice Cultures that Support Evaluation Ethics and evaluation practice			Howlett et al., (2009) Chapters 7 – 9 Mc David et al., (2013), Chapters 9 – 12 Sebedi 2010, *The Influence of Organizational Culture on Mainstreaming Monitoring and Evaluation*	
Joining Theory and Practice (Cont'd) Professional judgment The political factor	Evaluation proposal presentations (peer feedback)	Nov 22 & 23	Pal (2010) Chapters 8 & 9	
Criteria, Standards and Measures Approaches to qualitative evaluation Connecting qualitative evaluation to performance method Benchmarking Needs assessments	Evaluation proposal presentations (peer feedback)		Howlett et al., (2009), Chapter 6 Management and Benchmarking 2014, *Benchmarking as a measure of competitiveness*	
Economic Evaluation Types In Performance Measure Cost - Effectiveness, Utility, Benefit - Analysis	Case Study presentation		Hafstad, Aaro & Langmark (1996), *Evaluation of an anti-smoking mass media campaign*, Case Study	
Measurements in Program Evaluation Measurement: procedures,	Case study presentation		Braun et. al, 2020, *The online survey as a qualitative research tool*	

terminology, and validity Units of analysis & sources of data Survey & Research Design	Evaluation Proposal due			

Health/Wellness Services:

All course outlines must contain the following statement:
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to
Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of
options about how to obtain help.

Accessible Education Western (AEW):

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including
graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to
promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate
program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions,
mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western
(AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through
their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with
both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor)
to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged.
These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature,
accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive
technology instruction.

Statement on Academic Offences:

The statement: "Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the
appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the
following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf